



Study finds black segregation lowest in century

By Haya El Nasser, USA TODAY

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Black segregation from other racial groups has hit its lowest point in more than a century — declining in all 85 of the nation's largest metropolitan areas — but social and income inequality persist.



Joann Boyd, one of the first blacks to move to Kansas City suburb Overland Park, welcomes the growing diversity in race and income in her community. (*Chris Cummins, USA TODAY*)

A Manhattan Institute report out Monday shows that no housing market has a level of black isolation as high as the national average 40 years ago and that "all-white neighborhoods are effectively extinct."

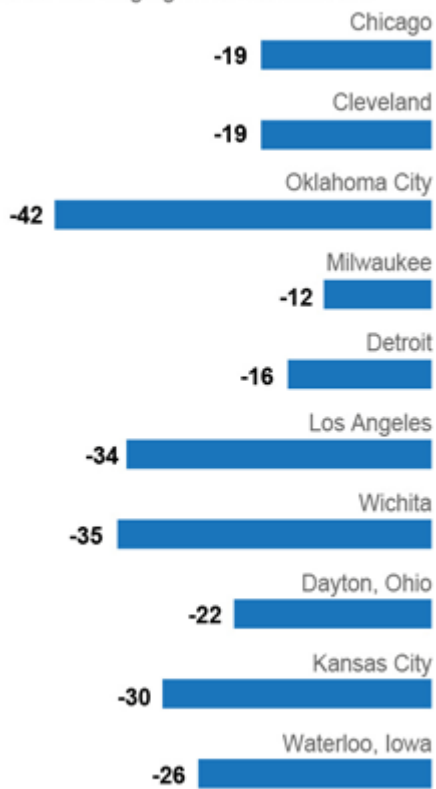
"This shift does not mean that segregation has disappeared," the report says. "The typical urban African American lives in a housing market where more than half the black population would need to move in order to achieve complete integration."

The research by Harvard University economics professor Edward Glaeser and Duke University professor Jacob Vigdor, both fellows at the conservative think tank's Center for State and Local Leadership, found that black suburbanization, gentrification, access to credit, fair housing laws and immigration have all contributed to a significant decline in black segregation.

"America is now more racially integrated than any time in the past century," Vigdor says. "There's been black suburbanization and the elimination of lily-white neighborhoods."

Segregation drops

Decline in percentage points in a key measure of segregation in those cities:



Source: The Manhattan Institute
By Janet Loehrke, USA TODAY

Other segregation experts expressed caution.

"We're nowhere near the end of segregation," says Brown University sociologist John Logan, who was not involved in the study. "There are still no signs of whites moving into what were previously all-minority neighborhoods, and there is still considerable white abandonment of mixed areas."

Wade Henderson, president of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, said, "This report misses out on the reality of neighborhood life across this country. For low-income black and Latino households ... their neighborhoods are clearly segregated, their schools are clearly segregated, and their access to opportunity is also segregated."

Chicago had a significant decline but remains the most segregated large city, the report found.

Segregation dropped the most in metropolitan areas that grew the fastest because of migration and immigration, many in the Sun Belt. Some of the once most segregated cities such as Detroit

and Kansas City have seen declines, driven by an exodus of blacks to the suburbs and other regions.

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