The State of Neighborhood Services and Conditions

Indicators of school performance continued to improve, although there was wide variation in neighborhoods across the city. Subway ridership reached an all-time high, while subway performance declined. Compared to the previous year, in 2015 the violent crime rate rose in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island but declined in Brooklyn.

Elementary and Middle Schools
Finding #1

Student performance in math continued to improve citywide, but disparities persisted across boroughs.

Citywide, students in grades three through eight performed better in math in 2015 than they did in the previous year. While, in most boroughs, proficiency rates in math increased between 2014 and 2015, the gains were smaller than they had been between 2013 and 2014, and in Staten Island proficiency rates in fact fell slightly. The highest proficiency rates were in Queens (42.7%) and Manhattan (41.6%), while barely more than one of every five students in the Bronx were proficient in math in the school year ending in 2015.

Figure 1: Share of Students (Grades Three through Eight) Performing at Grade Level in Math

Bronx Brooklyn Manhattan Queens Staten Island New York City

Sources: New York City Department of Education, NYU Furman Center
Student performance in English language arts continued to improve citywide.

In English language arts, students performed better in all five boroughs in 2015 than they did the year before, although significant disparities remained. Manhattan and Staten Island were tied for the highest proficiency rates in the subject, at 37.6 percent. The Bronx had the lowest proficiency rate at 17 percent and the smallest year-over-year gain of 1.5 percentage points. In all boroughs and citywide, proficiency rates were lower for English language arts than for math, and Staten Island was the only borough to make larger gains, in percentage point terms, in English language arts than in math between 2013 and 2015.

Student performance varied widely across schools.

In many schools, fewer than 15 percent of fourth graders scored proficient on either the English language arts or math subject tests in 2015. Lower-performing schools were concentrated in the southern and central Bronx, eastern Brooklyn, and northern Manhattan. In some neighborhoods, however, such as Queens Village (QN 13) in Queens, Flatlands/Canarsie (BK 18) in Brooklyn, and East Harlem (MN 11) in Manhattan, schools that were geographically quite close together had proficiency rates that differed by upwards of 30 percentage points.

Figure 3: Fourth Grade Math Performance and Number of Students Tested by School, 2015

- Math Proficiency: Less than 20%
- Math Proficiency: 20% to 40%
- Math Proficiency: 40% to 60%
- Math Proficiency: 60% or greater

Number of 4th Graders Tested
- <100 students
- 100+ students

Sources: NYU Institute for Education & Social Policy, New York Education Department, NYU Furman Center
SECONDARY SCHOOLS
FINDING #4

High school graduation rates improved citywide.

Citywide, more than 70 percent of the high school class of 2015 graduated by June of their senior year, a sizeable increase from the rate of about 52 percent just ten years earlier. While Staten Island continued to have the highest high school graduation rates among the five boroughs in 2015, it saw a small decline from 2014. In every other borough, graduation rates continued the recent upward trend.

Source: New York City Department of Education, NYU Furman Center

SECONDARY SCHOOLS
FINDING #5

Increases in high school graduation rates came from declining dropout rates and a falling share of students enrolled beyond their senior year.

The dropout rate (defined as the share of students who, as of June 30, four years after entering ninth grade, have not graduated and are not still enrolled in school) dropped by seven percentage points—from 16 percent to nine percent—between the class of 2005 and the class of 2015. Furthermore, the share of students who were still enrolled four years after entering ninth grade also declined as graduation rates increased.

Source: New York City Department of Education, NYU Furman Center
**PRIVATE SCHOOLING**

**FINDING #6**

The share of 5- to 17-year-olds attending private schools declined.

Citywide, the share of 5- to 17-year-olds attending private schools, including both religious and secular private schools, declined from a peak of 21.6 percent in 2007 to less than 17 percent in 2014. Manhattan had the highest rates of private school attendance between 2006 and 2014, but that rate declined precipitously between 2009 and 2010 in the midst of the Great Recession, falling from nearly 30 percent to slightly less than 25 percent in just one year. The Bronx was the only borough where less than one in ten school-aged children attended a private school in 2014.

Figure 6: Share of 5- to 17-Year-Olds Enrolled in Private School

Source: American Community Survey, NYU Furman Center

**FINDING #7**

The share of students attending private schools varied widely by neighborhood.

In the Upper East Side (MN 8) in Manhattan, and in Borough Park (BK 12) in Brooklyn, more than half of school-aged children attended private schools, according to 2010-2014 estimates from the American Community Survey. In general, the neighborhoods with higher shares of students attending private schools did not have poorer performance in public elementary schools; indeed, very few students attended private schools in the neighborhoods with the schools with the lowest proficiency rates (see Figure 3).

Figure 7: Share of 5- to 17-Year-Olds Attending Private School by Sub-Borough Area, 2010-2014

Source: American Community Survey, NYU Furman Center
**CRIME FINDING #8**

**Serious crime rates went down slightly from the previous year.**

The New York City Police Department tracks serious felonies, which include murder and non-negligent manslaughter, rape, felony assault, and robbery (broken out as violent crimes), as well as burglary, grand larceny, and car theft (broken out as property crimes). The total rate of serious crimes per 1,000 residents declined slightly between 2014 and 2015 (from 13.0 to 12.9), to match the lowest rate since 2000, recorded in 2010. Although the total number of violent crimes rose from 38,023 in 2014 to 38,667 in 2015, the resulting change in the violent crime rate was less than 0.1 crimes per 1,000 residents. All of the reduction in the overall serious crime rate, therefore, was attributable to the decline in the property crime rate from 8.4 in 2014 to 8.1 in 2015.

**Figure 8: Serious Crime Rate (per 1,000 Residents) by Major Type, New York City**

- Serious Crime
- Serious Property Crime
- Serious Violent Crime

**CRIME FINDING #9**

**Although crime declined overall between 2014 and 2015, rates of murder, rape, and robbery went up.**

In 2015, there were 352 homicides (crimes classified as murder or non-negligent manslaughter) in New York City, an increase from the 333 recorded in the previous year though still below the 419 homicides in 2012. There were 1,435 recorded rapes in 2015, compared to 1,352 in 2014, and 16,930 robberies, up from 16,533 in the previous year. Crimes of all types have declined since 2000, and the recent increases in certain categories were small compared to the gains made since that year.

**Figure 9: Index of Crime Rates by Type of Crime, New York City (Index=100 in 2000)**

- Murder and Non-Negligent Manslaughter
- Rape
- Robbery
- Felony Assault
- Burglary
- Grand Larceny
- Grand Larceny of Motor Vehicle

Sources: New York City Police Department, US Census, NYU Furman Center

Note: Due to rounding, the sum of violent crime rate and property crime rate may not exactly equal total serious crime rate.
Compared to the previous year, in 2015 the violent crime rate rose in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island, but declined in Brooklyn.

The rate of serious violent crimes rose by more than five percent compared to the previous year in the Bronx (6.5%), Manhattan (7.6%), and Staten Island (6.0%). In Brooklyn, the violent crime rate dropped from 5.3 per 1,000 residents in 2014 to 5.0 in 2015, a decline of 4.1 percent.

The rate of serious property crimes fell citywide but rose in the Bronx and Manhattan, compared to the previous year.

The rate of serious property crimes per 1,000 residents rose in the Bronx (from 7.4 per 1,000 residents in 2014 to 7.7 in 2015) and Manhattan (from 12.2 in 2014 to 12.5 in 2015). In Queens, the property crime rate fell from 6.9 per 1,000 residents in 2014 to 6.3 in 2015, a drop of more than eight percent.
More than two-thirds of New Yorkers commuted without a car.

A large majority—70.8 percent—of New Yorkers commuted to work without relying on a car in 2014.\(^1\) The share of commuters travelling by bicycle increased slightly since 2000, while the share walking to work declined. The largest increase in car-free commuting was in the share of commuters travelling to work by public transportation; this share increased from 52.6 percent in 2000 to 59.4 percent in 2014. In 2000, 33.9 percent of New York City commuters drove to work; by 2014, that share had declined to 27.5 percent.

Figure 12: Means of Travelling to Work (Share of Workers Who Do Not Work at Home), New York City

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Public Transit</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Car</th>
<th>Car Free (Transit + Walk + Bike)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: US Census (2000), American Community Survey (2014), NYU Furman Center

Subway ridership rose in recent years, while bus ridership declined.

Over half a million more people rode the subway on an average weekday in 2014 than did in 2007, and ridership increased every year since 2009. Overall, between 2007 and 2014, average weekday ridership on the subway increased 11 percent. Average weekday ridership on Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) buses (including MTA Bus Company\(^2\) and New York City Transit Bus), however, dropped by about 170,000, or six percent, during this same period.

Figure 13: Average Weekday Ridership on Metropolitan Transportation Authority, New York City

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Subway</th>
<th>Bus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>4,500,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>5,000,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>5,500,000</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>6,500,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>7,000,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>7,500,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Metropolitan Transportation Authority, NYU Furman Center

Note: Bus category includes both New York City Transit bus and MTA Bus Company ridership.

\(^1\) The census and American Community Survey ask about the primary means of travelling to work, so some residents who, for example, drive to a subway station and take the subway most of the way to work, will be recorded as commuting by public transit only. See the Indicators Definitions and Methods sections for more information about this indicator.

\(^2\) Some MTA Bus Company routes have stops both outside and within New York City, so not all riders represented in bus ridership figures live within the five boroughs.
Ridership increased throughout the subway system.

Between 2009 and 2014, ridership increased in the vast majority of subway stations, but the increase was particularly strong in northern Brooklyn and Manhattan. Five of the ten stops with the greatest percentage increase in total ridership (excluding stations where significant construction occurred in 2009) were on the L line in northern Brooklyn.

Subway performance declined in recent years.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) computes two main indicators of subway performance: On-time performance measures how well the system is at keeping to a schedule. Maintenance, equipment problems, sick passengers, and other problems can reduce on-time performance. Subway wait assessment is the MTA’s standard measurement of delays, and measures the likelihood that a passenger would have to wait longer than scheduled for a train. Both indicators show that subway reliability has declined in recent years. In October of 2015, only 67.5 percent of trains were on time at the terminal, down from 91.3 percent in 2010. Subway wait assessment scores have fallen from a peak of 80.3 in June of 2013 to 77.5 in October of 2015.
Subway reliability varied widely across the city.

Lines that serve much of the Bronx, the east side of Manhattan, and southern Brooklyn, including the 2, 4, 5, and 6 trains, had substantially lower rates of on-time performance, with less than 60 percent of trains arriving at their respective terminals close to their scheduled time in 2015 (through October of that year). Only the 7 train, serving much of Queens; the L train, serving northern Brooklyn; and shuttle trains were on time at least 80 percent of the time—which may be due to recent upgrades to these lines.

Figure 16: On-Time Subway Performance by Subway Route, 2015

- 40% to 50%
- 51% to 70%
- More than 70%

Subway service degraded much more rapidly in some neighborhoods than in others.

Between 2010 and 2015 (through October), on-time performance on lines serving much of the Bronx, the east side of Manhattan, and southern Brooklyn declined by more than 30 percentage points. The 7 and L trains, on the other hand, maintained relatively good on-time performance during this period, likely due to recent upgrades to these lines. Most lines, however, saw on-time performance drop by more than 10 percentage points.

Figure 17: Percentage Point Change in On-Time Subway Performance by Subway Route, 2010-2015

- Decrease of 20 to 40 percentage points
- Decrease of 10 to 19 percentage points
- Decrease of less than 10 percentage points

Sources: Metropolitan Transportation Authority, NYU Furman Center
Note: On-time performance is reported for each subway line. For each station, we take the average performance level for all the lines serving that station.