

December 14, 2010

Region Is Reshaped as Minorities Go to Suburbs

By SAM ROBERTS

Metropolitan New York is being rapidly reshaped as blacks, Latinos, Asians and immigrants surge into the suburbs, while gentrification by whites is widening the income gap in neighborhoods in Manhattan and Brooklyn, according to new census figures released on Tuesday.

Some of the largest population gains since 2000 were recorded in places that not long ago might have been considered marginal, including Bedford-Stuyvesant and Williamsburg in Brooklyn; Castle Hill and Hunts Point in the Bronx; South Jamaica in Queens; and Newark, Jersey City and Hoboken in New Jersey. Parts of those neighborhoods and cities, as well as the financial district in Lower Manhattan, registered large gains.

The number of Hispanic residents declined in tracts in Williamsburg, Bushwick and Greenpoint, Brooklyn, and in Washington Heights, but increased in the north Bronx; Woodside and Ozone Park, Queens; and central Harlem. The black population shrunk by double digits in Brooklyn's Prospect Heights, Clinton Hill and Fort Greene, in central Harlem and in South Ozone Park, but jumped in Canarsie and Flatlands, Brooklyn, and in Springfield Gardens, Queens.

The non-Hispanic white population swelled on the Lower East Side and in Harlem, Washington Heights, Clinton Hill and Bushwick, but declined in Bensonhurst, Brooklyn, and in Rego Park, Queens. Asians increased in Forest Hills and Flushing, Queens, and in Bensonhurst.

Diverse racial, ethnic and immigrant enclaves have proliferated in New York City and especially its suburbs since 2000, but that increase generated only negligible inroads against historic patterns of racial segregation, according to analyses of the new data. Most whites in the metropolitan area and most blacks in the city still live where a majority of their neighbors are of the same race.

The latest figures are the single largest data release in the Census Bureau's history, providing a look for the first time since 2000 at a variety of characteristics, including income, race, immigration and commuting habits for people in areas as small as just a few square blocks. Based on samples taken from 2005 to 2009, the five-year American Community Survey is separate from the 2009 survey, which probably better reflects the full impact of the recession, and from the 2010 Census, which is supposed to count people at every address.

Since 2000, decades of white flight eased and the proportion of non-Hispanic white New Yorkers increased slightly, to 35.5 percent. So did New York City's proportion of Hispanic

residents, to just over 27 percent. The proportion of blacks declined by a percentage point, to 23.3 percent, and the share of Asian residents rose by almost two percentage points, to nearly 12 percent.

For the first time since the 1970s, fully half of Manhattan's population is non-Hispanic white. The borough is 24 percent Hispanic, 14 percent black and 11 percent Asian.

The number of non-Hispanic whites has increased in three other counties in the area since 2000: Brooklyn, and Middlesex and Ocean in New Jersey.

New York City's foreign-born population remained fairly constant since 2000, about 36 percent. Three of the nine counties in the country where people born abroad made up one-third or more of the population are in New York or the surrounding area: Queens (47 percent, second to Miami-Dade, with 49 percent), Brooklyn (37 percent) and Hudson (40 percent) in New Jersey.

Hispanics are now the majority population in the Bronx, though Puerto Ricans, who were once dominant, have lost numbers, while the populations of Dominicans and Mexicans have risen.

Gentrification decreased the number of non-English speakers in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, while Chinese and Hispanic immigrants swelled the proportion of people who do not speak English at home in the southern portion of Staten Island.

Since 2000, the Dominican Republic, China and Mexico have sent the most people to New York. There have also been large influxes from Bangladesh and Pakistan, as well as from Ghana and elsewhere in the sub-Saharan region of Africa.

But many of the biggest gains in diversity were in the suburbs, generated by newly arrived Hispanic and Asian immigrants, and their American-born children. Their population increased in every county, typically clustered in ethnically or racially monolithic communities. Big percentage gains were recorded in places as far-flung as Ramapo and Huntington in New York; New Haven and Meriden, Conn.; and Jackson Township and Camden, N.J.

Spurred by a surge in people from Latin America, the Caribbean and Asia, foreign-born residents exceeded 60 percent of the population in Palisades Park and West New York, N.J.; 50 percent in Fairview, Guttenberg, Harrison and Union City, N.J.; 40 percent in Bergenfield, Cliffside Park, Elizabeth, Fort Lee, North Bergen, Passaic, Ridgefield and Teterboro, N.J.; and Bellerose Terrace, Elmont, Hillcrest, New Cassel, Port Chester, Sleepy Hollow, South Floral Park and Spring Valley in the Westchester, Rockland and Long Island suburbs. An influx of Jamaicans helped push the foreign-born population in Blue Hills, Conn., near Hartford, to more than 40 percent.

In the entire nation, residents of only four counties took 40 minutes or more to get to work: the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island, where, at 42.5 minutes, mean travel time was highest. (The lowest was 3.4 minutes in agricultural King County, Tex.) Manhattan, with 58 percent, was one of 17 counties in the country in which more than half of the residents over 25 had a bachelor's degree or higher.

Despite progress in the last decades of the 20th century, among the 100 largest metropolitan areas, New York stands third, behind Milwaukee and Detroit, on an index of black segregation compiled by William H. Frey, a Brookings Institution demographer.

Dr. Frey and Profs. John Iceland of Pennsylvania State University and John R. Logan of Brown University found persistent patterns of residential segregation in metropolitan areas around the nation that were repeated in New York.

In 2000, on average, a black suburbanite lived in a neighborhood that was 47 percent black. In 2005-9, that neighborhood would have been 44 percent black, the analysts found.

In 1970, whites in the metropolitan area were likely to live in a neighborhood that was 92 percent white, a figure that declined to 76 percent in 2000, and to 73 percent in 2005-9.

“New York is among a group of metropolitan regions,” Professor Logan said, “where the Great Migration created large black ghettos, and where very high levels of segregation have proved very resistant to change.”

Griff Palmer contributed reporting.

This article has been revised to reflect the following correction:

Correction: December 18, 2010

A chart on Wednesday with an article about the change in race patterns in the New York region mislabeled a town in Connecticut where the median household income has dropped by more than 40 percent since 2000. The town is North Greenwich, not Litchfield.