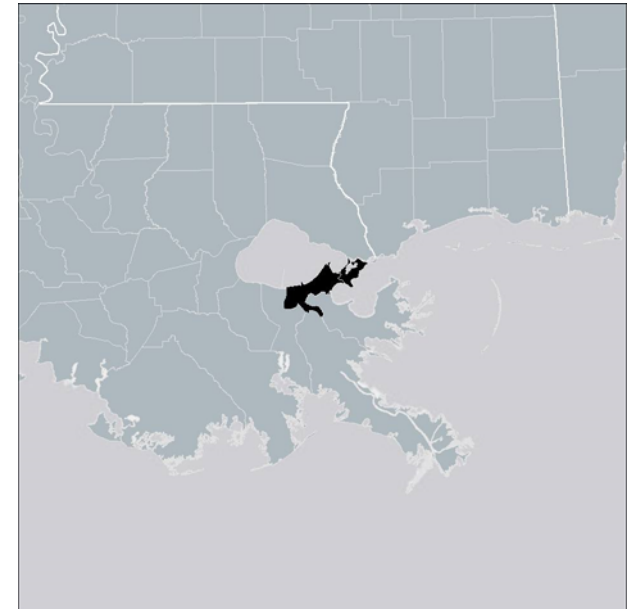


An Equity Profile of **New Orleans**

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Acknowledgments

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Equity Profiles are products of a partnership between PolicyLink and PERE, the Program for Environmental and Regional Equity at the University of Southern California.

The views expressed in this document are those of PolicyLink and PERE.

Summary

New Orleans, Louisiana, is already a majority people-of-color city, and communities of color will continue to drive growth and change into the foreseeable future. The city's diversity can be a tremendous economic asset if people of color are fully included as workers, entrepreneurs, and innovators. However, while the city's economy is showing signs of resurgence after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, rising inequality, stagnant wages, and persistent racial inequities place its long-term economic future at risk.

Equitable growth is the path to sustained economic prosperity in New Orleans. The region's economy could have been \$18 billion stronger in 2014 if its racial gaps in income had been closed: a 24 percent increase. By continuing to embed an equity approach throughout city government and advancing policy strategies to grow good jobs, build healthy communities of opportunity, prevent displacement, and ensure just policing and court systems, New Orleans can put all residents on the path toward reaching their full potential, and secure a bright future for the city and region.

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Introduction



Introduction

Overview

Across the country, community organizations and residents, local governments, business leaders, funders, and policymakers are striving to put plans, policies, and programs in place that build healthier, more equitable communities and foster inclusive growth.

These efforts recognize that equity – just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential – is fundamental to a brighter future for their communities.

Knowing how a community stands in terms of equity is a critical first step in planning for greater equity. To assist with that process, PolicyLink and the Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE) developed an equity indicators framework that communities can use to understand and track the state of equity and equitable growth locally.

This document presents an equity analysis of the City of New Orleans. It was developed with the support of the W.K. Kellogg

Foundation to support local community groups, elected officials, planners, business leaders, funders, and others working to build a stronger and more equitable city. The foundation is supporting the development of equity profiles in 10 of its priority communities across Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, and New Mexico.

The data in this profile are drawn from a regional equity database that includes data for the largest 100 cities and 150 regions in the United States, as well as all 50 states. This database incorporates hundreds of data points from public and private data sources including the U.S. Census Bureau, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, and Woods and Poole Economics. It also includes unique data on child and family well-being from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation Priority Communities Dashboard Database, contributed by The diversitydatakids.org Project based at the Institute for Child, Youth and Family Policy at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University.

See the "Data and methods" section of this profile for a detailed list of data sources.

This profile uses a range of data sources to describe the state of equity in New Orleans as comprehensively as possible, but there are limitations. Not all data collected by public and private sources is disaggregated by race/ethnicity and other demographic characteristics. And in some cases, even when disaggregated data is available, the sample size for a given population is too small to report with confidence.

Communities facing deep challenges and barriers to inclusion may be absent from some of the analysis presented here due to small sample size. Local data sources and the lived experiences of diverse residents should supplement the data provided in this profile to more fully represent the state of equity in New Orleans.

Introduction

What is an equitable city?

Cities are equitable when all residents – regardless of their race/ethnicity, nativity, income, neighborhood of residence, or other characteristics – are fully able to participate in the city’s economic vitality, contribute to the city’s readiness for the future, and connect to the city’s assets and resources.

Strong, equitable cities:

- Possess **economic vitality**, providing high-quality jobs to their residents and producing new ideas, products, businesses, and economic activity so the city remains sustainable and competitive.
- Are **ready for the future**, with a skilled, ready workforce, and a healthy population.
- Are **places of connection**, where residents can access the essential ingredients to live healthy and productive lives in their own neighborhoods, reach opportunities located throughout the city (and beyond) via transportation or technology, participate in political processes, and interact with other diverse residents.

Introduction

Why equity matters now

The face of America is changing.

Our country's population is rapidly diversifying. Already, more than half of all babies born in the United States are people of color. By 2030, the majority of young workers will be people of color. And by 2044, the United States will be a majority people-of-color nation.

Yet racial and income inequality is high and persistent.

Over the past several decades, long-standing inequities in income, wealth, health, and opportunity have reached unprecedented levels. And while most have been affected by growing inequality, communities of color have felt the greatest pains as the economy has shifted and stagnated.

Racial and economic equity is necessary for the nation's economic growth and prosperity.

Equity is an economic and health imperative as well as a moral one. Research shows that equity and diversity are win-win propositions for nations, cities, communities, and firms.

For example:

- More equitable regions experience stronger, more sustained growth.¹
- Regions with less segregation (by race and income) and lower income inequality have more upward mobility.²
- Researchers predict that health equity would lead to significant economic benefits from reductions in health-care spending and lost productivity.³
- Companies with a diverse workforce achieve a better bottom line.⁴
- A diverse population more easily connects to global markets.⁵
- Lower economic inequality results in better health outcomes for everyone.⁶

The way forward is with an equity-driven growth model.

To secure America's health and prosperity, the nation must implement a new economic model based on equity, fairness, and opportunity. Policies and investments must support equitable economic growth strategies, opportunity-rich neighborhoods, and "cradle-to-career" educational pathways.

Cities play a critical role in building this new growth model.

Local communities are where strategies are being incubated that foster equitable growth: growing good jobs and new businesses while ensuring that all – including low-income people and people of color – can fully participate and prosper.

¹ Manuel Pastor, "Cohesion and Competitiveness: Business Leadership for Regional Growth and Social Equity," OECD Territorial Reviews, Competitive Cities in the Global Economy, Organisation For Economic Co-Operation And Development (OECD), 2006; Manuel Pastor and Chris Benner, "Been Down So Long: Weak-Market Cities and Regional Equity" in *Retooling for Growth: Building a 21st Century Economy in America's Older Industrial Areas* (New York: American Assembly and Columbia University, 2008); Randall Eberts, George Erickcek, and Jack Kleinhenz, "Dashboard Indicators for the Northeast Ohio Economy: Prepared for the Fund for Our Economic Future" (Cleveland, OH: Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, 2006), <https://www.clevelandfed.org/newsroom-and-events/publications/working-papers/working-papers-archives/2006-working-papers/wp-0605-dashboard-indicators-for-the-northeast-ohio-economy.aspx>.

² Raj Chetty, Nathaniel Hendren, Patrick Kline, and Emmanuel Saez, "Where is the Land of Economic Opportunity? The Geography of Intergenerational Mobility in the U.S.," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 129 (2014): 1553-1623, http://www.equality-of-opportunity.org/assets/documents/mobility_geo.pdf.

³ Darrell Gaskin, Thomas LaVeist, and Patrick Richard, *The State of Urban Health: Eliminating Health Disparities to Save Lives and Cut Costs* (New York, NY: National Urban League Policy Institute, 2012).

⁴ Cedric Herring, "Does Diversity Pay?: Race, Gender, and the Business Case for Diversity," *American Sociological Review* 74 (2009): 208-22; Slater, Weigand and Zwirlein, "The Business Case for Commitment to Diversity," *Business Horizons* 51 (2008): 201-209.

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, "Ownership Characteristics of Classifiable U.S. Exporting Firms: 2007," Survey of Business Owners Special Report, June 2012, <http://www.census.gov/econ/sbo/export07/index.html>.

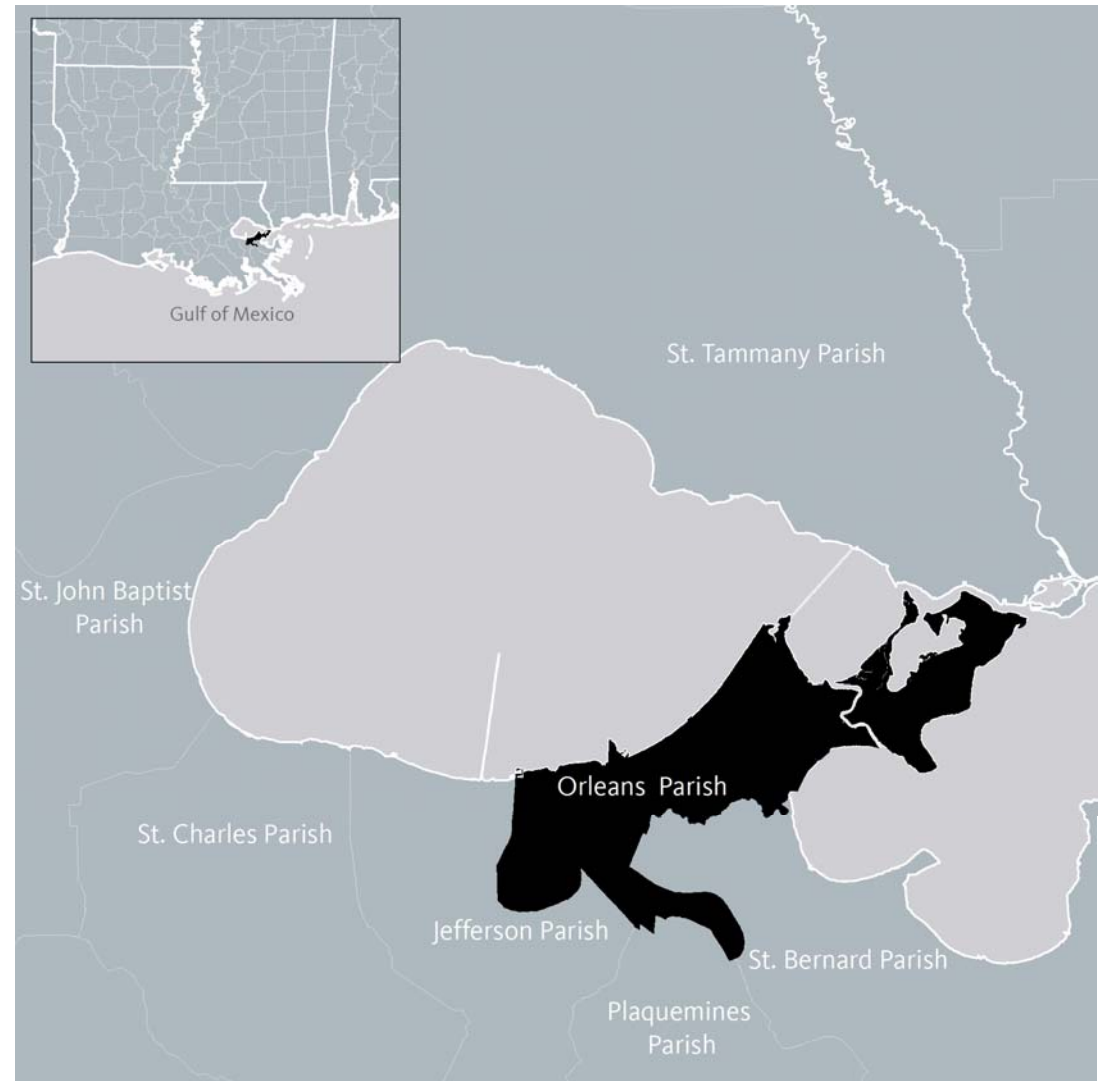
⁶ Kate Pickett and Richard Wilkinson, "Income Inequality and Health: A Causal Review," *Social Science & Medicine* 128 (2015): 316-326.

Introduction

Geography

This profile describes demographic, economic, and health conditions in the city of New Orleans, portrayed in black on the map to the right. New Orleans is situated within the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, Louisiana metropolitan statistical area, which includes Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany Parishes.

Unless otherwise noted, all data follow the city geography, which is simply referred to as “New Orleans.” Some exceptions, due to lack of data availability, are noted beneath the relevant figures. Information on data sources and methodology can be found in the “Data and methods” section beginning on page 96.



Introduction

Equity indicators framework

The indicators in this profile are presented in five sections. The first section describes the city's demographics. The next three sections present indicators of the city's economic vitality, readiness, and connectedness. The final section estimates the economic benefits of racial equity. Below are the questions answered within each of the five sections.

Demographics:

Who lives in the city, and how is this changing?

- Is the population growing?
- Which groups are driving growth?
- How diverse is the population?
- How does the racial composition vary by age?

Economic vitality:

How is the city doing on measures of economic growth and well-being?

- Is the city producing good jobs?
- Can all residents access good jobs?
- Is growth widely shared?
- Do all residents have enough income to sustain their families?
- Are race/ethnicity and nativity barriers to economic success?
- What are the strongest industries and occupations?

Readiness:

How prepared are the city's residents for the 21st century economy?

- Does the workforce have the skills for the jobs of the future?
- Are all youth ready to enter the workforce?
- Are residents healthy?
- Are racial gaps in education and health decreasing?
- Can all residents access healthy food?

Connectedness:

Are the city's residents and neighborhoods connected to one another and to the city's assets and opportunities?

- Do residents have transportation choices?
- Can residents access jobs and opportunities located throughout the city?
- Can all residents access affordable, quality, and convenient housing?
- Do neighborhoods reflect the city's diversity? Is segregation decreasing?

Economic benefits:

How would addressing racial inequities in affect the regional economy?

- How would the region's gross domestic product be affected?
- How much would residents benefit from closing racial gaps in income and employment?

Demographics



Demographics

Highlights

Who lives in the region, and how is this changing?

- New Orleans has experienced dramatic population changes in recent years, losing 116,000 residents (or nearly one quarter of the population) from 2000 to 2014.
- Over the past several decades, the share of people of color in New Orleans has increased from 60 percent in 1980 to 67 percent in 2014.
- From 2000 to 2014, the Latino population increased by 34 percent, despite a large decline in the overall people-of-color population. Latinos, Asians or Pacific Islanders, and mixed/other people of color will continue to drive growth and change in New Orleans over the next several decades.
- The racial generation gap in New Orleans decreased from 36 percentage points in 1980 to 18 percentage points in 2014.

Share of residents who are people of color:

69%

Overall population decline between 2000 and 2014:

116,000

Latino population growth since 2000:

34%

Demographics

A majority people-of-color city

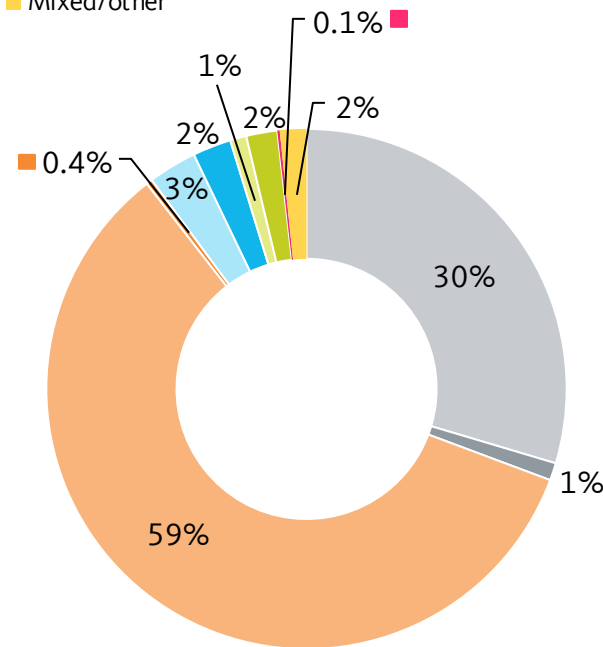
In New Orleans, 69 percent of residents are people of color, and the city has long had a Black majority. In the years since Hurricane Katrina, however, New Orleans has lost Black population and become more diverse, with growing shares of Latino, Asian, and White residents. Blacks remain the single largest group (59 percent), followed by non-Hispanic Whites (31 percent) and Latinos (5 percent).

Over half of the Latino population is U.S.-born, and the largest ancestry groups within the Latino population are Mexican and Honduran. Over half of the Asian or Pacific Islander population are immigrants, and nearly half of the Asian or Pacific Islander population as a whole is of Vietnamese ancestry.

Two-thirds of New Orleans residents are people of color

Race, Ethnicity, and Nativity, 2014

- White, U.S.-born
- White, Immigrant
- Black, U.S.-born
- Black, Immigrant
- Latino, U.S.-born
- Latino, Immigrant
- API, U.S.-born
- API, Immigrant
- Native American
- Mixed/other



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS).
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average. The IPUMS American Community Survey (ACS) microdata was adjusted to match the ACS summary file percentages by race/ethnicity.

Among Asians or Pacific Islanders, 47 percent are of Vietnamese ancestry

Latino and Asian or Pacific Islander Populations by Ancestry, 2014

Latino	Population
Mexican	3,381
Honduran	3,342
Cuban	1,009
Nicaraguan	1,000
All other Latinos	11,540
Total	20,272

Asian or Pacific Islander (API)	Population
Vietnamese	4,762
Chinese	997
Indian	714
Filipino	647
All other Asians	3,308
Total	10,428

Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series.
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Demographics

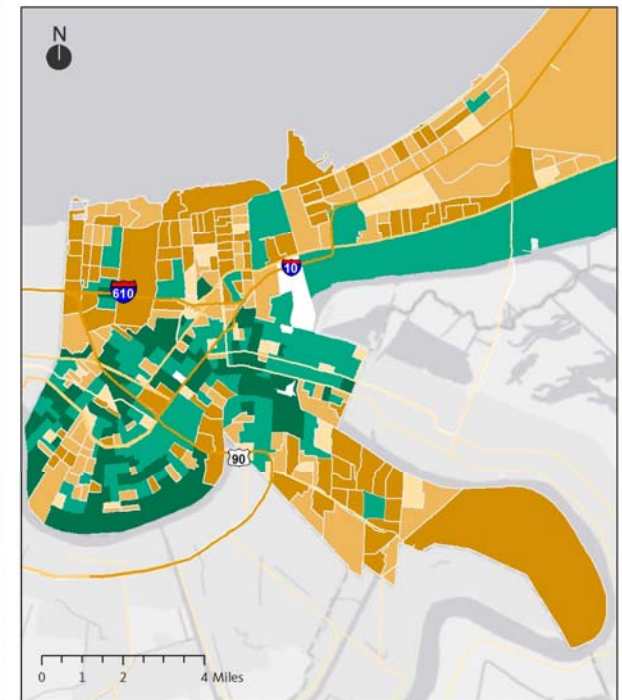
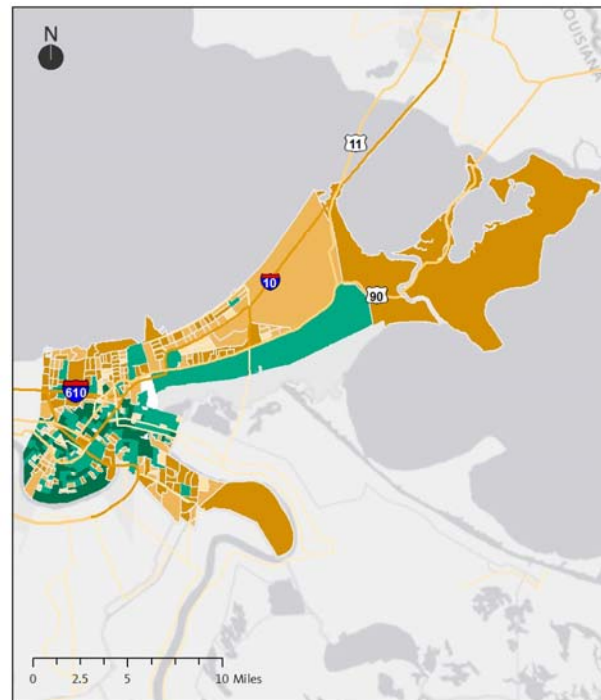
Demographic trends vary by neighborhood

Mapping the growth in people of color by census block group illustrates variation in growth and decline in communities of color throughout the city. The map highlights how the population of color has declined or experienced no growth in many neighborhoods in the central part of the city, and grown notably in the northern and southeastern neighborhoods.

Significant variation in growth and decline in communities of color by neighborhood

Percent Change in People of Color by Census Block Group, 2000 to 2014

- Decline of 8% or more
- Decline of less than 8% or no growth
- Increase of less than 1%
- Increase of 1% to 8%
- Increase of 8% or more



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Geolytics, Inc.; TomTom, ESRI, HERE, DeLorme, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community.
 Note: One should keep in mind when viewing this map and others that display a share or rate that while there is wide variation in the size (land area) of the census block groups in the city, each has a roughly similar number of people. Thus, care should be taken not to assign unwarranted attention to large block groups just because they are large. Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average. Areas in white are missing data.

Demographics

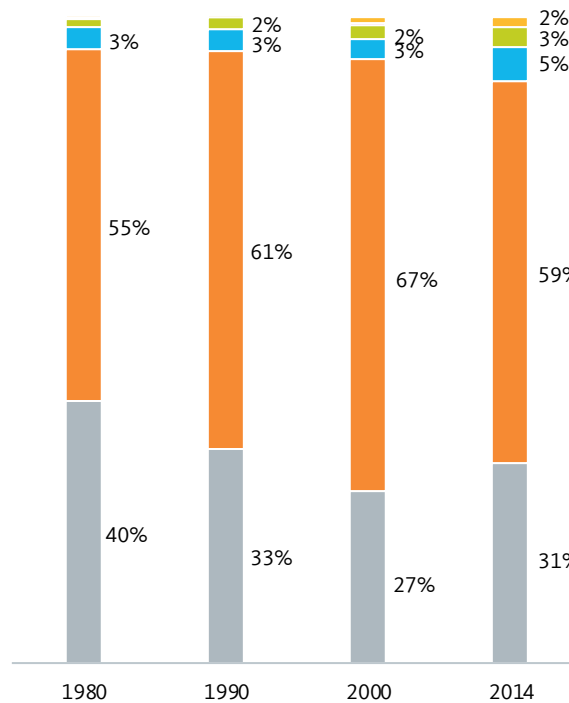
Demographics have shifted over the past several decades

New Orleans has experienced significant population decline in the last several decades: dropping from 557,515 residents in 1980 to 368,471 in 2014. Population losses totaled about 61,000 in the 1980s; 12,000 in the 1990s; and 116,000 between 2000 and 2014.

In the same time period, the share of people of color grew from 60 percent in 1980 to 73 percent in 2000, before falling to 69 percent in 2010 in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, and to 69 percent in 2014.

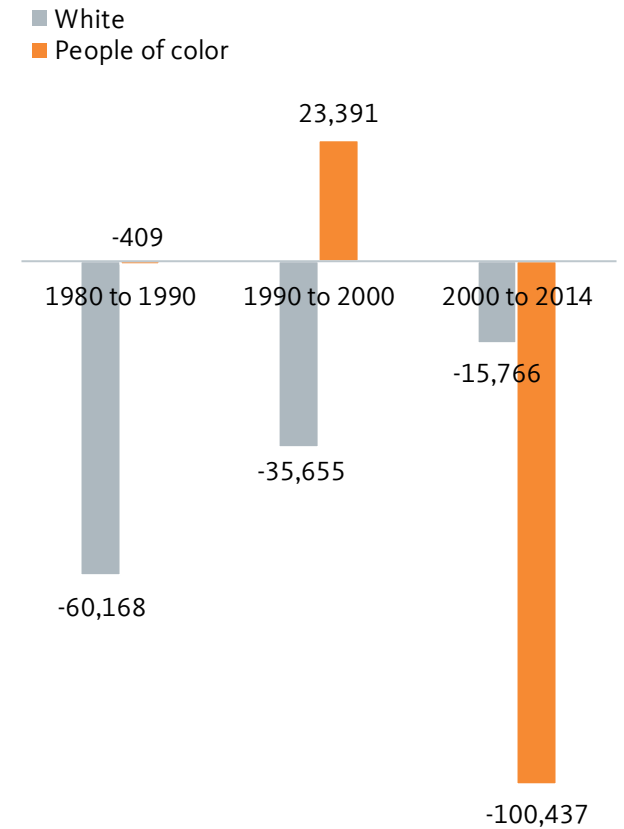
The population is continuing to diversify
Racial/Ethnic Composition, 1980 to 2014

- Mixed/other
- Native American
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Latino
- Black
- White



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Note: Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average. Much of the increase in the Mixed/other population between 1990 and 2000 is due to a change in the survey question on race.

The population of people of color grew during the 1990s but has declined significantly since 2000
Composition of Net Population Growth by Decade, 1980 to 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Note: Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average.

Demographics

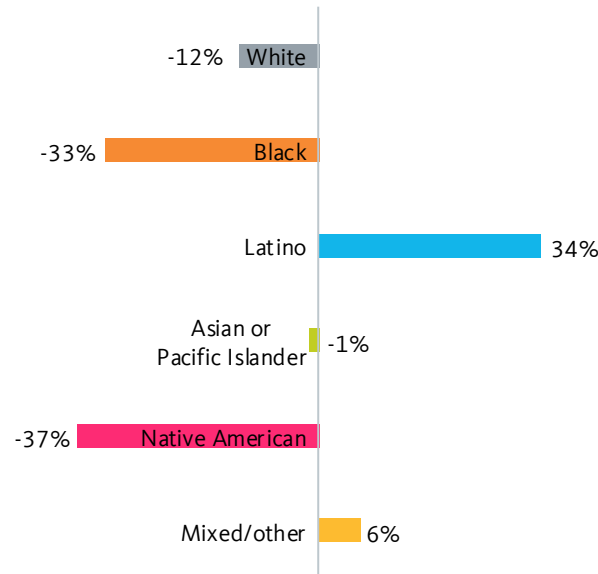
Latino population steadily increasing

From 2000 to 2014, New Orleans’s Latino population grew rapidly – 34 percent – adding more than 5,000 residents. The number of other/mixed race residents increased slightly, while populations of all other racial groups (Black, White, Asian or Pacific Islander, and Native American) decreased. The Black population of New Orleans decreased by about 114,000 during that period.

Immigration played a significant role in the growth of New Orleans’s Latino population: 38 percent of growth from 2000 to 2014 was from foreign-born residents.

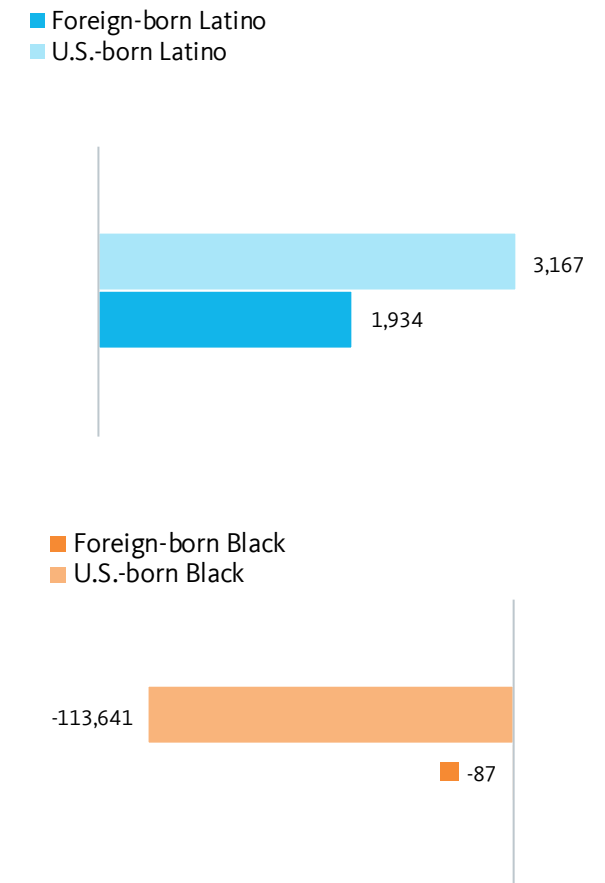
As the bottom chart on the right shows, African Americans account for the vast majority of Black population decline.

Only the Latino and mixed/other race populations grew between 2000 and 2014.
Growth Rates of Major Racial/Ethnic Groups, 2000 to 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.
 Note: Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average.

Nearly two-fifths of Latino population growth was due to immigrants
Net Change in Latino and Black Population by Nativity, 2000 to 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series.
 Note: Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average.

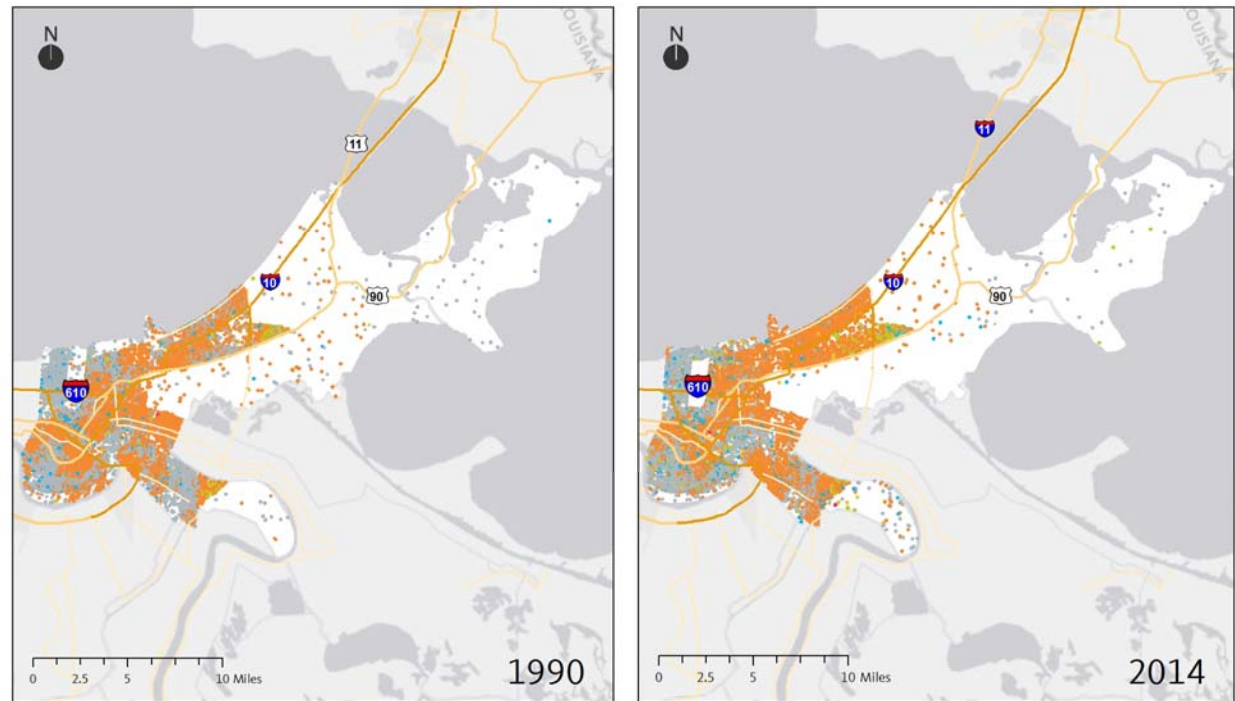
Demographics

Communities are becoming more diverse

The city of New Orleans has experienced significant population decline since 1990, including a net loss of approximately 50,000 in the White population and a net loss of more than 75,000 people of color – largely African Americans.

Many people of color have left New Orleans
Racial/Ethnic Composition by Census Block Group, 1990 and 2014

- Race/ethnicity
 1 Dot = 25 people
- White
 - Black
 - Latino
 - Asian or Pacific Islander
 - Native American
 - Mixed/other



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, GeoLytics, Inc.; TomTom, ESRI, HERE, DeLorme, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community.
 Note: Data for 2014 represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

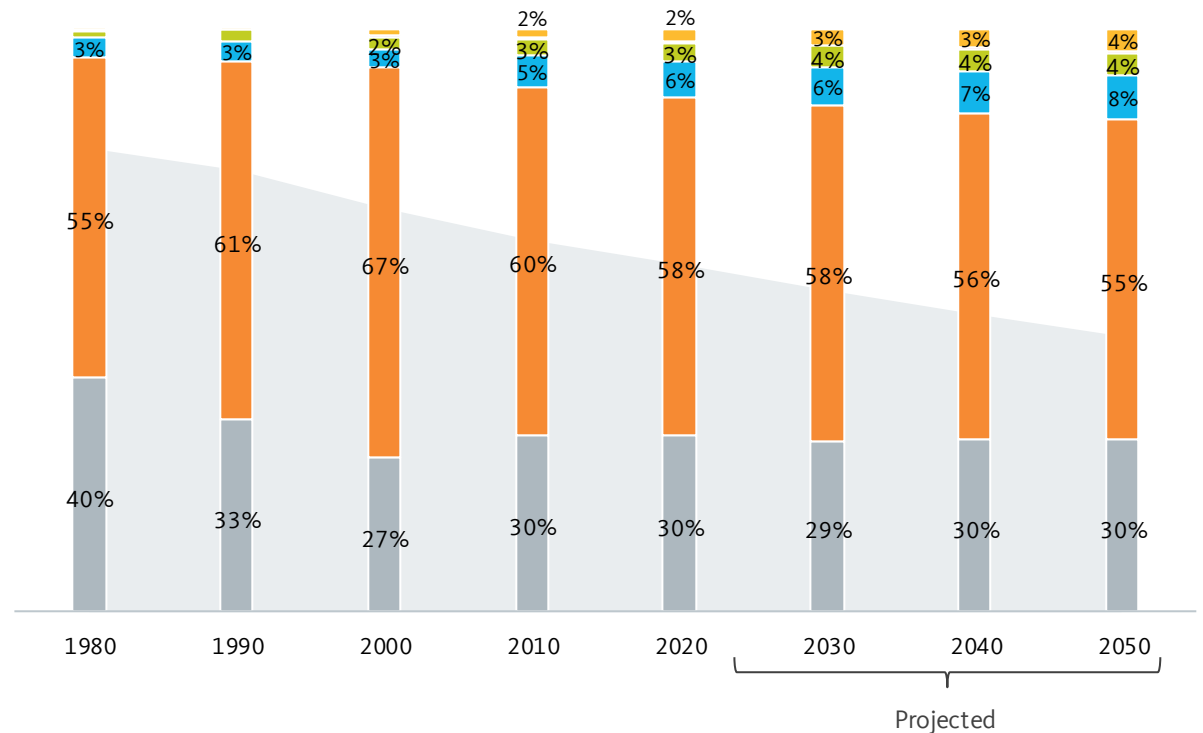
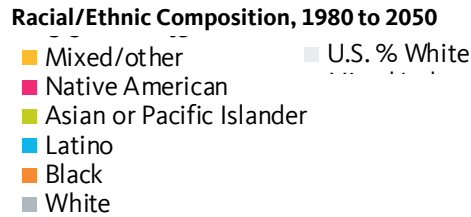
Demographics

The Latino population will continue to grow

While the United States is projected to become a majority people-of-color nation by 2044, New Orleans has long since passed this milestone.

Although the city is ahead of the national curve in demographic change, unlike the rest of the country – where the White population is declining – the White population in New Orleans is expected to remain stable over the next several decades. Through 2050, the share of people of color will remain unchanged. The share of Asians or Pacific Islanders, Latinos, and other/mixed races will increase, and the share of African Americans will continue to decrease.

The share of people of color is projected to remain steady through 2050



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

Note: Much of the increase in the Mixed/other population between 1990 and 2000 is due to a change in the survey question on race.

Demographics

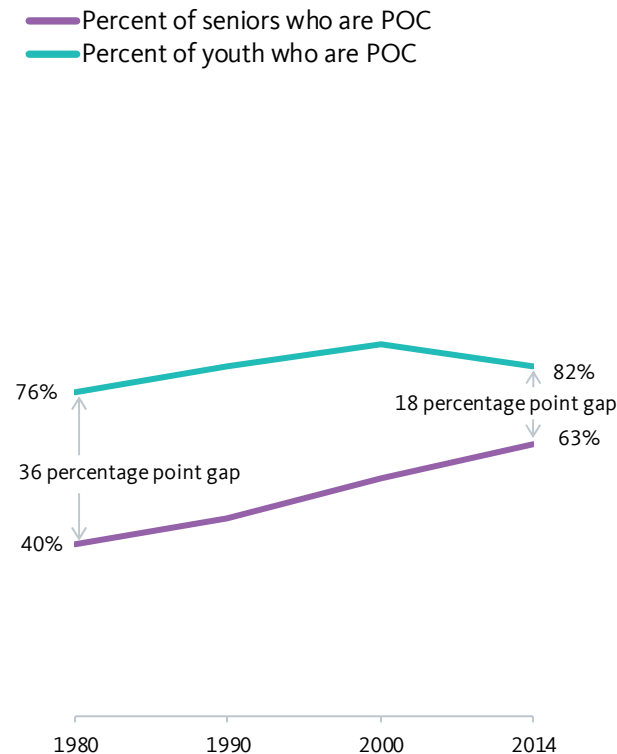
A shrinking racial generation gap

Today, 82 percent of New Orleans’s youth (under age 18) are people of color, compared with approximately 63 percent of the city’s seniors (over age 64). This 18 percentage-point difference between the share of people of color among young and old can be measured as the racial generation gap. It is lower than the national average (26 percentage points) and has declined substantially since 1980, when the gap was 36 percentage points.

Examining median age by race/ethnicity reveals how the city’s White population is slightly older than any other racial group. The median age of the Black population is 34 and the median age of Latinos is 32, which is about six years younger than the median age of 38 for the White population. The city’s other/mixed race population has the lowest median age, 27.

The racial generation gap between youth and seniors is getting smaller

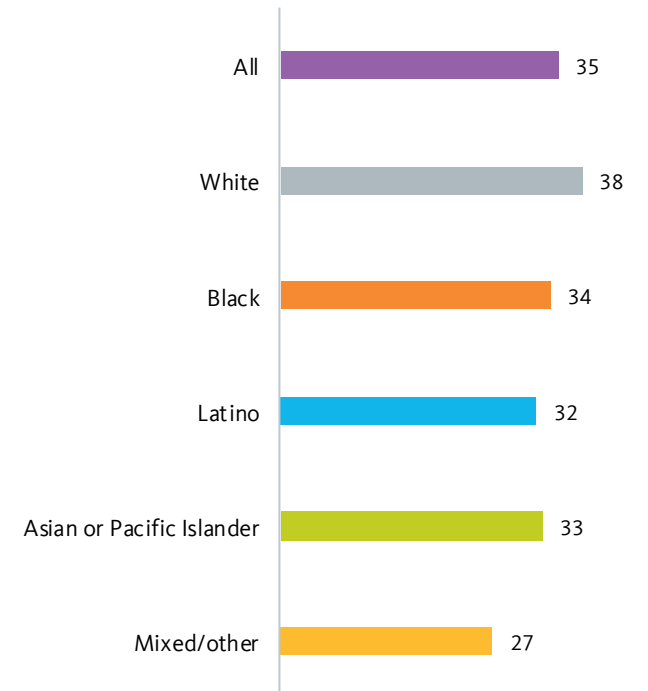
Percent People of Color (POC) by Age Group, 1980 to 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Note: Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average. Gap values may not equal difference in percentages shown due to rounding.

The city’s communities of color are more youthful than its White population

Median Age by Race/Ethnicity, 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Demographics

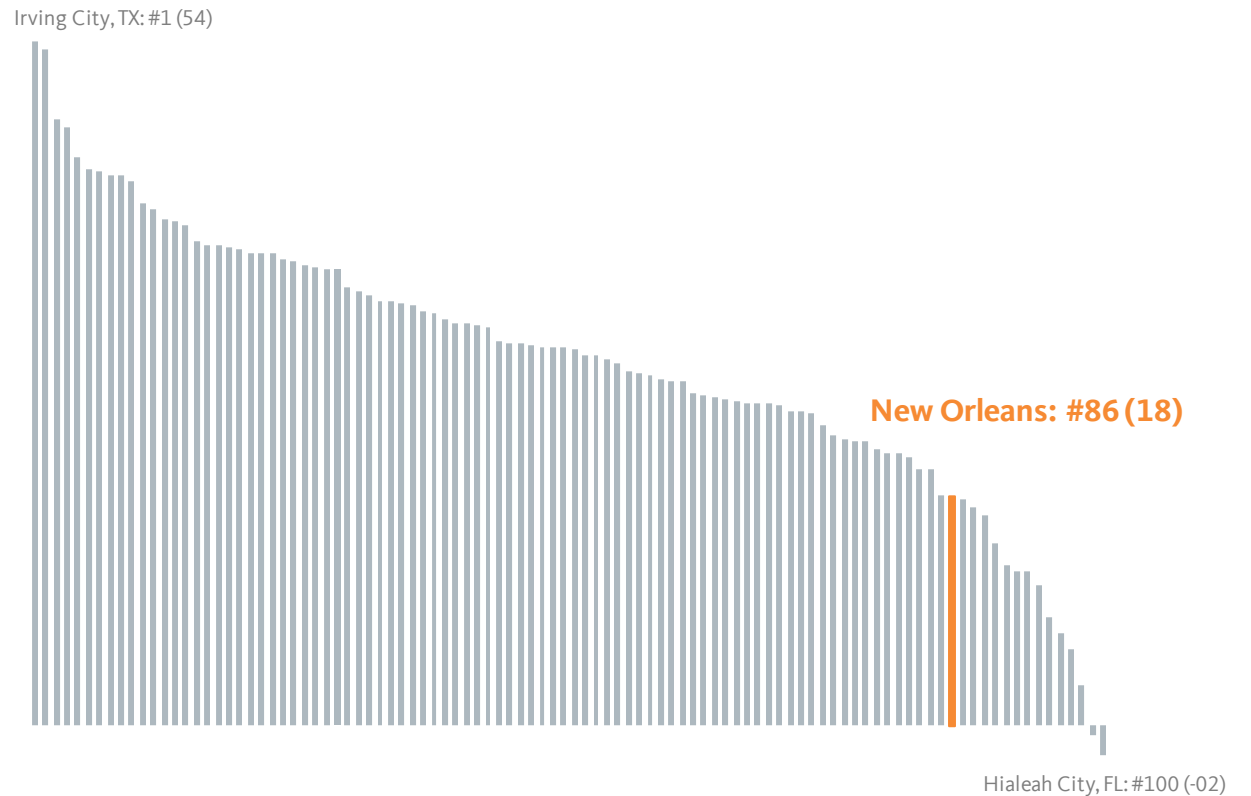
A shrinking racial generation gap

(continued)

New Orleans's 18 percentage-point racial generation gap is among the smallest in the nation. It is one of the few major and diverse cities where the gap has shrunk over the past few decades. The city ranks 86th among the 100 largest U.S. cities on this measure.

New Orleans has a relatively small and shrinking racial generation gap

The Racial Generation Gap in 2014: 100 Largest Cities, Ranked



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.
Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Economic vitality



Economic vitality

Highlights

How is the city doing on measures of economic growth and well-being?

- The New Orleans economy has struggled over the past few decades. Low-wage jobs have declined by 9 percent, and middle-wage jobs have declined by 24 percent.
- Despite increasing income inequality, wages in New Orleans have grown faster than the national average for workers in the middle of the income distribution since 1979.
- People of color are more likely to be in poverty or working poor than Whites. In New Orleans, 60 percent of Black residents live below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, compared with 26 percent of Whites.
- Although education is a leveler, racial and gender gaps persist in the labor market. At every level of educational attainment, people of color tend to have worse economic outcomes than Whites, and women earn less than their male counterparts.

Growth in income for workers at the 50th percentile since 1979:

5%

Wage gap between Whites and people of color:

\$9/hr

Income inequality rank (among 100 largest cities):

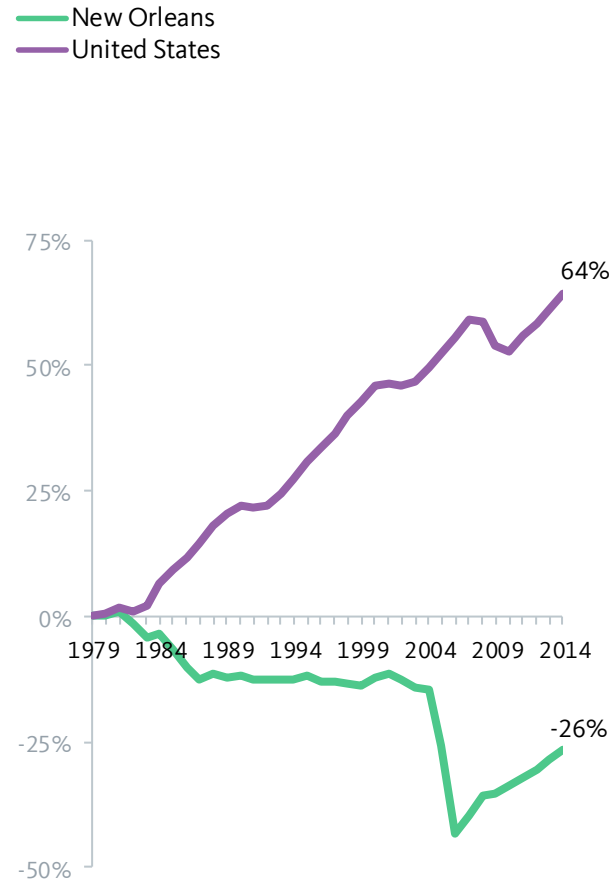
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Economic vitality

Long-term declines in jobs and economic growth

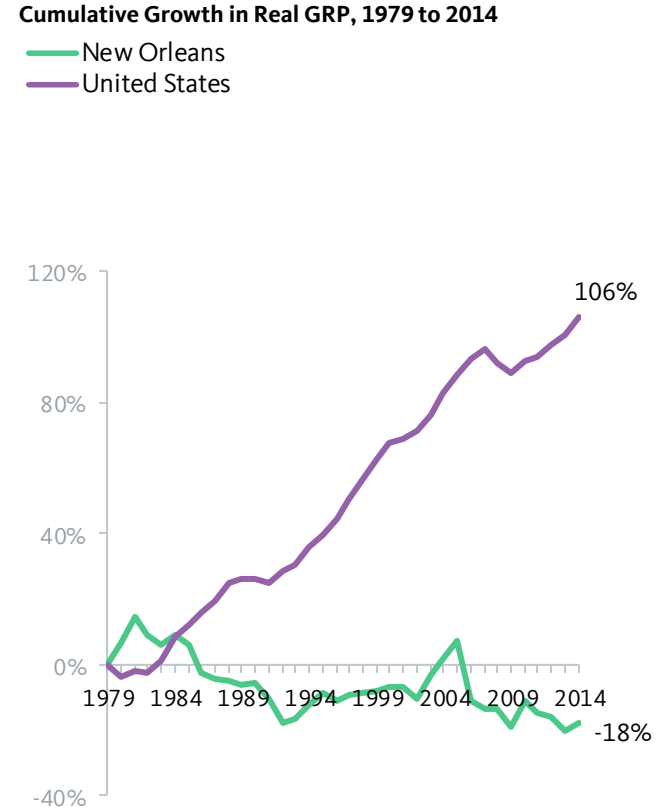
Economic growth as measured by increases in jobs and gross regional product (GRP) – the value of all goods and services produced within the city – has been consistently weak or nonexistent in New Orleans over the past several decades (GRP is not available at the city level). After the downturn in the 1990s, the city began to experience rapid growth through the early 2000s. However, Hurricane Katrina sunk the city back into a recession from which it is only beginning to recover.

Job growth has been negative since 1980
Cumulative Job Growth, 1979 to 2014



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Gross regional product (GRP) growth has declined in the decade since Hurricane Katrina
Cumulative Growth in Real GRP, 1979 to 2014



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Economic vitality

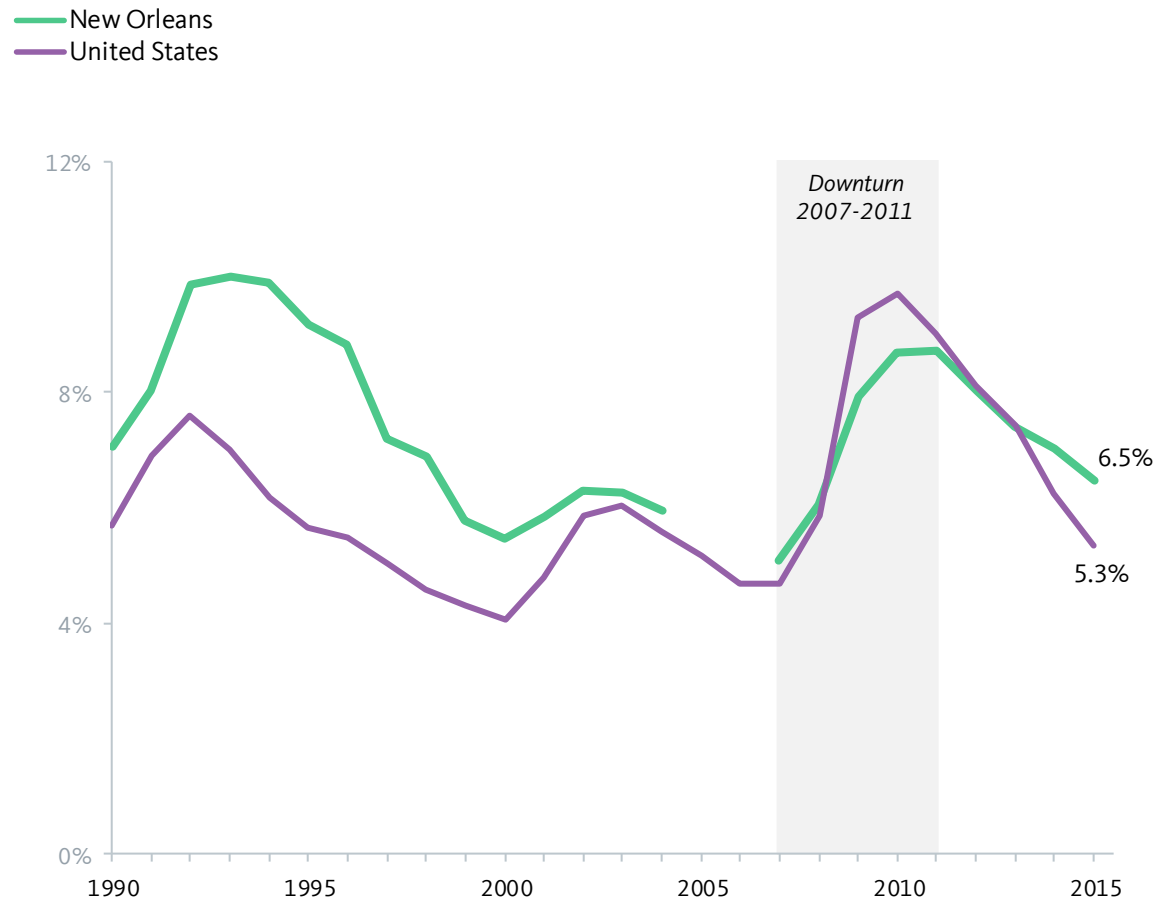
A slow recovery post-recession

During the economic downturn triggered by the Great Recession, New Orleans's economy was affected in ways similar to the nation as a whole, but did not reach as high of a peak in unemployment. While unemployment rose for the nation overall between 2007 and 2010, before declining in 2011, it did not begin declining in New Orleans until the following year, when it was just below the national average.

Since then, however, unemployment has not fallen as fast in New Orleans as for the nation overall. In 2015, 6.5 percent of the city's residents were unemployed, compared to the national average of 5.3 percent.

Unemployment began to fall consistently in 2011, but at a slower pace than the national average

Unemployment Rate, 1990 to 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Universe includes the civilian non-institutional population ages 16 and older.
Note: No data is available for New Orleans in 2005 or 2006 due to Hurricane Katrina.

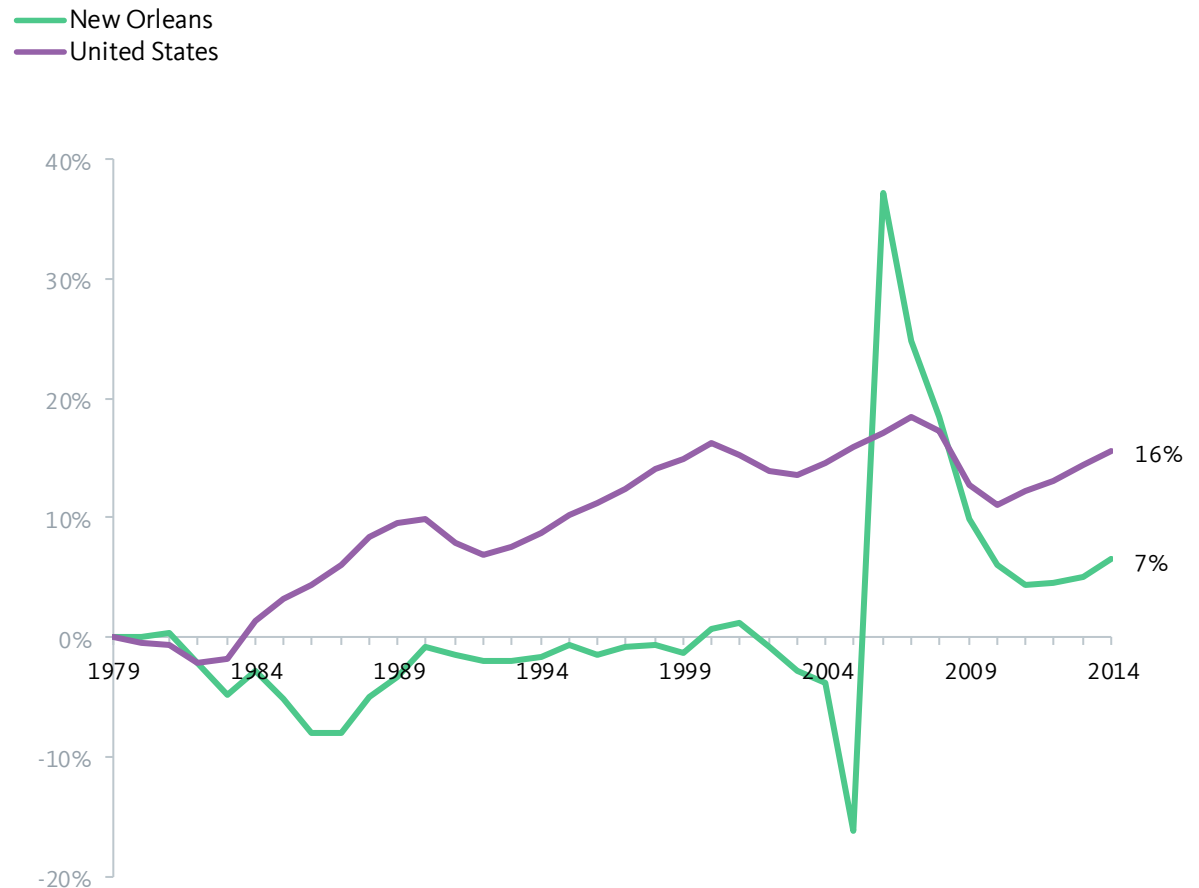
Economic vitality

Job growth is not keeping up with population growth

While overall job growth is essential, the real question is whether jobs are growing at a fast enough pace to keep up with population growth. Despite a spike in the number of jobs relative to the size of the population following Hurricane Katrina – when there was rapid population decline alongside a spike in jobs to rebuild – job growth per person in New Orleans has been far slower than the national average for the past few decades. The number of jobs per person has only increased by 7 percent since 1979, while it has increased by 16 percent for the nation overall.

Job growth relative to population growth has not kept pace with the national average

Cumulative Growth in Jobs-to-Population Ratio, 1979 to 2014



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Economic vitality

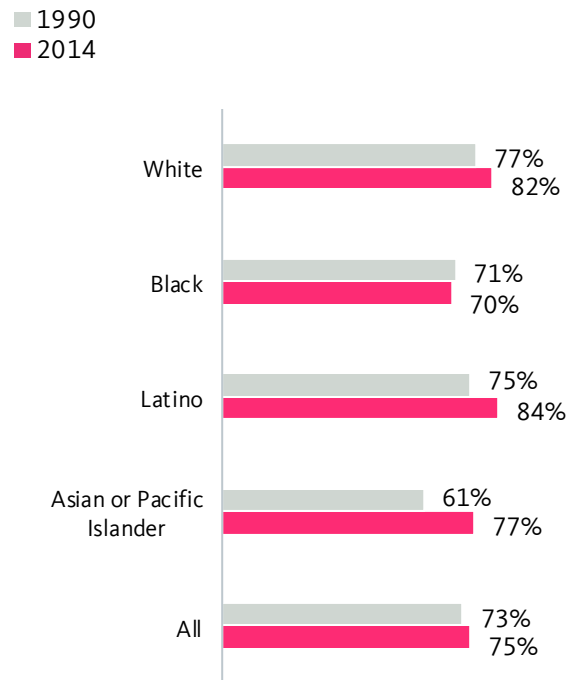
Unemployment highest for Blacks and Latinos

Another key question is, *Who is getting the city's jobs?* Examining unemployment by race since 1990, we find that tremendous racial employment gaps persist in the city of New Orleans.

Labor force participation is significantly lower among African Americans than other groups. Consistently high unemployment rates for Black workers suggest that this is due to long-term unemployment.

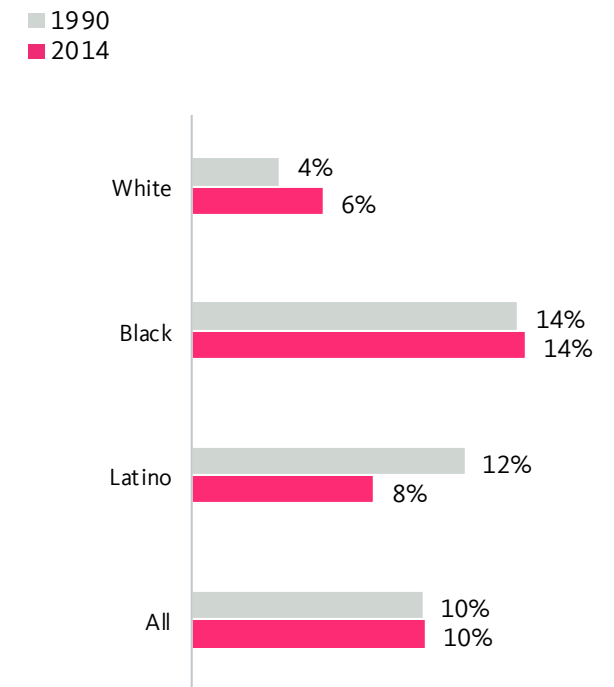
Despite comparable labor force participation rates (either working or actively seeking employment) to Whites, Latino workers have higher unemployment rates.

African Americans have the lowest rates of labor force participation
Labor Force Participation Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 1990 and 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes the civilian non-institutional population ages 25 through 64. Note: Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average.

African Americans have the highest unemployment rates
Unemployment Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 1990 and 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes the civilian non-institutional labor force ages 25 through 64. Note: Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average. Data for Asians or Pacific Islanders are excluded due to small sample size.

Economic vitality

Unemployment highest for Blacks and Latinos

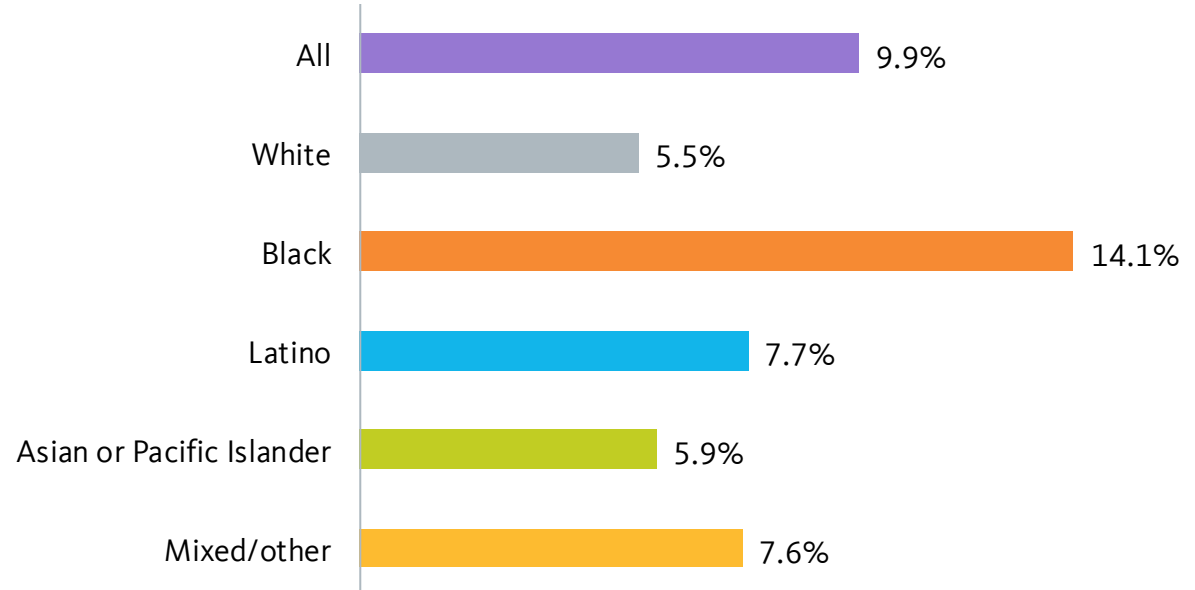
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People of color are much more likely to be unemployed than White residents. At 14 percent, the unemployment rate for African Americans in New Orleans is 2.5 times the rate for Whites. The unemployment rates for Latino (7.7 percent) and mixed/other race workers (7.6 percent) are also high in New Orleans.

Because the official unemployment rate is factored from the share of people who are in the labor force (actively looking for work over the past month), it understates the challenge of joblessness for some groups. A 2013 [report](#) from the Lindy Boggs National Center for Community Literacy at Loyola University and The Data Center found that 52 percent of New Orleans's working-age Black male population did not have jobs.

Unemployment is significantly higher for Black workers than for any other racial/ethnic group

Unemployment Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes the civilian non-institutionalized labor force ages 25 through 64.
Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Economic vitality

Unemployment concentrated in central and northeast parts of the city

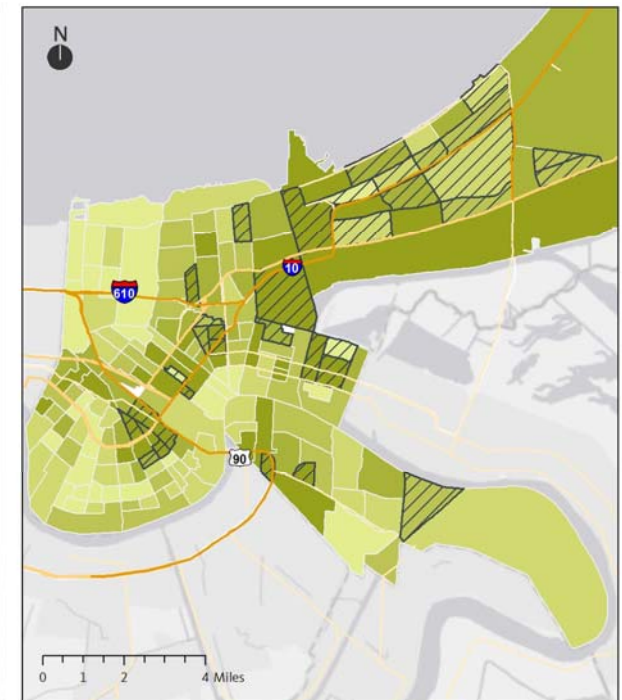
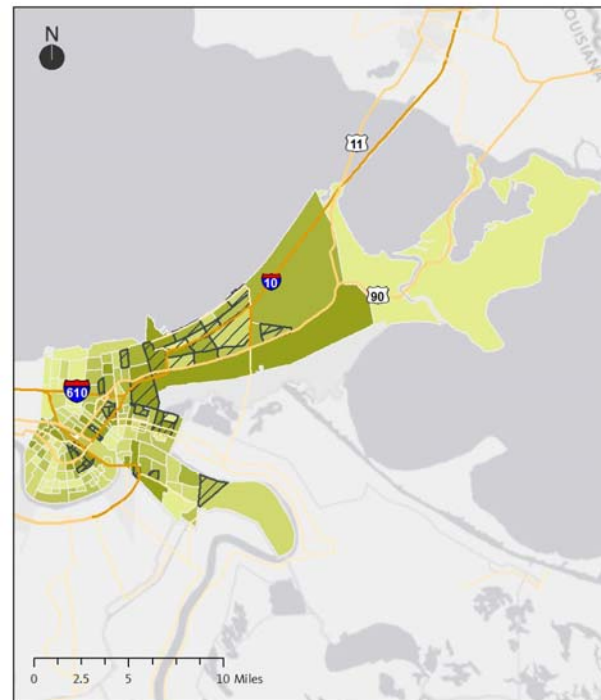
Knowing where high-unemployment communities are located can help the city’s leaders develop targeted solutions.

Pockets of high unemployment are dispersed throughout the city and particularly in the northeast. The highest unemployment rates tend to coincide with neighborhoods that have the highest shares of people of color (97 percent or more).

Clusters of high unemployment exist across the city

Unemployment Rate by Census Tract, 2014

- Less than 5%
- 5% to 10%
- 10% to 14%
- 14% to 18%
- 18% or more
- 97% or more people of color



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; TomTom, ESRI, HERE, DeLorme, MaymyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community. Universe includes the civilian noninstitutional labor force age 16 and older.

Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average. Areas in white are missing data.

Economic vitality

Increasing income inequality

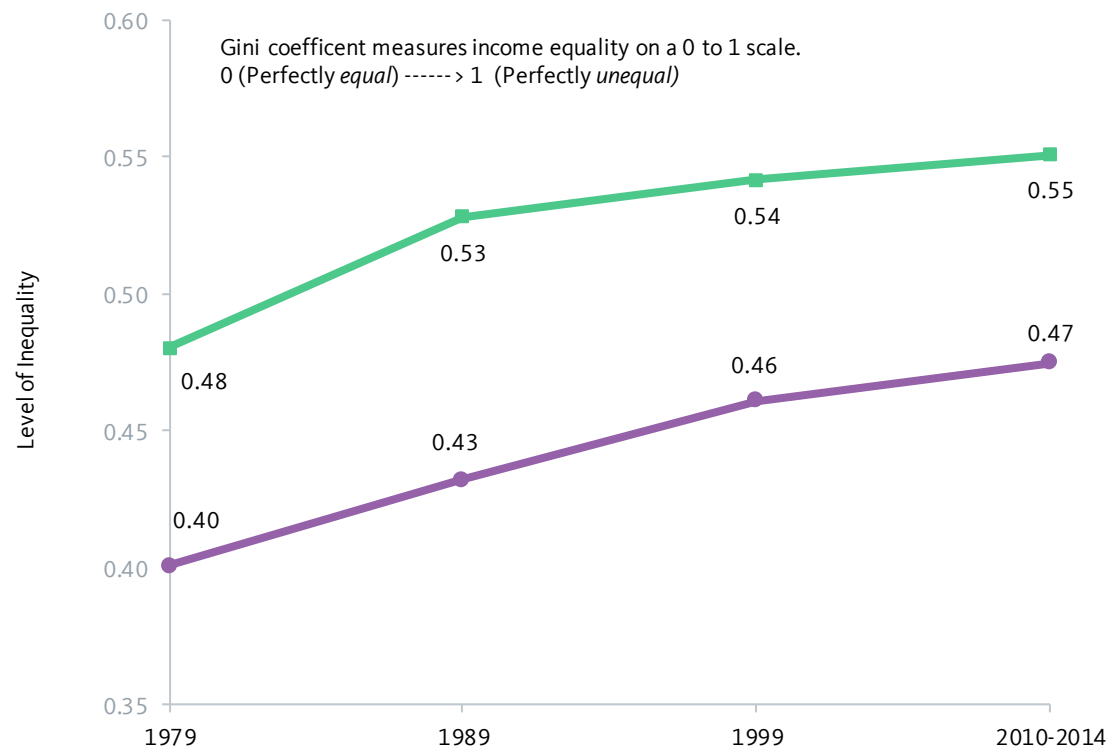
Over the past 30 years, income inequality in New Orleans has grown at a rate on par with the nation as a whole; however, inequality in New Orleans remains higher than the national average. New Orleans is ranked third among the 100 largest cities in terms of income inequality, and the region ranks sixth among the 150 largest metros on this measure.

Inequality here is measured by the Gini coefficient, which is the most commonly used measure of inequality. The Gini coefficient measures the extent to which the income distribution deviates from perfect equality, meaning that every household has the same income. The value of the Gini coefficient ranges from zero (perfect equality) to one (complete inequality, one household has all of the income).

Household income inequality has steadily increased since 1979

Gini Coefficient, 1979 to 2014

— New Orleans
— United States



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes all households (no group quarters).
Note: Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average.

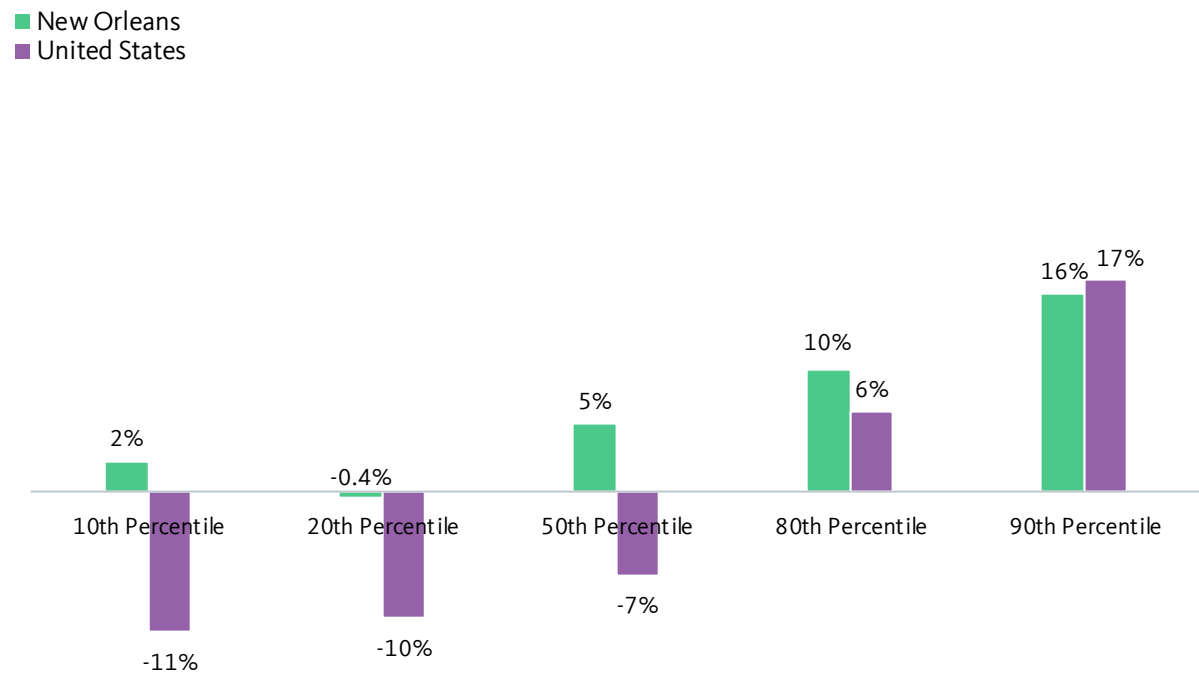
Economic vitality

Wages stagnant at the bottom, growing for top earners

Wage gains at the top of the income distribution play an important role in the city's increasing inequality, alongside real wage stagnation at the bottom. After adjusting for inflation, wages for workers at the 90th percentile grew by 16 percent since 1979, while they only grew by 2 percent for those at the 10th percentile and declined for those at the 20th. Despite the trend toward increasing income inequality, wage growth has generally been stronger in New Orleans than for the nation overall.

Wage growth has outpaced the national average for most workers

Real Earned Income Growth for Full-Time Wage and Salary Workers Ages 25-64, 1979 to 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes civilian non-institutional full-time wage and salary workers ages 25 through 64.
Note: Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average.

Economic vitality

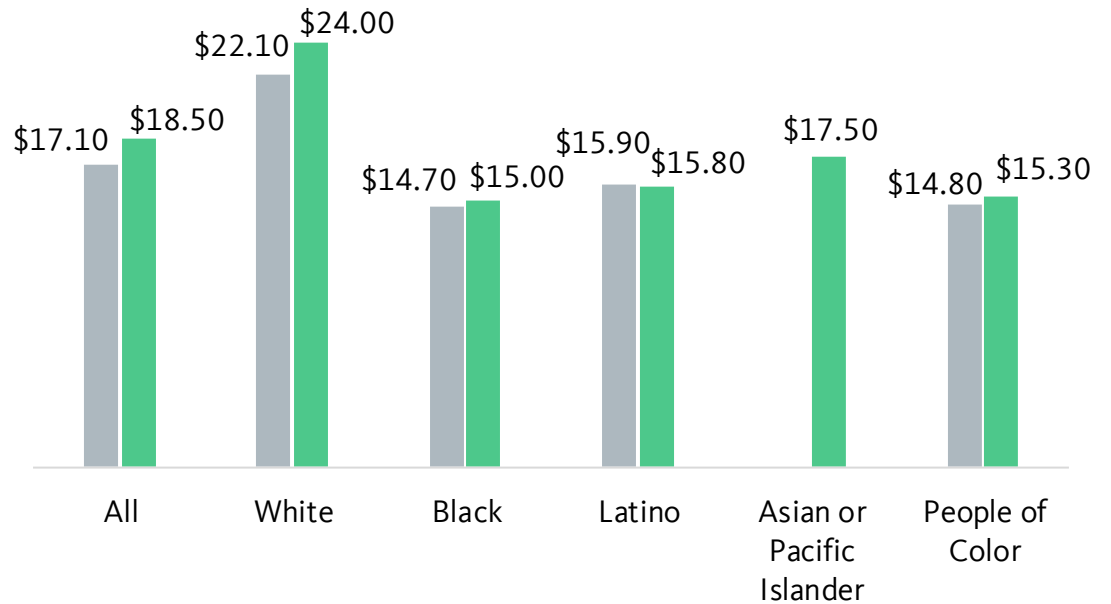
Wages have stagnated for most racial/ethnic groups

White workers have seen their median wages increase by about 9 percent since 2000, while wages for workers of color have remained relatively flat.

Median hourly wages have grown slightly for Whites, remained steady for other groups since 2000

Median Hourly Wage by Race/Ethnicity, 2000 and 2014

■ 2000
■ 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes civilian non-institutional full-time wage and salary workers ages 25 through 64. Note: Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average. Values are in 2014 dollars.

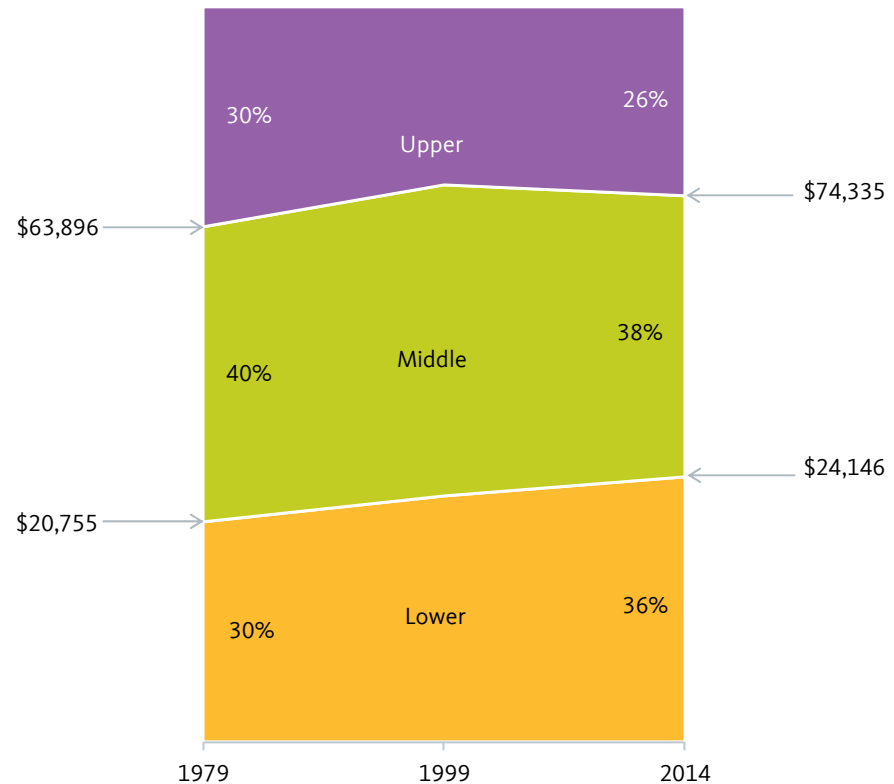
Economic vitality

The middle class is beginning to shrink as the share of lower-income households grows

New Orleans’s middle class has remained relatively stable, although the share of middle-class households has declined from 40 percent to 38 percent since 1979. The share of upper-income households declined from 30 to 26 percent during the same period, while the share of lower-income households grew from 30 to 36 percent.

In this analysis, middle-income households are defined as having incomes in the middle 40 percent of household income distribution. In 1979, those household incomes ranged from \$20,775 to \$63,896. To assess change in the middle-class and the other income ranges, we calculated what the income range would be today if incomes had increased at the same rate as average household income growth. Today’s middle class incomes would be \$24,146 to \$74,335, and 38 percent of households fall in that income range.

The share of middle-class households has declined since 1979
Households by Income Level, 1979 and 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes all households (no group quarters).
Note: Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average. Dollar values are in 2014 dollars.

Economic vitality

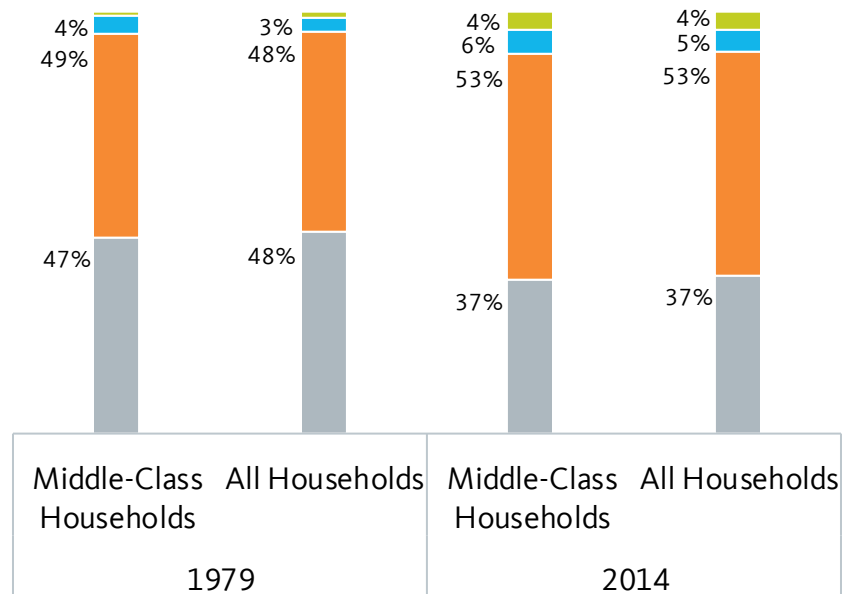
The middle class is growing more diverse

The demographics of the middle class reflect the city’s changing demographics. While the share of households with middle-class incomes has declined by 2 percentage points since 1979, middle-class households have become more racially and ethnically diverse as the population has become more diverse.

The middle class reflects the city’s racial/ethnic composition

Racial Composition of Middle-Class Households and All Households, 1979 and 2014

- Asian, Native American or Other
- Latino
- Black
- White



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes all households (no group quarters).
 Note: Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average.

Economic vitality

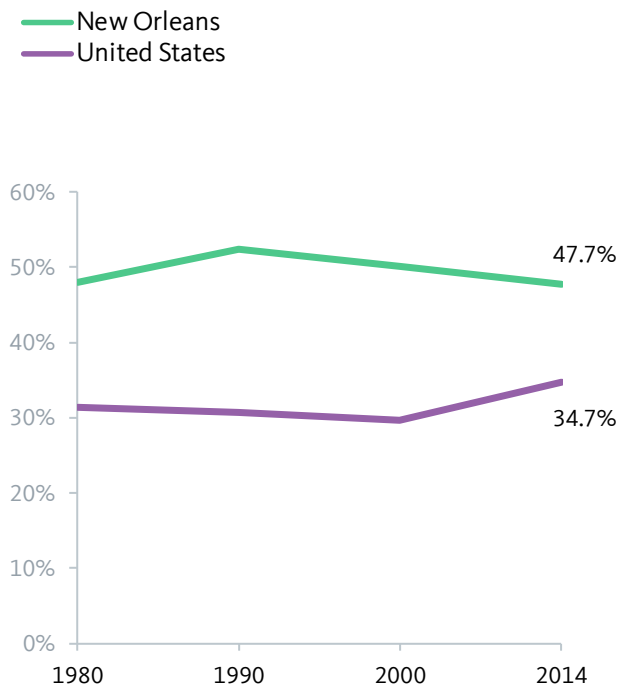
High rates of economic insecurity and working poverty

Because the federal poverty level is so low, it's helpful to look at the share of the population living below 200 percent of the poverty level.

The share of residents living below 200 percent of the federal poverty level peaked in New Orleans in 1990, and has been much higher than the national average since 1980. Today about 48 percent of New Orleans residents live below 200 percent of the federal poverty line – or about \$48,000 a year for a family of four.

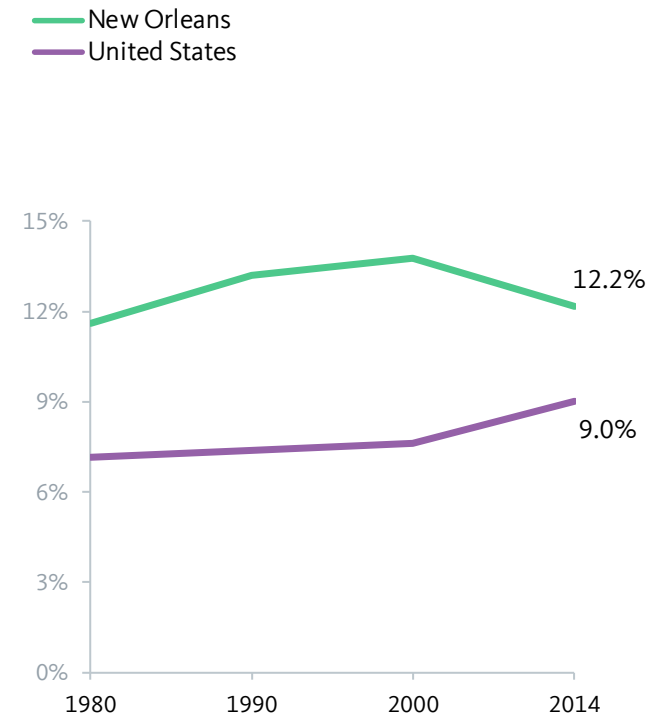
The rate of working poverty, defined as working full time with an income below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, is also consistently above the national average, though it has been decreasing slightly over the past decade. About 12 percent of the city's 25- to 64-year-olds are working poor, compared with 9 percent nationally.

Economic insecurity has decreased since 1990
Share of the Population Below 200 Percent of Poverty, 1980 to 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes all persons not in group quarters.
Note: Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average.

Working poverty is also declining
Working Poverty Rate, 1980 to 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes the civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64 not in group quarters.
Note: Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average.

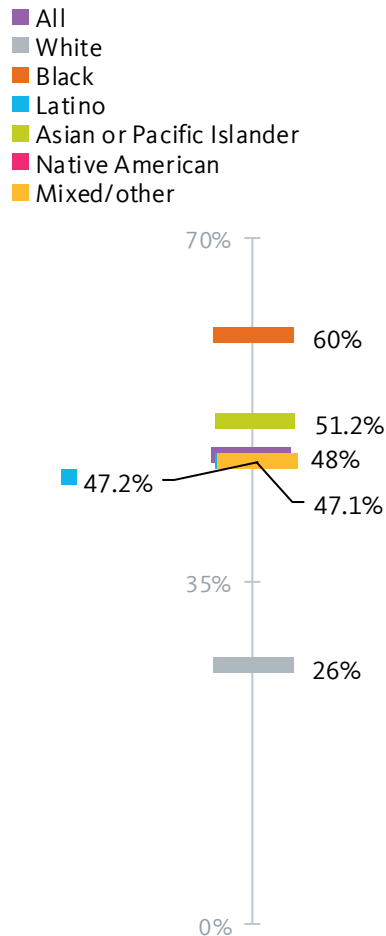
Economic vitality

Working poverty rates are highest among Black and Latino communities

Over half of New Orleans’s African Americans, half of Asians or Pacific Islanders, and nearly half of Latinos and people of other or mixed racial backgrounds live below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, compared with about a quarter of the White population.

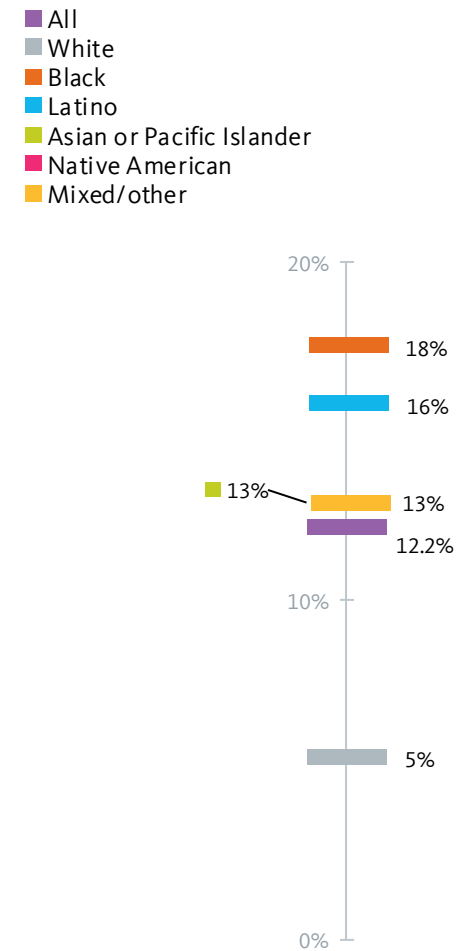
Blacks and Latinos are the most likely to be working poor compared with all other groups, with a rate of 18 percent and 16 percent, respectively, compared with the 12 percent average. Just 5 percent of Whites are working poor.

Economic insecurity is highest among African Americans
Share of the Population Below 200 Percent of Poverty by Race/Ethnicity, 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes all persons not in group quarters.
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Working poverty is highest for Black and Latino workers
Working Poverty Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes the civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64 not in group quarters.
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Economic vitality

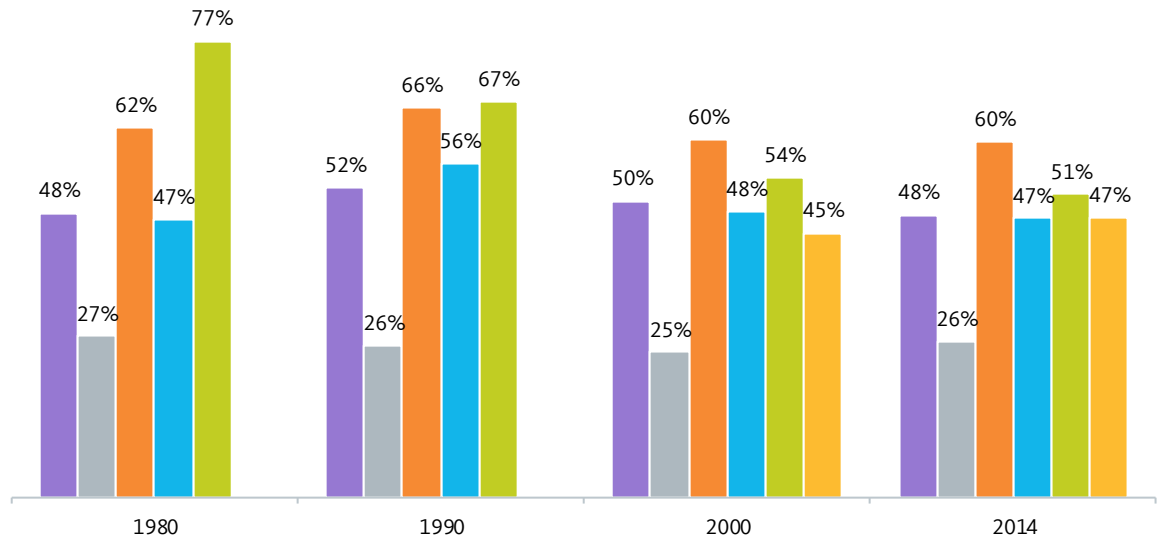
Economic insecurity persists, especially for communities of color

In 2014, 48 percent of New Orleans residents lived below 200 percent of poverty – the same share as in 1980. However, the rate varied significantly among different racial groups, ranging from 26 percent among Whites to 60 percent among African Americans.

Poverty declined significantly in the 1990s, but has since remained steady for most racial/ethnic groups

Percent of the Population Below 200 Percent of Poverty, 1980 to 2014

- All
- White
- Black
- Latino
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Mixed/other



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes all persons not in group quarters.
 Note: Data for 2014 represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Economic vitality

African Americans have the highest unemployment rates in New Orleans regardless of education

In general, unemployment decreases and wages increase with higher educational attainment.

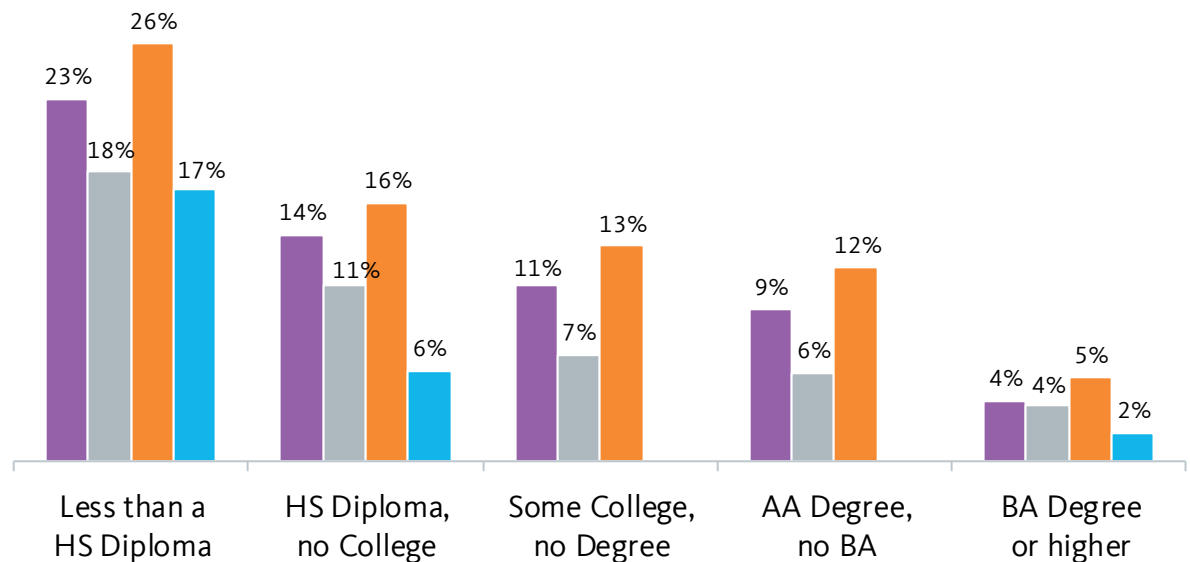
Among college graduates with a bachelor’s degree or higher, unemployment levels are similar by race, but wages still remain lower for people of color than for Whites.

Unemployment rates for African Americans are significantly higher than other groups at every level of education.

Black workers have higher unemployment rates than Whites at every education level

Unemployment Rate by Educational Attainment and Race/Ethnicity, 2014

- All
- White
- Black
- Latino



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes the civilian non-institutional labor force ages 25 through 64. Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average. Data for some racial/ethnic groups are excluded due to small sample size.

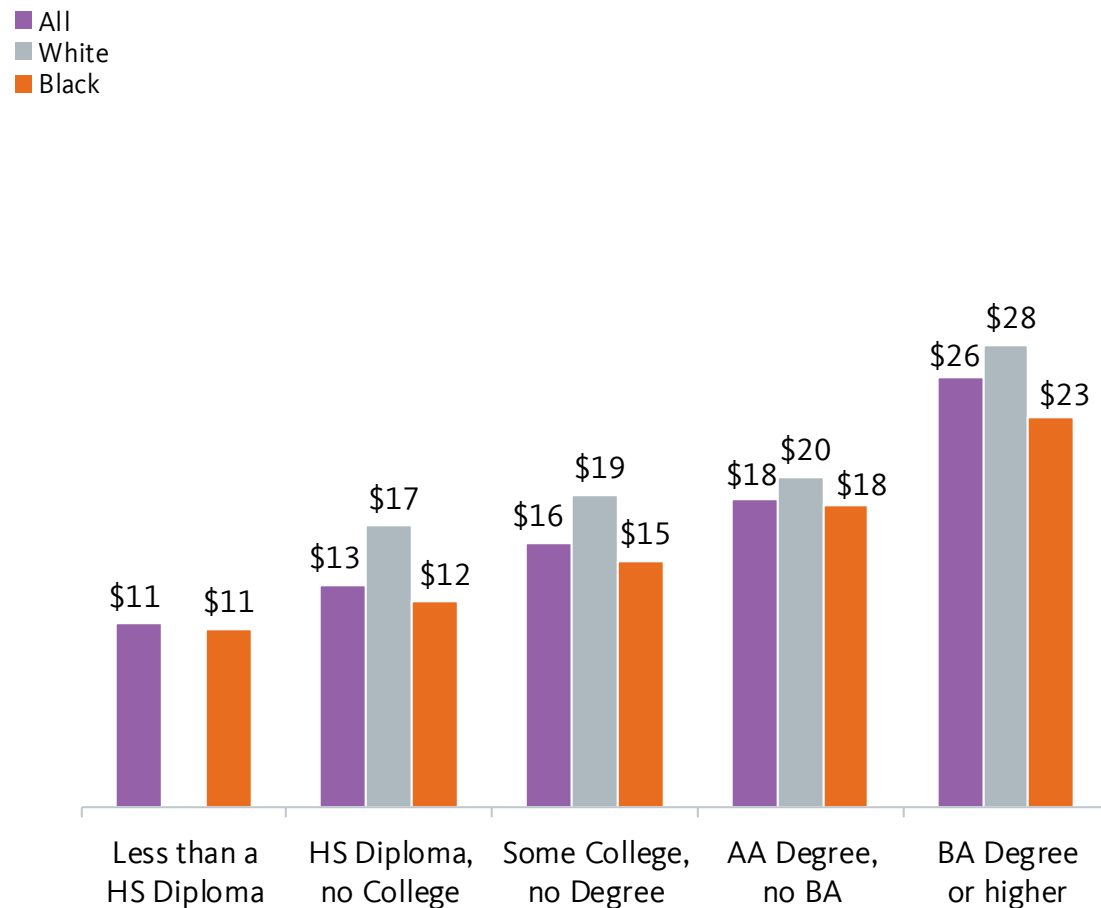
Economic vitality

Black workers have lower wages than Whites at nearly all education levels

Wages also tend to increase with higher educational attainment, but Black workers in New Orleans have lower median hourly wages than their White counterparts at every educational level.

The racial wage gap persists even at the highest education levels. In New Orleans, the median hourly wage of Black workers with a college degree is \$23/hour compared with \$28/hour for Whites with the same education.

Black workers earn lower wages than Whites with similar education levels
Median Hourly Wage by Educational Attainment and Race/Ethnicity, 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes civilian non-institutional full-time wage and salary workers ages 25 through 64. Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average. Values are in 2014 dollars.

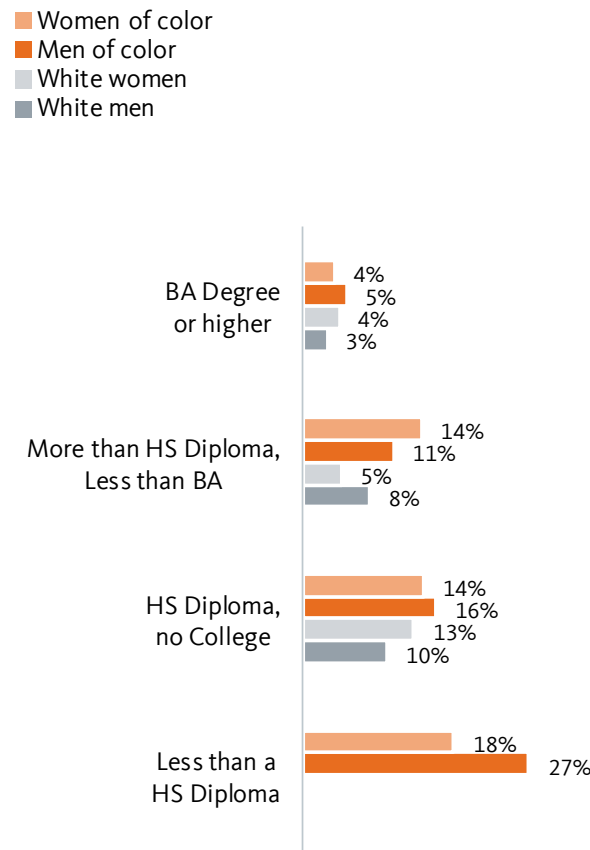
Economic vitality

Women of color earn lower wages at every education level

Men and women of color tend to have higher unemployment rates than White men and women at nearly all levels of education.

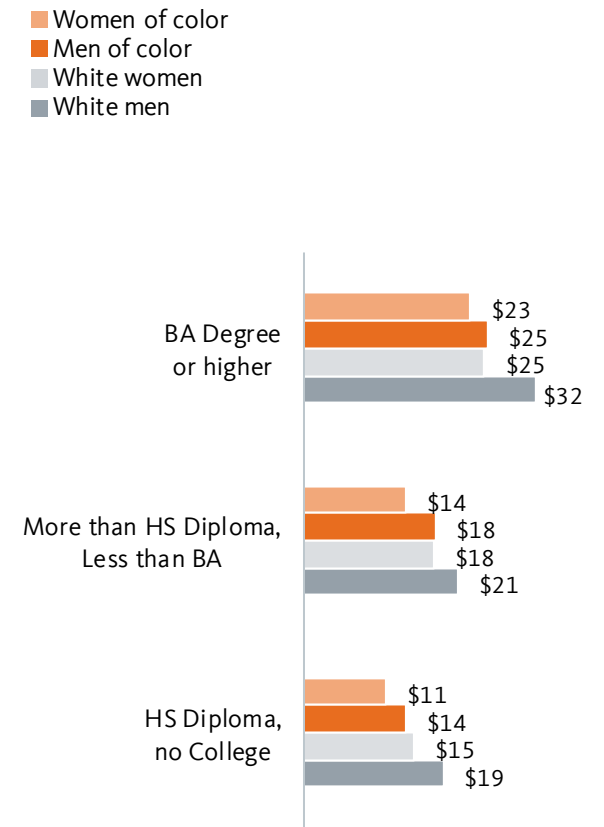
Women of color also have the lowest median hourly wages. Median wages for college-educated women of color with a bachelor's degree or higher are \$9 an hour less than the wages of their White male counterparts.

People of color have higher unemployment rates
Unemployment Rate by Educational Attainment, Race/Ethnicity, and Gender, 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes the civilian non-institutional labor force ages 25 through 64.
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

College-educated women of color earn \$9 less per hour than their White male counterparts
Median Hourly Wage by Educational Attainment, Race/Ethnicity, and Gender, 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes civilian non-institutional full-time wage and salary workers ages 25 through 64.
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average. Values are in 2014 dollars.

Economic vitality

Earnings have increased across wage categories

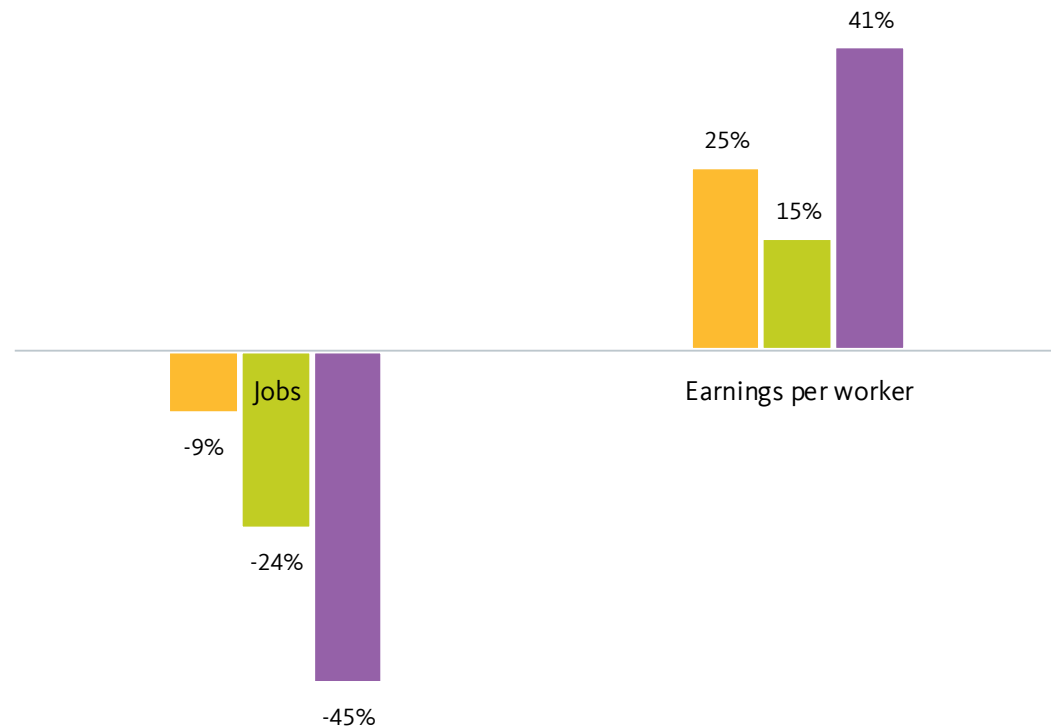
While workers in all wage categories have seen increased earnings since 1990, there has been no positive job growth in New Orleans during that time: about 9 percent of low-wage jobs have been lost, 24 percent of middle-wage jobs, and 45 percent of high-wage jobs.

High-wage workers have seen the greatest increase in earnings: 41 percent. Low-wage and middle-wage workers have seen earnings increases of 25 percent and 15 percent, respectively.

Jobs have declined at all wage levels, but earnings in low-wage jobs have increased by 25 percent

Growth in Jobs and Earnings by Industry Wage Level, 1990 to 2015

- Low-wage
- Middle-wage
- High-wage



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.
 Note: Universe includes all private sector jobs covered by the federal Unemployment Insurance (UI) program.

Economic vitality

Uneven wage growth across industry sectors

Wage growth in the city has been uneven across industry sectors, though most industries have seen significant earnings increases since 1990.

Among low-wage industries, earnings growth has ranged from 12 percent (in retail trade) to 107 percent (in arts, entertainment, and recreation). Among middle-wage jobs, those in finance and insurance have seen earnings increases of about 58 percent, and the highest increases for high-wage jobs have been in utilities (68 percent) and mining (84 percent).

Slow to moderate wage growth for workers in many of the city's largest industries

Industries by Wage Level Category in 1990 and 2015

Wage Category	Industry	Average Annual Earnings	Average Annual Earnings	Percent Change in Earnings	Share of Jobs
		1990	2015	1990-2015	2015
High	Mining	\$76,587	\$140,885	84%	19%
	Utilities	\$60,210	\$101,435	68%	
	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	\$59,250	\$75,547	28%	
	Information	\$52,860	\$45,770	-13%	
	Management of Companies and Enterprises	\$52,312	\$81,044	55%	
Middle	Manufacturing	\$51,448	\$77,436	51%	34%
	Wholesale Trade	\$51,278	\$70,044	37%	
	Finance and Insurance	\$49,634	\$78,462	58%	
	Transportation and Warehousing	\$48,970	\$59,845	22%	
	Construction	\$42,803	\$55,343	29%	
	Health Care and Social Assistance	\$42,364	\$47,950	13%	
	Education Services	\$38,038	\$46,135	21%	
Low	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	\$31,980	\$43,672	37%	47%
	Other Services (except Public Administration)	\$25,197	\$33,967	35%	
	Retail Trade	\$24,989	\$27,962	12%	
	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	\$24,132	\$50,039	107%	
	Administrative and Support and Waste Management	\$23,459	\$37,632	60%	
	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	\$20,885	\$30,783	47%	
Accommodation and Food Services	\$17,792	\$21,527	21%		

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

Note: Universe includes all private sector jobs covered by the federal Unemployment Insurance (UI) program. Dollar values are in 2015 dollars.

Economic vitality

Which industries are projected to grow?

The broader New Orleans region is projected to add 37,181 jobs from 2014 to 2024.

More than 12,000 of these jobs will be in the health-care and social assistance industries. About 5,000 jobs will be in professional, scientific, and technical services.

Jobs in accommodation and food services, retail trade, and construction industries are also expected to grow.

The overall number of jobs in the New Orleans region is expected to grow by more than six percent

Industry Employment Projections, 2014-2024

Industry	2014 Estimated Employment	2024 Projected Employment	Total 2014-2024 Employment Change	Annual Avg. Percent Change	Total Percent Change
Agriculture, Fishing, Forestry, and Hunting	920	1,030	110	1.1%	12.0%
Mining	8,070	8,420	350	0.4%	4.3%
Utilities	2,250	2,470	220	0.9%	9.8%
Construction	30,770	33,580	2,800	0.9%	9.1%
Manufacturing	31,040	32,230	1,190	0.4%	3.8%
Wholesale Trade	23,690	24,590	900	0.4%	3.8%
Retail Trade	62,510	65,460	2,950	0.5%	4.7%
Transportation and Warehousing	28,420	29,440	1,020	0.4%	3.6%
Information	8,390	9,100	710	0.8%	8.5%
Finance and Insurance	18,220	18,890	670	0.4%	3.7%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	8,650	8,900	260	0.3%	2.9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	33,020	38,120	5,090	1.4%	15.4%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	7,710	9,920	2,210	2.6%	28.7%
Administrative and Waste Services	34,010	34,990	980	0.3%	2.9%
Educational Services	43,490	45,240	1,740	0.4%	4.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	70,590	82,980	12,390	1.6%	17.6%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	11,270	12,000	730	0.6%	6.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	71,660	76,160	4,500	0.6%	6.3%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	53,000	51,270	-1,730	-0.3%	-3.3%
Government	35,280	35,360	80	0.0%	0.2%
Total, All Industries	582,940	620,130	37,180	0.6%	6.4%

Source: Louisiana Workforce Commission. Note: Data is for combined projections area of the New Orleans Regional Labor Market Area, including Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany counties. Figures may not sum to total due to rounding.

Economic vitality

Which occupations are projected to grow?

Of the 37,180 jobs to be added to the region by 2024, health-care practitioners and technical occupations will contribute the most, adding 5,790 jobs. Computer and mathematical occupations will see the fastest growth rate, rising by 26 percent.

Computer and mathematical occupations are projected to grow by approximately 26 percent

Occupational Employment Projections, 2014-2024

Occupation	2014 Estimated Employment	2024 Projected Employment	Total 2014-2024 Employment Change	Annual Avg. Percent Change	Total Percent Change
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	10,310	11,220	910	0.8%	8.8%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	11,670	12,090	420	0.4%	3.6%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	19,310	20,110	800	0.4%	4.1%
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	22,090	24,240	2,150	0.9%	9.7%
Community and Social Service Occupations	6,020	6,740	720	1.1%	12.0%
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	6,290	7,900	1,610	2.3%	25.6%
Construction and Extraction Occupations	29,650	31,260	1,610	0.5%	5.4%
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	28,760	30,290	1,530	0.5%	5.3%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	540	520	-20	-0.4%	-3.7%
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	62,710	66,440	3,730	0.6%	5.9%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	35,520	41,310	5,790	1.5%	16.3%
Healthcare Support Occupations	12,090	14,110	2,020	1.6%	16.7%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	25,820	27,890	2,070	0.8%	8.0%
Legal Occupations	5,730	6,120	390	0.7%	6.8%
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	2,950	3,270	320	1.0%	10.8%
Management Occupations	32,960	34,810	1,850	0.5%	5.6%
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	82,870	83,880	1,010	0.1%	1.2%
Personal Care and Service Occupations	15,740	18,010	2,270	1.4%	14.4%
Production Occupations	24,210	25,210	1,000	0.4%	4.1%
Protective Service Occupations	17,390	17,850	460	0.3%	2.6%
Sales and Related Occupations	67,760	70,610	2,850	0.4%	4.2%
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	42,110	44,590	2,480	0.6%	5.9%
Total, All Occupations	582,940	620,120	37,180	0.6%	6.4%

Source: Louisiana Workforce Commission. Note: Data is for combined projections area of the New Orleans Regional Labor Market Area, including Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany counties. Figures may not sum to total due to rounding and non-disclosure of data in the underlying source by detailed occupation.

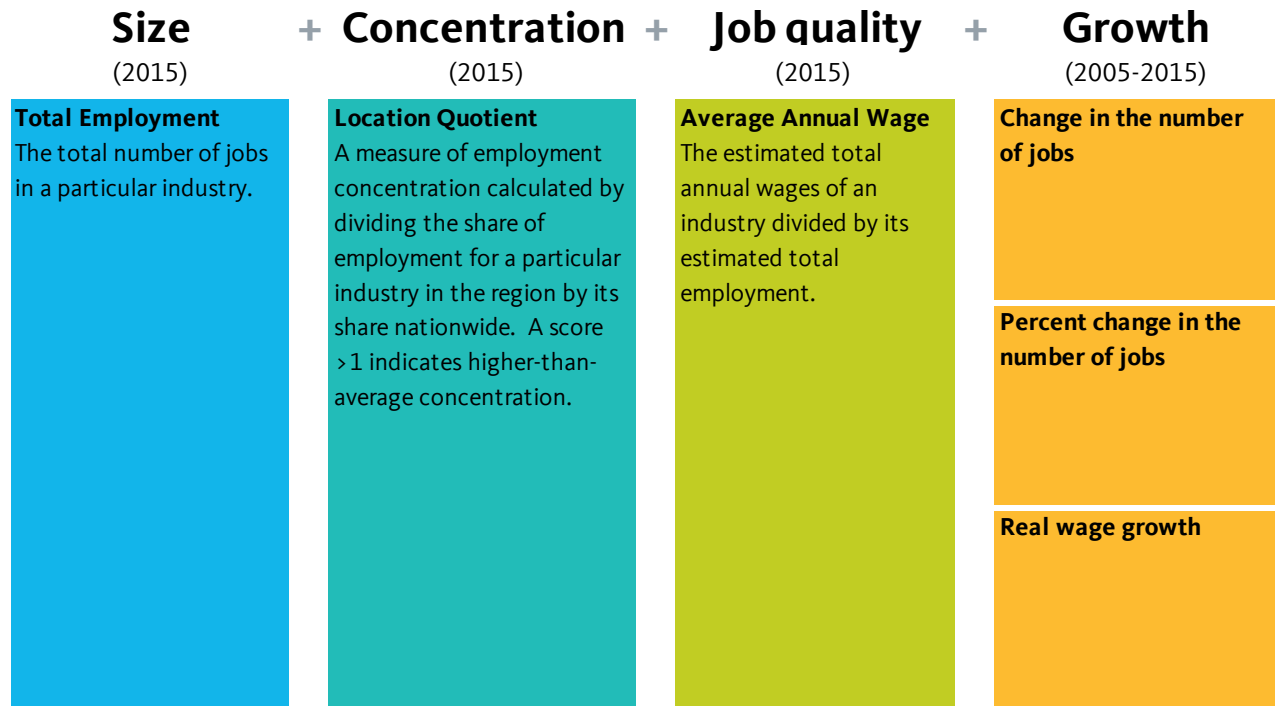
Economic vitality

Identifying the region’s strong industries

Understanding which industries are strong and competitive in the region is critical for developing effective strategies to attract and grow businesses. To identify strong industries in the region, 19 industry sectors were categorized according to an “**industry strength index**” that measures four characteristics: size, concentration, job quality, and growth. Each characteristic was given an equal weight (25 percent each) in determining the index value. “Growth” was an average of three indicators of growth (change in the number of jobs, percent change in the number of jobs, and real wage growth). These characteristics were examined over the last decade to provide a current picture of how the region’s economy is changing.

Given that the regional economy has experienced widespread employment decline in almost all industries, it is important to note that this index is only meant to provide general guidance on the strength of various industries. Its interpretation should be informed by examining all four metrics of size, concentration, job quality, and growth.

Industry strength index =



Note: This industry strength index is only meant to provide general guidance on the strength of various industries in the region, and its interpretation should be informed by an examination of individual metrics used in its calculation, which are presented in the table on the next page. Each indicator was normalized as a cross-industry z-score before taking a weighted average to derive the index.

Economic vitality

Professional services and health care dominate

According to the industry strength index, the region's strongest industries are education services and accommodation and food services. Education services ranks first because of a strong concentration of jobs in the region and high rate of growth.

The education services industry is strong and expanding significantly in the region

Industry Strength Index

Industry	Size	Concentration	Job Quality	Growth			Industry Strength Index
	Total employment (2015)	Location Quotient (2015)	Average annual wage (2015)	Change in employment (2005 to 2015)	% Change in employment (2005 to 2015)	Real wage growth (2005 to 2015)	
Education Services	15,643	4.2	\$48,796	7,623	95%	-14%	115.0
Accommodation and Food Services	37,294	2.1	\$25,605	7,925	27%	16%	106.1
Mining	2,246	2.2	\$182,656	-1,900	-46%	41%	97.1
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	14,964	1.3	\$82,676	2,154	17%	16%	47.9
Health Care and Social Assistance	21,845	0.9	\$46,592	2,078	11%	13%	28.6
Finance and Insurance	5,480	0.7	\$101,022	-2,286	-29%	36%	11.8
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2,667	0.9	\$100,929	-1,406	-35%	10%	-6.6
Transportation and Warehousing	7,713	1.2	\$55,531	-2,076	-21%	4%	-15.9
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	11,362	0.9	\$39,684	-1,954	-15%	9%	-18.7
Information	4,146	1.1	\$56,297	-639	-13%	12%	-19.6
Retail Trade	15,398	0.7	\$27,224	248	2%	-2%	-20.8
Other Services (except Public Administration)	5,747	1.0	\$34,220	-236	-4%	13%	-29.9
Utilities	227	0.3	\$109,743	-742	-77%	9%	-32.3
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2,746	1.0	\$41,976	-251	-8%	16%	-32.5
Wholesale Trade	3,768	0.5	\$73,137	-1,718	-31%	10%	-33.0
Construction	5,152	0.6	\$53,179	-183	-3%	5%	-33.2
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	5,177	1.7	\$30,956	-1,573	-23%	-26%	-42.7
Manufacturing	4,026	0.2	\$64,823	-3,714	-48%	8%	-52.4
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	57	0.0	\$36,634	5	10%	14%	-64.9

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Woods & Poole Economic, Inc.

Note: Universe includes all private sector jobs covered by the federal Unemployment Insurance (UI) program. Dollar values are in 2015 dollars.

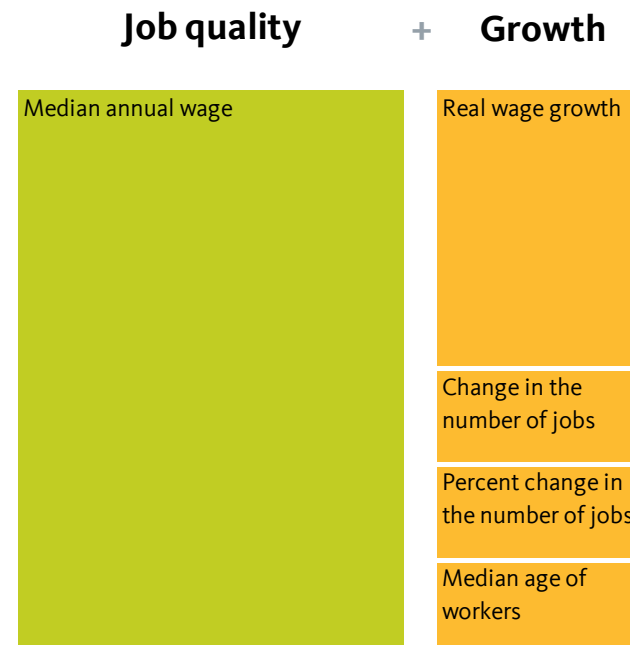
Economic vitality

Identifying high-opportunity occupations

Understanding which occupations are strong and competitive in the region can help leaders develop strategies to connect and prepare workers for good jobs. To identify “high-opportunity” occupations in the region, we developed an “**occupation opportunity index**” based on measures of job quality and growth, including median annual wage, real wage growth, job growth (in number and share), and median age of workers. A high median age of workers indicates that there will be replacement job openings as older workers retire.

Job quality, measured by the median annual wage, accounted for two-thirds of the occupation opportunity index, and growth accounted for the other one third. Within the growth category, half was determined by wage growth and the other half was divided equally among the change in number of jobs, percent change in jobs, and median age of workers.

Occupation opportunity index =



Note: Each indicator was normalized as a cross-occupation z-score before taking a weighted average to derive the index.

Economic vitality

Professional services, health care, and management dominate

According to the occupation opportunity index, the most competitive occupations are engineers; lawyers, judges, and related workers; top executives; and operations special managers. Architects, surveyors, and cartographers saw the largest increases in

real wage growth while engineers, business operations specialists, and supervisors of protective service workers saw the greatest absolute increases in employment.

Top executives and lawyers, judges, and related workers rank highest on the occupation opportunity index

Occupation Opportunity Index

Occupation	Employment (2011)	Job Quality Median Annual Wage (2011)	Growth			Occupation Opportunity Index	
			Real Wage Growth (2011)	Change in Employment (2005-11)	% Change in Employment (2005-11)		Median Age (2010)
Engineers	6,250	\$94,590	20%	1,670	36%	43	2.09
Lawyers, Judges, and Related Workers	3,480	\$96,795	-9%	300	9%	45	1.82
Top Executives	10,600	\$88,706	5%	-2,460	-19%	49	1.61
Operations Specialties Managers	4,360	\$82,409	14%	-1,530	-26%	46	1.47
Health Diagnosing and Treating Practitioners	18,470	\$80,266	15%	-60	0%	43	1.45
Other Management Occupations	8,800	\$76,992	24%	-1,460	-14%	45	1.38
Architects, Surveyors, and Cartographers	600	\$68,964	39%	-190	-24%	47	1.31
Physical Scientists	1,150	\$78,736	-4%	-210	-15%	46	1.20
Supervisors of Production Workers	2,160	\$64,070	37%	-110	-5%	47	1.14
Advertising, Marketing, Promotions, Public Relations, and Sales Managers	1,400	\$76,190	10%	-1,210	-46%	40	1.13
Supervisors of Protective Service Workers	1,780	\$52,525	23%	1,410	381%	51	0.98
Supervisors of Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers	2,460	\$60,130	17%	170	7%	48	0.82
Supervisors of Construction and Extraction Workers	2,320	\$60,530	17%	-270	-10%	48	0.80
Computer Occupations	6,240	\$63,650	4%	-1,790	-22%	40	0.63
Postsecondary Teachers	2,200	\$62,950	-5%	-1,140	-34%	44	0.57
Plant and System Operators	3,790	\$57,509	1%	-510	-12%	47	0.51
Business Operations Specialists	12,010	\$54,916	3%	1,450	14%	45	0.50
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing	8,490	\$54,923	8%	-40	0%	44	0.48
Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers	1,880	\$51,363	16%	-100	-5%	43	0.43
Sales Representatives, Services	4,660	\$51,339	6%	10	0%	44	0.34
Financial Specialists	7,830	\$53,050	4%	-650	-8%	43	0.34
Drafters, Engineering Technicians, and Mapping Technicians	3,070	\$50,489	2%	430	16%	46	0.31
Preschool, Primary, Secondary, and Special Education School Teachers	14,240	\$49,133	12%	-1,550	-10%	44	0.26
Water Transportation Workers	5,490	\$50,496	10%	-1,070	-16%	39	0.24

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes all nonfarm wage and salary jobs.

Note: Analysis reflects the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, Louisiana Metropolitan Statistical Area as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. Dollar values are in 2011 dollars.

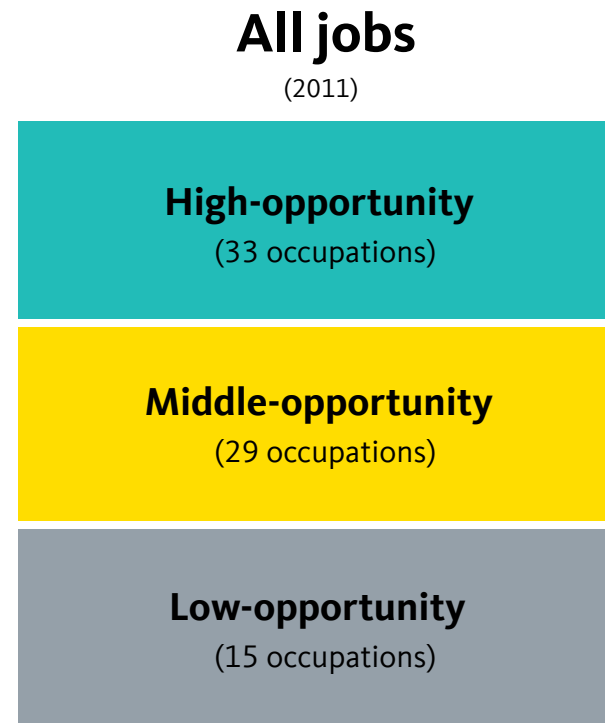
Economic vitality

Identifying high-opportunity occupations

Once the occupation opportunity index score was calculated for each occupation, occupations were sorted into three categories (high-, middle-, and low-opportunity). The average index score is zero, so an occupation with a positive value has an above-average score while a negative value represents a below-average score.

Because education level plays such a large role in determining access to jobs, we present the occupational analysis for each of three educational attainment levels: workers with a high school degree or less, workers with more than a high-school degree but less than a bachelor's degree, and workers with a bachelor's degree or higher.

Given that the regional economy has experienced widespread employment decline across many occupation groups, it is important to note that this index is only meant to provide general guidance on the strength of various occupations. Its interpretation should be informed by examining all metrics of job quality and growth.



Note: The occupation opportunity index and the three broad categories drawn from it are only meant to provide general guidance on the level of opportunity associated with various occupations in the region, and its interpretation should be informed by an examination of individual metrics used in its calculation, which are presented in the tables on the following pages.

Economic vitality

High-opportunity occupations for workers with a high school degree or less

Supervisors of production workers and supervisors of construction and extraction workers are high-opportunity jobs for workers without postsecondary education

Occupation Opportunity Index: Occupations by Opportunity Level for Workers with a High School Diploma or Less

Occupation	Employment	Job Quality	Growth			Occupation Opportunity Index	
	(2011)	Median Annual Wage (2011)	Real Wage Growth (2011)	Change in Employment (2005-11)	% Change in Employment (2005-11)		Median Age (2010)
High-Opportunity							
Supervisors of Production Workers	2,160	\$64,070	37.4%	-110	-4.8%	47	1.14
Supervisors of Construction and Extraction Workers	2,320	\$60,530	16.5%	-270	-10.4%	48	0.80
Supervisors of Transportation and Material Moving Workers	1,880	\$51,363	16.5%	-100	-5.1%	43	0.43
Water Transportation Workers	5,490	\$50,496	10.2%	-1,070	-16.3%	39	0.24
Extraction Workers	1,410	\$43,336	12.6%	20	1.4%	39	0.07
Other Production Occupations	6,640	\$35,850	29.3%	-180	-2.6%	43	0.01
Metal Workers and Plastic Workers	4,220	\$41,566	11.9%	-1,540	-26.7%	44	-0.03
Middle-Opportunity							
Other Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	13,860	\$37,991	14.5%	-10	-0.1%	43	-0.06
Other Construction and Related Workers	550	\$39,933	3.4%	0	0.0%	45	-0.09
Assemblers and Fabricators	2,300	\$34,966	11.1%	-660	-22.3%	42	-0.26
Vehicle and Mobile Equipment Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	4,850	\$38,644	3.5%	-1,820	-27.3%	41	-0.26
Construction Trades Workers	18,480	\$36,389	3.9%	-1,330	-6.7%	37	-0.35
Motor Vehicle Operators	12,940	\$31,535	18.7%	-3,450	-21.0%	44	-0.37
Animal Care and Service Workers	830	\$24,330	15.9%	540	186.2%	35	-0.45
Supervisors of Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Workers	1,320	\$30,101	2.2%	-90	-6.4%	44	-0.47
Material Recording, Scheduling, Dispatching, and Distributing Workers	14,350	\$30,372	-0.2%	-490	-3.3%	43	-0.51
Other Protective Service Workers	6,560	\$25,193	25.1%	-2,440	-27.1%	43	-0.51
Food Processing Workers	1,980	\$23,747	17.2%	150	8.2%	36	-0.60
Other Transportation Workers	1,050	\$24,708	30.5%	-1,080	-50.7%	27	-0.62
Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	4,620	\$31,254	-14.5%	-1,030	-18.2%	42	-0.67
Textile, Apparel, and Furnishings Workers	1,110	\$21,212	15.8%	-1,820	-62.1%	48	-0.71
Low-Opportunity							
Other Personal Care and Service Workers	6,690	\$20,545	20.7%	-1,350	-16.8%	39	-0.72
Helpers, Construction Trades	2,020	\$25,073	3.4%	30	1.5%	30	-0.77
Nursing, Psychiatric, and Home Health Aides	7,500	\$21,645	13.8%	-2,490	-24.9%	40	-0.79
Grounds Maintenance Workers	1,640	\$21,890	3.7%	-920	-35.9%	44	-0.80
Building Cleaning and Pest Control Workers	12,780	\$20,229	15.0%	-4,390	-25.6%	44	-0.85
Personal Appearance Workers	770	\$22,180	5.7%	-920	-54.4%	37	-0.86
Material Moving Workers	14,600	\$25,114	6.9%	-5,140	-26.0%	37	-0.86
Cooks and Food Preparation Workers	18,010	\$19,821	14.8%	-4,050	-18.4%	31	-0.99
Food and Beverage Serving Workers	24,890	\$17,933	15.3%	-1,420	-5.4%	26	-1.00
Other Food Preparation and Serving Related Workers	6,570	\$17,946	9.9%	-960	-12.7%	28	-1.03
Retail Sales Workers	37,600	\$20,370	10.3%	-6,230	-14.2%	30	-1.10

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes all nonfarm wage and salary jobs for which the typical worker is estimated to have a high school degree or less. Note: Analysis reflects the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, Louisiana Metropolitan Statistical Area as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. Dollar values are in 2011 dollars.

Economic vitality

High-opportunity occupations for workers with more than a high school degree but less than a BA

Supervisors of protective service workers and supervisors of installation, maintenance, and repair workers are high-opportunity jobs for workers with more than a high school degree but less than a bachelor's degree

Occupation Opportunity Index: Occupations by Opportunity Level for Workers with More Than a High School Diploma but Less Than a Bachelor's Degree

Occupation	Employment	Job Quality	Growth			Median Age	Occupation Opportunity Index	
	(2011)	Median Annual Wage (2011)	Real Wage Growth (2011)	Change in Employment (2005-11)	% Change in Employment (2005-11)			
High-Opportunity	Supervisors of Protective Service Workers	1,780	\$52,525	22.7%	1,410	381.1%	51	0.98
	Supervisors of Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers	2,460	\$60,130	17.1%	170	7.4%	48	0.82
	Plant and System Operators	3,790	\$57,509	1.2%	-510	-11.9%	47	0.51
	Drafters, Engineering Technicians, and Mapping Technicians	3,070	\$50,489	2.2%	430	16.3%	46	0.31
	Legal Support Workers	2,330	\$46,298	14.4%	0	0.0%	43	0.23
	Life, Physical, and Social Science Technicians	1,120	\$47,224	11.0%	420	60.0%	37	0.23
	Electrical and Electronic Equipment Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	2,320	\$46,823	10.5%	90	4.0%	39	0.17
	Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	6,010	\$42,990	7.0%	-820	-12.0%	47	0.04
Middle-Opportunity	Law Enforcement Workers	4,820	\$39,682	6.6%	1,290	36.5%	37	-0.08
	Health Technologists and Technicians	11,980	\$40,614	7.8%	-1,870	-13.5%	41	-0.14
	Supervisors of Sales Workers	6,100	\$38,206	1.7%	-130	-2.1%	42	-0.21
	Other Education, Training, and Library Occupations	4,770	\$27,775	27.6%	-30	-0.6%	45	-0.27
	Fire Fighting and Prevention Workers	1,710	\$30,574	14.3%	380	28.6%	37	-0.36
	Supervisors of Personal Care and Service Workers	580	\$34,447	5.8%	-1,100	-65.5%	43	-0.37
	Financial Clerks	14,020	\$32,363	12.9%	-3,920	-21.9%	45	-0.41
	Communications Equipment Operators	790	\$27,100	25.0%	-520	-39.7%	41	-0.41
	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	17,490	\$32,388	2.4%	-3,300	-15.9%	47	-0.47
	Other Healthcare Support Occupations	6,160	\$27,199	14.1%	-320	-4.9%	31	-0.59
Low-Opportunity	Information and Record Clerks	17,420	\$27,033	5.9%	-4,400	-20.2%	41	-0.73
	Other Office and Administrative Support Workers	10,750	\$25,725	9.6%	-7,600	-41.4%	44	-0.83
	Entertainment Attendants and Related Workers	1,760	\$18,855	19.5%	-1,600	-47.6%	36	-0.86

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes all nonfarm wage and salary jobs for which the typical worker is estimated to have more than a high school degree but less than a BA. Note: Analysis reflects the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, Louisiana Metropolitan Statistical Area as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. Dollar values are in 2011 dollars.

Economic vitality

High-opportunity occupations for workers with a BA degree or higher

Engineers and lawyers, judges, and related workers are high-opportunity occupations for workers with a bachelor's degree or higher

Occupation Opportunity Index: All Levels of Opportunity for Workers with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher

Occupation	Employment	Job Quality	Growth				Occupation Opportunity Index
	(2011)	Median Annual Wage (2011)	Real Wage Growth (2011)	Change in Employment (2005-11)	% Change in Employment (2005-11)	Median Age (2010)	
High-Opportunity							
Engineers	6,250	\$94,590	19.9%	1,670	36.5%	43	2.09
Lawyers, Judges, and Related Workers	3,480	\$96,795	-9.4%	300	9.4%	45	1.82
Top Executives	10,600	\$88,706	5.3%	-2,460	-18.8%	49	1.61
Operations Specialties Managers	4,360	\$82,409	13.9%	-1,530	-26.0%	46	1.47
Health Diagnosing and Treating Practitioners	18,470	\$80,266	15.3%	-60	-0.3%	43	1.45
Other Management Occupations	8,800	\$76,992	24.2%	-1,460	-14.2%	45	1.38
Architects, Surveyors, and Cartographers	600	\$68,964	39.4%	-190	-24.1%	47	1.31
Physical Scientists	1,150	\$78,736	-4.0%	-210	-15.4%	46	1.20
Advertising, Marketing, Promotions, Public Relations, and Sales Managers	1,400	\$76,190	9.5%	-1,210	-46.4%	40	1.13
Computer Occupations	6,240	\$63,650	4.0%	-1,790	-22.3%	40	0.63
Postsecondary Teachers	2,200	\$62,950	-5.0%	-1,140	-34.1%	44	0.57
Business Operations Specialists	12,010	\$54,916	3.3%	1,450	13.7%	45	0.50
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing	8,490	\$54,923	8.2%	-40	-0.5%	44	0.48
Sales Representatives, Services	4,660	\$51,339	6.3%	10	0.2%	44	0.34
Financial Specialists	7,830	\$53,050	4.1%	-650	-7.7%	43	0.34
Preschool, Primary, Secondary, and Special Education School Teachers	14,240	\$49,133	12.1%	-1,550	-9.8%	44	0.26
Entertainers and Performers, Sports and Related Workers	2,060	\$40,160	-7.0%	1,640	390.5%	37	0.10
Media and Communication Workers	1,250	\$41,342	1.9%	410	48.8%	44	-0.01
Middle-Opportunity							
Media and Communication Equipment Workers	890	\$35,033	28.7%	170	23.6%	36	-0.07
Librarians, Curators, and Archivists	1,220	\$40,805	-6.9%	270	28.4%	48	-0.11
Art and Design Workers	780	\$37,052	18.7%	-810	-50.9%	43	-0.12
Other Sales and Related Workers	1,630	\$32,234	15.0%	-660	-28.8%	49	-0.24
Specialists	6,250	\$37,274	-7.2%	-930	-13.0%	41	-0.38
Low-Opportunity							
Other Teachers and Instructors	660	\$32,330	-34.8%	-2,910	-81.5%	39	-0.99

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes all nonfarm wage and salary jobs.

Note: Analysis reflects the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, Louisiana Metropolitan Statistical Area as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. Universe includes all nonfarm wage and salary jobs for which the typical worker is estimated to have a BA degree or higher. Dollar values are in 2011 dollars.

Economic vitality

Black workers among the most likely to have low-opportunity jobs

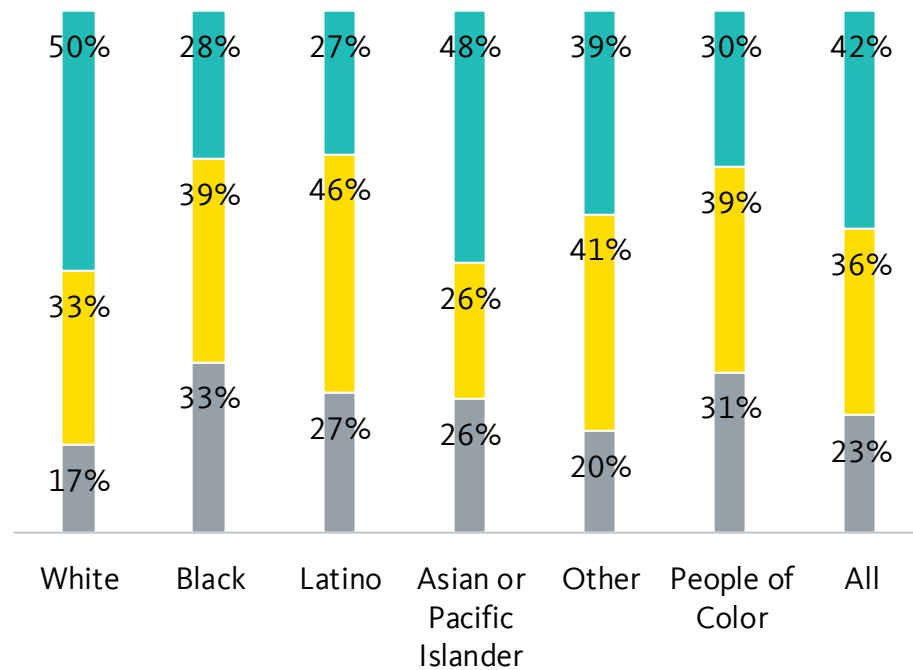
When examining access to high-opportunity jobs by race/ethnicity, we find that Whites and Asians or Pacific Islanders are most likely to be employed in high-opportunity occupations. Blacks and Latinos are the least likely to be in these occupations.

Differences in education levels play a large role in determining access to high-opportunity jobs (and this is examined next), but racial discrimination, work experience, social networks, and – for immigrants – legal status and English language ability are also contributing factors.

Black and Latino workers are the least likely to access high-opportunity jobs

Opportunity Ranking of Occupations by Race/Ethnicity, All Workers

- High opportunity
- Middle opportunity
- Low opportunity



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes the employed civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64.

Note: While data on workers are from the city of New Orleans, the opportunity ranking for each worker's occupation is based on analysis of the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, Louisiana Metropolitan Statistical Area as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. Data for some racial/ethnic groups are excluded due to small sample size.

Economic vitality

Black workers with a HS diploma or less are the most likely to have low-opportunity jobs

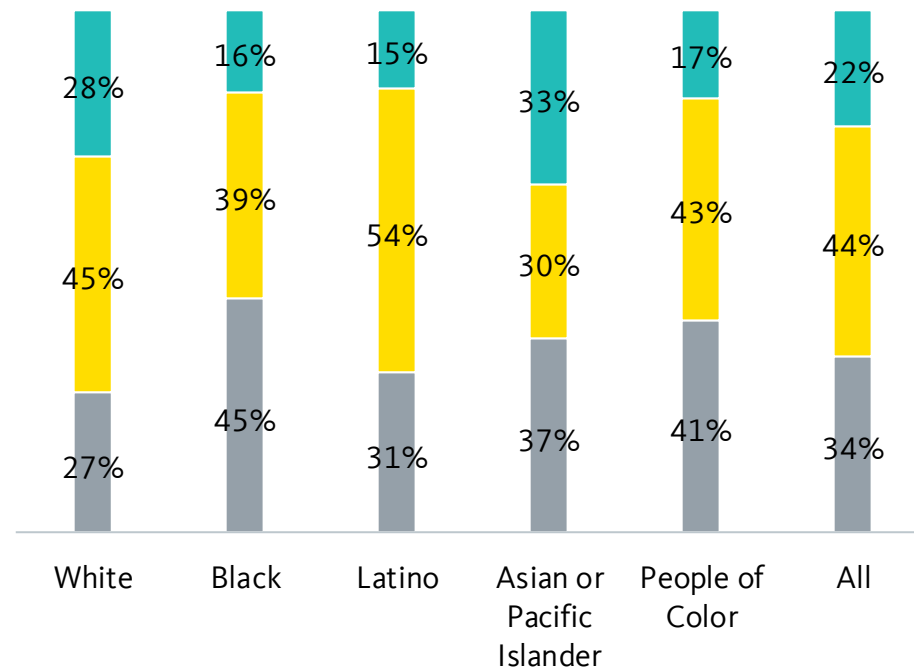
Among workers with a high school degree or less, Asians or Pacific Islanders are more likely than others to be in the high-opportunity occupations, while Latinos and African Americans are the least likely to be in these jobs.

Latinos and Whites with low levels of education are most often in middle-opportunity jobs, and Blacks and Asians or Pacific Islanders are most likely to be in low-opportunity jobs. However, Asians or Pacific Islanders are also most likely to be in high-opportunity jobs, reflecting the diversity within this population.

Of those with low education levels, Latinos and African Americans are least likely to hold high-opportunity jobs

Opportunity Ranking of Occupations by Race/Ethnicity, Workers with Low Educational Attainment

- High opportunity
- Middle opportunity
- Low opportunity



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes the employed civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64 with a high school diploma or less. Note: While data on workers are from the city of New Orleans, the opportunity ranking for each worker's occupation is based on analysis of the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, Louisiana Metropolitan Statistical Area as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. Data for some racial/ethnic groups are excluded due to small sample size.

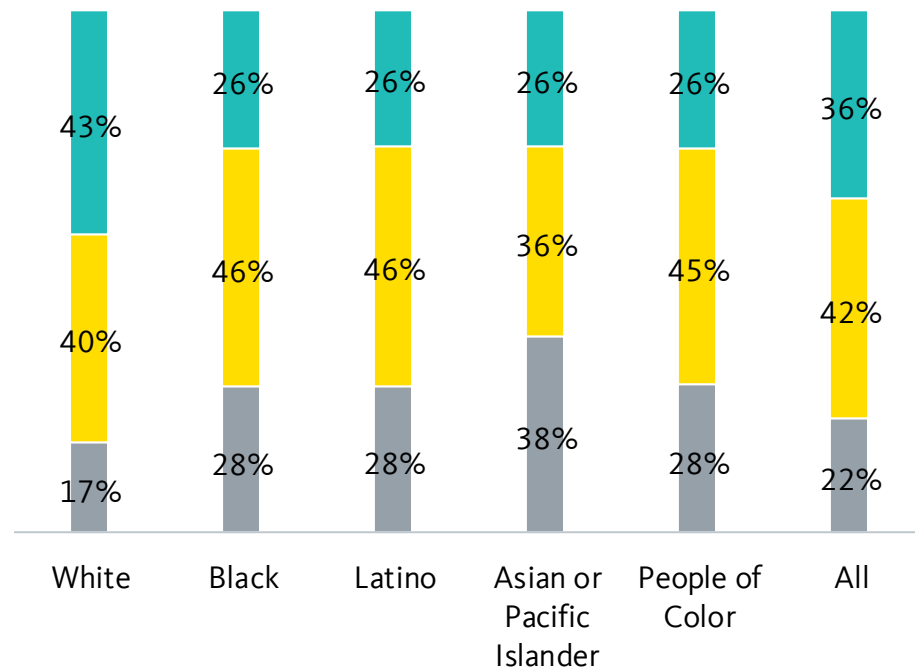
Economic vitality

Asian or Pacific Islander workers with some higher education are most likely to have low-opportunity jobs

Differences in job opportunity are generally smaller for workers with middle education levels, but Whites are much more likely than people of color to be in high-opportunity jobs. Of those with middle education levels, African Americans and Latinos are most likely to be in middle-opportunity jobs, and Asians or Pacific Islanders are most likely to be in low-opportunity jobs.

Of those with middle education levels, people of color are much less likely than Whites to access high-opportunity jobs
Opportunity Ranking of Occupations by Race/Ethnicity, Workers with Middle Educational Attainment

- High opportunity
- Middle opportunity
- Low opportunity



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes the employed civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64 with more than a high school diploma but less than a BA degree. Note: While data on workers are from the city of New Orleans, the opportunity ranking for each worker's occupation is based on analysis of the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, Louisiana Metropolitan Statistical Area as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. Data for some racial/ethnic groups are excluded due to small sample size.

Economic vitality

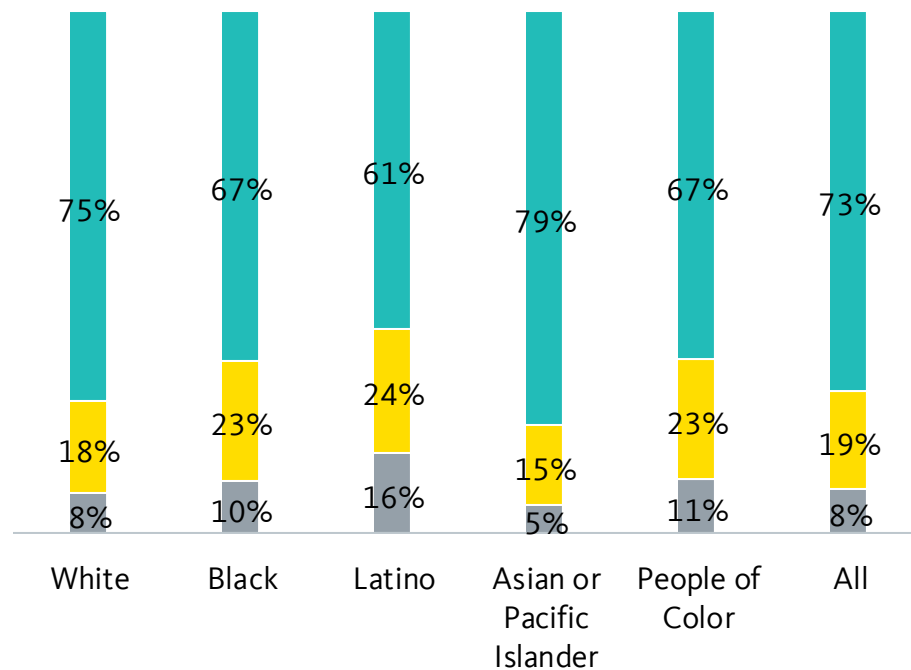
Latino workers with a BA or higher are the least likely to have high-opportunity jobs

Differences in access to high-opportunity occupations tend to decrease even more for workers with college degrees, though gaps across groups remain.

Among the most educated workers, Asians or Pacific Islanders are the most likely to be in high-opportunity occupations, followed by Whites. Among the college educated, Latinos have the least access to high-opportunity jobs, and Latinos and Blacks are more likely than other college-educated workers to be in middle- and low-opportunity occupations.

Differences in occupational opportunity by race/ethnicity are smaller for college-educated workers
Opportunity Ranking of Occupations by Race/Ethnicity, Workers with High Educational Attainment

- High opportunity
- Middle opportunity
- Low opportunity



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes the employed civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64 with a BA degree or higher. Note: While data on workers are from the city of New Orleans, the opportunity ranking for each worker's occupation is based on analysis of the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, Louisiana Metropolitan Statistical Area as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget. Data for some racial/ethnic groups are excluded due to small sample size.

Readiness



Readiness

Highlights

How prepared are the city's residents for the 21st century economy?

- A skills and education gap exists for people of color, with the share of future jobs statewide requiring at least an associate's degree (33 percent) exceeding the proportion of people of color in New Orleans with that level of education.
- While the number of disconnected youth has decreased, youth of color are still far more likely to be disconnected and far less likely to finish high school than their White counterparts.
- In New Orleans, 28 percent of Black residents live in limited supermarket access areas (LSAs). Lack of access to healthy foods can contribute to poor health outcomes.

Percent of jobs statewide requiring at least an associate's degree in 2020:

33%

Percent of working-age African Americans with at least an associate's degree:

21%

Number of disconnected African American youth:

6,700

Readiness

African American and Latino workers are least prepared for the future economy

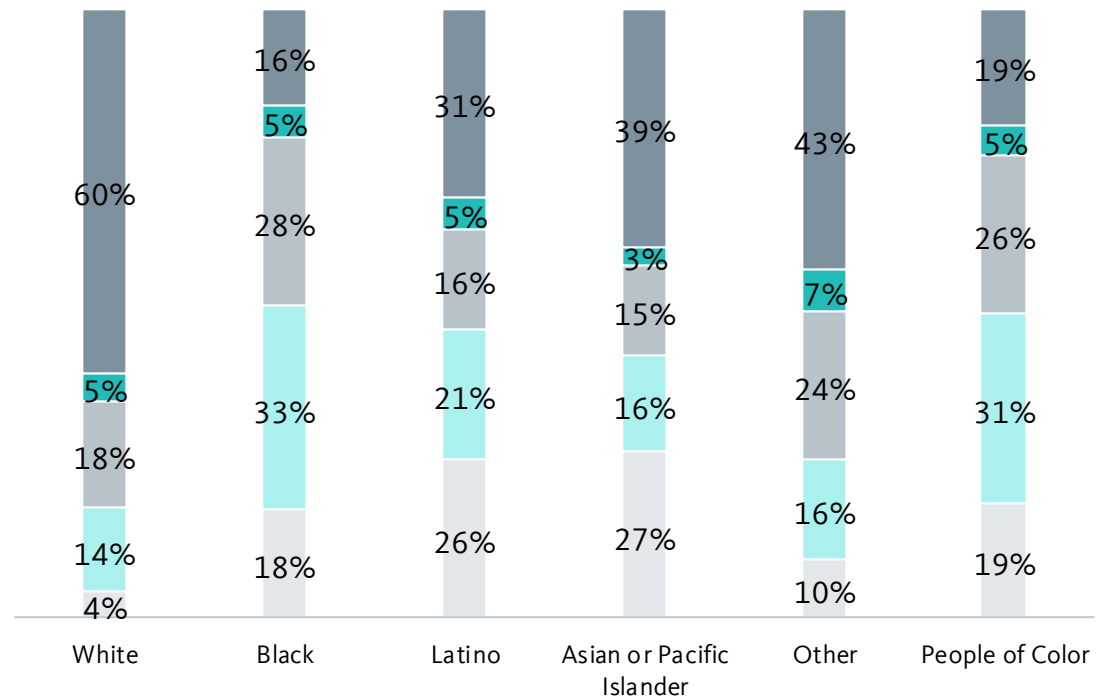
Wide gaps exist in educational attainment among racial/ethnic groups. About 26 percent of Latinos and 18 percent of Black residents ages 25 to 64 have less than a high school diploma. Among Whites, 60 percent have a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared with 31 percent of Latinos and just 16 percent of African Americans.

Among Asians or Pacific Islanders, 39 percent have a bachelor’s degree or higher, but 27 percent have less than a high school diploma, creating an hourglass-type educational distribution among this population.

There are wide gaps in educational attainment by race/ethnicity

Educational Attainment by Race/Ethnicity, 2014

- Bachelor's degree or higher
- Associate's degree
- Some college
- High school grad
- Less than high school diploma



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes all persons ages 25 through 64.
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

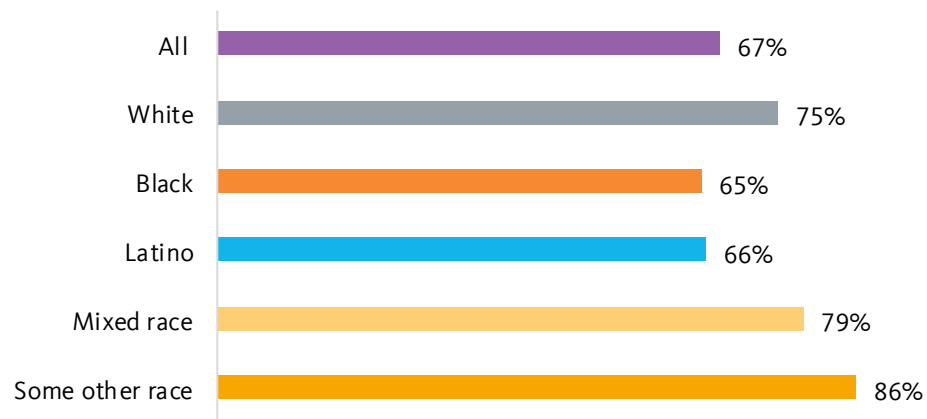
Readiness

Racial inequities in access to early education

Racial inequities in education appear early for children living in New Orleans. Black and Latino children living in the city attend Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten at lower levels than other students. About two in three Black and Latino children access critical formal early learning foundation provided by Pre-K and Kindergarten compared with three in four White students.

Research by Robert Balfanz of Johns Hopkins University stresses the importance of key transitions and academic behaviors that predict whether or not students will be academically successful and graduating from high school on time. Among them is reading and math proficiency. In New Orleans, 60 percent of third through eighth graders are proficient in reading, math, science and social studies combined. The rates are lower for Black students compared with their White counterparts: 58 percent of Black students test proficient as do 77 percent of White students.

There are stark racial inequities across indicators of early childhood learning
Public or Private Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten Attendance, 2010-2014



Share of Students in Grades 3-8 (in public and charter schools) Achieving Proficient on State Exams in Reading, Math, Science, and Social Studies (Combined), 2014-2015



Source: diversitydatakids.org calculations of data from the American Community Survey, 2010-2014, and the Louisiana Department of Education.
 Note: Data for some racial/ethnic groups are excluded due to data availability; estimates are not reported if the margin of error at the 95 percent confidence interval is one-third of the estimate value or more. Estimates are derived from survey data and subject to sampling variability. Please interpret accordingly.

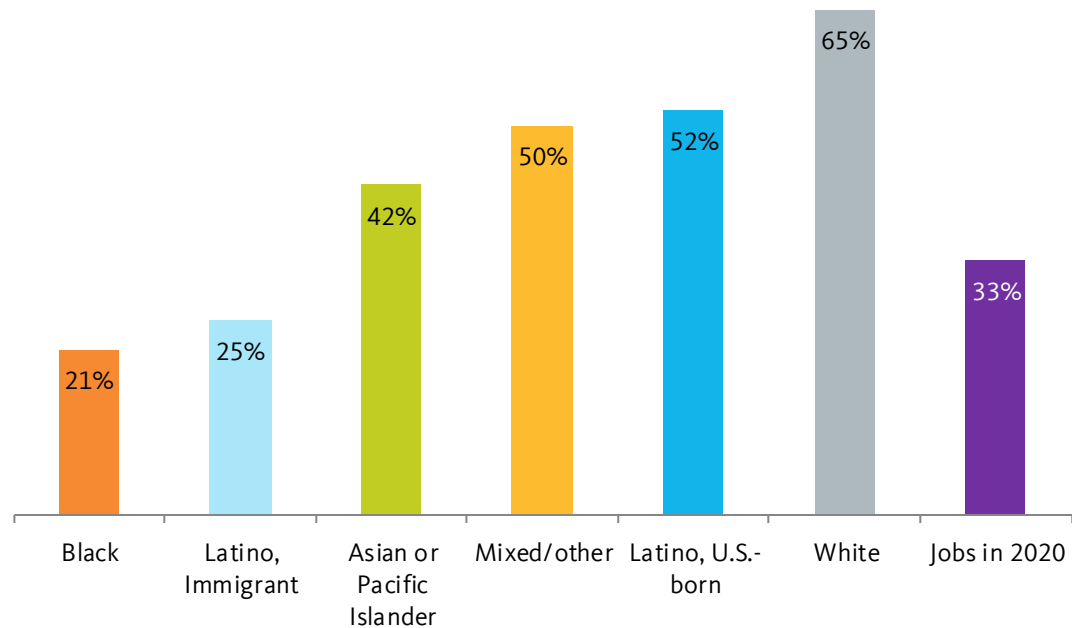
Readiness

Racial inequities in adult educational attainment

New Orleans could face a skills gap unless education levels increase among communities of color. By 2020, 33 percent of jobs in Louisiana will require an associate’s degree or higher. Only 21 percent of African Americans and 25 percent of Latino immigrants in the city of New Orleans have that level of education.

New Orleans will face a skills gap unless education levels increase

Share of Working-Age Population with an Associate’s Degree or Higher by Race/Ethnicity and Nativity, 2014, and Projected Share of Jobs that Require an Associate’s Degree or Higher, 2020



Source: Georgetown Center for Education and the Workforce; Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe for education levels of workers includes all persons ages 25 through 64. Note: Data for 2014 by race/ethnicity and nativity represent a 2010 through 2014 average for the city of New Orleans; data on jobs in 2020 represents a state-level projection for Louisiana.

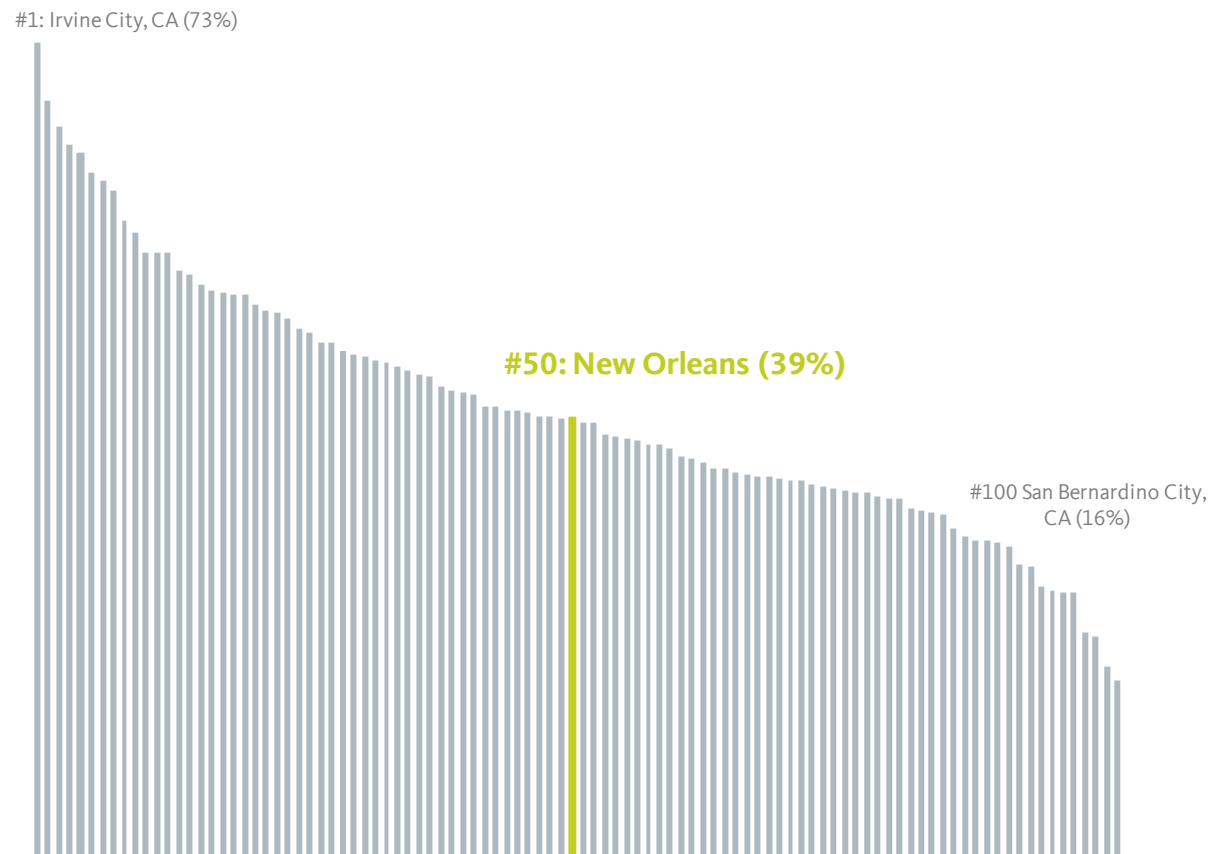
Readiness

Relatively high education levels

New Orleans ranks 50th among the 100 largest cities on the share of residents with an associate’s degree or higher. The city’s share of residents with an associate’s degree or higher is 39 percent.

However, 18 percent of African Americans and 26 percent of Latinos in New Orleans have attained less than a high school diploma.

New Orleans ranks in the middle of the 100 largest cities for residents with an associate’s degree or higher
Percent of the Population with an Associate’s Degree or Higher in 2014: Largest 100 Cities, Ranked



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes all persons ages 25 through 64.
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

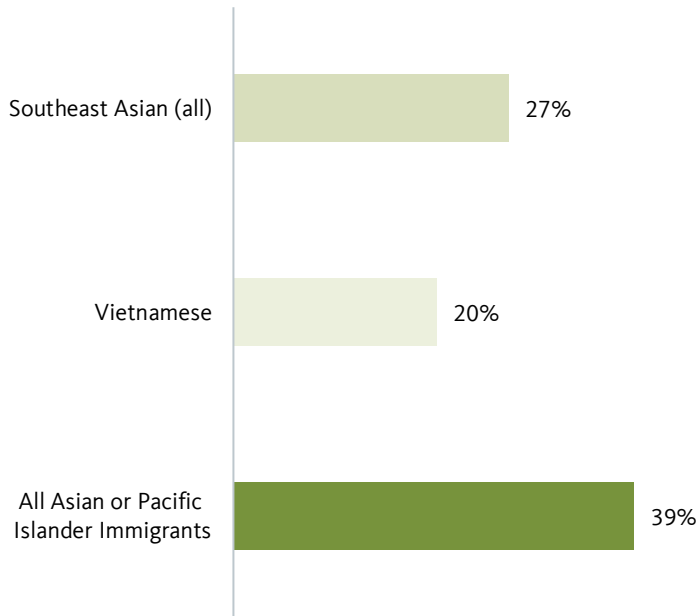
Readiness

Education levels vary among immigrant groups

Among Asian or Pacific Islander immigrants in New Orleans, significantly fewer Vietnamese immigrants have associate’s degrees than the overall Asian or Pacific Islander immigrant population. Among the region’s Latino immigrant communities, immigrants from Central America have lower education levels compared with Latino immigrants overall.

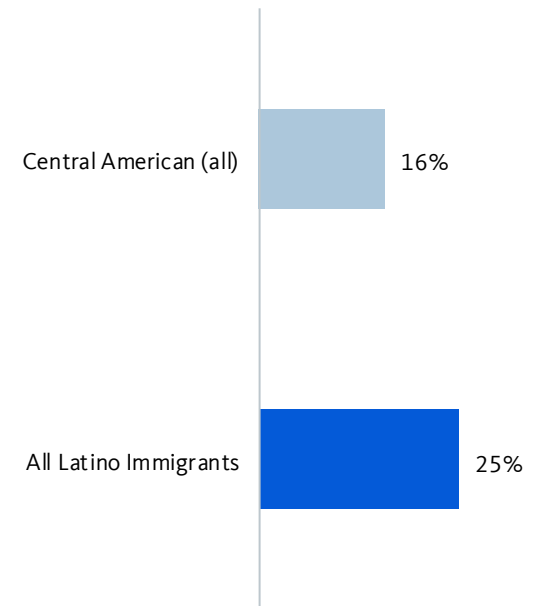
Asian immigrants tend to have higher education levels compared with Latino immigrants, but educational attainment differs among immigrants by country of origin

Asian Immigrants, Percent with an Associate’s Degree or Higher by Origin, 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes all persons ages 25 through 64. Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Latino Immigrants, Percent with an Associate’s Degree or Higher by Origin, 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes all persons ages 25 through 64. Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Readiness

More young people are getting high school degrees, but Black and Latino youth are more likely to be behind

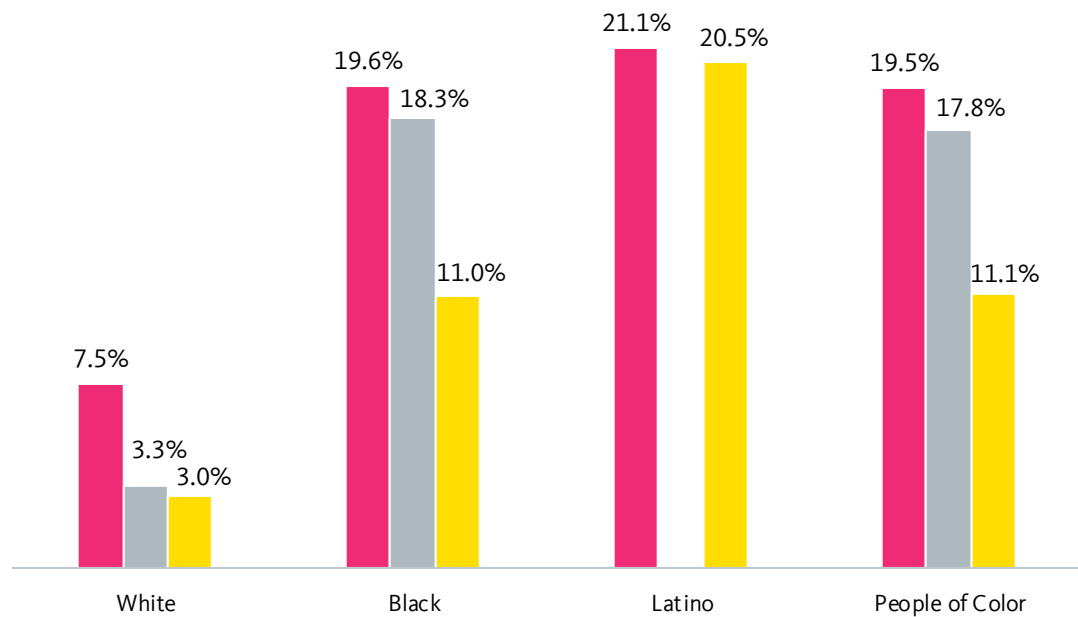
The share of youth who do not have a high school education and are not pursuing one has declined considerably since 1990 for most groups, but has remained flat for Latinos.

Despite the overall improvement, however, Black and Latino youth are still far less likely than their White counterparts to finish high school.

Educational attainment and enrollment among youth has improved since 2000

Percent of 16- to 24-Year-Olds Not Enrolled in School and Without a High School Diploma, 1990 to 2014

- 1990
- 2000
- 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series.

Notes: Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average. Data for some racial/ethnic groups are excluded due to small sample size.

Readiness

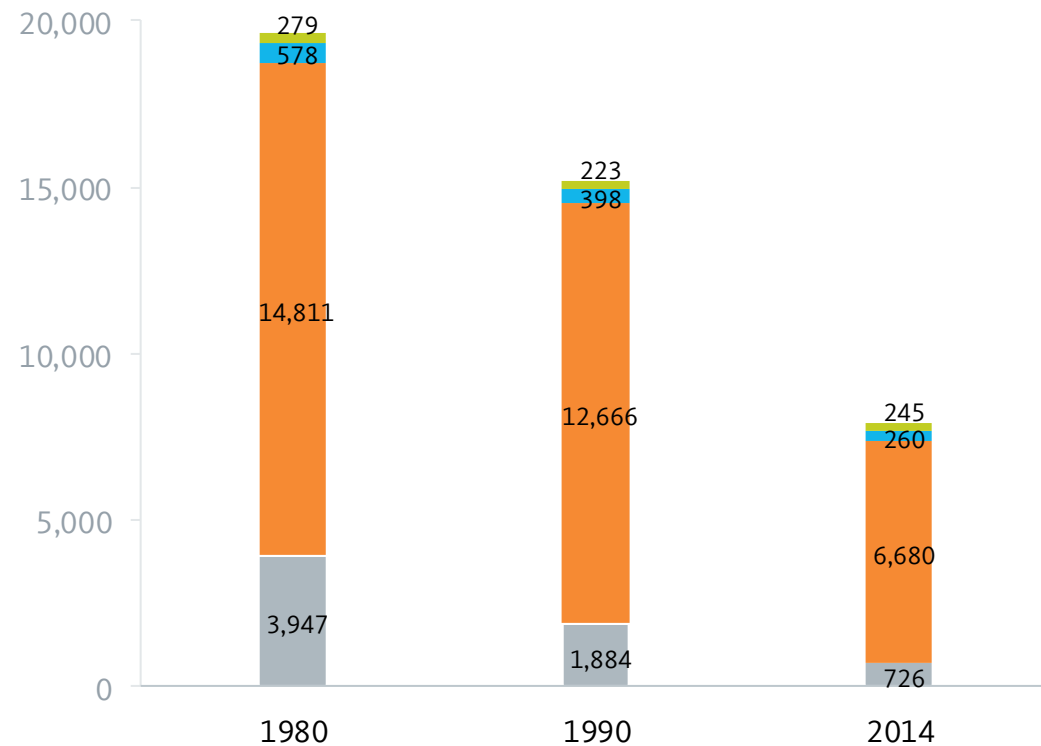
Many Black youth are disconnected from work or school

While trends in the pursuit of education have been positive for youth of color, the number of “disconnected youth” who are neither in school nor working remains high. Due in large part to the immense population shifts caused by Hurricane Katrina, the overall number of youth in New Orleans has dramatically declined since 2000, so the number of disconnected youth has likewise decreased.

Despite the declining numbers for all groups shown, youth of color were still far more likely to be disconnected in 2014: 22 percent of Black youth and 10 percent of Latino youth were disconnected, compared with only 5 percent of their White counterparts.

Of the 8,000 disconnected youth in New Orleans, 80 percent are Black
Disconnected Youth: 16- to 24-Year-Olds Not in Work or School, 1980 to 2014

- Asian, Native American or Other
- Latino
- Black
- White



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series.
 Notes: Data for 2014 represents a 2010 through 2014 average.

Readiness

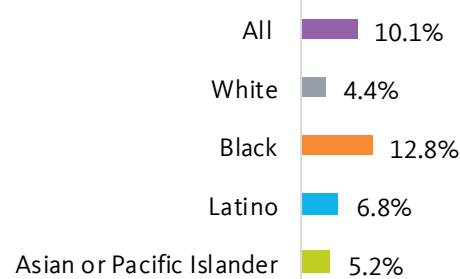
Racial inequities in early nutrition

Black infants in New Orleans are nearly three times as likely as White infants to be born with a low birth weight. Racial inequities are also stark when it comes to the share of infants who are breastfed – the nutrition option for infants recommended most by health professionals. Among White babies, 91 percent are breastfed at discharge compared with 49 percent of Black babies and 60 percent of Latino babies. According to the [National Institutes of Health](#), breastfeeding offers critical health benefits for both mother and child, including critical immunological and anti-inflammatory properties that protect both from illness and disease. Additionally, breastfeeding offers important economic benefits: On average, a breastfeeding-mother could save between \$1,200 and \$1,500 in formula expenses in the first year alone.

Black babies are also less likely than other babies to make it past their first birthday. Roughly 3 White and Latino babies per 1,000 live births die before their first birthday compared with 10 Black babies per 1,000 live births.

Black children face some of the greatest health challenges

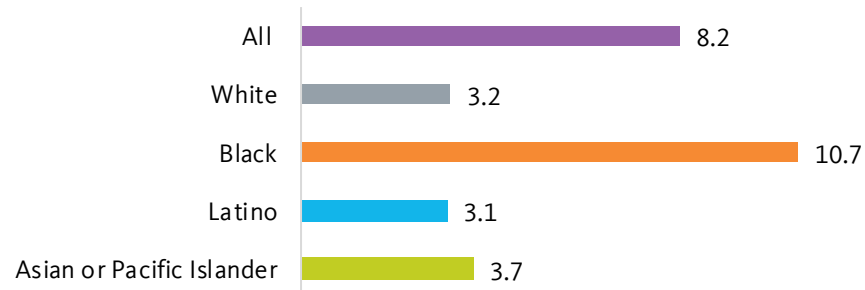
Low Birth-Weight Rate, 2011-2013



Share of Babies Breastfed at Hospital Discharge, 2011-2013



Infant Mortality Under Age 1 (per 1,000 live births), 2010-2013



Source: diversitydatakids.org calculations of data from the National Center for Health Statistics.

Notes: Individuals reporting multiple or other races were recoded to one of four single races in the source data from the National Center for Health Statistics. Low birth weight is defined as weighing less than 2.5kg and plural births are excluded. Data for some racial/ethnic groups are excluded.

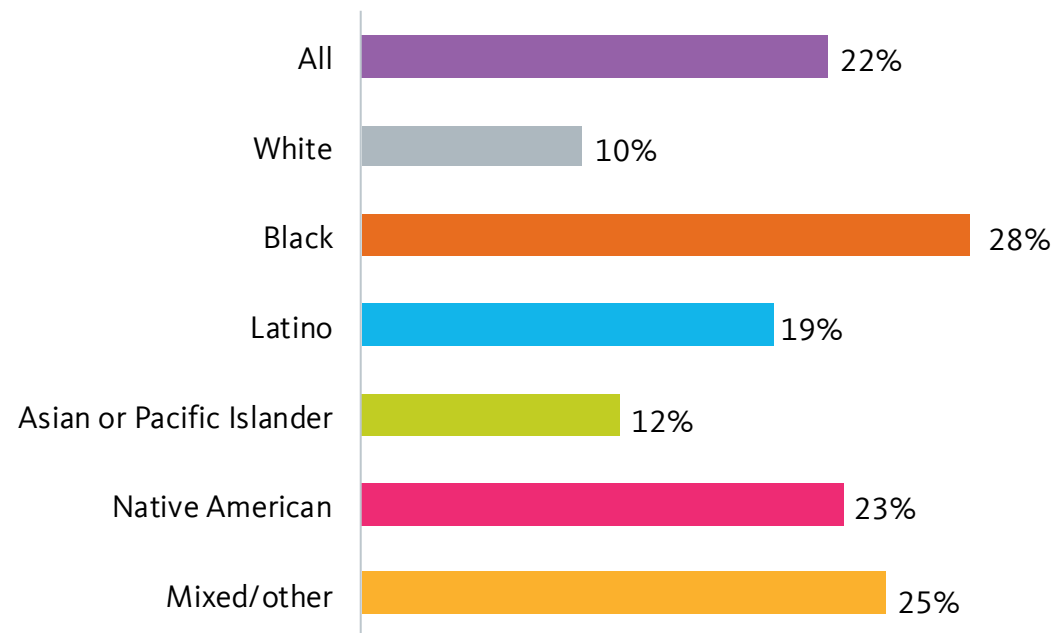
Readiness

Black residents most likely to live in areas with below-average access to supermarkets

Limited supermarket access areas (LSAs) are defined as areas where residents must travel significantly farther to reach a supermarket than the “comparatively acceptable” distance traveled by residents in well-served areas with similar population densities and car ownership rates.

African Americans are the most likely to live in LSAs in New Orleans: 28 percent of Black residents live in LSAs, compared to 10 percent of Whites. Lack of access to supermarkets and healthier food options can lead to obesity, diabetes, and a number of other negative health outcomes.

More than a quarter of African Americans in New Orleans live in LSAs
Percent Living in Limited Supermarket Access Areas by Race/Ethnicity, 2014



Readiness

Food access varies by income

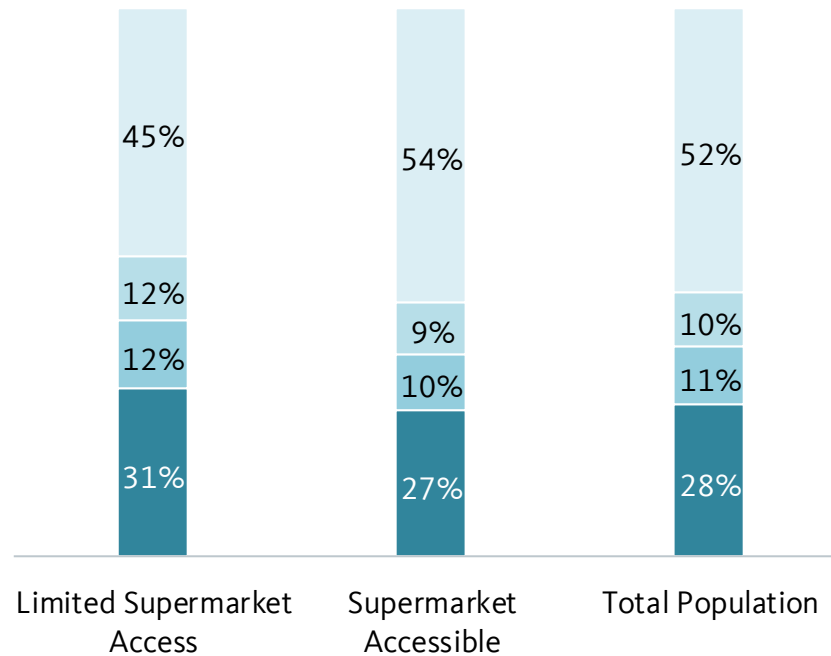
Limited supermarket access areas (LSAs) are defined as areas where residents must travel significantly farther to reach a supermarket than the “comparatively acceptable” distance traveled by residents in well-served areas with similar population densities and car ownership rates.

New Orleanians living at 200 percent of the federal poverty level or above are more likely to live in areas with nearby supermarkets than those who are living in poverty.

Economically insecure residents are disproportionately represented in limited supermarket access areas

Poverty Composition of Food Environments, 2014

- 200% poverty or above
- 150-199% poverty
- 100-149% poverty
- Below poverty



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; The Reinvestment Fund. See the “Data and methods” section for details.
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

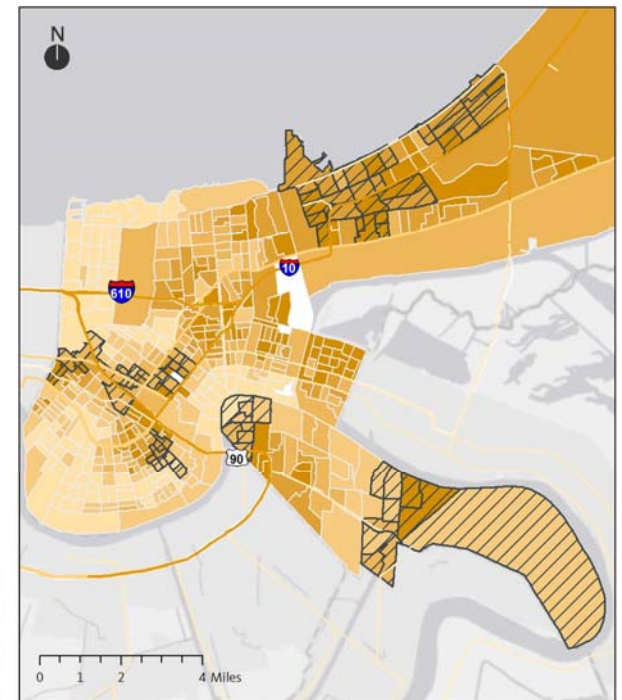
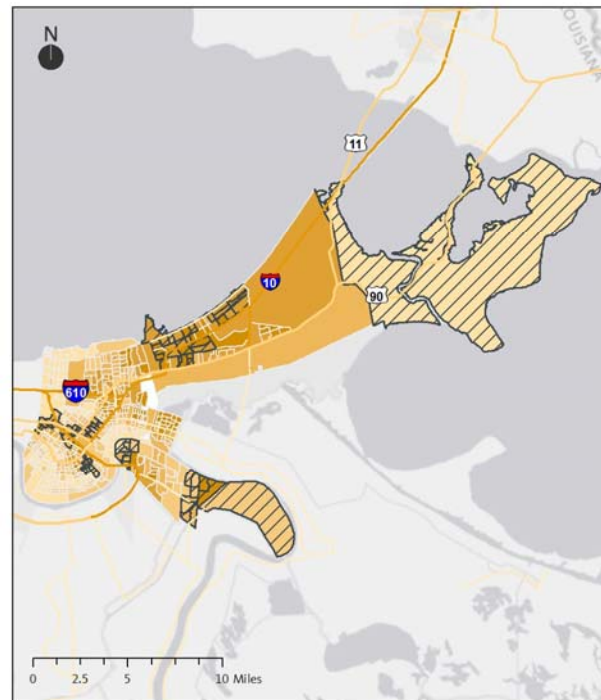
Readiness

Food access varies by neighborhood demographics

Limited supermarket access areas (LSAs) are defined as areas where residents must travel significantly farther to reach a supermarket than the “comparatively acceptable” distance traveled by residents in well-served areas with similar population densities and car ownership rates.

With the exception of the extreme northeast southeast parts of the city, LSAs tend to coincide with areas that have higher shares of people of color.

Black and mixed/other race residents are the most likely to live in LSAs
Percent People of Color by Census Block Group and Low Supermarket Access (LSA) Block Groups, 2014



Sources: The Reinvestment Fund, 2014 LSA analysis; U.S. Census Bureau; TomTom, ESRI, HERE, DeLorme, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community. Note: Data on population by race/ethnicity represent a 2010 through 2014 average. Areas in white are missing data.

Readiness

Health challenges among communities of color

Black adults have particularly high rates of obesity, diabetes, and asthma in New Orleans. More than one in three Black adults is obese compared with 16 percent of White adults. Black adults are also nearly three times as likely as their White counterparts to have diabetes. Racial disparities in asthma are less pronounced but still apparent.

Roughly 4 percent of White adults have asthma compared with 9 percent of Black adults. The social determinants of health – where people live, learn, work, and age – are increasingly recognized as influencing growing rates of chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and asthma.

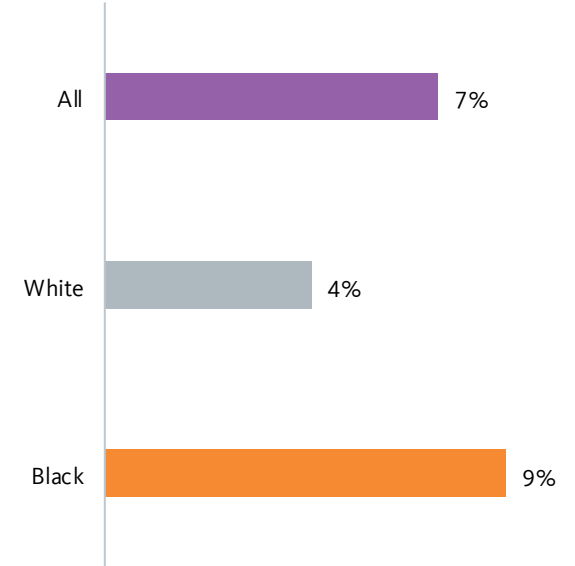
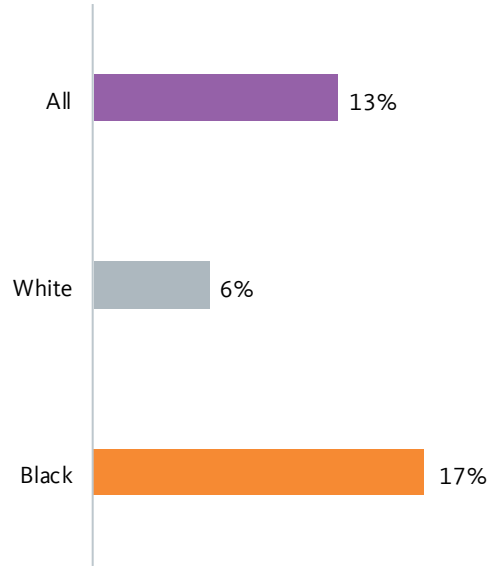
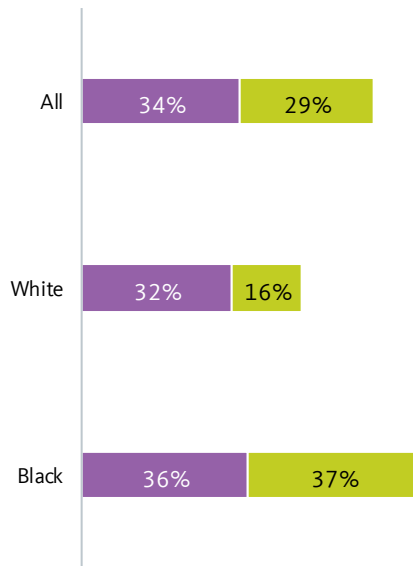
African Americans face above average obesity, diabetes, and asthma rates

Adult Overweight and Obesity Rates by Race/Ethnicity, 2012

Adult Diabetes Rates by Race/Ethnicity, 2012

Adult Asthma Rates by Race/Ethnicity, 2012

■ Overweight
■ Obese



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Universe includes adults ages 18 and older.
Note: Data represent a 2008 through 2012 average.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Universe includes adults ages 18 and older.
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Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Universe includes adults ages 18 and older.
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Readiness

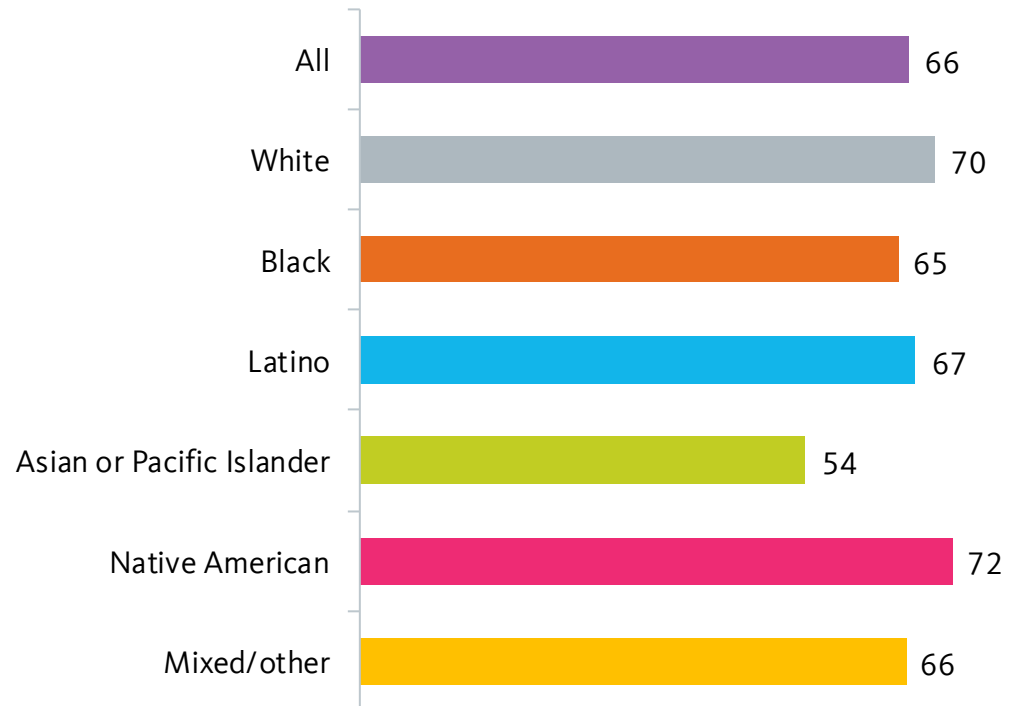
Air pollution is a concern for all residents

The average New Orleans resident has higher exposure to air pollution than 66 percent of neighborhoods in the United States. Native American and White residents have the highest average exposure at 72 and 70, respectively, while Asian or Pacific Islander residents have the lowest at 54.

The exposure index values range from 1 (lowest risk) to 100 (highest risk) on a national scale. The index value is based on percentile ranking each risk measure across all census tracts in the United States and taking the averaging ranking for each geography and demographic group.

Native Americans and Whites in New Orleans have the greatest exposure to air pollution

Air Pollution: Exposure Index by Race/Ethnicity, 2014



Readiness

Exposure to air pollution varies slightly by income as well as race

Both race and socioeconomic status impact exposure to pollutants. White residents below poverty have the highest average exposure at 71 followed by White residents above poverty at 70. In both socioeconomic groups, people of color rank lower on the exposure index.

Exposure to air pollution is impacted by both race and income

Air Pollution: Exposure Index by Poverty Status, 2014

■ White
■ People of color



Source: U.S. EPA, 2011 National Air Toxics Assessment; U.S. Census Bureau.
Note: Data on population by race/ethnicity represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Connectedness



Connectedness

Highlights

Are the city's residents and neighborhoods connected to one another and to the city's assets and opportunities?

- In New Orleans, 26 percent of African Americans and 17 percent of other or mixed race individuals live in households without a vehicle, compared with just 9 percent of Whites.
- Residents of color have higher housing burdens than Whites, especially those who are renters.
- Residential segregation between White and Native American residents has grown since 1990. Black-White segregation and Latino-White segregation are also increasing.

Black households without access to a car:

26%

Renter housing burden rank (among 100 largest cities):

#15

Share of renters burdened by housing costs:

59%

Connectedness

Moderate levels of segregation

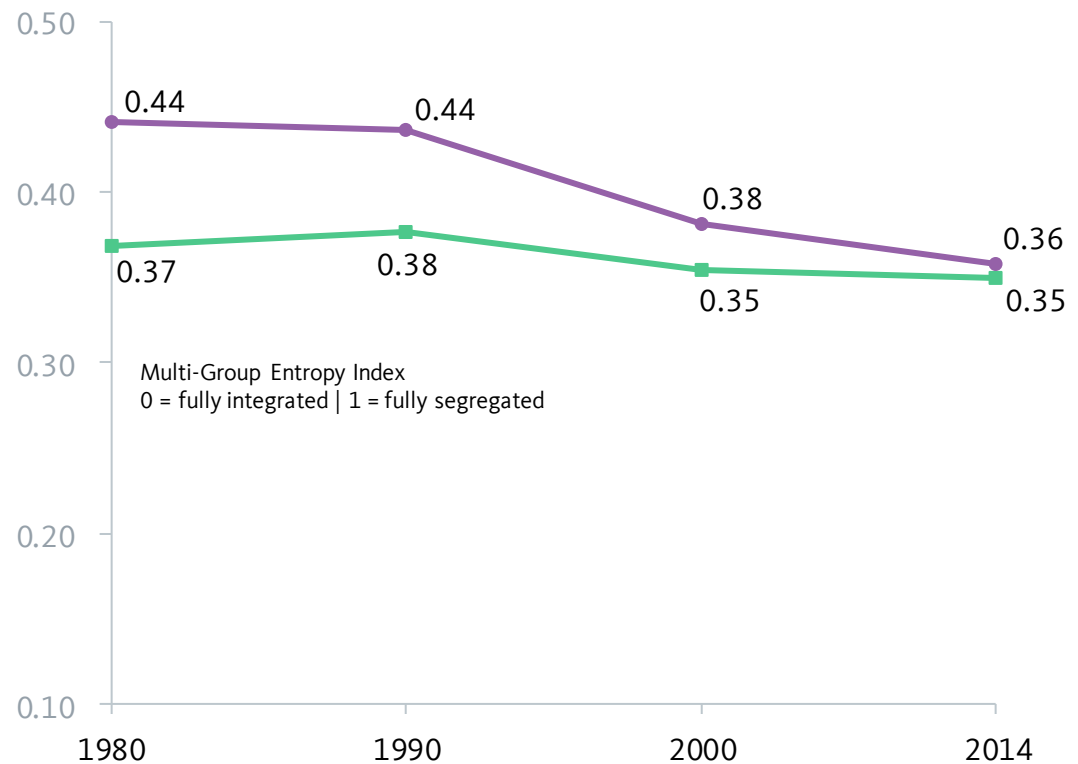
New Orleans is slightly less segregated by race/ethnicity than the nation as a whole, and segregation has declined over time as the region has become more diverse.

Segregation is measured by the entropy index, which ranges from a value of 0, meaning that all census tracts have the same racial/ethnic composition as the entire metropolitan area (maximum integration), to a high of 1, if all census tracts contained one group only (maximum segregation).

Residential segregation in New Orleans is similar to the national average

Residential Segregation, 1980 to 2014

— New Orleans
— United States



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Geolytics, Inc.
Note: Data for 2014 represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Connectedness

Increased segregation among people of color

While racial segregation overall has been on the decline in the region, it remains very high between the largest population groups, and is increasing for others.

The chart at the right displays the dissimilarity index, which estimates the share of a given racial/ethnic group who would need to move to a new neighborhood to achieve complete integration with the other group.

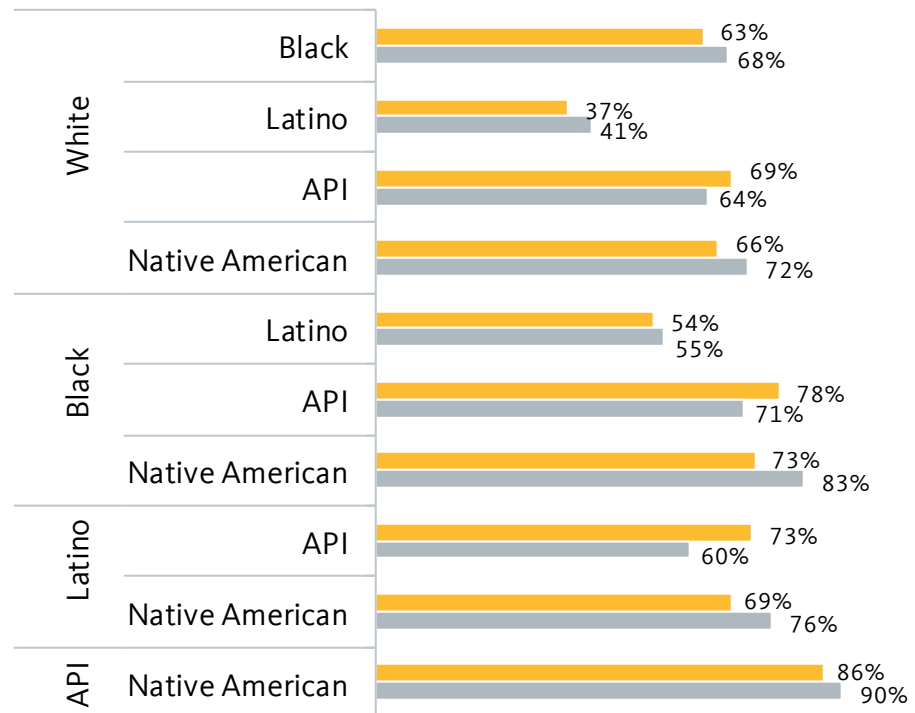
This index shows that Black-White segregation remains high: 68 percent of Black New Orleans residents would need to move to achieve integration with Whites.

It also shows that segregation is increasing between several groups. Blacks and Whites, Latinos and Whites, and Native Americans and Whites, are more segregated from each other now than in 1990.

Segregation has increased among most groups

Residential Segregation, 1990 and 2014, measured by the Dissimilarity Index

■ 1990
■ 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Geolytics, Inc. Data reported is the dissimilarity index for each combination of racial/ethnic groups.

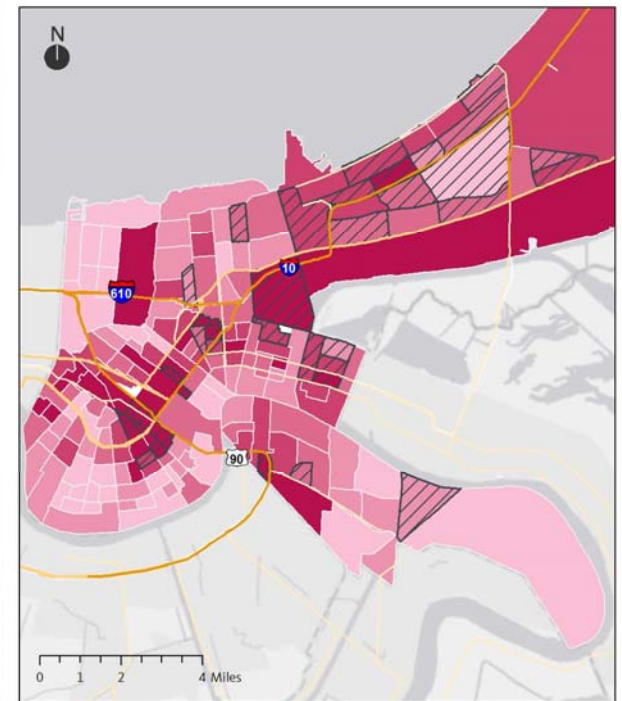
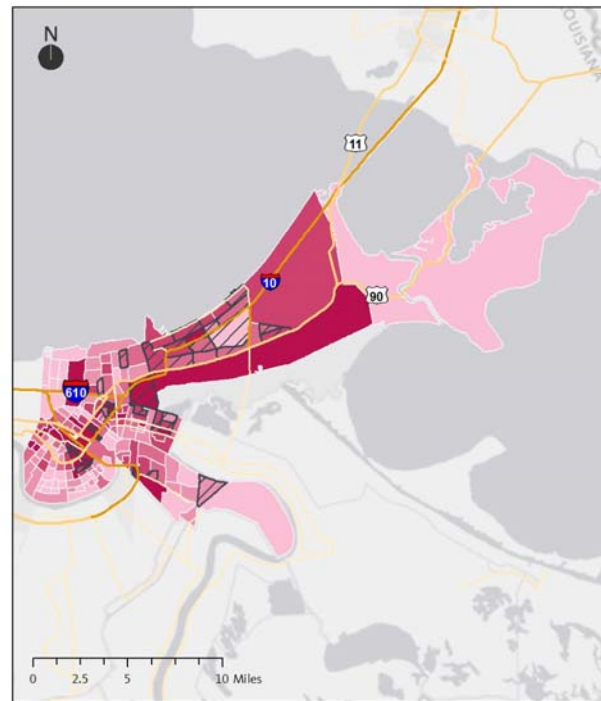
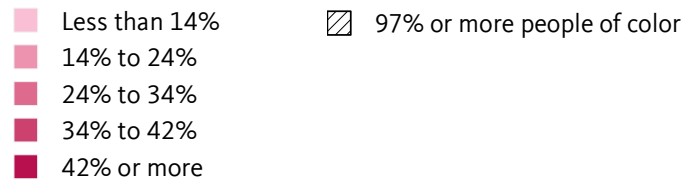
Connectedness

Concentrated poverty in communities of color

Like most cities, New Orleans’s neighborhoods vary tremendously in terms of their socioeconomic status. As the map illustrates, there are many high-poverty neighborhoods. About one-fifth of the census tracts in New Orleans have a poverty rate of 42 percent or higher.

Neighborhoods with the highest poverty rates tend to be found in the central part of the city and along the Claiborne corridor, as well as in the northeast portion of the city. They also tend to correspond with neighborhoods with high concentrations of people of color (97 percent or more).

Many communities of color are also areas of high poverty
Percent Population Below the Federal Poverty Level by Census Tract, 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; TomTom, ESRI, HERE, DeLorme, MaymyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community. Universe includes all persons not in group quarters. Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average. Areas in white are missing data.

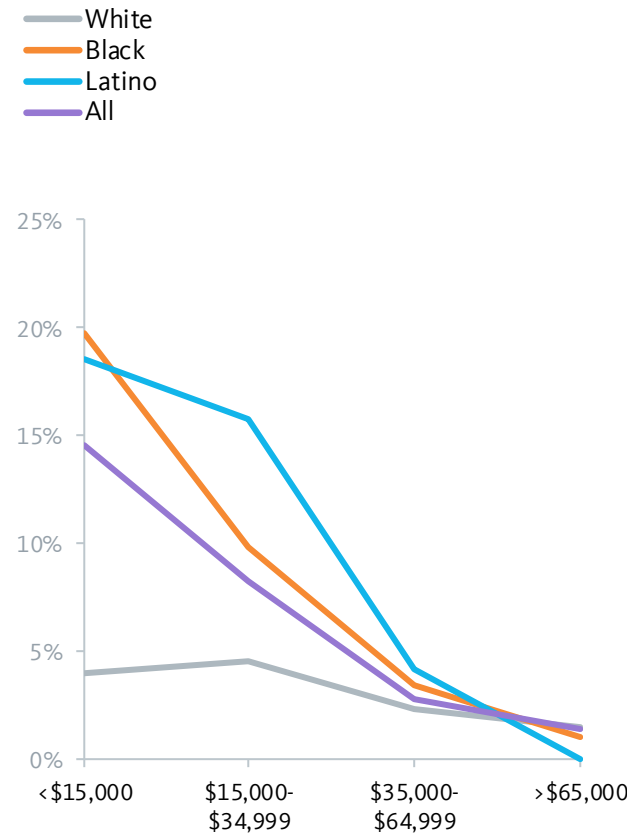
Connectedness

Black and Latino workers are the most likely to rely on the region's transit system

Income and race both play a role in determining who uses New Orleans's public transit systems to get to work. Very low-income African Americans are most likely to get to work using public transit, but transit use declines rapidly for all groups as incomes increase.

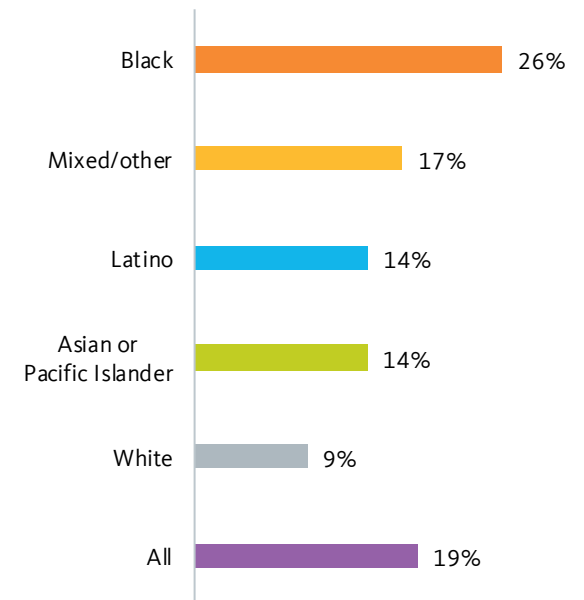
Households of color are much less likely to own cars than Whites. Across the region, 91 percent of White households have at least one car, compared with just 74 percent of Black households.

Transit use varies by income and race
Percent Using Public Transit by Annual Earnings and Race/Ethnicity, 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes workers ages 16 and older with earnings.
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Black households are least likely to have a car
Percent of Households without a Vehicle by Race/Ethnicity, 2014



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes all households (no group quarters).
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Connectedness

How residents commute varies by income

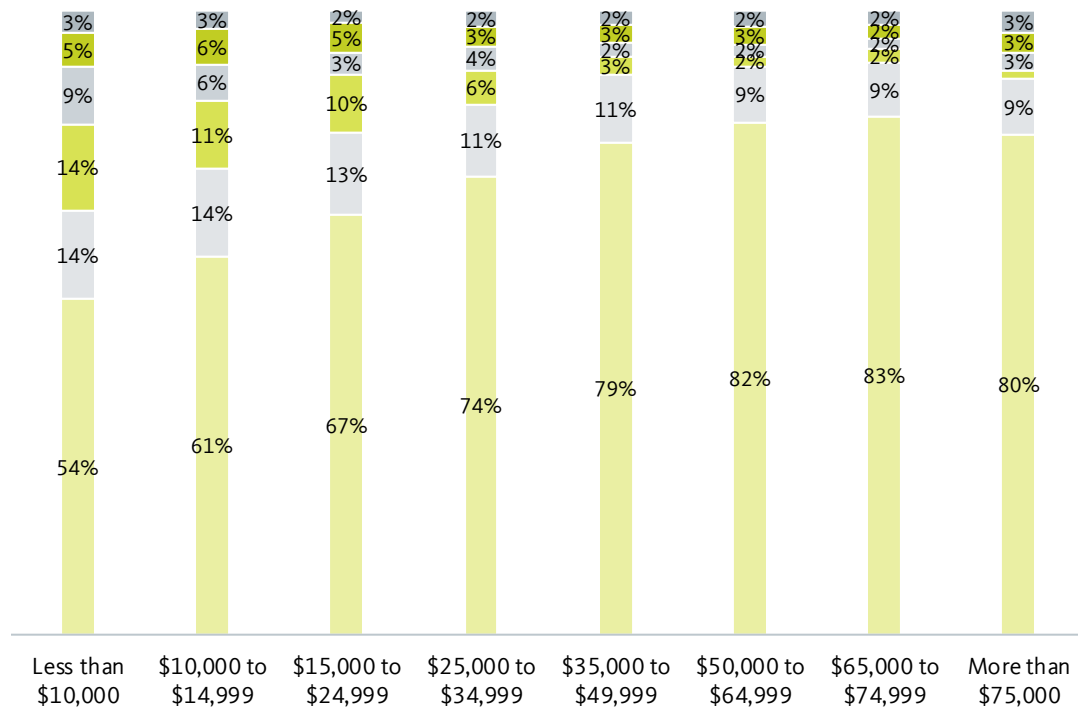
About 72 percent of New Orleans residents drive alone to work, followed by approximately 11 percent who carpool.

Single-driver commuting, however, fluctuates with income. Only 54 percent of very low-income workers (earning under \$10,000 per year) drive alone to work, compared to 80 percent of workers who make \$75,000 or more a year.

Lower-income residents are the least likely to drive alone to work

Means of Transportation to Work by Annual Earnings, 2014

- Worked at home
- Other
- Walked
- Public transportation
- Auto-carpool
- Auto-alone



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes workers ages 16 and older with earnings.
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average. Dollar values are in 2014 dollars.

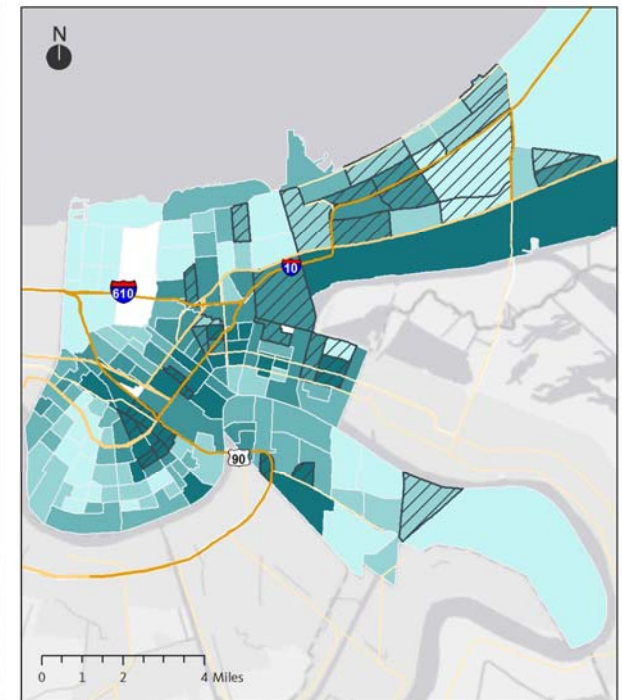
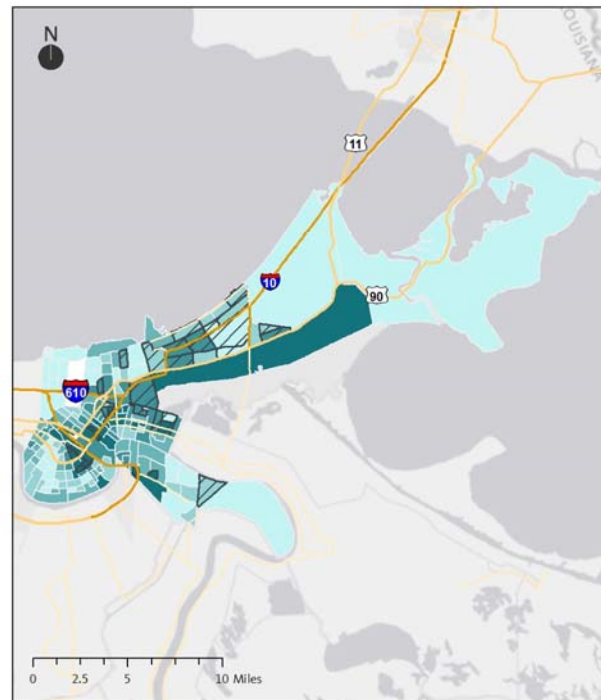
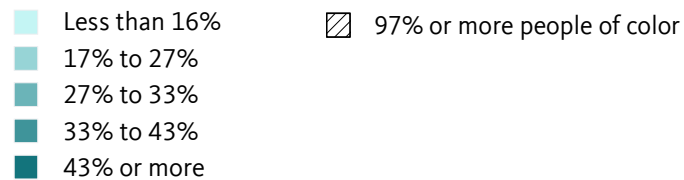
Connectedness

Communities of color are more likely to be carless

In New Orleans, the vast majority of households (81 percent) have access to at least one vehicle. But access to a vehicle remains a challenge for households in many areas, especially neighborhoods in the central and eastern parts of the city.

Neighborhoods that have the highest shares of people of color (97 percent or more) tend to have among the highest rates of carlessness as well.

Carless households are scattered throughout the city
Percent of Households Without a Vehicle by Census Tract, 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; TomTom, ESRI, HERE, DeLorme, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community. Universe includes all households (no group quarters). Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average. Areas in white are missing data.

Connectedness

Longer commutes for residents in northeast and southeast

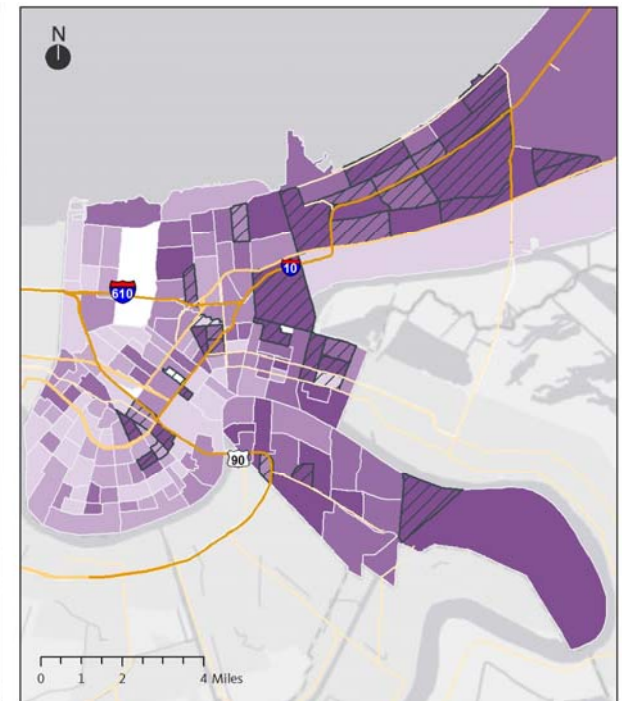
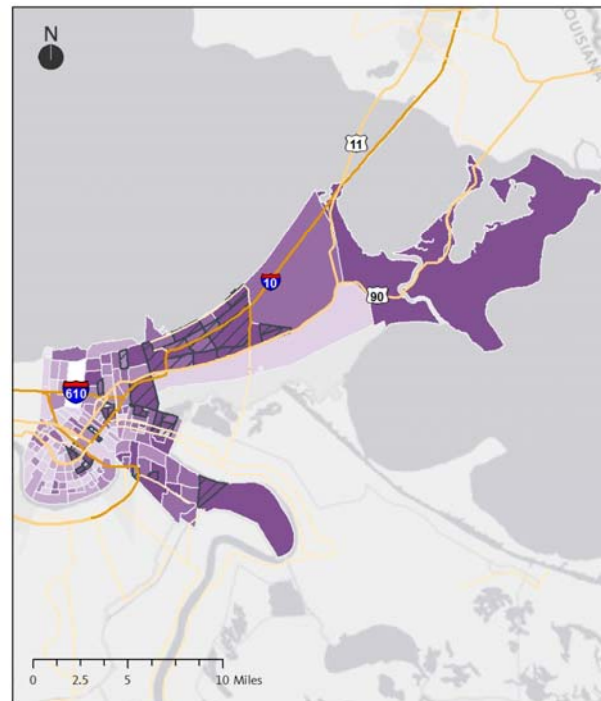
Workers in New Orleans have slightly shorter commute times than U.S. workers overall, with an average travel time of 23 minutes compared to 26 minutes for the United States overall. Workers with longer commute times, those taking 27 minutes or more, tend to live away from the urban core in the eastern part of the city.

Many of these areas, including the Ninth Ward, are tracts where people of color make up 97 percent or more of the population.

Workers living in the eastern part of the city have the longest commute times

Average Travel Time to Work by Census Tract, 2014

- Less than 19 minutes
 97% or more people of color
- 20 to 21 minutes
- 21 to 23 minutes
- 23 to 27 minutes
- 27 minutes or more



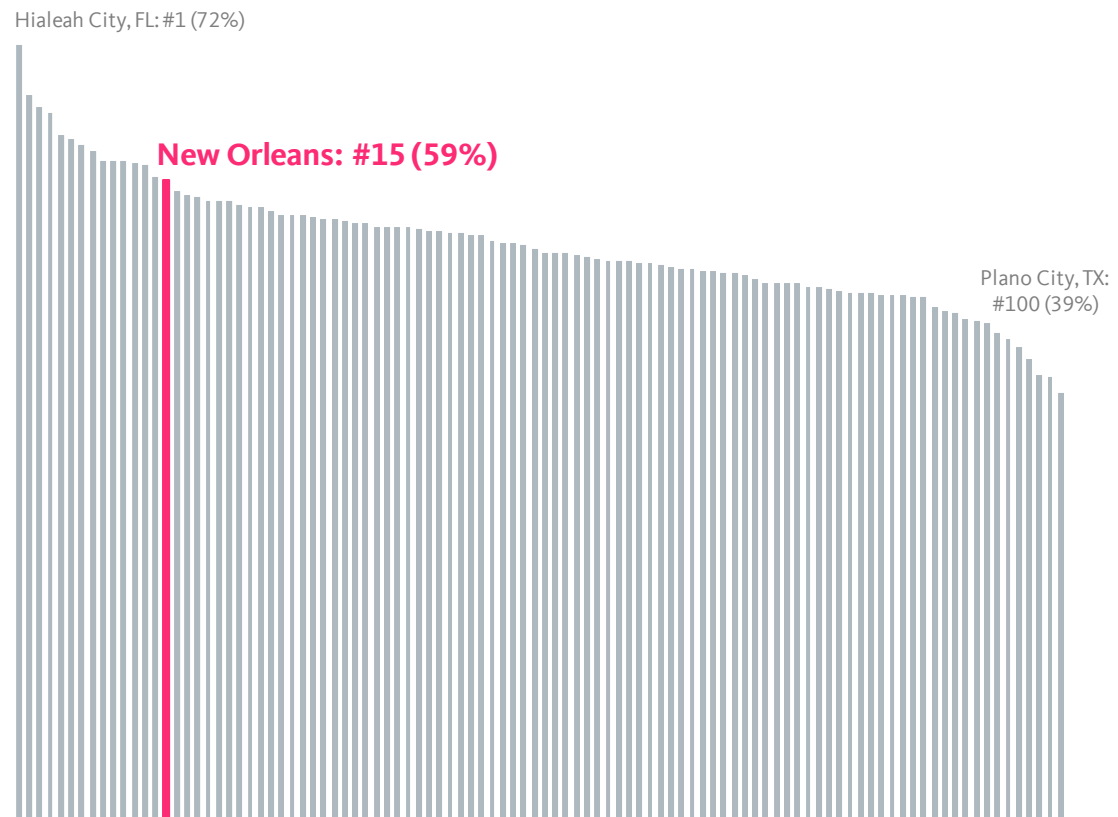
Source: U.S. Census Bureau; TomTom, ESRI, HERE, DeLorme, MaymyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community. Universe includes all persons ages 16 or older who work outside of home. Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average. Areas in white are missing data.

Connectedness

High housing burden for renter households

The share of cost-burdened renter households is higher in New Orleans than the national average of 51 percent. About 59 percent of renter households are cost burdened, defined as spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing. This figure is slightly higher than Birmingham (58 percent), and slightly lower than Memphis, Tennessee (60 percent).

New Orleans ranks 15th in renter housing burden among the 100 largest cities
Share of Households that Are Rent Burdened, 2014: 100 Largest Cities, Ranked



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes renter-occupied households with cash rent (excludes group quarters).
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Connectedness

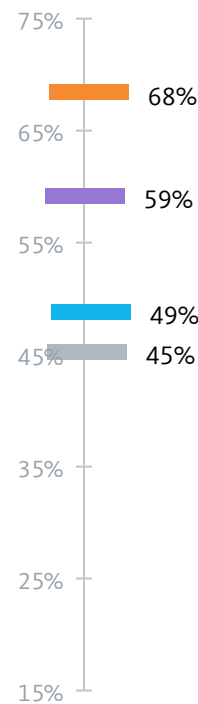
Black households face higher housing burdens

People of color are much more likely than Whites to spend a large share of their income on housing, whether they rent or own. Black households have the highest housing burden among both renters (68 percent) and homeowners (37 percent). Latino renters as well as homeowners have higher housing burdens than their White counterparts.

Housing burden is defined as paying more than 30 percent of household income toward housing.

Nearly 70 percent of Black renters are housing burdened
Renter Housing Burden by Race/Ethnicity, 2014

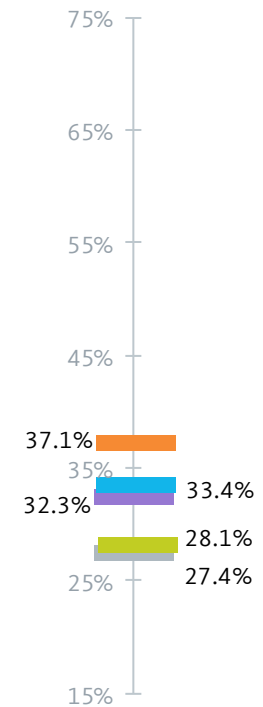
- All
- White
- Black
- Latino



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes renter-occupied households with cash rent (excludes group quarters).
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

African Americans and Latinos have the highest homeowner housing burden
Homeowner Housing Burden by Race/Ethnicity, 2014

- All
- White
- Black
- Latino
- Asian or Pacific Islander



Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Universe includes owner-occupied households (excludes group quarters).
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Economic benefits



Economic benefits

Highlights

What are the benefits of racial economic inclusion to the broader economy?

- The New Orleans region's economy could have been \$18 billion stronger in 2014 – a 24 percent increase – if its racial gaps in income had been closed.
- With racial equity in income in the city of New Orleans, African Americans would see their average annual income grow to nearly \$51,000 – an increase of \$30,000.
- For Black workers in the city of New Orleans, 39 percent of the racial income gap is due to difference in employment rates; 61 percent of the gap is due to differences in wages.

Percent annual income gains with racial equity, for Black workers in New Orleans:

145%

Average annual income gains with racial equity, for people of color:

\$28,500

Economic benefits of inclusion

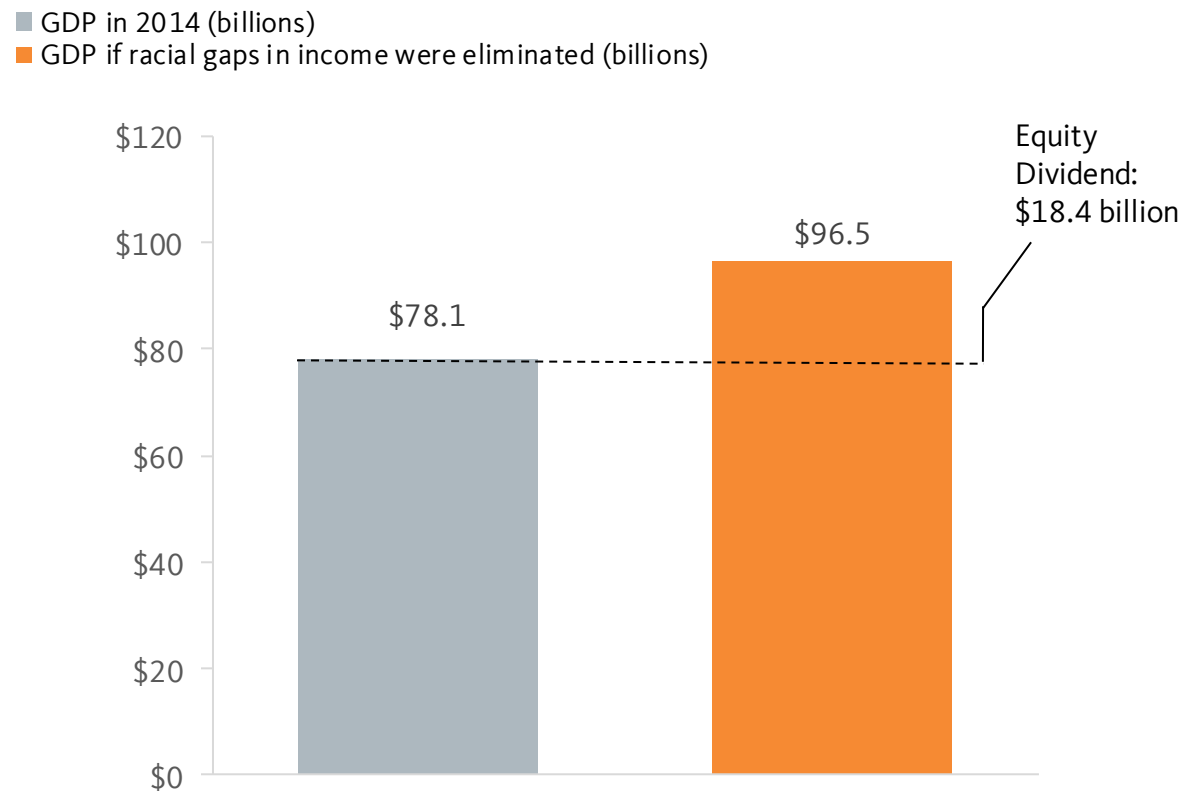
A potential \$18 billion per year GDP boost from racial equity

The New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner region stands to gain a great deal from addressing racial inequities. The region’s economy could have been \$18 billion stronger in 2014 if its racial gaps in income had been closed: a 24 percent increase.

Using data on income by race, we calculated how much higher total economic output would have been in 2014 if all racial groups who currently earn less than Whites had earned similar average incomes as their White counterparts, controlling for age.

We also examined how much of the region’s racial income gap between people of color and Whites was due to differences in wages and how much was due to differences in employment (measured by hours worked). Nationally, 64 percent of the racial income gap between all people of color and Whites is due to wage differences. In the New Orleans region, the share of the gap attributable to wages is 67 percent.

The New Orleans region’s GDP would have been more than \$18 billion higher if there were no racial gaps in income
Actual GDP and Estimated GDP without Racial Gaps in Income, 2014



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and Integrated Public Use Microdata Series.
 Note: Data reflects the New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, Louisiana Metropolitan Statistical Area as defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and represents a 2010 through 2014 average. Values are in 2014 dollars.

Economic benefits of inclusion

Average income for people of color would increase by about 129 percent with racial equity

People of color in the New Orleans region as a whole are projected to see their incomes grow by 74 percent with racial equity. Projected income gains for people of color in the city of New Orleans would be even higher: 129 percent.

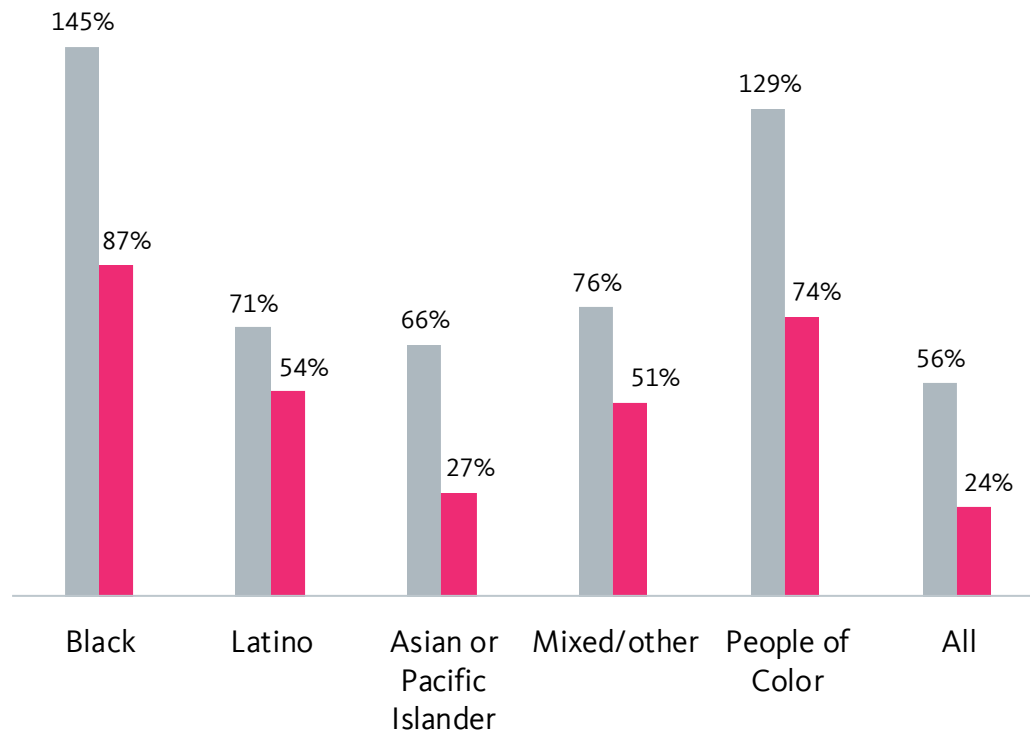
African Americans in the city of New Orleans would see a 145 percent gain in average annual income, while those of mixed/other races would see a 76 percent gain.

Income gains were estimated by calculating the percentage increase in income for each racial/ethnic group if they had the same average annual income (and income distribution) and hours of work as non-Hispanic Whites, controlling for age.

African Americans in New Orleans would experience the largest income increases with racial equity

Percentage Gain in Income with Racial Equity by Race/Ethnicity, 2014

- New Orleans
- New Orleans Metro Area



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and Integrated Public Use Microdata Series.
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Economic benefits of inclusion

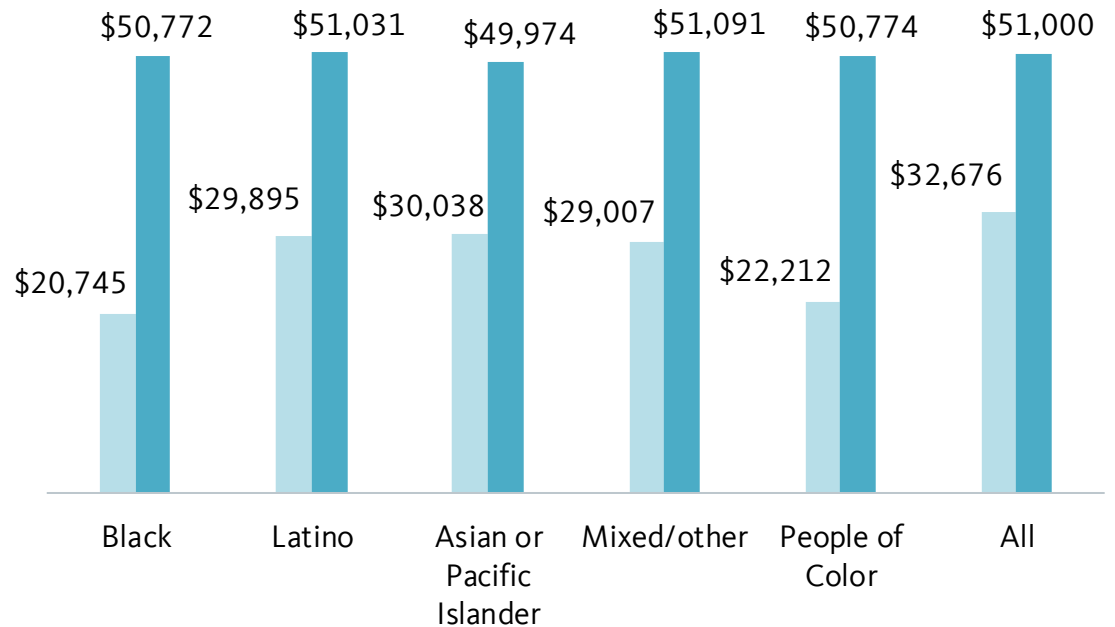
Average income for Black workers would increase by over \$30,000 per year

People of color as a whole are projected to see their incomes grow by an average of almost \$28,500 per year, with racial equity. Black workers would see an even larger increase in average income, from \$20,745 to \$50,772 per year.

African Americans would experience the largest income increases with racial equity

Gain in Average Income with Racial Equity by Race/Ethnicity, 2014

- Average Annual Income
- Projected Annual Income



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and Integrated Public Use Microdata Series.
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average. Values are in 2014 dollars.

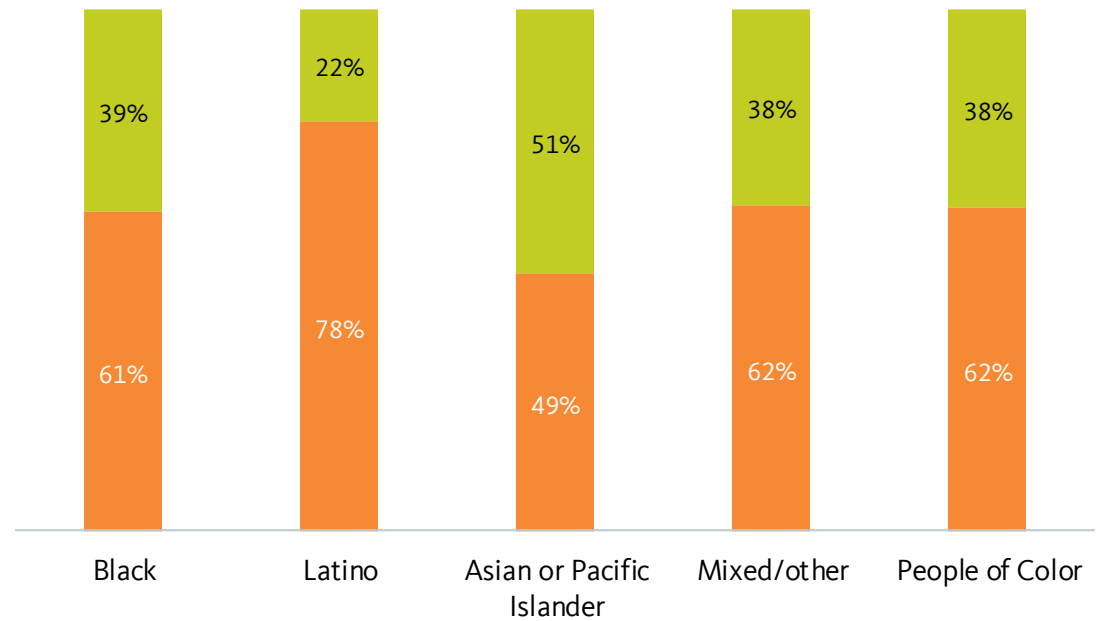
Economic benefits of inclusion

Most of the potential income gains would come from closing the racial wage gap

We also examined how much of the city’s racial income gap was due to differences in wages and how much was due to differences in employment (measured by hours worked). In New Orleans, most of the racial income gap is due to differences in wages. For all racial/ethnic groups except Asians and Pacific Islanders, wages account for the majority of the income gap.

Most of the racial income gap is due to differences in wages
Source of Gains in Income with Racial Equity By Race/Ethnicity, 2014

■ Employment
 ■ Wages



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and Integrated Public Use Microdata Series.
 Note: Data represent a 2010 through 2014 average.

Implications



Implications

Advancing racial equity and inclusive growth

New Orleans's diverse population is a major economic asset that can help the city compete in the global economy, if the city's leaders invest in ensuring all of its residents can contribute their talent and creativity to building a strong next economy.

New Orleans's local government leaders are already advancing equity-driven strategies and approaches. On April 20, 2017 the Office of Mayor Mitch Landrieu officially launched its #EquityNewOrleans strategy to embed equity throughout government operations and activities. Business, community, and political leaders can build on this momentum by working to connect communities of color to jobs, business opportunities, quality education, and career training. PolicyLink and PERE recommend the following policies, promoted by the All-In Cities initiative at PolicyLink, as a holistic approach to ensure all New Orleanians can contribute to and benefit from the city's vibrant, equitable economic future.

Grow good, accessible jobs that provide pathways to the middle class

Good jobs that are accessible to workers of color and other marginalized workers who are

likely to live in poor, isolated neighborhoods form the bedrock of equitable cities. A job that pays enough to support one's family and put some away for the future, provides health care and other benefits, and safe, dignified, family-friendly working conditions is a universal foundation for well-being and prosperity. New Orleans should target its economic development efforts to grow high-road, inclusive businesses in high-opportunity sectors; leverage public investments to help entrepreneurs of color and triple-bottom-line businesses grow more good jobs; and set high standards for wages and benefits for all workers.

Increase the economic security and mobility of vulnerable families and workers

Economic security—having enough money to cover basic needs and enough savings to weather setbacks and invest for the future—is critical to the health and well-being of families, neighborhoods, and local economies. In New Orleans, 60 percent of Black residents are economically insecure (at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty line). The city can make strides to reduce this insecurity and strengthen its economy by connecting vulnerable residents with jobs and

opportunities to save and build assets, removing discriminatory barriers to employment, and protecting families from predatory financial practices.

Cultivate homegrown talent through a strong cradle-to-career pipeline

A skilled workforce is the key to city success in the global economy, so New Orleans and other cities must prioritize equipping youth of color with the skills to excel in the 21st century workforce. By 2020, 33 percent of jobs in the state of Louisiana will require at least an associate's degree, but only 21 percent of Black New Orleanians are currently prepared for these jobs. New Orleans can nurture homegrown talent by taking a cradle-to-career approach that includes a strong workforce system to connect adult workers – including those facing barriers to employment – with employment opportunities. The City should continue to push forward its Economic Opportunity Strategy to connect 35,000 African American men to jobs.¹

Create healthy, opportunity-rich neighborhoods for all

High-quality neighborhoods are fundamental building blocks for health and economic

Implications

Advancing racial equity and inclusive growth

(continued)

opportunity. People who live in resource-rich neighborhoods with good schools, safe streets, parks, transit, clean air and water, and places to buy healthy food and other services are much more likely to live long, healthy, secure lives. In New Orleans, a child born in the Lakeshore neighborhood just a few miles away can expect to reach their 80th birthday, while a child born in the Tremé neighborhood just a few miles away can expect to live to be 55 years old.² The city should work to improve services and quality of life in its poorest neighborhoods and make catalytic investments that reconnect disinvested neighborhoods to the regional economy and spur equitable development that builds community wealth.

Build resilient, connected infrastructure
Infrastructure—roads, transit, sidewalks, bridges, ports, broadband, parks, schools, water lines, and more—is the skeletal support that allows cities to function and connects their residents to each other and to the regional and global economy. New Orleans should leverage investments in existing and new infrastructure investments, targeting resources to high-need, underserved neighborhoods to foster equitable growth and economic opportunity.

Increase access to high-quality, affordable homes and prevent displacement

Housing is the lynchpin for opportunity: the location and quality of the home you can afford not only affects your living space and your household budget—it determines the quality of your schools, the safety of your streets, the length of your commute, your exposure to toxics, and more. New Orleans must take proactive steps to ensure that working-class families of color can live in healthy homes that connect them to opportunity – and that they can afford to stay in those homes. Nearly 60 percent of renters are housing burdened. A multi-strategy approach that includes funding sources, policy levers, code enforcement, and tenant protections and services can expand housing opportunity and protect low-income communities of color from displacement.

Expand democracy and ensure just policing and court systems

While this profile does not examine primary data on democratic participation or the justice system, other reports have illustrated how African American New Orleanians are

underrepresented in civic engagement and voter participation³ and significantly overrepresented in the share of those involved in the justice system.⁴ City leaders should take proactive steps to protect civil and human rights, ensure that marginalized populations have a voice in city decisions, and direct justice system resources toward public safety and away from traditional punitive measures that reinforce social structures of inequity.

¹ PolicyLink, “Connecting Black Men to Jobs in New Orleans’s Anchor Institutions,” *America’s Tomorrow Newsletter*, November 18, 2014, <http://www.policylink.org/focus-areas/equitable-economy/americas-tomorrow-newsletters/connecting-black-men-to-anchor-institution-jobs>.

² Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies and Orleans Parish Place Matters, *Place Matters for Health in Orleans Parish: Ensuring Opportunities for Good Health for All* (Washington, DC: Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies and Orleans Parish Place Matters, 2012), <http://jointcenter.org/research/place-matters-for-health-in-orleans-parish-ensuring-opportunities-for-good-health-for-all>.

³ Urban League of Greater New Orleans, *State of Black New Orleans: 10 Years Post-Katrina* (New Orleans: Urban League of Greater New Orleans, 2015), http://www.urbanleaguenorleans.org/ul/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/SOB_FinalBookFile_Spread.pdf.

⁴ Mathilde Laisne, Jon Wool, and Christian Henrichson, *Past Due: Examining the Costs and Consequences of Charging for Justice in New Orleans* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2017), <https://www.vera.org/publications/past-due-costs-consequences-charging-for-justice-new-orleans>.

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Data and methods

Data source summary and geography

Unless otherwise noted, all of the data and analyses presented in this profile are the product of PolicyLink and USC Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE), and reflect the city of New Orleans. The specific data sources are listed in the table shown here.

While much of the data and analysis presented in this profile are fairly intuitive, in the following pages we describe some of the estimation techniques and adjustments made in creating the underlying database, and provide more detail on terms and methodology used. Finally, the reader should bear in mind that while only a single city is profiled here, many of the analytical choices in generating the underlying data and analyses were made with an eye toward replicating the analyses in other cities and regions and the ability to update them over time. Thus, while more regionally specific data may be available for some indicators, the data in this profile draws from our regional equity indicators database that provides data that are comparable and replicable over time.

Source	Dataset
Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS)	1980 5% State Sample 1990 5% Sample 2000 5% Sample 2010 American Community Survey, 5-year microdata sample 2010 American Community Survey 2014 American Community Survey, 5-year microdata sample
U.S. Census Bureau	1980 Summary Tape File 1 (STF1) 1980 Summary Tape File 2 (STF2) 1980 Summary Tape File 3 (STF3) 1990 Summary Tape File 2A (STF2A) 1990 Modified Age/Race, Sex and Hispanic Origin File (MARS) 1990 Summary Tape File 4 (STF4) 2000 Summary File 1 (SF1) 2010 Summary File 1 (SF1) 2014 ACS 5-year Summary File (2012 5-year ACS) 2012 Local Employment Dynamics, LODES 7 2010 TIGER/Line Shapefiles, 2010 Census Block Groups 2014 TIGER/Line Shapefiles, 2014 Census Tracts 2010 TIGER/Line Shapefiles, 2010 Counties
Geolytics	1980 Long Form in 2010 Boundaries 1990 Long Form in 2010 Boundaries 2000 Long Form in 2010 Boundaries
Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.	2016 Complete Economic and Demographic Data Source
U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis	Gross Domestic Product by State Gross Domestic Product by Metropolitan Area Local Area Personal Income Accounts, CA30: Regional Economic Profile
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics	Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Local Area Unemployment Statistics Occupational Employment Statistics
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)
The Reinvestment Fund	2014 Analysis of Limited Supermarket Access (LSA)
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	2011 National-Scale Air Toxics Assessment (NATA)
Diversity Data Kids	Dashboard data file
Louisiana Workforce Commission	2014-2024 Employment by Industry Long Term Projections for All Occupations to 2024
Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce	Updated projections of education requirements of jobs in 2020, originally appearing in: Recovery: Job Growth And Education Requirements Through 2020; State Report

Data and methods

Selected terms and general notes

Broad racial/ethnic origin

In all of the analyses presented, all categorization of people by race/ethnicity and nativity is based on individual responses to various census surveys. All people included in our analysis were first assigned to one of six mutually exclusive racial/ethnic categories, depending on their response to two separate questions on race and Hispanic origin as follows:

- “White” and “non-Hispanic White” are used to refer to all people who identify as White alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.
- “Black” and “African American” are used to refer to all people who identify as Black or African American alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.
- “Latino” refers to all people who identify as being of Hispanic origin, regardless of racial identification.
- “Asian American and Pacific Islander,” “Asian or Pacific Islander,” “Asian,” and “API” are used to refer to all people who identify as Asian American or Pacific Islander alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.

- “Native American” and “Native American and Alaska Native” are used to refer to all people who identify as Native American or Alaskan Native alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.
- “Mixed/other” and “other or mixed race” are used to refer to all people who identify with a single racial category not included above, or identify with multiple racial categories, and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.
- “People of color” or “POC” is used to refer to all people who do not identify as non-Hispanic White.

Nativity

The term “U.S.-born” refers to all people who identify as being born in the United States (including U.S. territories and outlying areas), or born abroad to American parents. The term “immigrant” refers to all people who identify as being born abroad, outside of the United States, to non-American parents.

Detailed racial/ethnic ancestry

Given the diversity of ethnic origin and large

presence of immigrants among the Latino and Asian populations, we sometimes present data for more detailed racial/ethnic categories within these groups. In order to maintain consistency with the broad racial/ethnic categories, and to enable the examination of second-and-higher generation immigrants, these more detailed categories (referred to as “ancestry”) are drawn from the first response to the census question on ancestry, recorded in the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) variable “ANCESTR1.” For example, while country-of-origin information could have been used to identify Filipinos among the Asian population or Salvadorans among the Latino population, it could do so only for immigrants, leaving only the broad “Asian” and “Latino” racial/ethnic categories for the U.S.-born population. While this methodological choice makes little difference in the numbers of immigrants by origin we report – i.e., the vast majority of immigrants from El Salvador mark “Salvadoran” for their ancestry – it is an important point of clarification.

Data and methods

Selected terms and general notes

(continued)

Other selected terms

Below we provide some definitions and clarification around some of the terms used in the profile:

- The term “region” is often used to describe the city of New Orleans but may also refer to the New Orleans metropolitan area or other large urban areas (e.g. large cities and counties). The terms “metropolitan area,” “metro area,” and “metro” are used interchangeably to refer to the geographic areas defined as Metropolitan Statistical Areas under the December 2003 definitions of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).¹ The term “neighborhood” is used at various points throughout the profile. While in the introductory portion of the profile this term is meant to be interpreted in the colloquial sense, in relation to any data analysis it refers to census tracts.
- The term “communities of color” generally refers to distinct groups defined by race/ethnicity among people of color.
- The term “high school diploma” refers to both an actual high school diploma as well as high school equivalency or a General

Educational Development (GED) certificate.

- The term “full-time” workers refers to all persons in the IPUMS microdata who reported working at least 45 or 50 weeks (depending on the year of the data) and usually worked at least 35 hours per week during the year prior to the survey. A change in the “weeks worked” question in the 2008 ACS, as compared with prior years of the ACS and the long form of the decennial census, caused a dramatic rise in the share of respondents indicating that they worked at least 50 weeks during the year prior to the survey. To make our data on full-time workers more comparable over time, we applied a slightly different definition in 2008 and later than in earlier years: in 2008 and later, the “weeks worked” cutoff is at least 50 weeks while in 2007 and earlier it is 45 weeks. The 45-week cutoff was found to produce a national trend in the incidence of full-time work over the 2005-2010 period that was most consistent with that found using data from the March Supplement of the Current Population Survey, which did not experience a

change to the relevant survey questions. For more information, see:

https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/2012/demo/Gottschalck_2012FCSM_VII-B.pdf.

General notes on analyses

Below, we provide some general notes about the analysis conducted:

- In regard to monetary measures (income, earnings, wages, etc.) the term “real” indicates the data has been adjusted for inflation. All inflation adjustments are based on the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U) from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Data and methods

Summary measures from IPUMS microdata

Although a variety of data sources were used, much of our analysis is based on a unique dataset created using microdata samples (i.e., “individual-level” data) from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS), for four points in time: 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010 through 2014 pooled together. While the 1980 through 2000 files are based on the decennial census and each cover about 5 percent of the U.S. population, the 2010 through 2014 files are from the ACS and cover only about 1 percent of the U.S. population. Five years of ACS data were pooled together to improve the statistical reliability and to achieve a sample size that is comparable to that available in previous years. Survey weights were adjusted as necessary to produce estimates that represent an average over the 2010 through 2014 period.

Compared with the more commonly used census “summary files,” which include a limited set of summary tabulations of population and housing characteristics, use of the microdata samples allows for the flexibility to create more illuminating metrics

of equity and inclusion, and provides a more nuanced view of groups defined by age, race/ethnicity, and nativity for various geographies in the United States.

The IPUMS microdata allows for the tabulation of detailed population characteristics, but because such tabulations are based on samples, they are subject to a margin of error and should be regarded as estimates – particularly in smaller regions and for smaller demographic subgroups. In an effort to avoid reporting highly unreliable estimates, we do not report any estimates that are based on a universe of fewer than 100 individual survey respondents.

A key limitation of the IPUMS microdata is geographic detail. Each year of the data has a particular lowest level of geography associated with the individuals included, known as the Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA) for years 1990 and later, or the County Group in 1980. PUMAs are generally drawn to contain a population of about 100,000, and vary greatly in geographic size

from being fairly small in densely populated urban areas, to very large in rural areas, often with one or more counties contained in a single PUMA.

The major challenge for our purposes is that PUMAs do not neatly align with the boundaries of cities, often with several PUMAs entirely contained within the core of the city but several other, more peripheral PUMAs straddling the city boundary.

Because PUMAs do not neatly align with the boundaries of cities and metropolitan areas, we created a geographic crosswalk between PUMAs and each geography for the 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010 through 2014 microdata. For simplicity, the description below refers only to the PUMA-to-city crosswalk but the same procedure was used to generate the PUMA-to-metropolitan area crosswalk.

We first estimated the share of each PUMA’s population that fell inside each city using population information specific to each year

Data and methods

Summary measures from IPUMS microdata

(continued)

from Geolytics, Inc. at the 2000 census block group level of geography (2010 population information was used for the 2010 through 2014 geographic crosswalk). If the share was at least 50 percent, then the PUMAs were assigned to the city and included in generating our city summary measures. For most PUMAs assigned to a city, the share was 100 percent.

For the remaining PUMAs, however, the share was somewhere between 50 and 100 percent, and this share was used as the “PUMA adjustment factor” to adjust downward the survey weights for individuals included in such PUMAs when estimating regional summary measures. Finally, we made one final adjustment to the individual survey weights in all PUMAs assigned to a city: we applied a “regional adjustment factor” to ensure that the weighted sum of the population from the PUMAs assigned to each metro area matched the total population reported in the official census summary files for each year/period. The final adjusted survey weight used to make all city estimates was, thus, equal to the

product of the original survey weight in the IPUMS microdata, the PUMA adjustment factor, and the regional adjustment factor.

To measure geographic fit, we calculated three measures: the share of the city population in each year that was derived from PUMAs that were 80 percent, 90 percent, and 100 percent contained in the city (based on population counts in each year). For example, a city with perfect geographic fit would be one in which 100 percent of the population was derived from PUMAs for which 100 percent of the PUMA population was contained in that city. A city of dubious geographic fit thus might be one in which zero percent of its population was from 80-percent-contained PUMAs (indicating that all of the PUMAs assigned to it were somewhere between 50 and 80 percent contained since a PUMA must be at least 50 percent to be assigned to the city in the first place).

The table shown below provides the above measures of fit for the city of New Orleans, along with the regional adjustment factor that

was applied (which again, gives a sense of how much the population from PUMAs allocated to the city had to be adjusted to match the actual city population in each year).

Percentage of city population from:	1980	1990	2000	2010-2014
completely contained PUMAs	0.00	0.77	0.76	0.62
90% contained PUMAs	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83
80% contained PUMAs	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.83
Regional adjustment factor:	1.00	1.00	0.99	1.00

As can be seen, except for the pooled 2010 through 2014 sample, the entire city population for which estimates are drawn from the IPUMS microdata is based on PUMAs that are at least 90 percent contained in the city boundaries. For 2010 through 2014, the geographic fit between PUMAs and the city is not as good. Despite the imperfect geographic fit, a comparison of the percentage people of color, the poverty rate, and the percentage immigrant calculated from the IPUMS microdata and the ACS summary file shows that they are very similar, differing by less than two percentage points, suggesting that any bias due to the imperfect geographic match is fairly small.

Data and methods

Adjustments made to census summary data on race/ethnicity by age

For the racial generation gap indicator, we generated consistent estimates of populations by race/ethnicity and age group (under 18, 18-64, and over 64 years of age) for the years 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2014 (which reflects a 2010 through 2014 average), at the county level, which was then aggregated to the regional level and higher. The racial/ethnic groups include non-Hispanic White, non-Hispanic Black, Hispanic/Latino, non-Hispanic Asian and Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic Native American/Alaska Native, and non-Hispanic Other (including other single race alone and those identifying as multiracial). While for 2000, this information is readily available in SF1, for 1980 and 1990, estimates had to be made to ensure consistency over time, drawing on two different summary files for each year.

For 1980, while information on total population by race/ethnicity for all ages combined was available at the county level for all the requisite groups in STF1, for race/ethnicity by age group we had to look to STF2, where it was only available for non-

Hispanic White, non-Hispanic Black, Hispanic, and the remainder of the population. To estimate the number of non-Hispanic Asian and Pacific Islanders, non-Hispanic Native Americans/Alaskan Natives, and non-Hispanic Others among the remainder for each age group, we applied the distribution of these three groups from the overall county population (of all ages) from STF1.

For 1990, population by race/ethnicity at the county level was taken from STF2A, while population by race/ethnicity was taken from the 1990 Modified Age Race Sex (MARS) file – special tabulation of people by age, race, sex, and Hispanic origin. However, to be consistent with the way race is categorized by the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) Directive 15, the MARS file allocates all persons identifying as “Other race” or multiracial to a specific race. After confirming that population totals by county were consistent between the MARS file and STF2A, we calculated the number of “Other race” or multiracial that had been added to each racial/ethnic group in each county (for all

ages combined) by subtracting the number that is reported in STF2A for the corresponding group. We then derived the share of each racial/ethnic group in the MARS file that was made up of other or mixed race people and applied this share to estimate the number of people by race/ethnicity and age group exclusive of the other or mixed race category, and finally the number of the other or mixed race people by age group.

For 2014 (which, again, reflects a 2010 through 2014 average), population by race/ethnicity and age was taken from the 2014 ACS 5-year summary file, which provides counts by race/ethnicity and age for the non-Hispanic White, Hispanic/Latino, and total population combined. County by race/ethnicity and age for all people of color combined was derived by subtracting non-Hispanic Whites from the total population.

Data and methods

Adjustments made to demographic projections

National projections

National projections of the non-Hispanic White share of the population are based on the U.S. Census Bureau's 2014 National Population Projections. However, because these projections follow the OMB 1997 guidelines on racial classification and essentially distribute the other single-race alone group across the other defined racial/ethnic categories, adjustments were made to be consistent with the six broad racial/ethnic groups used in our analysis.

Specifically, we compared the percentage of the total population composed of each racial/ethnic group from the Census Bureau's Population Estimates program for 2015 (which follows the OMB 1997 guidelines) to the percentage reported in the 2015 ACS 1-year Summary File (which follows the 2000 Census classification). We subtracted the percentage derived using the 2015 Population Estimates program from the percentage derived using the 2015 ACS to obtain an adjustment factor for each group

(all of which were negative, except that for the mixed/other group) and carried this adjustment factor forward by adding it to the projected percentage for each group in each projection year. Finally, we applied the resulting adjusted projected population distribution by race/ethnicity to the total projected population from the 2014 National Population Projections to get the projected number of people by race/ethnicity in each projection year.

County and regional projections

Similar adjustments were made in generating county and regional projections of the population by race/ethnicity. Initial county-level projections were taken from Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. Like the 1990 MARS file described above, the Woods & Poole projections follow the OMB Directive 15-race categorization, assigning all persons identifying as other or multiracial to one of five mutually exclusive race categories: White, Black, Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander, or Native American. Thus, we first generated an adjusted version of the county-level Woods &

Poole projections that removed the other or multiracial group from each of these five categories. This was done by comparing the Woods & Poole projections for 2010 to the actual results from SF1 of the 2010 Census, figuring out the share of each racial/ethnic group in the Woods & Poole data that was composed of other or mixed race persons in 2010, and applying it forward to later projection years. From these projections, we calculated the county-level distribution by race/ethnicity in each projection year for five groups (White, Black, Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Native American), exclusive of other and mixed-race people.

To estimate the county-level share of population for those classified as Other or mixed race in each projection year, we then generated a simple straight-line projection of this share using information from SF1 of the 2000 and 2010 Census. Keeping the projected other or mixed race share fixed, we allocated the remaining population share to each of the other five racial/ethnic groups by applying the racial/ethnic distribution implied

Data and methods

Adjustments made to demographic projections

(continued)

by our adjusted Woods & Poole projections for each county and projection year. The result was a set of adjusted projections at the county level for the six broad racial/ethnic groups included in the profile, which were then applied to projections of the total population by county from the Woods & Poole data to get projections of the number of people for each of the six racial/ethnic groups.

Finally, an Iterative Proportional Fitting (IPF) procedure was applied to bring the county-level results into alignment with our adjusted national projections by race/ethnicity described above. The final adjusted county results were then aggregated to produce a final set of projections at the metro area and state levels.

Data and methods

Estimates and adjustments made to BEA data on GDP

The data on national gross domestic product (GDP) and its analogous regional measure, gross regional product (GRP) – both referred to as GDP in the text – are based on data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). However, due to changes in the estimation procedure used for the national (and state-level) data in 1997, and a lack of metropolitan area estimates prior to 2001, a variety of adjustments and estimates were made to produce a consistent series at the national, state, metropolitan-area, and county levels from 1969 to 2014.

Adjustments at the state and national levels

While data on gross state product (GSP) are not reported directly in the profile, they were used in making estimates of gross product at the county level for all years and at the regional level prior to 2001, so we applied the same adjustments to the data that were applied to the national GDP data. Given a change in BEA's estimation of gross product at the state and national levels from a standard industrial classification (SIC) basis to a North American Industry Classification

System (NAICS) basis in 1997, data prior to 1997 were adjusted to prevent any erratic shifts in gross product in that year. While the change to a NAICS basis occurred in 1997, BEA also provides estimates under an SIC basis in that year. Our adjustment involved figuring the 1997 ratio of NAICS-based gross product to SIC-based gross product for each state and the nation, and multiplying it by the SIC-based gross product in all years prior to 1997 to get our final estimate of gross product at the state and national levels.

County and metropolitan area estimates

To generate county-level estimates for all years, and metropolitan-area estimates prior to 2001, a more complicated estimation procedure was followed. First, an initial set of county estimates for each year was generated by taking our final state-level estimates and allocating gross product to the counties in each state in proportion to total earnings of employees working in each county – a BEA variable that is available for all counties and years. Next, the initial county estimates were aggregated to metropolitan-area level, and

were compared with BEA's official metropolitan-area estimates for 2001 and later. They were found to be very close, with a correlation coefficient very close to one (0.9997). Despite the near-perfect correlation, we still used the official BEA estimates in our final data series for 2001 and later. However, to avoid any erratic shifts in gross product during the years until 2001, we made the same sort of adjustment to our estimates of gross product at the metropolitan-area level that was made to the state and national data – we figured the 2001 ratio of the official BEA estimate to our initial estimate, and multiplied it by our initial estimates for 2000 and earlier to get our final estimate of gross product at the metropolitan-area level.

We then generated a second iteration of county-level estimates – just for counties included in metropolitan areas – by taking the final metropolitan-area-level estimates and allocating gross product to the counties in each metropolitan area in proportion to total earnings of employees working in each

Data and methods

Estimates and adjustments made to BEA data on GDP

(continued)

county. Next, we calculated the difference between our final estimate of gross product for each state and the sum of our second-iteration county-level gross product estimates for metropolitan counties contained in the state (that is, counties contained in metropolitan areas). This difference, total nonmetropolitan gross product by state, was then allocated to the nonmetropolitan counties in each state, once again using total earnings of employees working in each county as the basis for allocation. Finally, one last set of adjustments was made to the county-level estimates to ensure that the sum of gross product across the counties contained in each metropolitan area agreed with our final estimate of gross product by metropolitan area, and that the sum of gross product across the counties contained in state agreed with our final estimate of gross product by state. This was done using a simple IPF procedure.

We should note that BEA does not provide data for all counties in the United States, but rather groups some counties that have had boundary changes since 1969 into county

groups to maintain consistency with historical data. Any such county groups were treated the same as other counties in the estimate techniques described above.

Data and methods

Middle-class analysis

To analyze middle-class decline over the past four decades, we began with the regional household income distribution in 1979 – the year for which income is reported in the 1980 Census (and the 1980 IPUMS microdata). The middle 40 percent of households were defined as “middle class,” and the upper and lower bounds in terms of household income (adjusted for inflation to be in 2010 dollars) that contained the middle 40 percent of households were identified. We then adjusted these bounds over time to increase (or decrease) at the same rate as real average household income growth, identifying the share of households falling above, below, and in between the adjusted bounds as the upper, lower, and middle class, respectively, for each year shown. Thus, the analysis of the size of the middle class examined the share of households enjoying the same relative standard of living in each year as the middle 40 percent of households did in 1979.

Data and methods

Assembling a complete dataset on employment and wages by industry

Analysis of jobs and wages by industry, reported on pages 44-45 and 49, is based on an industry-level dataset constructed using two-digit NAICS industries from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). Due to some missing (or nondisclosed) data at the county and regional levels, we supplemented our dataset using information from Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., which contains complete jobs and wages data for broad, two-digit NAICS industries at multiple geographic levels. (Proprietary issues barred us from using Woods & Poole data directly, so we instead used it to complete the QCEW dataset.) While we refer to counties in describing the process for "filling in" missing QCEW data below, the same process was used for the regional and state levels of geography.

Given differences in the methodology underlying the two data sources (in addition to the proprietary issue), it would not be appropriate to simply "plug in" corresponding Woods & Poole data directly to fill in the QCEW data for nondisclosed industries.

Therefore, our approach was to first calculate the number of jobs and total wages from nondisclosed industries in each county, and then distribute those amounts across the nondisclosed industries in proportion to their reported numbers in the Woods & Poole data.

To make for a more accurate application of the Woods & Poole data, we made some adjustments to it to better align it with the QCEW. One of the challenges of using Woods & Poole data as a "filler dataset" is that it includes all workers, while QCEW includes only wage and salary workers. To normalize the Woods & Poole data universe, we applied both a national and regional wage and salary adjustment factor; given the strong regional variation in the share of workers who are wage and salary, both adjustments were necessary. Second, while the QCEW data are available on an annual basis, the Woods & Poole data are available on a decadal basis until 1995, at which point they become available on an annual basis. For the 1990-1995 period, we estimated the Woods & Poole annual jobs and wages figures using a

straight-line approach. Finally, we standardized the Woods & Poole industry codes to match the NAICS codes used in the QCEW.

It is important to note that not all counties and regions were missing data at the two-digit NAICS level in the QCEW, and the majority of larger counties and regions with missing data were only missing data for a small number of industries and only in certain years. Moreover, when data are missing it is often for smaller industries. Thus, the estimation procedure described is not likely to greatly affect our analysis of industries, particularly for larger counties and regions.

Data and methods

Growth in jobs and earnings by industry wage level, 1990 to 2015

The analysis on pages 44-45 uses our filled-in QCEW dataset (see the previous page) and seeks to track shifts in regional job composition and wage growth by industry wage level.

Using 1990 as the base year, we classified all broad private sector industries (at the two-digit NAICS level) into three wage categories: low, middle, and high wage. An industry's wage category was based on its average annual wage, and each of the three categories contained approximately one-third of all private industries in the region.

We applied the 1990 industry wage category classification across all the years in the dataset, so that the industries within each category remained the same over time. This way, we could track the broad trajectory of jobs and wages in low-, middle-, and high-wage industries.

This approach was adapted from a method used in a Brookings Institution report by Jennifer S. Vey, *Building From Strength: Creating Opportunity in Greater Baltimore's Next Economy* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2012).

While we initially sought to conduct the analysis at a more detailed NAICS level, the large amount of missing data at the three- to six-digit NAICS levels (which could not be resolved with the method that was applied to generate our filled-in two-digit QCEW dataset) prevented us from doing so.

Data and methods

Analysis of occupations by opportunity level

The analysis of occupations on pages 50-55 is based on an analysis that seeks to classify occupations in the region by opportunity level. To identify “high-opportunity” occupations, we developed an “occupation opportunity index” based on measures of job quality and growth, including median annual wage, wage growth, job growth (in number and share), and median age of workers (which represents potential job openings due to retirements). Once the “occupation opportunity index” score was calculated for each occupation, they were sorted into three categories (high, middle, and low opportunity). Occupations were evenly distributed into the categories based on employment.

There are some aspects of this analysis that warrant further clarification. First, the “occupation opportunity index” that is constructed is based on a measure of job quality and set of growth measures, with the job-quality measure weighted twice as much as all of the growth measures combined. This weighting scheme was applied both because

we believe pay is a more direct measure of “opportunity” than the other available measures, and because it is more stable than most of the other growth measures, which are calculated over a relatively short period (2005-2011). For example, an increase from \$6 per hour to \$12 per hour is fantastic wage growth (100 percent), but most would not consider a \$12-per-hour job as a “high-opportunity” occupation.

Second, all measures used to calculate the “occupation opportunity index” are based on data for metropolitan statistical areas from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), with one exception: median age by occupation. This measure, included among the growth metrics because it indicates the potential for job openings due to replacements as older workers retire, is estimated for each occupation from the 2010 5-year IPUMS ACS microdata file (for the employed civilian noninstitutional population ages 16 and older). It is calculated at the metropolitan statistical area level (to be

consistent with the geography of the OES data), except in cases for which there were fewer than 30 individual survey respondents in an occupation; in these cases, the median age estimate is based on national data.

Third, the level of occupational detail at which the analysis was conducted, and at which the lists of occupations are reported, is the three-digit standard occupational classification (SOC) level. While considerably more detailed data is available in the OES, it was necessary to aggregate to the three-digit SOC level in order to align closely with the occupation codes reported for workers in the ACS microdata, making the analysis reported on pages 55-58 possible.

Fourth, while most of the data used in the analysis are regionally specific, information on the education level of “typical workers” in each occupation, which is used to divide occupations in the region into the three groups by education level (as presented on pages 52-54), was estimated using national 2010 IPUMS ACS microdata (for the

Data and methods

Analysis of occupations by opportunity level

(continued)

employed civilian noninstitutional population ages 16 and older). Although regionally specific data would seem to be the better choice, given the level of occupational detail at which the analysis is conducted, the sample sizes for many occupations would be too small for statistical reliability. And, while using pooled 2006-2010 data would increase the sample size, it would still not be sufficient for many regions, so national 2010 data were chosen given the balance of currency and sample size for each occupation. The implicit assumption in using national data is that the occupations examined are of sufficient detail that there is not great variation in the typical educational level of workers in any given occupation from region to region. While this may not hold true in reality, we would note that a similar approach was used in a Brookings Institution report by Jonathan Rothwell and Alan Berube, *Education, Demand, and Unemployment in Metropolitan America* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution, September 2011).

We should also note that the BLS does publish

national information on typical education needed for entry by occupation. However, in comparing these data with the typical education levels of actual workers by occupation that were estimated using ACS data, there were important differences, with the BLS levels notably lower (as expected). The levels estimated from the ACS were determined to be the appropriate choice for our analysis as they provide a more realistic measure of the level of educational attainment necessary to be a viable job candidate – even if the typical requirement for entry is lower.

Fifth, it is worthwhile to clarify an important distinction between the lists of occupations by typical education of workers and opportunity level, presented on pages 53-55, and the charts depicting the opportunity level associated with jobs held by workers with different education levels and backgrounds by race/ethnicity/nativity, presented on pages 56-58. While the former are based on the national estimates of typical education levels by occupation, with each occupation assigned

to one of the three broad education levels described, the latter are based on actual education levels of workers in the region (as estimated using 2010 5-year IPUMS ACS microdata), who may be employed in any occupation, regardless of its associated “typical” education level.

Lastly, it should be noted that for all of the occupational analysis, it was an intentional decision to keep the categorizations by education and opportunity broad, with three categories applied to each. For the categorization of occupations, this was done so that each occupation could be more justifiably assigned to a single typical education level; even with the three broad categories some occupations had a fairly even distribution of workers across them nationally, but, for the most part, a large majority fell in one of the three categories. In regard to the three broad categories of opportunity level and education levels of workers, this was done to ensure reasonably large sample sizes in the 2010 5-year IPUMS ACS microdata that was used for the analysis.

Data and methods

Health data and analysis

Health data presented are from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) database, housed in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The BRFSS database is created from randomized telephone surveys conducted by states, which then incorporate their results into the database on a monthly basis.

The results of this survey are self-reported and the population includes all related adults, unrelated adults, roomers, and domestic workers who live at the residence. The survey does not include adult family members who are currently living elsewhere, such as at college, a military base, a nursing home, or a correctional facility.

The most detailed level of geography associated with individuals in the BRFSS data is the county. Using the county-level data as building blocks, we created additional estimates for the region, state, and United States.

While the data allow for the tabulation of personal health characteristics, it is important to keep in mind that because such tabulations are based on samples, they are subject to a margin of error and should be regarded as estimates – particularly in smaller regions and for smaller demographic subgroups.

To increase statistical reliability, we combined five years of survey data, for 2008 through 2012. As an additional effort to avoid reporting potentially misleading estimates, we do not report any estimates that are based on a universe of fewer than 100 individual survey respondents. This is similar to, but more stringent than, a rule indicated in the documentation for the 2012 BRFSS data of not reporting (or interpreting) percentages based on a denominator of fewer than 50 respondents (see: https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/annual_data/2012/pdf/Compare_2012.pdf). Even with this sample size restriction, regional estimates for smaller demographic subgroups should be regarded with particular care.

For more information and access to the BRFSS database, see: <http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/index.html>.

Data and methods

Analysis of access to healthy food

Analysis of access to healthy food is based on the 2014 Analysis of Limited Supermarket Access (LSA) from the The Reinvestment Fund (TRF). LSA areas are defined as one or more contiguous census block groups (with a collective population of at least 5,000) where residents must travel significantly farther to reach a supermarket than the “comparatively acceptable” distance traveled by residents in well-served areas with similar population densities and car ownership rates.

The methodology’s key assumption is that block groups with a median household income greater than 120 percent of their respective metropolitan area’s median (or non-metro state median for non-metropolitan areas) are adequately served by supermarkets and thus travel an appropriate distance to access food. Thus, higher-income block groups establish the benchmark to which all block groups are compared, controlling for population density and car ownership rates.

An LSA score is calculated as the percentage by which the distance to the nearest supermarket would have to be reduced to make a block group’s access equal to the access observed for adequately served areas. Block groups with an LSA score greater than 45 were subjected to a spatial connectivity analysis, with 45 chosen as the minimum threshold because it was roughly equal to the average LSA score for all LSA block groups in the 2011 TRF analysis.

Block groups with contiguous spatial connectivity of high LSA scores are referred to as LSA areas. They represent areas with the strongest need for increased access to supermarkets. Our analysis of the percent of people living in LSA areas by race/ethnicity and poverty level was done by merging data from the 2014 5-year ACS summary file with LSA areas at the block group level and aggregating up to the city, county, and higher levels of geography.

For more information on the 2014 LSA analysis, see: https://www.reinvestment.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/2014_Limited_Supermarket_Access_Analysis-Brief_2015.pdf.

Data and methods

Air pollution data and analysis

The air pollution exposure index is derived from the 2011 National-Scale Air Toxics Assessment (NATA) developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The NATA uses general information about emissions sources to develop risk estimates and *does not* incorporate more refined information about emissions sources, which suggests that the impacts of risks may be overestimated. Note, however, that because the analysis presented using this data is relative to the U.S. overall in the case of exposure index, the fact that the underlying risk estimates themselves may be overstated is far less problematic.

The NATA data include estimates of cancer risk and respiratory hazards (non-cancer risk) at the census tract level based on exposure to outdoor sources. It is important to note that while diesel particulate matter (PM) exposure is included in the NATA non-cancer risk estimates, it is not included in the cancer risk estimates (even though PM is a known carcinogen).

The index of exposure to air pollution presented is based on a combination of separate indices for cancer risk and respiratory hazard at the census tract level, using the 2011 NATA. We followed the approach used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in developing its Environmental Health Index. The cancer risk and respiratory hazard estimates were combined by calculating tract-level z-scores for each and adding them together as indicated in the formula below:

$$COMBINED_i = \left(\frac{c_i - \mu_c}{\sigma_c} \right) + \left(\frac{r_i - \mu_r}{\sigma_r} \right)$$

Where c indicates cancer risk, r indicates respiratory risk, i indexes census tracts, and μ and σ represent the means and standard deviations, respectively, of the risk estimates across all census tracts in the United States.

The combined tract level index, $COMBINED_i$, was then ranked in ascending order across all tracts in the United States, from 1 to 100.

Finally, the tract-level rankings were summarized to the city, county, and higher levels of geography for various demographic groups (i.e., by race/ethnicity and poverty status) by taking a population-weighted average using the group population as weight, with group population data drawn from the 2014 5-year ACS summary file.

For more information on the NATA data, see <http://www.epa.gov/national-air-toxics-assessment>.

Data and methods

Measures of diversity and segregation

In the profile, we refer to measures of residential segregation by race/ethnicity (the “multi-group entropy index” on page 78 and the “dissimilarity index” on page 79). While the common interpretation of these measures is included in the text of the profile, the data used to calculate them, and the sources of the specific formulas that were applied, are described below.

Both measures are based on census-tract-level data for 1980, 1990, and 2000 from Geolytics, and for 2014 (which reflects a 2010 through 2014 average) from the 2014 5-year ACS. While the data for 1980, 1990, and 2000 originate from the decennial censuses of each year, an advantage of the Geolytics data we use is that it has been “re-shaped” to be expressed in 2010 census tract boundaries, and so the underlying geography for our calculations is consistent over time; the census tract boundaries of the original decennial census data change with each release, which could potentially cause a change in the value of residential segregation indices even if no actual change in residential

segregation occurred. In addition, while most all the racial/ethnic categories for which indices are calculated are consistent with all other analyses presented in this profile, there is one exception. Given limitations of the tract-level data released in the 1980 Census, Native Americans are combined with Asians and Pacific Islanders in that year. For this reason, we set 1990 as the base year (rather than 1980) in the chart on page 79, but keep the 1980 data in the chart on page 78 as this minor inconsistency in the data is not likely to affect the analysis.

The formula for the multi-group entropy index was drawn from a 2004 report by John Iceland of the University of Maryland, *The Multigroup Entropy Index (Also Known as Theil’s H or the Information Theory Index)* available at: <https://www.census.gov/topics/housing/housing-patterns/about/multi-group-entropy-index.html>. In that report, the formula used to calculate the multigroup entropy index (referred to as the “entropy index” in the report) appear on page 8.

The formula for the dissimilarity index is well established, and is made available by the U.S. Census Bureau at: <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2002/dec/censr-3.html>.

Data and methods

Estimates of GDP without racial gaps in income

Estimates of the gains in average annual income and GDP under a hypothetical scenario in which there is no income inequality by race/ethnicity are based on the 2014 5-Year IPUMS ACS microdata. We applied a methodology similar to that used by Robert Lynch and Patrick Oakford in chapter two of *All-In Nation: An America that Works for All*, with some modification to include income gains from increased employment (rather than only those from increased wages). As in the Lynch and Oakford analysis, once the percentage increase in overall average annual income was estimated, 2014 GDP was assumed to rise by the same percentage.

We first organized individuals aged 16 or older in the IPUMS ACS into six mutually exclusive racial/ethnic groups: non-Hispanic White, non-Hispanic Black, Latino, non-Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic Native American, and non-Hispanic Other or multiracial. Following the approach of Lynch and Oakford in *All-In Nation*, we excluded from the non-Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islander category subgroups whose average incomes

were higher than the average for non-Hispanic Whites. Also, to avoid excluding subgroups based on unreliable average income estimates due to small sample sizes, we added the restriction that a subgroup had to have at least 100 individual survey respondents in order to be included.

We then assumed that all racial/ethnic groups had the same average annual income and hours of work, by income percentile and age group, as non-Hispanic Whites, and took those values as the new “projected” income and hours of work for each individual. For example, a 54-year-old non-Hispanic Black person falling between the 85th and 86th percentiles of the non-Hispanic Black income distribution was assigned the average annual income and hours of work values found for non-Hispanic White persons in the corresponding age bracket (51 to 55 years old) and “slice” of the non-Hispanic White income distribution (between the 85th and 86th percentiles), regardless of whether that individual was working or not. The projected individual annual incomes and work hours

were then averaged for each racial/ethnic group (other than non-Hispanic Whites) to get projected average incomes and work hours for each group as a whole, and for all groups combined.

One difference between our approach and that of Lynch and Oakford is that we include all individuals ages 16 years and older, rather than just those with positive income. Those with income values of zero are largely non-working, and were included so that income gains attributable to increased average annual hours of work would reflect both expanded work hours for those currently working and an increased share of workers – an important factor to consider given sizeable differences in employment rates by race/ethnicity. One result of this choice is that the average annual income values we estimate are analogous to measures of per capita income for the age 16-and-older population and are notably lower than those reported in Lynch and Oakford. Another is that our estimated income gains are relatively larger as they presume increased employment rates.

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