

A PORTRAIT OF
**NEW YORK
CITY 2018**

WELL-BEING IN
**THE FIVE BOROUGHS AND
THE GREATER METRO AREA**

Kristen Lewis
Sarah Burd-Sharps

KEY FINDINGS

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Lastly, we especially want to express appreciation and respect for our dedicated Measure of America team, whose collaborative spirit in shaping this report was remarkable. We are very grateful to them.

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Kristen and Sarah

Key Findings

A Portrait of New York City 2018 examines well-being and access to opportunity for different geographies and demographic groups in New York City and the greater New York–New Jersey–Connecticut metropolitan area using the framework of human development. Relying solely on economic statistics can result in a misleading picture of the opportunities and well-being of everyday people. To remedy this and complement money metrics like gross domestic product, the United Nations developed the Human Development Index—a composite score of life expectancy, education, and income indicators. Measure of America (MOA) has adapted this index to the US context. Using data from the US Census Bureau and state and city health departments to measure these three fundamental dimensions of well-being and access to opportunity, MOA combined these measurements into a single number on a 0-to-10-point scale. This is the American Human Development (HD) Index.

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Relative to the United States as a whole, New York City and the greater metro area are doing well in terms of the three building blocks of the HD Index—on average, New Yorkers are ahead in terms of access to knowledge, a long and healthy life, and a decent standard of living. But a look beneath the surface of these relatively high averages uncovers deep and disturbing disparities on all three fronts. Calculating scores by towns, neighborhoods, and even smaller geographic units, as well as by race and ethnicity, gender, and nativity, allows for side-by-side comparisons that highlight the advantages and challenges encountered by different groups and communities. NYC residents are more likely than the average American to hold a bachelor's or graduate degree, but almost one in five New Yorkers lacks the barebones credential of a high school diploma; the typical worker earns more in NYC than in the United States overall, but there is an \$81,000 gap between the highest- and lowest-earning neighborhoods in the city; and while the average New Yorker outlives the average American by three years, an Asian child born in the Bronx can expect to live 17.5 years longer than a black child born in Manhattan.

The city and the metro area, as well as the communities within them, are not discrete. Millions of people traverse these boundaries daily to go to work or class, to visit friends and family, to see a play or spend a day at the beach. The well-being of residents of the metro area has an impact on that of residents of the city proper, and vice versa—the fates of all New Yorkers, as well as our tri-state neighbors, are joined together. And while an exploration of human development in the city and the metro area reveals many similarities, the report also identifies key differences that lend insight into the challenges facing New Yorkers and their tri-state neighbors today.

While we explore the three dimensions of the index separately, earnings and education are tightly intertwined—though women's economic returns on

education are less than men's—and neighborhoods and demographic groups that score low on one dimension of the index often score low on the other. (Health is the exception—immigrants and Latinos have much higher life expectancies than one would expect given their earnings; this phenomenon is discussed on [PAGE 106](#).) The well-being challenges faced by certain New York metro area and NYC communities are compounded by stark residential segregation by race and ethnicity, income, and education level. This report also examines a range of issues that contribute to and/or are compounded by the well-being challenges faced by many New York City communities, such as health inequities, racism, residential segregation, and mass incarceration. Bringing to light the interlocking barriers to opportunity in the region is the first step toward crafting targeted, data-informed policies that expand the freedom and opportunities of all New Yorkers.

Using data on educational attainment and enrollment rates, median personal earnings, and life expectancy at birth, Measure of America calculated American Human Development Index scores for 170 neighborhood and town clusters in the New York metro area; for the five boroughs and for 188 neighborhood tabulation areas in New York City; for the four major racial and ethnic groups; for women and men; and for US- and foreign-born residents.

Human Development in the New York Metro Area

- While the majority of the *Portrait*, including the chapters on health, earnings, and education, focuses on NYC proper, well-being in the greater metro area lends important regional context, and is discussed in depth in the first section of this report. **The American Human Development Index score for the greater New York metro area (6.32) is higher than the score for the city proper (5.98) and the United States as a whole (5.17).**
- Despite a longer life expectancy and higher education levels, women score slightly lower than men on the index (6.25 vs. 6.30) due to a **\$12,500 gender earnings gap**. Women earn less than men in every racial and ethnic group, though the size of the gap varies. Measure of America has also calculated earnings by Asian subgroup for this report, and the gender differences within some of these groups are striking.
- Of the four major racial and ethnic groups studied in this report, Asian metro area residents score highest on the HD Index, followed by white, black, and Latino residents. The Asian and white scores are similar (7.54 and 7.16, respectively), as are the black and Latino scores (4.87 and 4.83).

Bringing to light the interlocking barriers to opportunity in the region is the first step toward crafting targeted, data-informed policies that expand the freedom and opportunities of all New Yorkers.

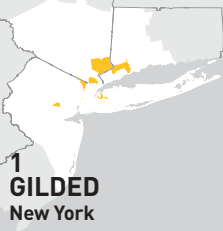


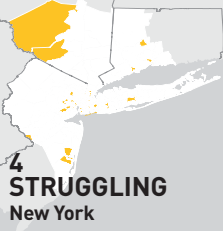

- Asians in the metro area score higher on the HD Index than Asians in the city proper, while the reverse is true for whites. Black and Latino residents score third and fourth, respectively, in both. But black city residents fare slightly better than their metro area counterparts, while for Latinos, the reverse is true (4.83 in the metro area vs. 4.58 in the city).
- The top-scoring neighborhood and town cluster of the 170 analyzed in the metro area is the Upper East Side in New York City (9.36). This area also scores highest in terms of education. The highest earnings are also found in Manhattan, in Battery Park City, Greenwich Village, and Soho. Southeast Westchester County fares best in terms of life expectancy.
- Southwest Newark, New Jersey has the lowest HD Index score and the lowest average life expectancy. The Hunts Point, Longwood, and Melrose section of the Bronx has the lowest education score, and Belmont, Crotona Park East, and East Tremont, also in the Bronx, has the lowest earnings.

THE FIVE NEW YORKS

Two communities just a few miles apart may afford their residents vastly different opportunities. By the same token, metro area residents separated by significant distance can share remarkably similar experiences when it comes to well-being and access to opportunity, and face the same obstacles to realizing their potential. To highlight such community similarities and differences across the tri-state area, Measure of America sorted the 170 neighborhood and town clusters in the metropolitan region into the Five New Yorks according to where they fall on the HD Index.

- **Gilded New York:** The eleven neighborhood and town clusters that make up Gilded New York score above 8.50 on the HD Index, with an impressive average score of 9.18.
- **Opportunity-Rich New York:** Opportunity-Rich New York is comprised of forty-two neighborhood and town clusters with scores between 7.00 and 8.49. Only five of these communities are in New York City proper.
- **Main Street New York:** Seventy-four neighborhood and town clusters, home to nearly 10 million metro area residents, land near the middle of the index, between 5.50 and 6.99.
- **Struggling New York:** Thirty-four neighborhood and town clusters score between 4.00 and 5.49 on the index, together comprising Struggling New York.
- **Precarious New York:** The nine neighborhood and town clusters that make up Precarious New York score less than 4.00 on the HD Index. More than 1.3 million people live in Precarious New York.

TABLE 19 Human Development Index for the Five New Yorks

	HD INDEX RANGE	LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (years)	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL (% of adults 25+)	AT LEAST BACHELOR'S DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (% ages 3 to 24)	MEDIAN EARNINGS (\$)
UNITED STATES	5.17	79.3	12.9	30.6	11.6	77.3	\$31,416
 1 GILDED New York	8.50 TO 10.00	86.2	5.0	72.7	35.8	85.6	\$69,136
 2 OPPORTUNITY-RICH New York	7.00 TO 8.49	84.2	7.4	51.3	22.6	83.4	\$50,342
 3 MAIN STREET New York	5.50 TO 6.99	82.4	12.5	35.6	14.0	80.8	\$39,043
 4 STRUGGLING New York	4.00 TO 5.49	80.7	22.6	24.6	9.2	77.6	\$28,587
 5 PRECARIOUS New York	BELOW 4.00	78.5	32.0	13.9	3.4	76.6	\$22,342

Sources: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the Connecticut Department of Public Health, NJ Department of Health, New York State Department of Health, and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and population data from CDC Wonder and the US Census Bureau, 2010-2014. Education and earnings: US Census Bureau ACS, 2015.



Of the ten highest-scoring neighborhoods, nine are in Manhattan and one is in Brooklyn. All ten lowest-scoring neighborhoods are in the Bronx.

Human Development in New York City

KEY FINDINGS: AMERICAN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX

- **New York City scores 5.98 out of 10 on the American Human Development Index, higher than the United States but lower than the New York metro area.** The city also has higher highs and lower lows than the greater metro area.
- On average, Asian and white New Yorkers enjoy relatively high levels of well-being, while black and Latino New Yorkers have HD Index scores below the city average. White residents have the highest score (7.63) and Latino residents have the lowest (4.58).
- Women score higher than men on the HD Index (6.16 vs. 5.87) due to higher average life expectancies and education levels.
- Carnegie Hill on the Upper East Side has the highest score (9.34) of all 188 NYC neighborhood tabulation areas. Of the ten highest-scoring neighborhoods, nine are in Manhattan and one is in Brooklyn. All ten lowest-scoring neighborhoods are in the Bronx. Claremont-Bathgate scores the lowest (2.71).
- Like the metro area, New York City is highly segregated by race, income, and education level. There is a strong positive relationship between a neighborhood's HD Index score and its proportion of white residents, while neighborhoods with higher shares of Latino residents tend to have lower index scores.
- HD Index scores can be used to track improvements over time, but in a city where neighborhoods are rapidly transforming, it can be difficult to determine if rising well-being levels are due to better outcomes for existing residents or to changes in population demographics. According to an analysis of the racial compositions of the fifty-nine NYC community districts since 2000, the black share of the population has decreased by more than 5 percentage points in fourteen neighborhoods. At the same time, many traditionally black and Latino neighborhoods experienced an influx of white residents.

Health

KEY FINDINGS: A LONG AND HEALTHY LIFE

- **A child born today in New York City can expect to live for 82.3 years.** If New York City were a country, it would rank eighth in life expectancy, tied with Sweden. But the life expectancies of the longest- and shortest-lived neighborhoods and racial and ethnic groups are separated by gaps of over ten years.
- Foreign-born New Yorkers can expect to live six years longer, on average, than those born in the United States. This life expectancy advantage tends to fade the longer immigrants live in the United States.
- There is a five-year life expectancy gap between NYC men (80.2 years) and women (85.3 years). Some of this gap has a biological basis, but the ways in which men and women are socialized also plays a role.
- More than a decade separates the life expectancy of the city's Asian residents (89.3 years) and its black residents (79.2 years). Latinos and whites fall between the two; Latinos are the second-longest-lived group (83.5 years), and whites are the third (82.6 years).
- There is a thirteen-year difference in life expectancy between the longest- and shortest-lived NYC community district; residents of Bayside, Douglaston, and Little Neck in Queens have a life expectancy of 89.6 years, compared to a 76.7-year life expectancy for residents of Brownsville and Ocean Hill in Brooklyn.
- Heart disease and cancer are the two leading causes of death across all four racial and ethnic groups, but black New Yorkers are more likely to die from preventable causes such as infant death in the first twenty-eight days, HIV, and homicide.



Latinos are the second-longest-lived group in New York City, outliving whites by almost one year.



Although New York City scores higher on the Education Index than the United States as a whole due to higher levels of bachelor's and graduate degree attainment, almost one in five adults in the city lacks a high school diploma.

Education

KEY FINDINGS: ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE

- **New York City scores 5.45 on the Education Index**, calculated using a combination of school enrollment rates and adult high school, bachelor's, and graduate degree attainment rates. Although New York scores higher on the Education Index than the United States as a whole (5.45 compared to 5.17) due to higher levels of bachelor's and graduate degree attainment, almost one in five adults in the city lacks a high school diploma.
- On average, women in New York City have higher educational attainment levels than men, with an Education Index score of 5.52, compared to 5.37.
- Education Index scores of US- and foreign-born New Yorkers are separated by nearly three points—6.44 compared to 3.54. Foreign-born New Yorkers are less likely to be enrolled in school and less likely to have attained a high school, bachelor's, or graduate degree. Educational attainment and enrollment rates for immigrant New Yorkers vary considerably by race and ethnicity, however.
- White residents score the highest on the Education Index (7.67). Asians score second highest (5.76), but educational outcomes vary considerably by Asian subgroup. Black New Yorkers come in third (4.54) and Latino New Yorkers have the lowest score (3.24), though, again, educational attainment varies by subgroup.
- Education Index scores vary tremendously across New York City neighborhoods, ranging from Carnegie Hill on the Upper East Side, with a score of 9.50, to North Corona in Queens, which scores just 1.38.
- Low Education Index scores are associated with higher rates of poverty, child poverty, unemployment, incarceration, and births to teenagers. Higher education scores are associated with higher median personal earnings.

Earnings

KEY FINDINGS: A DECENT STANDARD OF LIVING

- To gauge living standards, Measure of America uses median personal earnings, the wages of the person at the midpoint of the earnings distribution; half of all workers earn more, half earn less. The wages of all workers, full- and part-time, are included. **NYC median personal earnings are \$35,934**, above the US median of \$31,416. But there are vast disparities in earnings among different racial and ethnic groups. The typical white worker takes home \$52,290, over \$20,000 more than the typical Asian or black worker (with median earnings of \$32,156 and \$32,059, respectively) and twice the earnings of the typical Latino worker (\$25,086).
- White city residents earn \$16,000 more than white Americans in general. Asian city residents are the only group that earns less than their US counterparts.
- Men earn \$7,000 more than women in NYC, despite women's superior performance on the Education Index. The gender earnings gap exists across all of the major racial and ethnic groups. It is widest for white workers—white men typically earn \$13,100 more than white women in the city. Black men and women have the smallest gender earnings gap, likely a sign of disproportionate discrimination faced by black men rather than an advantage for black women.
- US-born New Yorkers make \$11,000 more than foreign-born New Yorkers. NYC Asians have the largest gap: Asians born in the United States earn over \$18,000 more than those who immigrated.
- Manhattanites take home twice the earnings of Bronx residents. All ten of the highest-earning neighborhoods are in Manhattan; eight of the ten lowest-earning neighborhoods are in the Bronx.
- Earnings range from a median of \$95,000 in Carnegie Hill on the Upper East Side to \$14,400 in the Bronx neighborhood of Belmont.
- Over 50 percent of New Yorkers qualify as rent burdened (spending more than 30 percent of their incomes on rent and utilities), the third-highest rate of the ten most populous US metro areas.
- There is a strong negative relationship between incarceration rates and earnings in New York City neighborhoods.



White city residents earn \$16,000 more than white Americans in general. Asian city residents are the only group that earns less than their US counterparts.



The report concludes with an ambitious but realistic goal: to increase the HD Index from today's 5.98 to 6.60 by 2025.

Conclusion

SETTING A GOAL AND WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE IT

Shoring up the foundations of well-being for all residents as well as building on the strengths and expanding the opportunities of the groups that are struggling today is key to a flourishing New York tomorrow. The fates of different groups of New Yorkers are inextricably linked. The report thus concludes with an ambitious but realistic goal: to increase well-being for all city residents and narrow the gaps between groups, **resulting in an increase in the HD Index— from today's 5.98 to 6.60 by 2025**. To achieve this goal in a way that results in measurable well-being improvements for all, with a focus on the most vulnerable residents, the following areas are priorities:

- **HEALTH:** Structuring neighborhood, school, and work environments such that the healthiest choices are also easy choices and addressing the particular health challenges of black New Yorkers will extend life expectancy for all and achieve significant gains for the group with the lowest life expectancy. Investing in the social determinants of health in black communities and reducing anti-black racism, which exacts a heavy toll on the health of black New Yorkers, are particularly important.

Target: Increase average life expectancy by one year, from 82.3 years to 83.3 years, by 2025.

- **EDUCATION:** Better educational outcomes require that we address the social and economic disadvantages that threaten children's stability, protect them from harm, and promote healthy cognitive development in the early years; improve school quality such that all children have good choices; and address the disproportionate rates of youth disconnection among black and Latino young people. A focus on Struggling NY and Precarious NY and on Latinos citywide will help narrow the gaps in educational attainment and quality.

Target: Increase enrollment by 6 percent and boost adult educational attainment by 6 percent by 2025.

- **EARNINGS:** Increasing wages, addressing the affordable housing crisis, reducing the toll of justice involvement in high-incarceration neighborhoods, and reducing the gender earnings gap will lift median personal earnings, enabling greater economic security and a chance for all New Yorkers to invest in themselves and provide a safe, stable environment for the next generation. This will require a laser focus on workers whose median personal earnings are very low, namely those in Precarious NY (under \$22,000 annual median personal earnings) and Struggling NY (under \$29,000).

Target: Increase median earnings by \$4,000 by 2025 (in inflation-adjusted dollars).

THE NYC GOAL: Raise the Level of Well-Being for All and Narrow the Gap Between Groups

2018 → 2025

Today's New York City HD Index score is 5.98 out of a possible 10. **The goal is to increase the HD Index score to 6.60 by 2025.** Achieving this demanding but attainable goal in a way that results in measurable well-being improvements for all with a focus on the city's most vulnerable residents will require the following changes in health, education, and earnings over the next seven years.

LIFE EXPECTANCY



HEALTH: Address key determinants and drivers of health disparity to extend life expectancy for all with targeted efforts for black residents, the group with the lowest life expectancies.

- ✓ **All:** Increase average life expectancy at birth by one year from 82.3 years to 83.3 years.
- ✓ **Narrow the Gap:** Increase the life expectancy of black New Yorkers, currently 79.2 years, by at least two years.

ENROLLMENT & ADULT EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



EDUCATION: Increase school enrollment and educational degree attainment with a focus on Struggling New York and Precarious New York.

- ✓ **All:** Increase enrollment and attainment by 6 percent. This would require an additional 102,000 young people ages 3–24 enrolled in school, 184,000 more adults having high school or equivalency diplomas, 130,000 more four-year college grads, and 59,000 more graduate or professional degrees.
- ✓ **Narrow the Gap:** Focus school enrollment and educational attainment policies and programs in Struggling and Precarious New York, with particular attention to Latino families.

MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS



EARNINGS: Wages of workers at the high end of the earnings scale have been rising faster, so lifting the median with an eye toward greater income equality will require a laser focus on the wages of low- and mid-wage workers and factors such as employment discrimination and the toll of incarceration on individuals and families that thwart economic security.

- ✓ **All:** Increase NYC median personal earnings by \$4,000, from today's \$36,000 to \$40,000.
- ✓ **Narrow the Gap:** Lift the earnings from \$22,000 (Precarious NYC) and \$28,000 (Struggling NYC).