



TO: Interested Parties
 FROM: Global Strategy Group & Regional Plan Association
 DATE: March 25, 2021
 RE: **New Survey Shows Disparities in Satisfaction and Optimism About NY Metro Region’s Future**

Despite the many hardships that the New York metropolitan area and its residents have faced during the coronavirus pandemic and economic crisis, there is light at the end of the tunnel. After enduring the pandemic for more than a year, NY metro residents believe the worst of the pandemic is behind us, are optimistic about the future of the New York metropolitan area, and believe the quality of life in the region will continue to improve in the coming years. However, impressions vary widely among different groups: women, Black and Latinx, and low-income residents are less satisfied with the quality of life in the region, while men, white, and high-income residents are more satisfied with the quality of life in the region.

Global Strategy Group (GSG) and the Regional Plan Association (RPA) have partnered together to conduct regular polling on the quality of life in the New York metropolitan area, as well as the major issues facing the region’s residents. This report features findings from a survey of 800 adults in the New York metropolitan area, as well as the debut of the RPA-GSG Metro NY Outlook Index – a score we will use to track attitudes on eight core aspects of life in the New York metropolitan area. While this report focuses on satisfaction with the quality of life in the region and the coronavirus pandemic, subsequent releases will focus on other specific policy areas.

Key Survey Findings:

The NY Metro Outlook Index Score is currently 57.3 – a slightly positive rating on a scale of 1 to 100.

To calculate the NY Metro Outlook Index Score, the share reporting they were satisfied with eight aspects of life (having equal opportunity, the overall quality of life, the safety of local communities, the quality of public education, the quality of public transportation, the ability to find a satisfactory good-paying job, the direction the New York City area is headed in, and the ability to find satisfactory housing you can afford) were averaged together, resulting in an overall score of 57.3. This score can be characterized as slightly positive, as it’s above 50%, indicating that in general, residents are more satisfied than dissatisfied with life in the New York metropolitan area. However, the table to the right shows the NY Metro Outlook Index Scores across a variety of

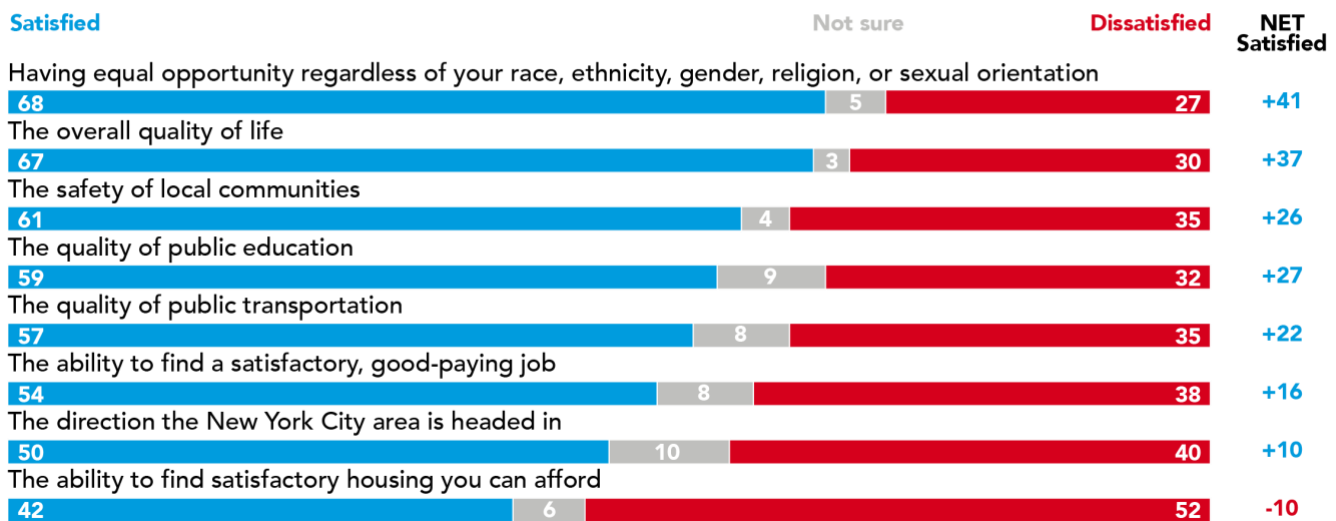
Demographic	NY Metro Outlook Index Score
Overall	57.3
New York City	57.3
Outside of NYC	57.1
Men	64.6
Women	51
18-44	63.5
45-64	50.5
65+	52.8
White	62.1
Black	49.1
Latinx	54
<\$50k	49.1
\$50k-\$100k	57.5
>\$100k	68.3
Parent	66.1
Not parent	52.8

demographic groups, revealing stark divisions by gender, age, race, and income. Men (64.6), residents ages 18-44 (63.5), white residents (62.1), residents making over \$100,000 (68.3), and parents (66.1) report the highest levels of satisfaction, while women (51), residents ages 45-64 (50.5), Black residents (49.1), and residents making less than \$50,000 (49.1) report the lowest levels of satisfaction.

NY metro residents are generally satisfied with a variety of aspects of life.

Respondents were asked whether they are satisfied or dissatisfied with eight aspects of life in the New York metropolitan area. Overall, NY metro residents are largely satisfied with a variety of aspects of life, especially having equal opportunity regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, or sexual orientation (68% satisfied), the overall quality of life (67% satisfied), and the safety of local communities (61% satisfied). The only area where there is noticeable dissatisfaction is the ability to find satisfactory, affordable housing (52% dissatisfied). While New York City residents are more likely to say they are satisfied with the quality of public transportation (64% satisfied in NYC; 52% satisfied outside of NYC) and the direction the New York City area is headed in (54% satisfied in NYC; 47% satisfied outside of NYC), those who live outside of New York City are more likely to say they are satisfied with the overall quality of life (63% satisfied in NYC; 70% satisfied outside of NYC) and the safety of local communities (59% satisfied in NYC; 63% satisfied outside of NYC).

Below you are going to see different aspects of life in the New York City metropolitan area. please indicate how satisfied you are with each one:



Most believe the quality of life will improve in the years to come, but impressions vary widely based on gender and race.

When asked whether respondents expect the quality of life in their community to be better, worse, or about the same in five to 10 years from now, the plurality say better (48% better/20% worse/31% about the same), a substantial increase from when GSG and RPA last asked this question in 2013 (28% better/19% worse/48% about the same). New York City residents (58% better/18% worse/24% about the same) are more optimistic than residents outside New York City (42% better/22% worse/36% about the same), while men (57% better/17% worse/26% about the same) are more optimistic than women (41% better/23% worse/36% about the same). However, more than half of NY metro residents say they would move out of their community if they could (52% would move/48% would stay), a noticeable uptick since 2013 (36% would move/62% would stay). There are considerable demographic gaps on whether or not residents in the metro area would move. 80% of Black residents say they would move out of their community if they could, while only 43% of white residents say the same. Additionally, 58% of women say they would move out of their community if they could, while only 47% of men say the same.

The high cost of living, crime, and high taxes are perceived as the biggest threats to the metropolitan area.

When respondents were asked what the biggest threats to the New York metropolitan area are, the high cost of living (45%), crime (33%), and high taxes (31%) rose to the top. New York City residents are more likely to point to housing unaffordability (29%) and homelessness (26%), while high taxes (40%) and the high cost of living (47%) are major concerns of residents outside of New York City. Black residents and women are significantly more likely to say the high cost of living (52% Black; 49% women) and housing unaffordability (39% Black; 32% women), while white residents are more likely to say high taxes (36%). Additionally, Latinx residents are more likely to say crime (38%) is the biggest threat to the New York metropolitan area.

What do you think are the biggest threats to the New York City metropolitan area?

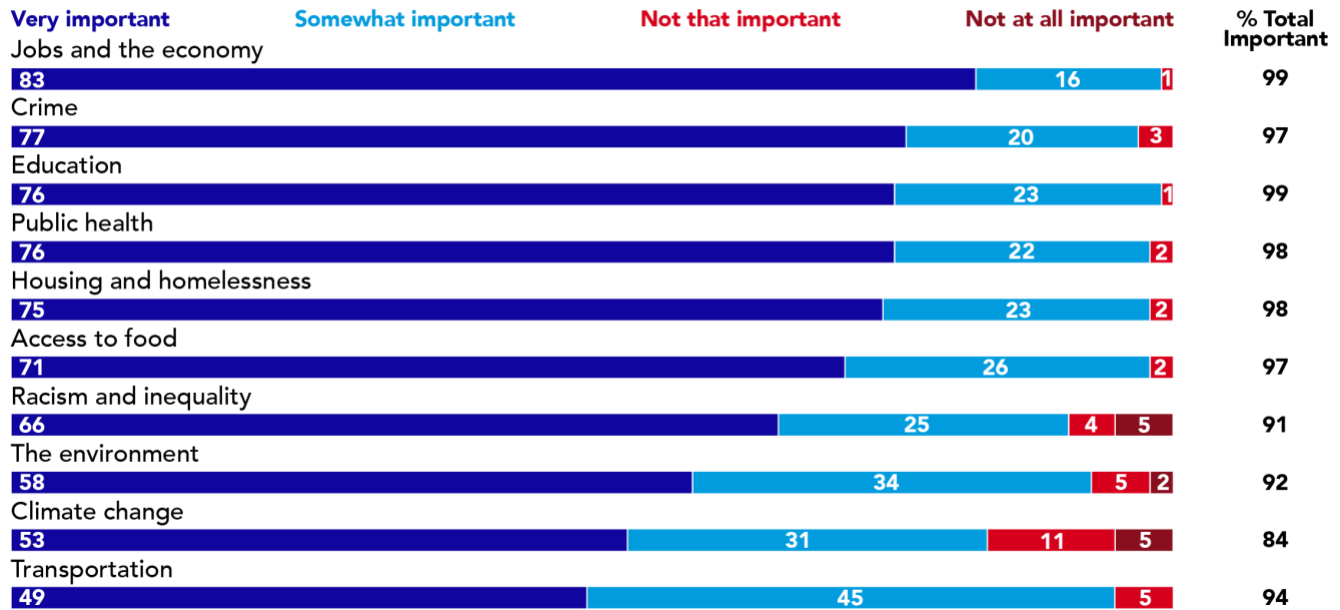
	NYC	Outside NYC	Men	Women	White	Black	Latinx
High cost of living	45	47	41	49	41	52	46
Crime	33	33	34	31	31	33	38
High taxes	31	40	39	24	36	21	31
Housing unaffordability	25	29	18	32	20	39	23
Homelessness	22	26	16	27	18	31	26
The coronavirus pandemic	22	21	22	21	22	9	32
Poor leadership and public distrust in gov't	19	24	17	20	25	12	14
The economy	17	16	17	17	17	20	13
Social and racial inequality	15	20	14	15	12	20	19
Job loss/Lack of job opportunities	14	18	12	16	12	16	13

Only showing response options that scored 10% or higher

Jobs and the economy is the top issue NY metro residents want their leaders to focus on.

Following the economic crisis, NY metro residents say that jobs and the economy (83% very important; 99% total important) is the most important issue for future city and state leaders to focus on, followed by crime (77% very important; 97% total important), education (76% very important; 99% total important), and public health (76% very important; 98% very important). Focusing on jobs and the economy is especially important for Black residents (87% very important; 98% total important) and low-income residents (85% very important; 100% total important). Black residents are also more likely to say they want their leaders to focus on housing and homelessness (95% very important; 98% total important) and crime (80% very important; 95% total important).

Please indicate how important you feel each of the following is for future city and state leaders to focus on:



The vast majority of NY metro residents agree life has been difficult during the pandemic, and many were personally affected.

While three in four NY metro residents agree that life has been difficult since the coronavirus pandemic began (75% difficult/24% not difficult), Black residents (82% difficult/15% not difficult), Asian-American* residents (77% difficult/21% not difficult), and residents making less than \$50,000 (82% difficult/15% not difficult) are the most likely to say life has been difficult. 81% of NY Metro residents report knowing someone who was infected with coronavirus, including 13% who say they were personally infected. Asian-American* residents are the least likely to know someone infected with coronavirus (69%), compared to white residents (82%), Black residents (81%), and Latinx residents (85%). Furthermore, 50% of NY Metro residents report knowing someone who passed away from coronavirus, including 14% who lost a family member. Latinx residents are even more likely to report knowing someone who died from coronavirus (54%) or had a family member die from coronavirus (21%).

In addition to the public health toll, NY metro residents have faced a number of other challenges.

NY metro residents say that social isolation (51%), lack of a job/job insecurity (26%), and rent or home payments (25%) have been the largest sources of stress during the coronavirus pandemic. New York City residents (30%) are more likely than residents outside of New York City (22%) to say that rent or home payments is the largest source of stress. While white residents (62%) are more likely than adults overall to say that social isolation is their largest source of stress, Black residents are more likely to point to rent or home payments (48%) and access to food (20%) as their largest sources of stress, and Latinx residents point to lack of a job/job security (37%) and rent or home payments (39%). Additionally, women are more likely to say the lack of a job/job insecurity (28%) has been the largest source of stress, while men are more likely to say that access to food (16%) has been their largest source of stress.

*Small sample size.

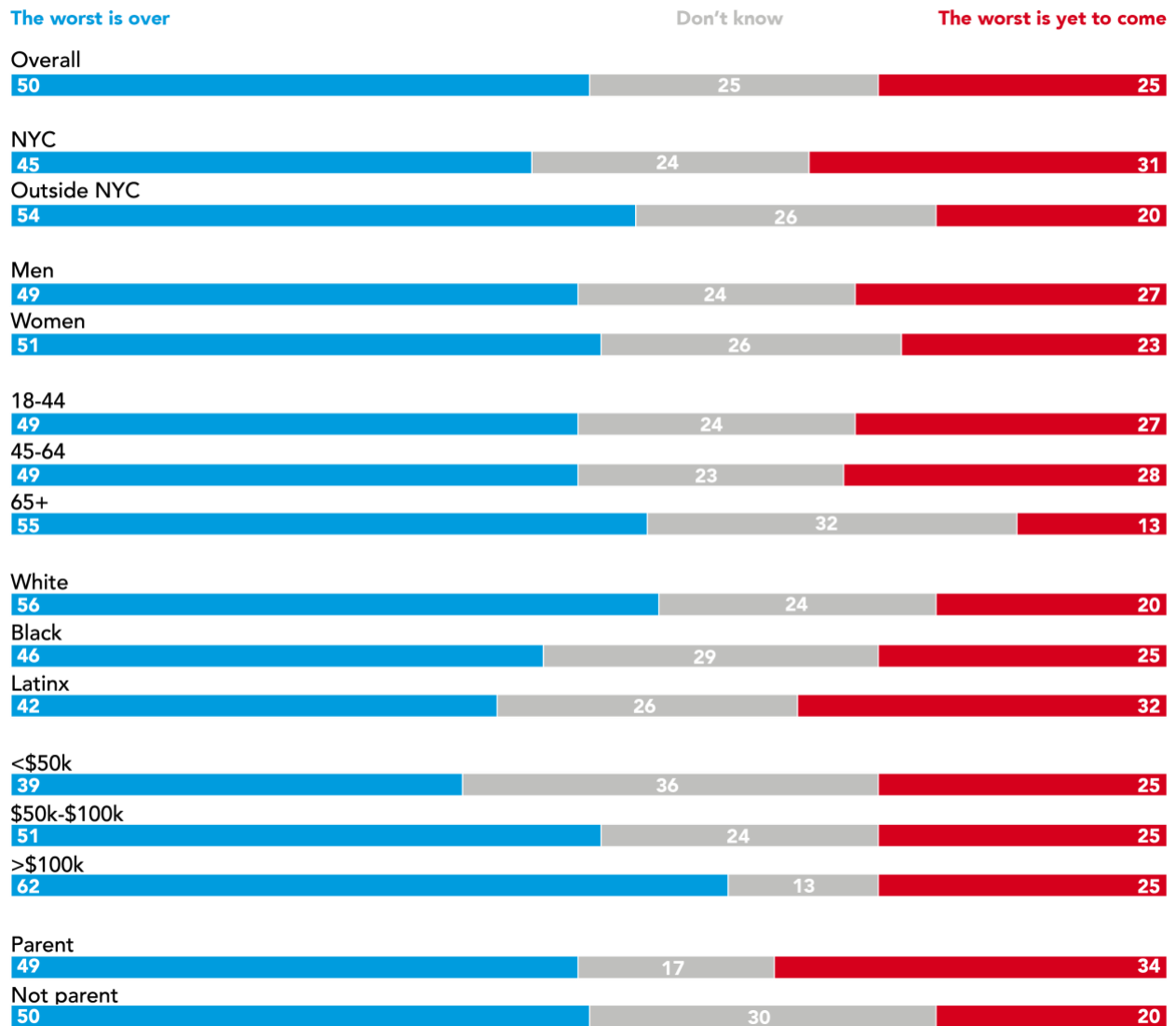
Which of these would you consider your household's largest source of stress during the coronavirus pandemic?

	NYC	Outside NYC	Men	Women	White	Black	Latinx
Social isolation	48	52	51	50	62	41	35
Lack of a job/job insecurity	28	25	24	28	21	23	37
Rent or home payments	30	22	25	25	12	48	39
Poor health or sickness	18	16	16	18	19	17	10
Lack of childcare/schools closed	14	12	14	11	13	6	17
Access to food	13	11	16	9	9	20	15
Lack of transportation	10	5	9	6	7	6	8
Other	5	8	7	6	8	5	3

Despite these hardships, the plurality of NY metro residents believe the worst of the pandemic is over.

Half of NY metro residents say that the worst of the pandemic is over, while only a quarter say the worst is yet to come. Residents outside of New York City (54% worst is over/20% worst is yet to come/26% don't know), residents over 65 (55% worst is over/13% worst is yet to come/32% don't know), white residents (56% worst is over/20% worst is yet to come/24% don't know), and residents who make over \$100,000 (62% worst is over/25% worst is yet to come, 13% don't know) are most likely to say the worst of the coronavirus pandemic is over, while New York City residents (45% worst is over/31% worst is yet to come/24% don't know), Latinx residents (42% worst is over/32% worst is yet to come/26% don't know), and parents (49% worst is over/34% worst is yet to come/17% don't know) are the most likely to have a more pessimistic outlook.

When it comes to the coronavirus pandemic in your community, do you personally think that...



About this poll

Global Strategy Group conducted an online survey of 804 adults in the New York metropolitan area from March 9-March 14, 2021. The New York metropolitan area includes New York City, Long Island, the Mid and Lower Hudson Valley, northern New Jersey, and Southern Connecticut. The margin of error at the 95% confidence level is +/- 3.5%. The margin of error on sub-samples is greater. This is the first survey in a series that will be conducted by Global Strategy Group and Regional Plan Association.