



Reversing Nearly a Decade of Positive Trends

The Lingering Impact of the Pandemic on Young Adults who are Out of School and Out of Work in New York City



July 2023

About This Brief

JobsFirstNYC commissioned this brief and co-authored it with Community Service Society to analyze major recent changes to the out-of-school, out-of-work population of 16- to 24-year-olds in New York City. This includes the analysis of changes to both the supply-side and demand-side trends of the labor market and how it impacts young adults. Additionally, this brief seeks to explore broader issues and trends in NYC that may be affecting young adults who are out of school and out of work, and offers recommendations for regaining ground lost to the pandemic.

This brief utilizes 1-year American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample from 2010 to 2021, sourced from the Census Bureau. Where necessary, data from 2018 and 2019 were combined as pre-COVID years, and 2020 and 2021 as COVID years, to compare data before and after the pandemic in New York City and adjust for year-to-year fluctuations. The report focuses on 16- to 24-year-olds and estimates the out-of-school, out-of-work population across the city's community districts using this data. All data presented pertains to New York City unless otherwise specified.

About JobsFirstNYC

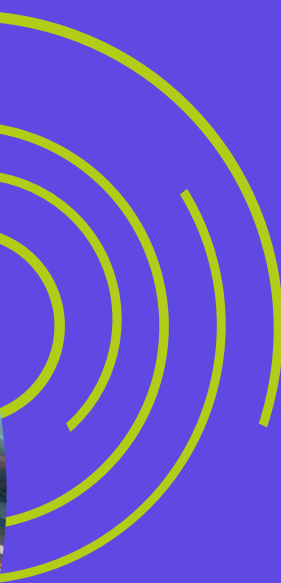
JobsFirstNYC creates and advances solutions that break down barriers and transform the systems supporting young adults and their communities in the pursuit of economic opportunities.

About Community Service Society

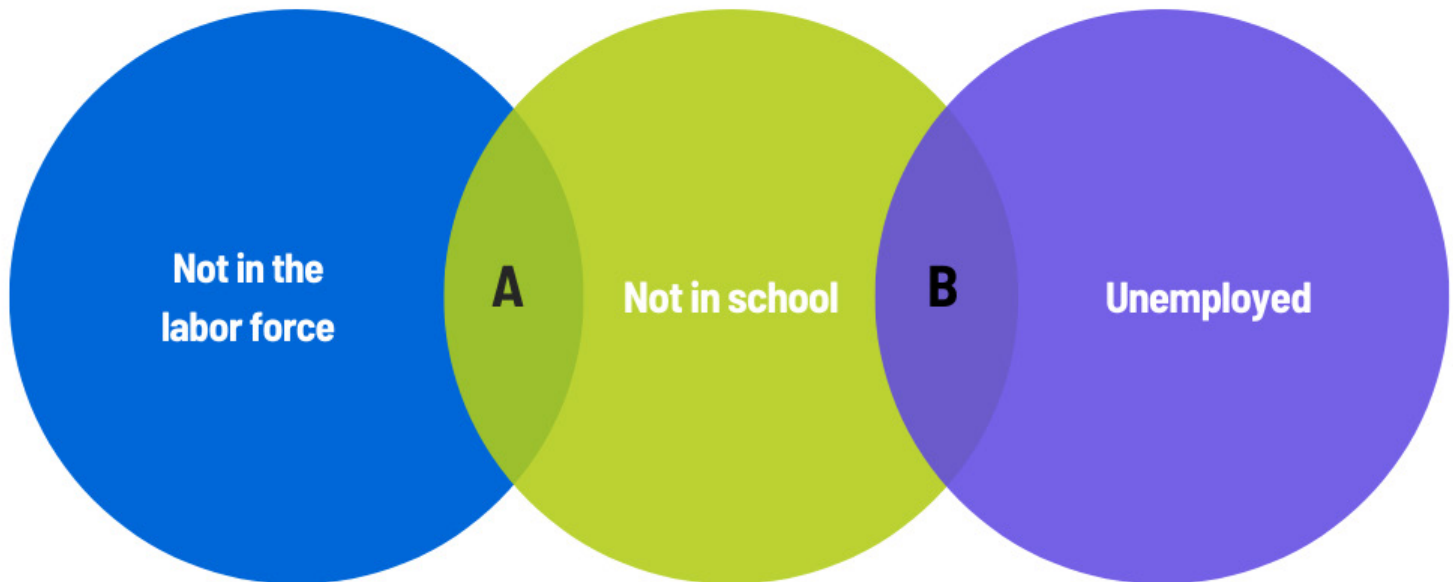
The Community Service Society of New York (CSS) has worked with and for New Yorkers since 1843 to promote economic opportunity and champion an equitable city and state.



A Profile of Young Adults who are Out of School and Out of Work in New York City



Who are the young adults who are out of school and out of work?

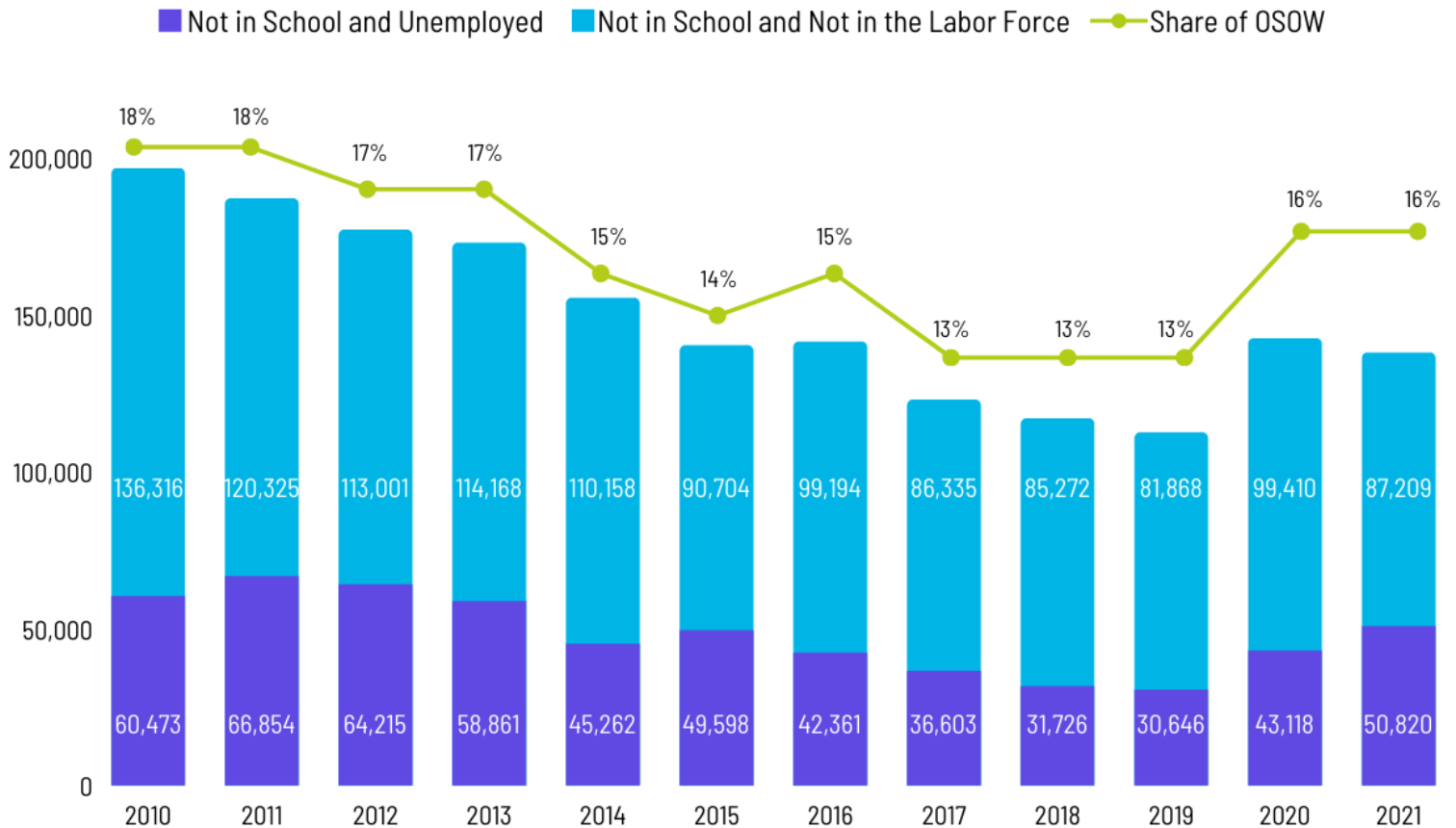



Young Adults who are Out of School and Out of Work (OSOW)=A+B

After a decade-long trend of increasing gains in the labor market and rising educational attainment for young adults in New York City, the onset of the pandemic saw a reversal of those gains. In absolute terms, an additional 25,500 16- to 24-year-olds have joined the out-of-school, out-of-work category in New York City, for a total of 138,000.

Since the pandemic, there has been an increase in the share of young adults who are not in school and unemployed.

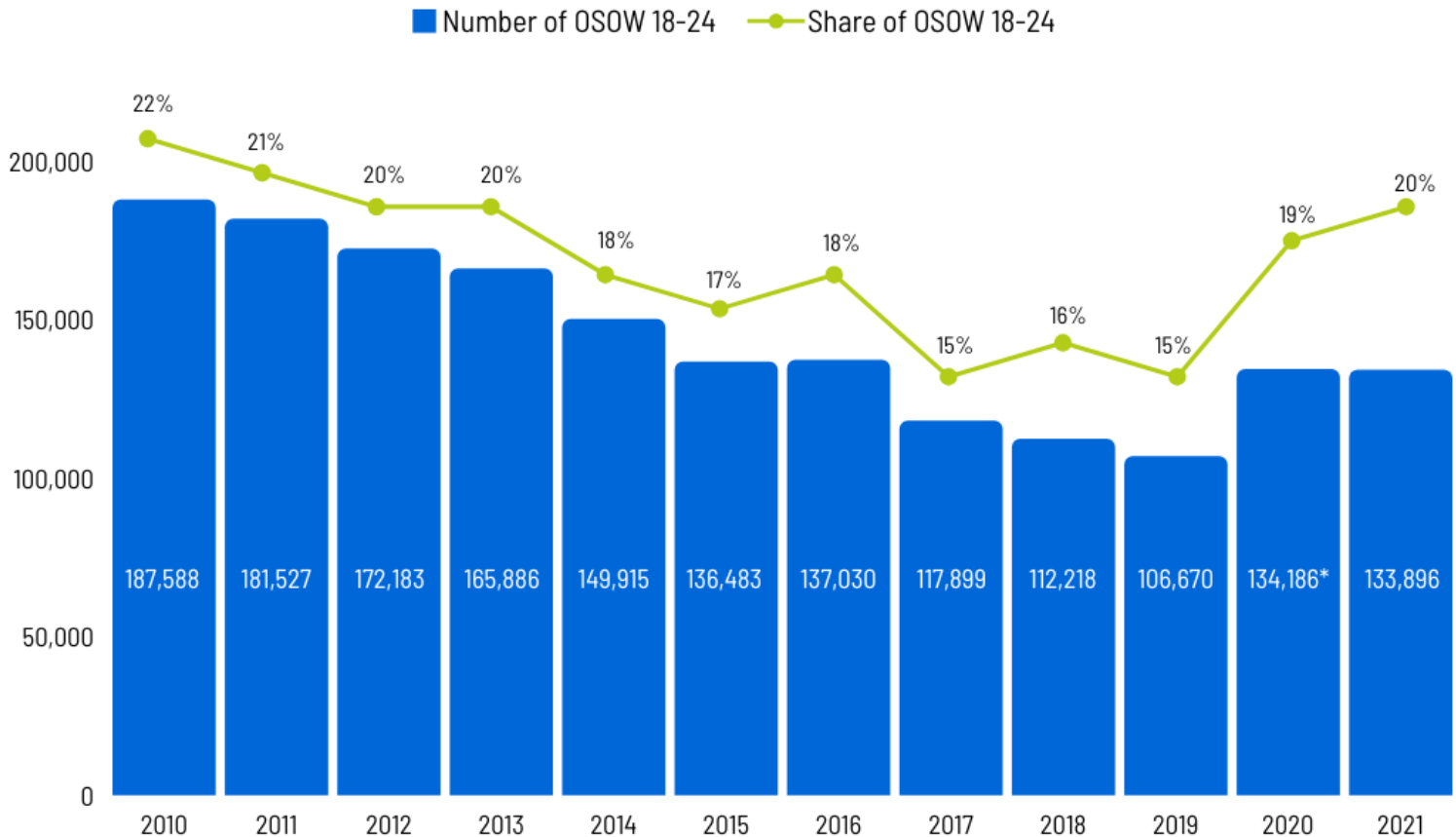
16- to 24-year-olds OSOW count and share in NYC, 2010-2021





Young adults aged 18-24 years comprised nearly 134,000 of the total out-of-school, out-of-work population in 2021, making up the bulk of the increase in the out-of-school, out-of-work population. The increase in 18- to 24-year-olds who are out of school and out of work is especially noteworthy since the overall population of young adults in the city has declined every year over the last decade.

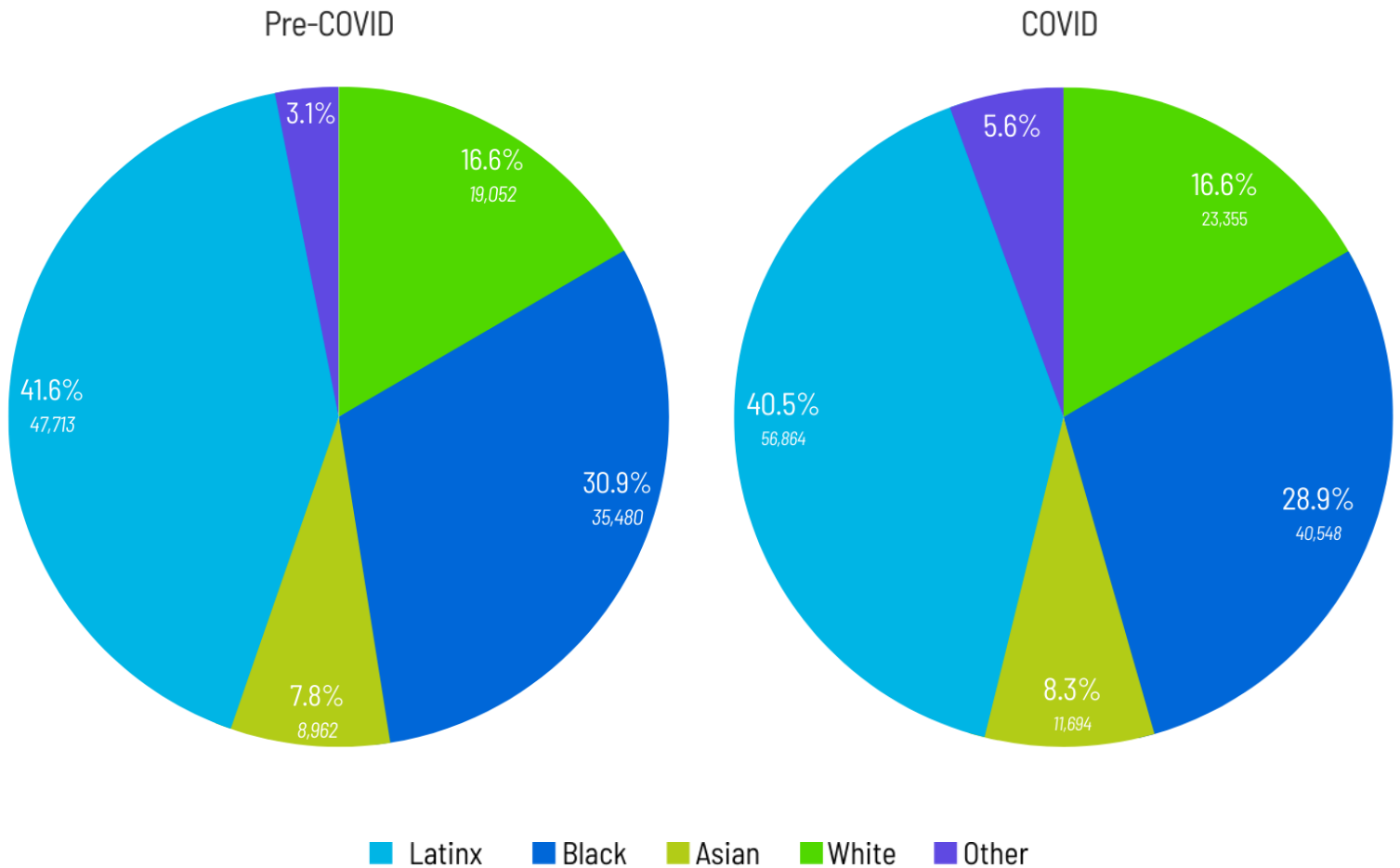
18- to 24-year-olds OSOW in NYC, 2010-2021



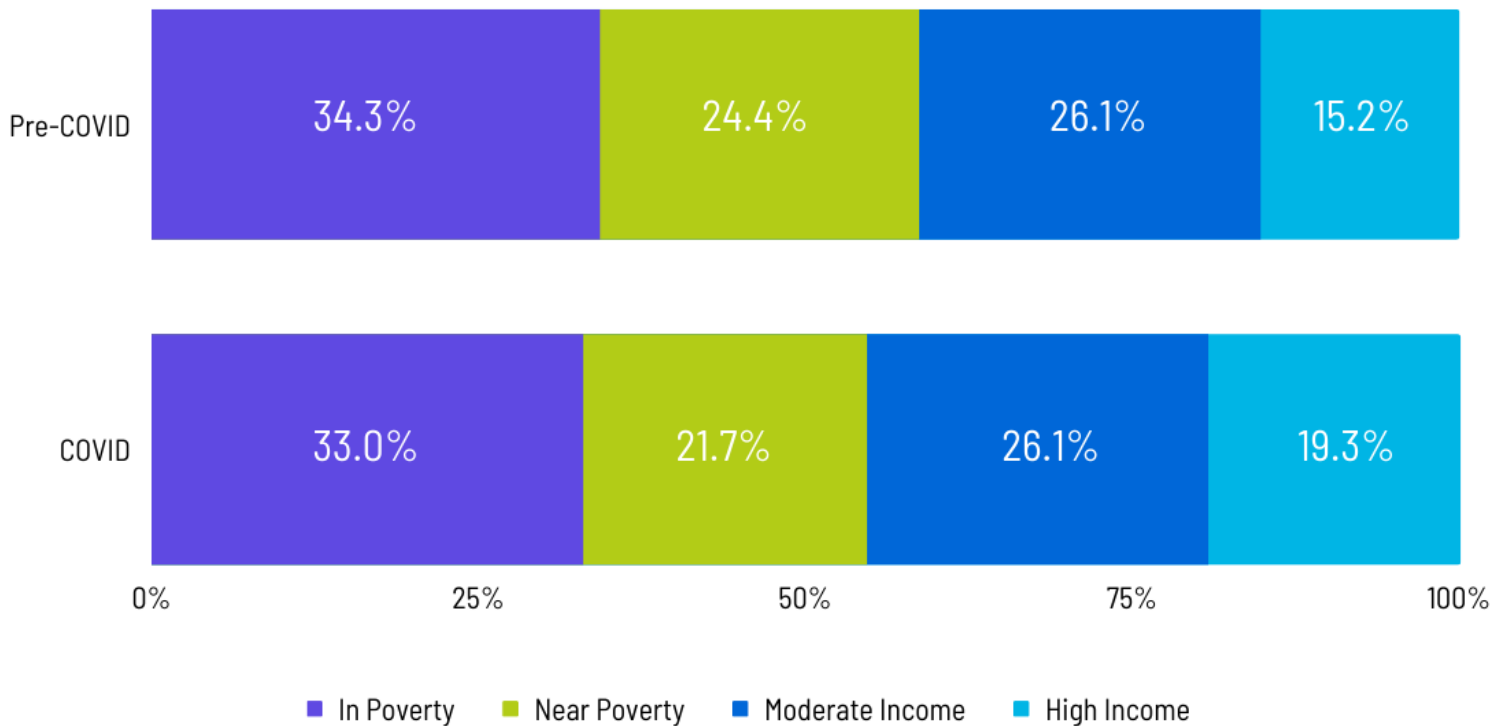
JobsFirstNYC's most recent report, *1 in 4 Young Adults in New York City Were Out of School and Out of Work in 2020*, relied on limited data from the Current Population Survey due to the impact of COVID-19 and the delay of 2020 ACS data release. This data brief presents updated data from the American Community Survey (ACS), which provides a more complete and reliable picture of the years affected by the pandemic.

Young adults who are out of school and out of work are more likely to come from under-resourced Black and Latinx households.

16- to 24-year-olds OSOW by race/ethnicity

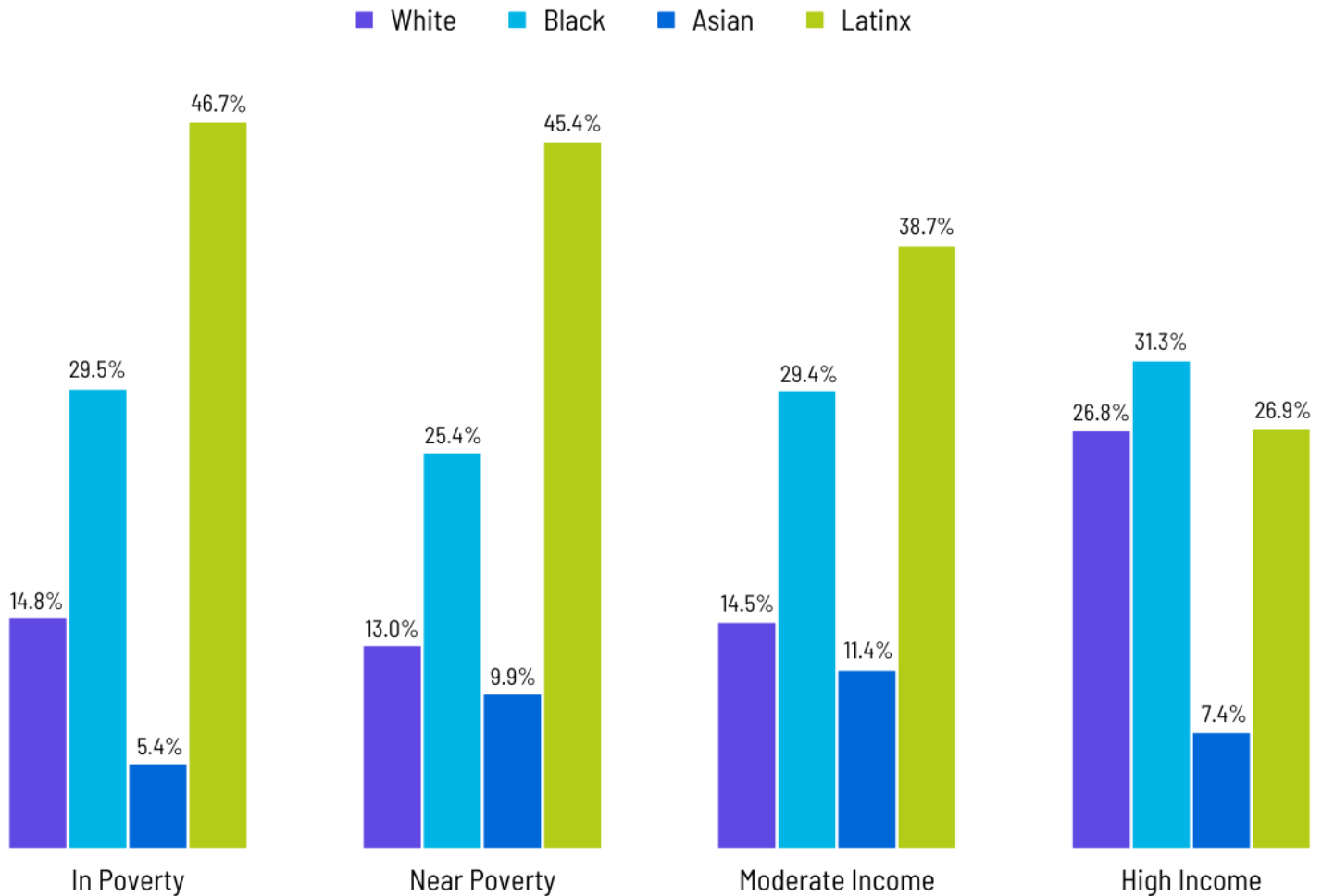


16- to 24-year-olds OSOW by poverty status



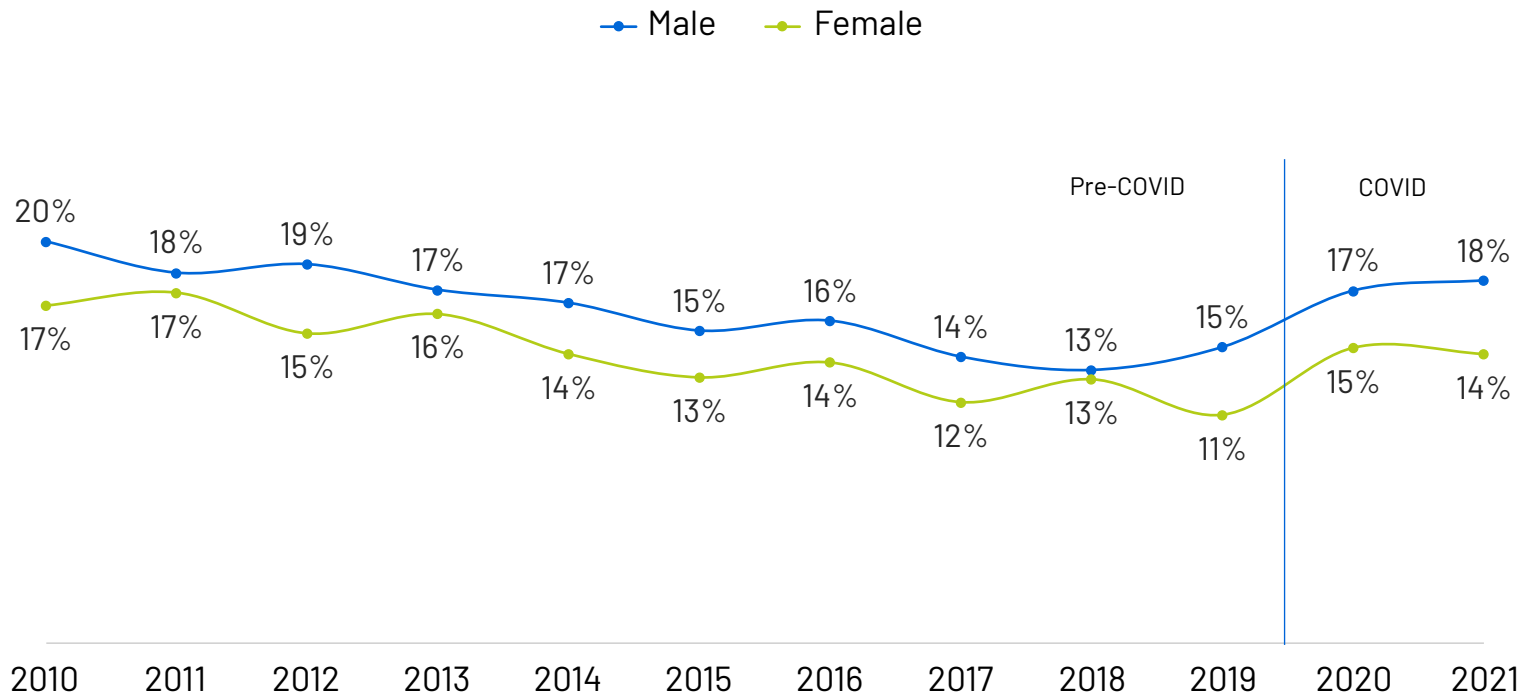
"In poverty" refers to individuals with resources 100% below the Federal Poverty Line (FPL), "Near Poverty" refers to individuals with resources between 100 and 200% of the FPL, "Moderate income" refers to individuals with resources between 200 and 400% of the FPL, and "High income" refers to individuals with resources more than 400% of the FPL.

16- to 24-year-olds OSOW by poverty status and race, (2020-2021)



Pre-pandemic, the gap between male and female out-of-school, out-of-work rates was narrowing, with rates falling for both populations. Since the pandemic, these rates have begun to diverge, with a rise in the rate of young men who are out of school and out of work.

16- to 24-year-olds OSOW by sex, 2010-2021

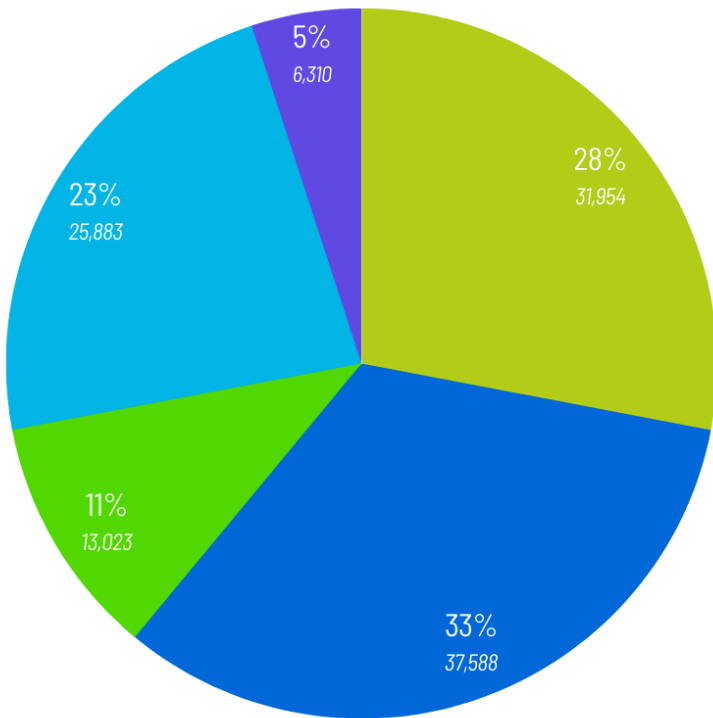


A Community-Level Look at Young Adults who are Out of School and Out of Work in New York City

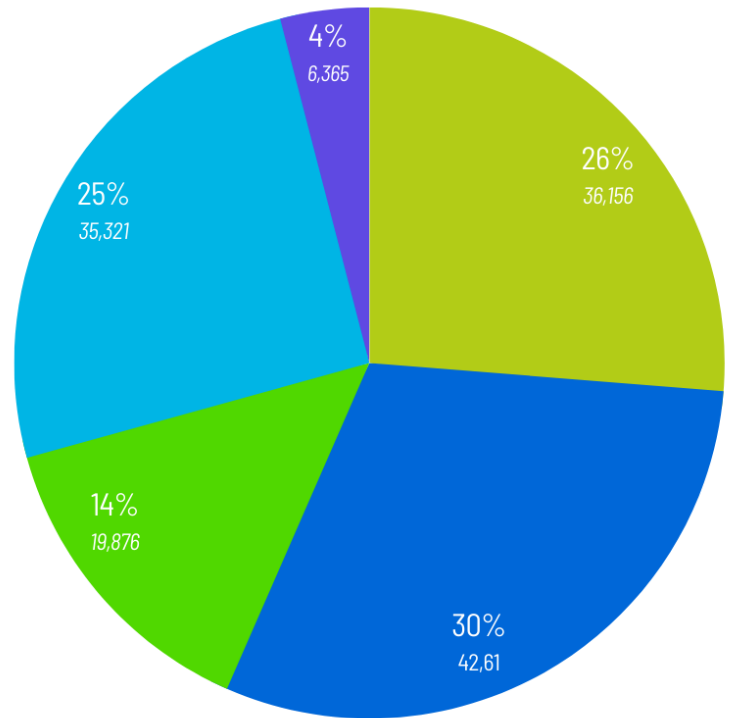


16- to 24-year-olds OSOW by borough

Pre-COVID



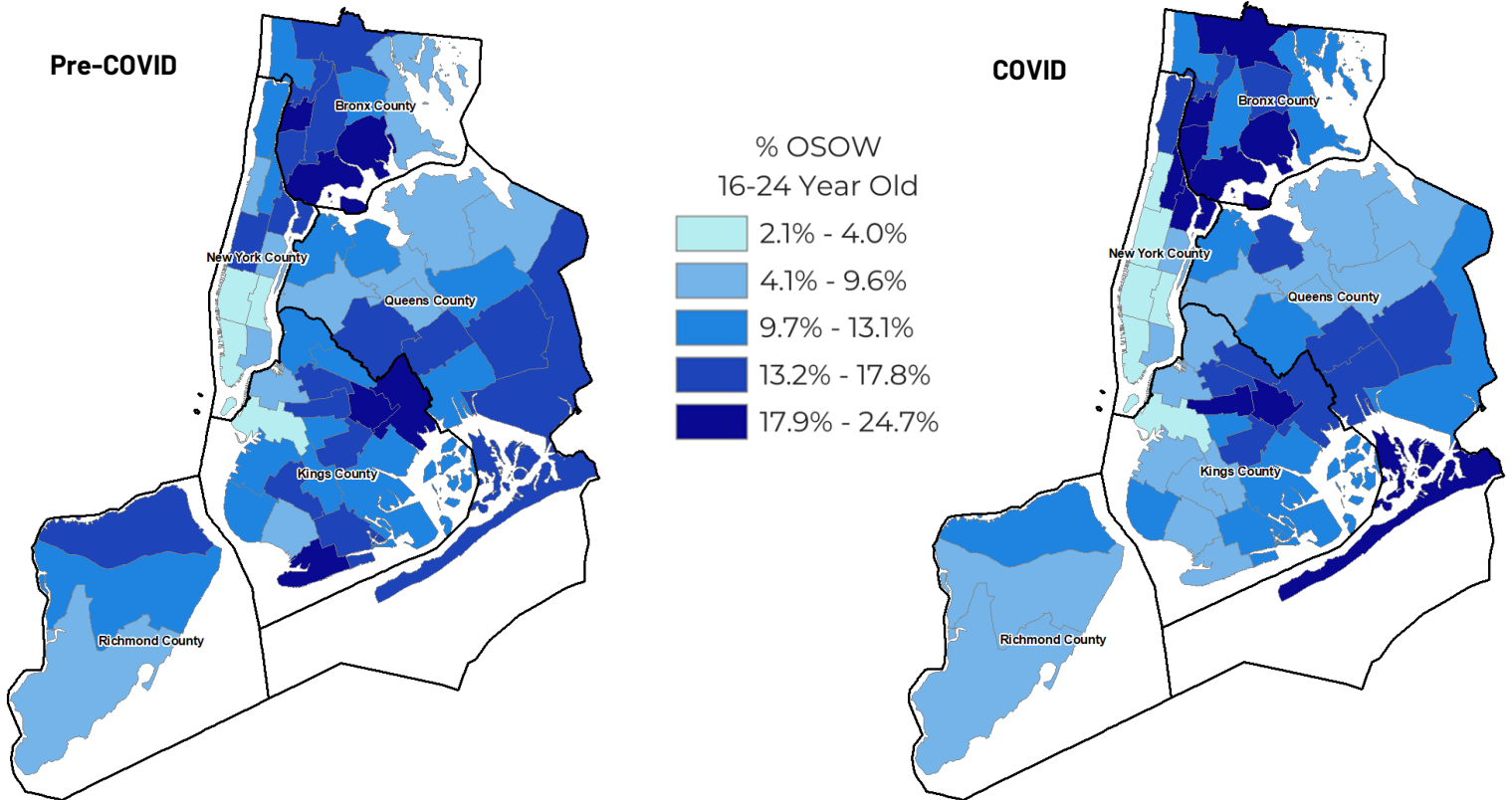
COVID



■ Bronx ■ Brooklyn ■ Manhattan ■ Queens ■ Staten Island

An additional 16,000 young adults living in Manhattan and Queens were out of school and out of work, making up nearly two-thirds of the citywide increase in the out-of-school, out-of-work population since the onset of the pandemic.

Rate of young adults who are OSOW by community districts



Five community districts with the overall highest rate of young adults who are OSOW

Borough	CD	Community District	Pre-COVID		COVID		Percentage Point Change	Share of Population Below 200% of Federal Poverty Line
			OSOW Count	OSOW Rate	OSOW Count	OSOW Rate		
Brooklyn	16	Brownsville & Ocean Hill	3,150	23.4%	3,283	27.0%	3.6	49%
Bronx	1 & 2	Hunts Point, Longwood, & Melrose	5,088	23.3%	5,611	26.7%	3.4	65%
Manhattan	11	East Harlem	1,635	13.6%	3,521	26.6%	13.0	50%
Bronx	5	Morris Heights, Fordham South, & Mount Hope	4,792	24.7%	4,532	25.2%	0.5	62%
Manhattan	10	Central Harlem	1,821	12.8%	2,897	24.7%	11.9	36%

Five community districts with the highest increases in young adults who are OSOW since the pandemic

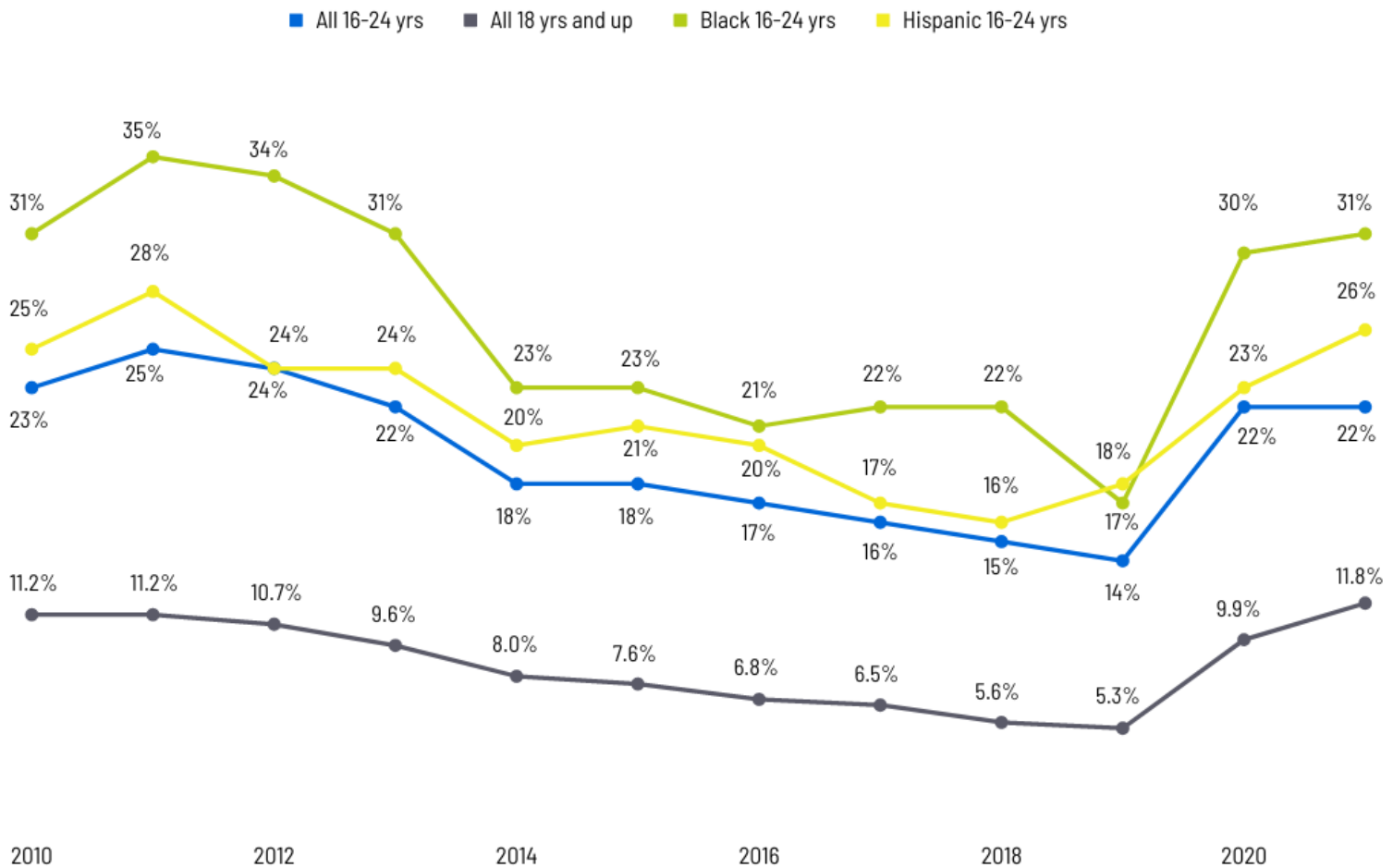
Borough	CD	Community District	Pre-COVID		COVID		Percentage Change	Share of Population Below 200% of Federal Poverty Line
			OSOW Count	OSOW Rate	OSOW Count	OSOW Rate		
Queens	1	Astoria & Long Island City	1,561	7%	2,107	15%	105%	26%
Manhattan	9	Hamilton Heights, Manhattanville & West Harlem	1,818	4%	1,771	8%	104%	49%
Bronx	4	Concourse, Highbridge & Mount Eden	2,618	14%	3,795	24%	76%	55%
Bronx	8	Riverdale, Fieldston & Kingsbridge	1,477	9%	1,577	15%	68%	35%
Manhattan	4&5	Chelsea, Clinton & Midtown Business District	412	3%	651	5%	68%	23%

The Employment Landscape for Young Adults who are Out of School and Out of Work



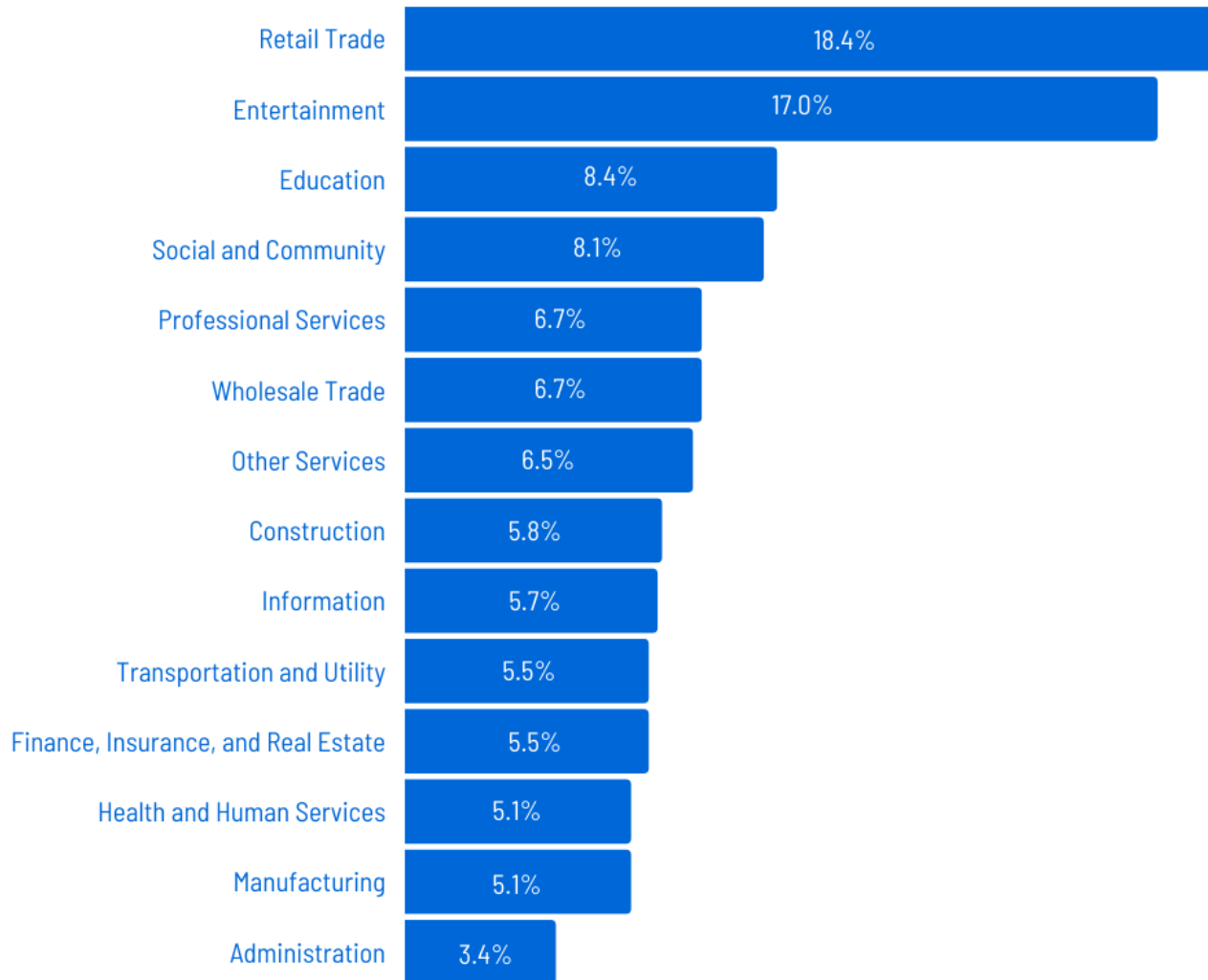
The unemployment rate among Black and Latinx young adults has historically been higher than the citywide average, and has grown even more since the pandemic, with rates for Black young adults increasing to 31% and rates for Latinx young adults increasing to 26% in 2021. Unemployment rates for all Black workers continue to remain continually high even as citywide rates have plummeted in 2023.

16- to 24-year-olds OSOW unemployment rates by race/ethnicity

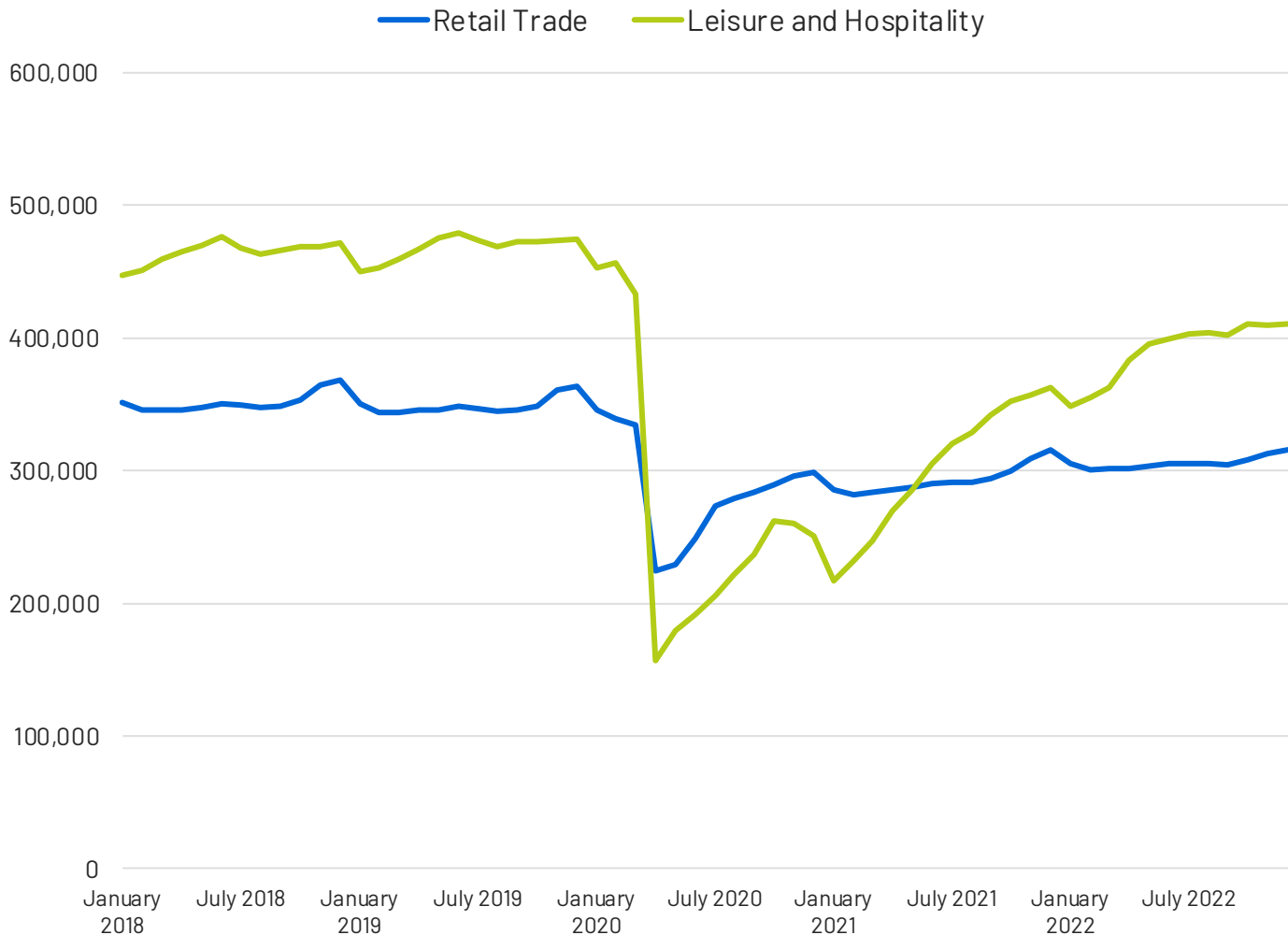


Young adult employment in New York City continues to be concentrated in retail trade as well as in leisure and hospitality; however, these sectors have been slower to recover since the onset of the pandemic.

16–24-year-old employment across major industries

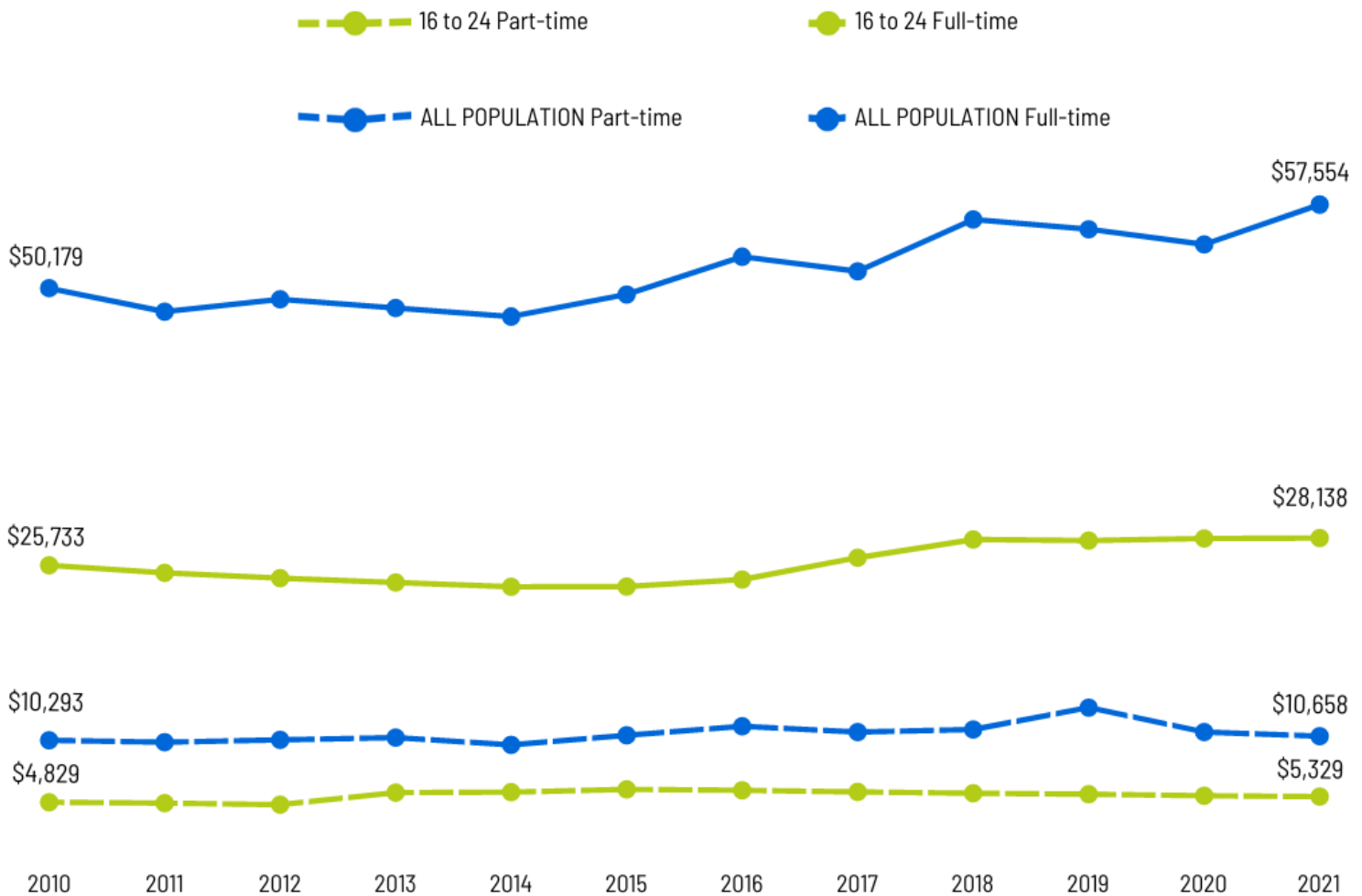


16–24-year-old employment in retail trade and leisure and hospitality



Wage growth continues to be slow among young adults who are employed, and the share of workers in part-time work has continued to increase. This trend precedes the pandemic.

Median wages of young adult workers and all workers (full-time and part-time) in 2021



All dollar amounts are adjusted for inflation.

A Look at Educational Attainment in New York City

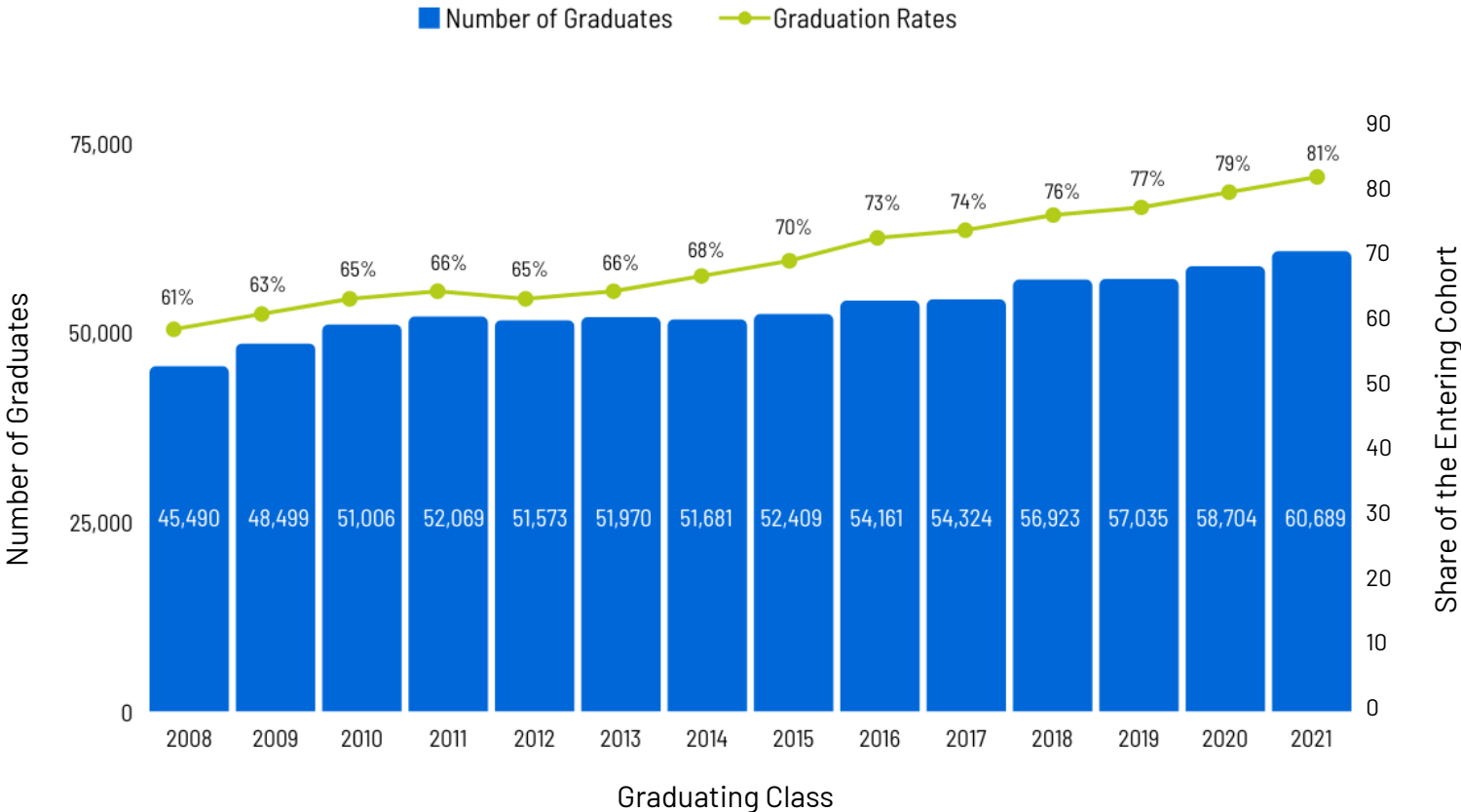


Over the last decade, educational attainment has been increasing across all populations.

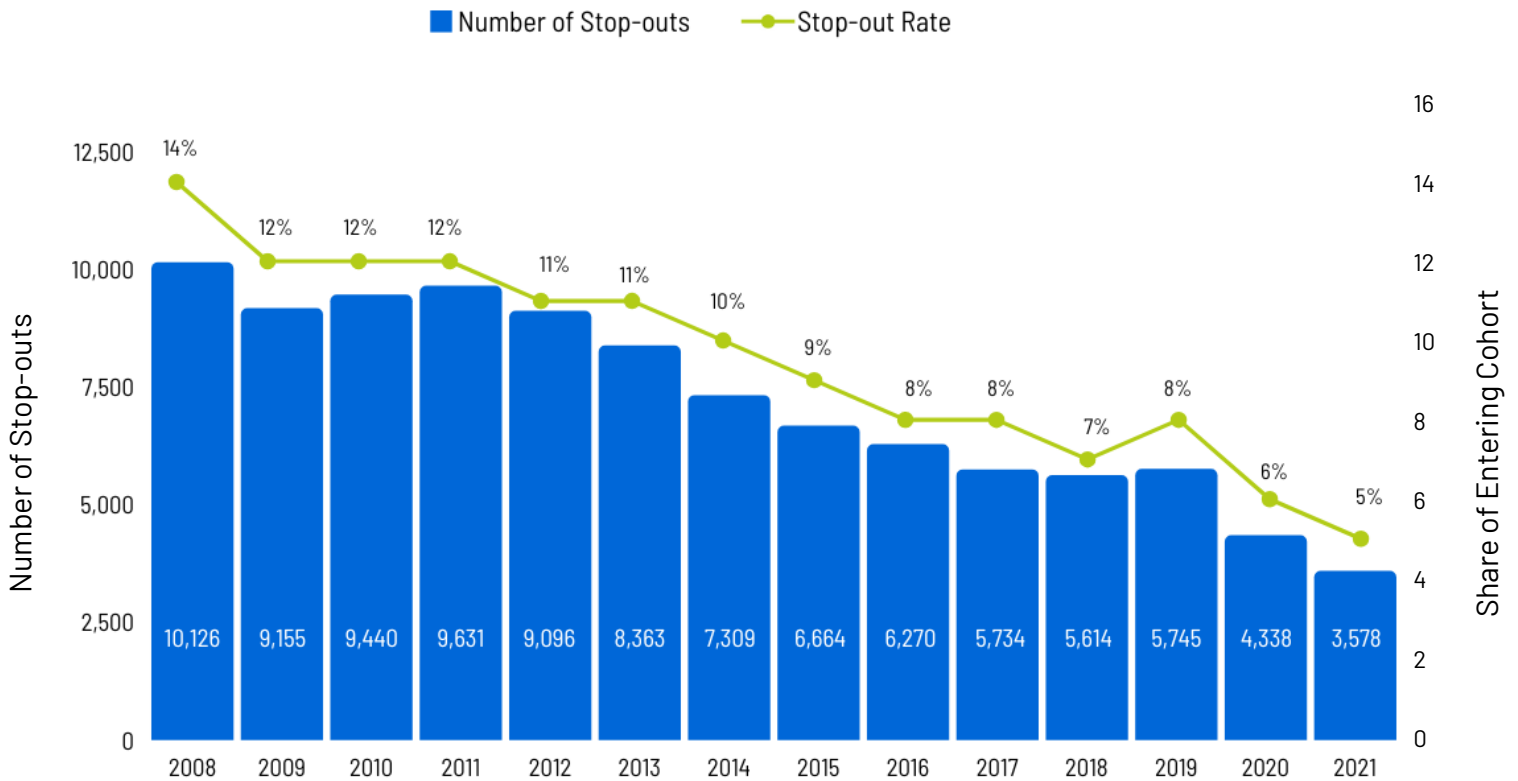
High school graduation rates have been improving for all populations, increasing from 77% in 2019 to 81% in 2021. Additionally, the high school stop-out rate has decreased across all demographics, falling from 8% in 2019 to 5% in 2021.

Source: NYC Public Schools

Trends in graduate numbers and graduation rates

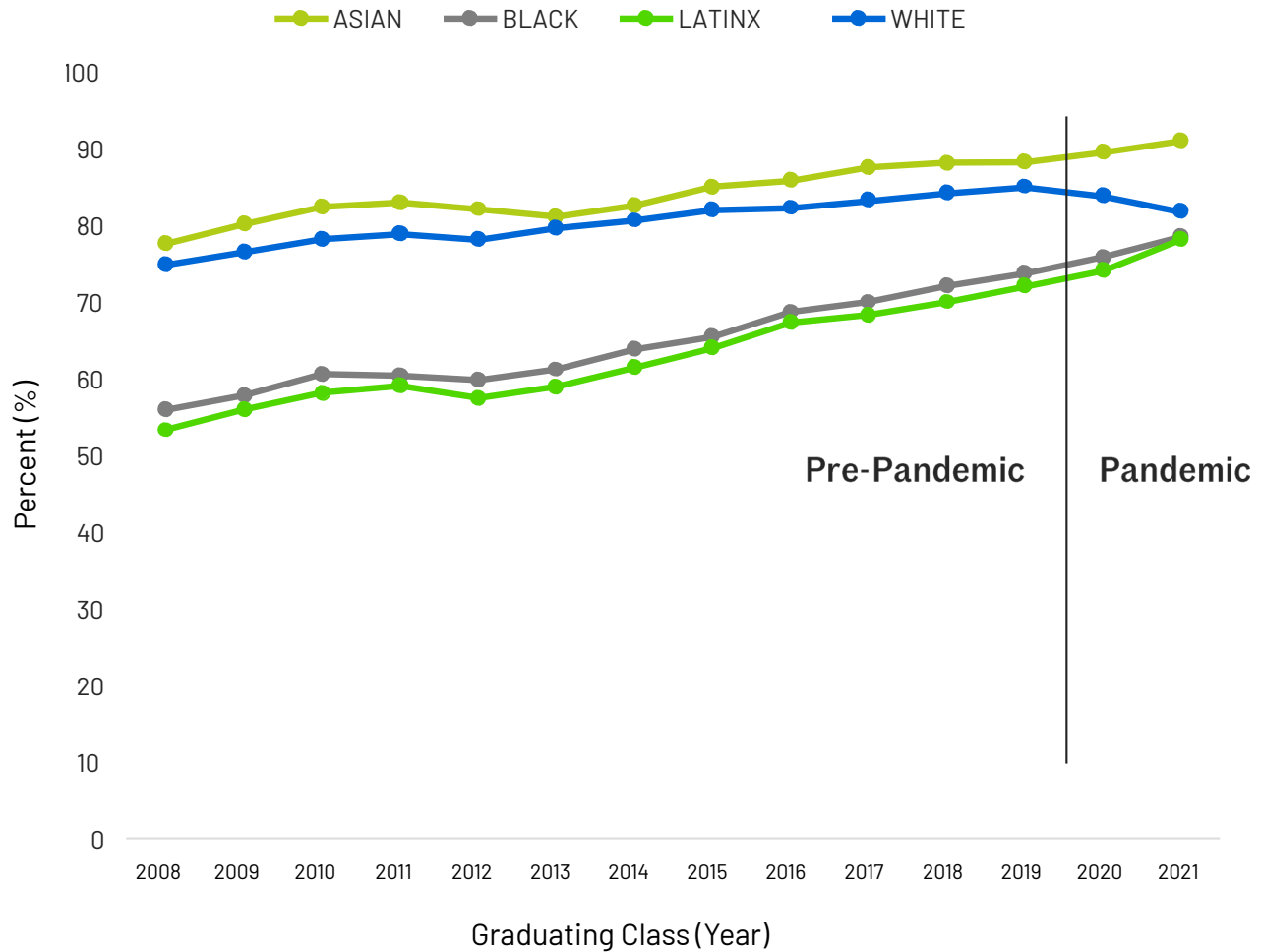


Trends in stop-out numbers and stop-out rates

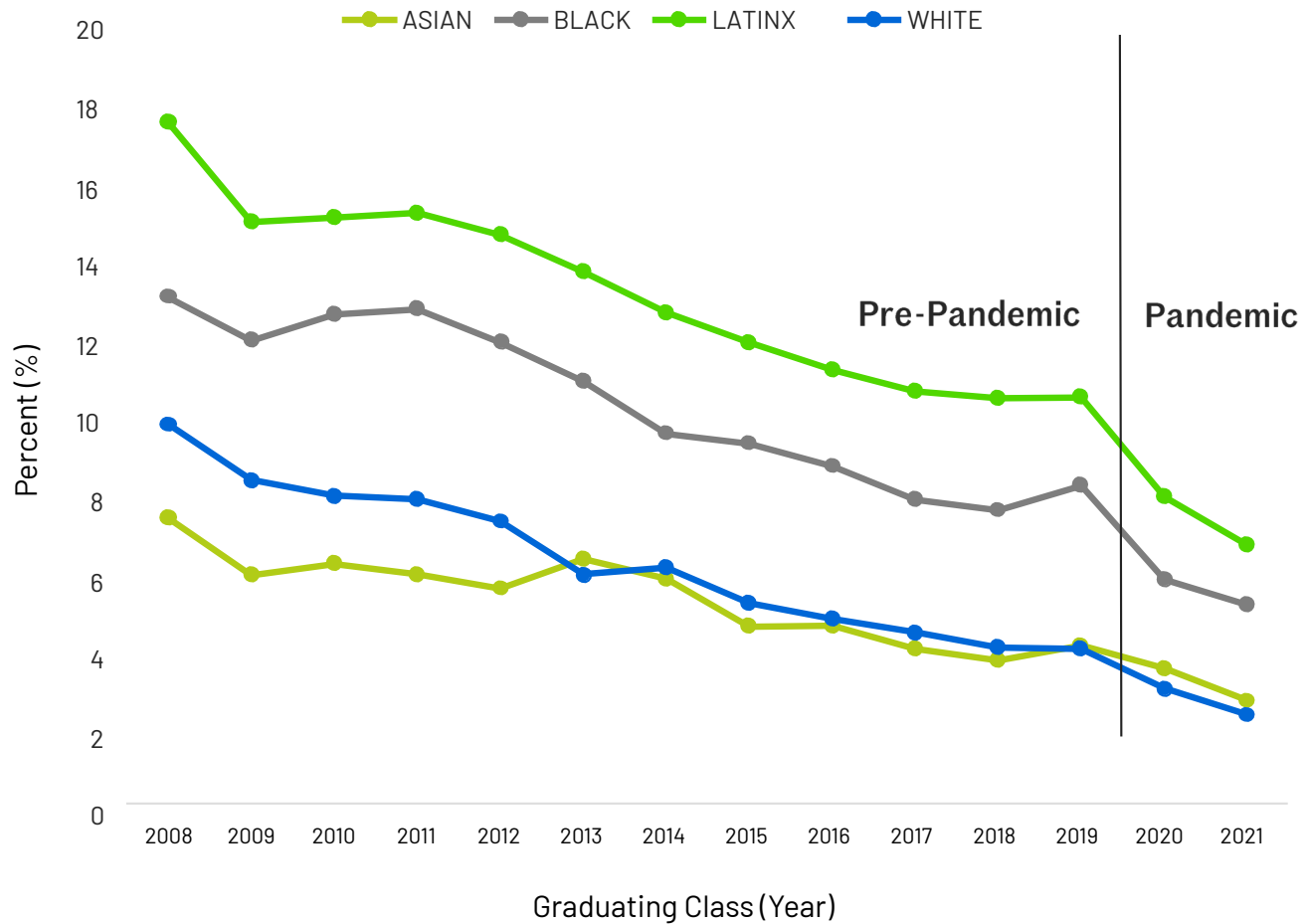


Stop-out refers to a temporary withdrawal from school or a delay in the pursuit of one's education.

Graduation rates by race/ethnicity



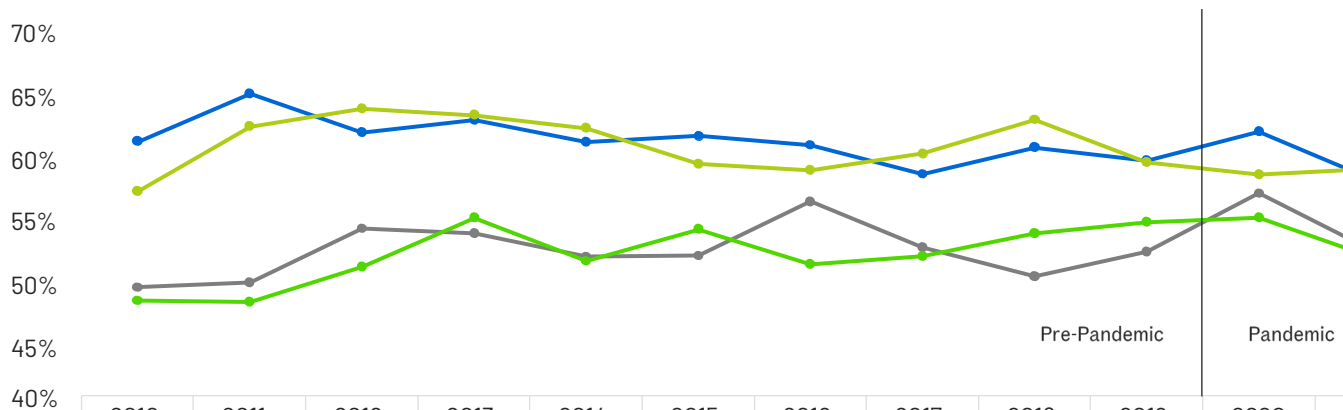
Stop-out rates by race/ethnicity



College and post-graduate attendance rates have improved for Black and Latinx populations, but still lag behind the rates of White and Asian young adults.

Source: NYC Public Schools

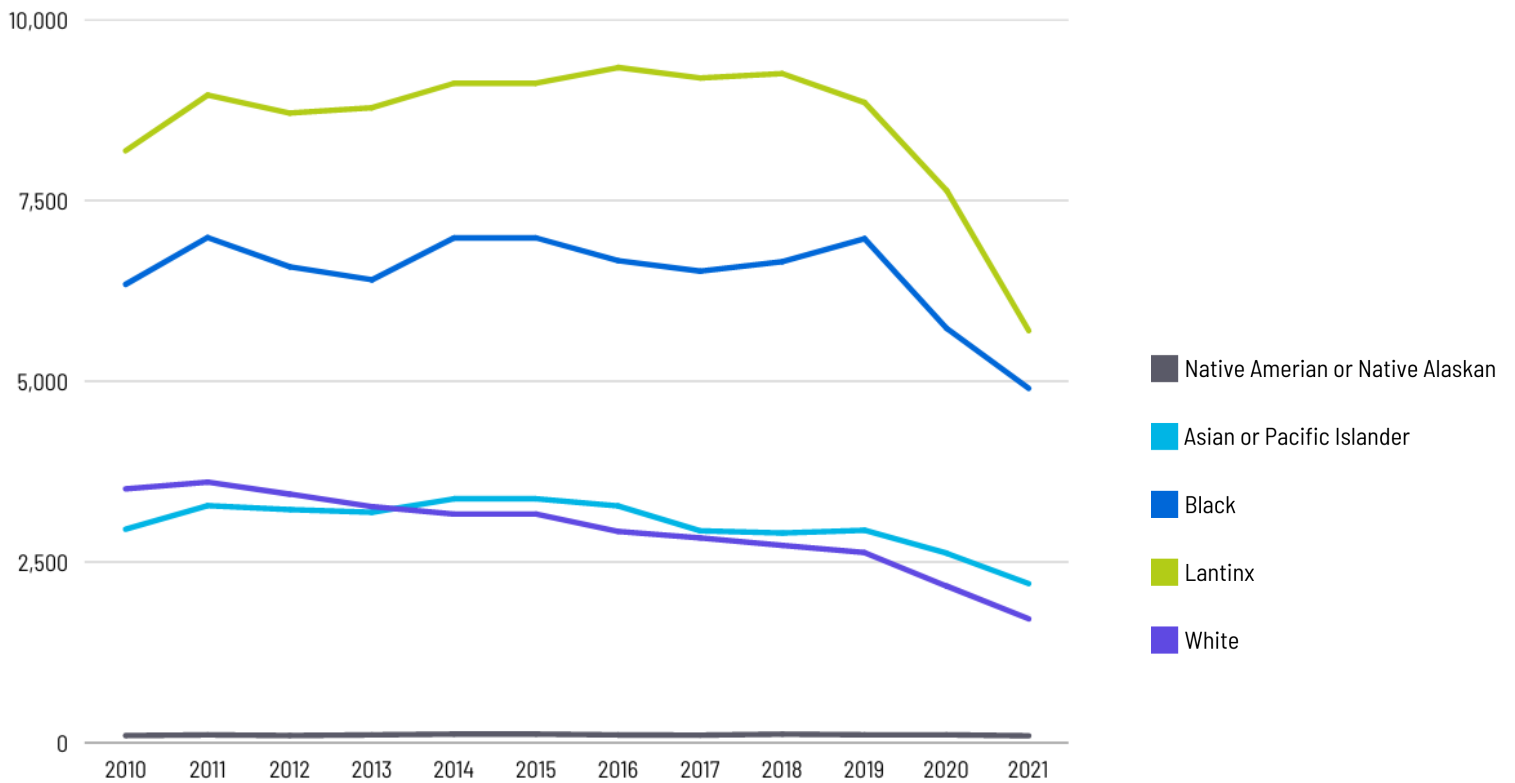
College attendance rates by race/ethnicity



	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
— WHITE	61%	65%	62%	63%	61%	61%	61%	58%	60%	59%	62%	58%
— BLACK	49%	49%	54%	53%	51%	52%	56%	52%	50%	52%	57%	52%
— ASIAN	57%	62%	64%	63%	62%	59%	59%	60%	63%	59%	58%	59%
— LATINX	48%	48%	51%	55%	51%	54%	51%	52%	53%	54%	55%	51%

Given that 74% of first-time freshmen at the City University of New York (CUNY) are graduates of NYC Public Schools, CUNY data on enrollment and educational attainment provides powerful insights into changes in NYC's young adult population over time.

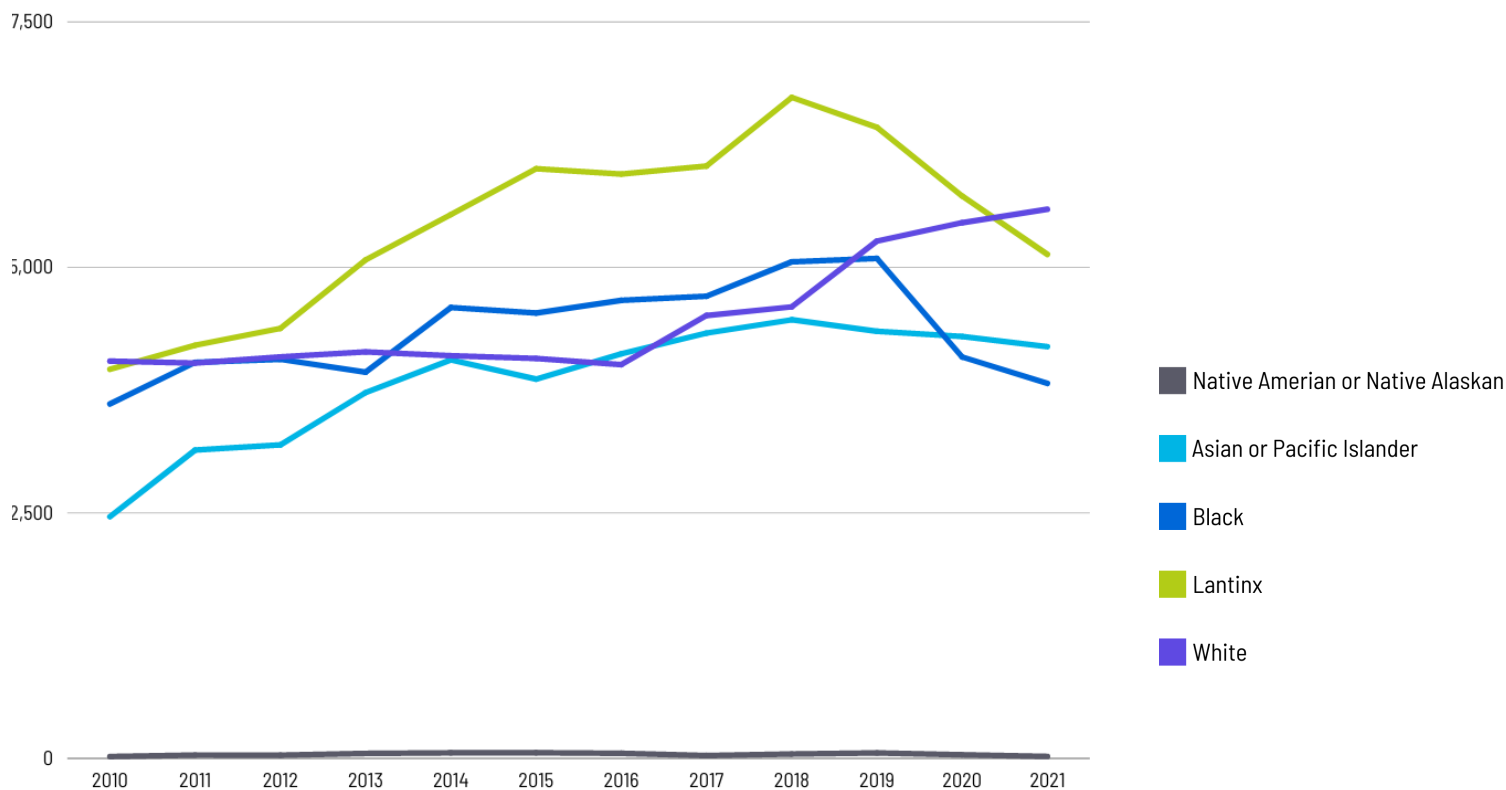
First time fall enrollment into CUNY associate degree programs



Source: The City University of New York, Office of Applied Research, Evaluation, and Data Analytics

Nearly half of students who began in Fall 2020 were not retained through one year of associate degree programs. Young adult retention rates for the Fall 2020 cohort of CUNY associate degree programs across all institutions were 73% for one semester and 56% for one year following matriculation.

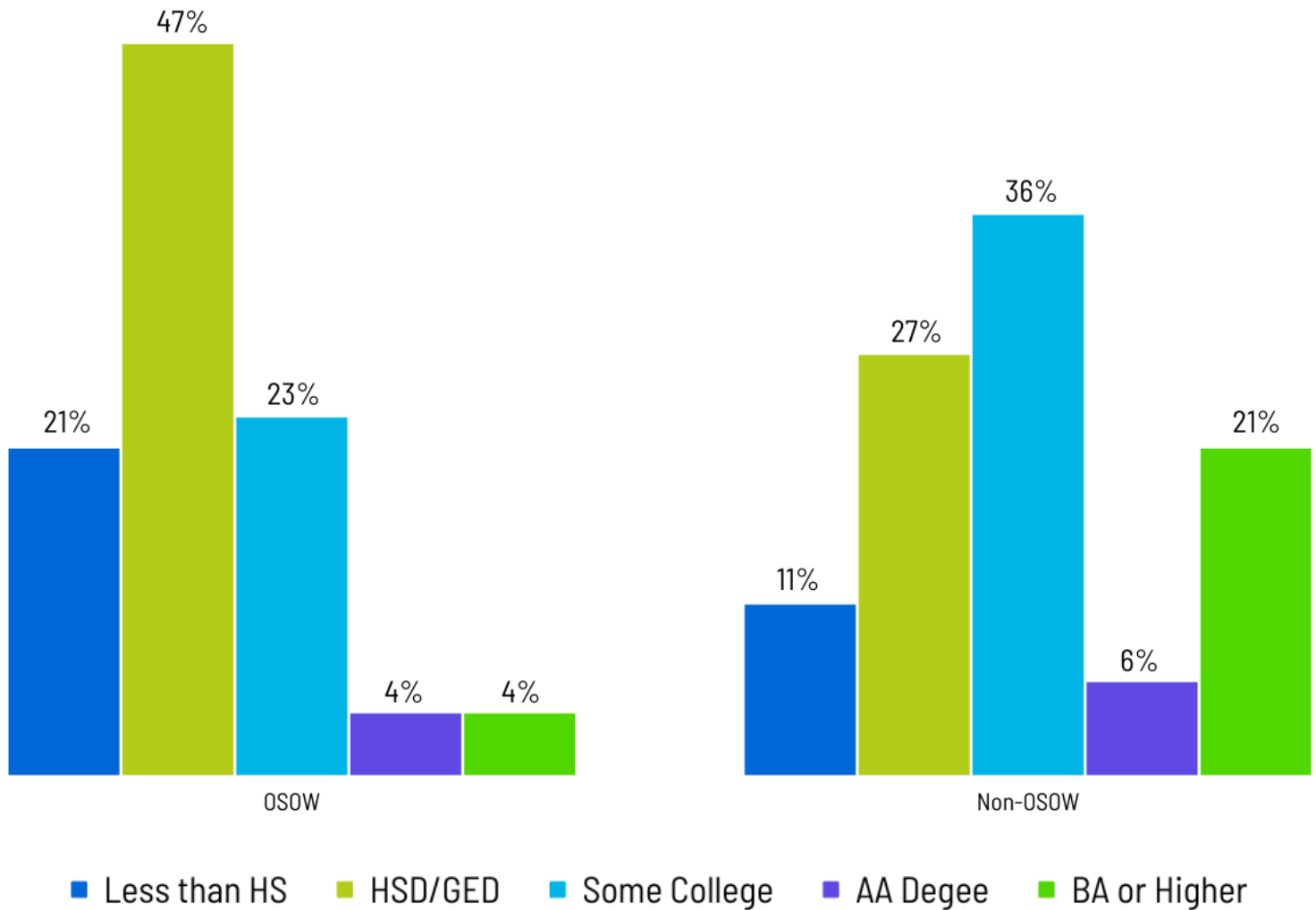
Fall enrollment into non-degree programs at CUNY for young adults under 25



Source: The City University of New York, Office of Applied Research, Evaluation, and Data Analytics

Although educational attainment has continued to improve among the 16- to-24-year-old population, almost 75% of young adults who are out of school and out of work have no college education, limiting their opportunities in the job market.

Educational attainment of 18- to 24-year-olds (2020-2021)





Address long-term economic insecurity created by part-time, low-wage work.

Steady growth in part-time, low-wage jobs creates long-term economic insecurity and uncertainty. New York City needs to invest in and strengthen opportunities for young adults to access good-paying quality jobs that offer career advancement possibilities beginning in high schools. NYC also needs to build more intentional opportunities for part-time, low-wage workers to connect to education and skills training that will put them on a path to economic mobility. Although much of the workforce development system has been focused on connecting jobseekers to full-time employment, more services are needed to better prepare young adults on how best to navigate a labor market in which job offerings are increasingly in part-time and precarious work.



Recommendations to Recover Gains

Support neighborhood partnership development.

It is critical to increase targeted workforce development and wraparound service programs for young adults in neighborhoods with high rates of young adults who are out of school and out of work, which also tend to have large communities living in economic insecurity and poverty. JobsFirstNYC has spearheaded a number of place-based partnerships, which are localized solutions that respond to the unique needs of communities with high numbers of young adults who are out of school and out of work. These partnerships include the Lower East Side Employment Network, the Brownsville Hub Cooperative (Brooklyn), YES Bed Stuy (Brooklyn), Youth WINS (Staten Island), and the Jerome Avenue Revitalization Collaborative (Bronx).



Prioritize economic mobility and pathways to prosperity for historically marginalized and disproportionately harmed communities.

New York City's workforce system stakeholders can make significant, measurable progress toward this recommendation by: encouraging participation in young adult workforce programs; implementing systems change strategies; centering young adults in planning processes; and prioritizing economic mobility and prosperity.



Recommendations to Recover Gains

Create a seamless continuum of integrated services across education and youth development institutions.

This can be achieved by: providing early career exposure; leveraging existing resources for support; integrating wraparound support programs; increasing the availability of bridge programs; reimagining education pathways; and making credentials easily attainable.

Policy Recommendations



Permanently expand the Earned Income Tax Credit to include earners aged 18–24.

This tax provision was temporarily expanded to young adult earners aged 19–24 nationwide during the pandemic under the American Rescue Plan. In New York City, earners aged 19–24 are eligible for the 2022 tax year, but it is uncertain whether young adult earners, many of whom are income eligible, will face age-related barriers to this important tax credit in the future.



Policy Recommendations

Substantially increase the minimum wage.

While the minimum wage in New York City is set to rise incrementally over the next three years, inflation, poverty, and widespread economic instability may continue to leave many young adults in New York City financially insecure.

Policy Recommendations



Strengthen wage equity policies

for young adult workers by protecting against wage theft and increasing the reach and enforcement of anti-discrimination policies and workplace protections.



Policy Recommendations

Increase investment in initiatives that support young men.

Given the alarming rise in unemployment rates among young men in New York City, particularly those of color, it is critical to prioritize investment in programs that support this population. Mentorship programs, specialized workforce initiatives, and other holistic opportunities for young men provide access to vital social-emotional support and enhance their economic well being.

Broader Trends to Explore



Increased out-of-school and out-of-work rates in Manhattan and Queens

Manhattan and Queens have fewer New York City Department of Youth and Community Development program sites and workforce program sites than other boroughs; however, out-of-school, out-of-work population rates increased the most in Manhattan and Queens.

See Appendix A for additional community-level data



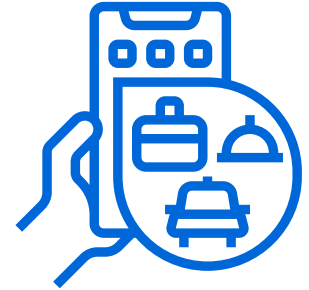
Broader Trends to Explore

Low first-time postsecondary enrollment

There were more than one million fewer undergraduates enrolled in college in 2021 compared to fall 2019. These unprecedented drops in college enrollment signal that young adults may be reconsidering the value of college. JobsFirstNYC Education Solutions is addressing this trend by building equitable pathways to postsecondary education and career pathways, for example through the long-standing Bronx Opportunity Network partnership between Bronx-Based community-based organizations and colleges.

Source: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center

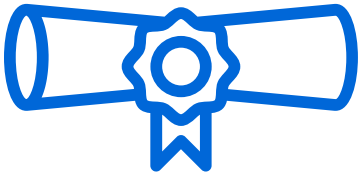
Broader Trends to Explore



Rise of part-time jobs and the gig economy

Across New York State, 850,000 workers are low-wage independent contractors. Because these workers are not classified as employees, they lack the guaranteed protections that are afforded to most workers, including a minimum wage, basic insurances, paid sick leave, and the ability to form labor unions. JobsFirstNYC Work Solutions has launched three citywide Sector Networks in the green economy, tech, and healthcare. These Networks will strengthen collaboration among workforce training providers and employers to improve program design and skills training, leverage knowledge and resources, and increase access to higher-quality jobs.

Source: Center for New York City Affairs



Broader Trends to Explore

Lack of college degrees creates a barrier to accessing economic mobility

Young adults who are out of school and out of work are reaching a paper ceiling: the invisible barrier that comes at every turn for workers without a bachelor's degree. Almost 75% of young adults who are out of school and out of work have no college education, restricting their opportunities in the job market. JobsFirstNYC is addressing this trend in multiple ways including launching a citywide Skills Mapping initiative in partnership with SkyHive, enabling workforce organizations to support job seekers to understand their current skills to match to jobs based on skills instead of degrees; and it collaborates with OneTen to help Black talent in New York without four-year degrees to get jobs with family sustaining wages.

Learn more about SkyHive at skyhive.io and OneTen at oneten.org

Broader Trends to Explore



Low rates of household formation

As the cost of living in NYC continues to rise, young people are living with their parents for longer and buying homes at lower rates than previous generations did at their age. Lack of choice regarding where to live, longer commute times, and living far from friends and community spaces all contribute to the high rates of social isolation and loneliness among young adults today. At the same time, living at home enables young adults to accrue savings for themselves and their families, and to take more time to develop and pursue their career goals.

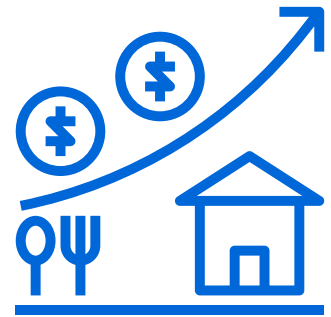


Broader Trends to Explore

Influx of new arrivals

There are 13,700 students in temporary housing seeking asylum enrolled in our public schools as of early 2023. NYC direct service organizations face challenges in connecting undocumented workers and asylum seekers to workforce development opportunities including paid internships and jobs placements.

Broader Trends to Explore



Impacts of the increasing cost of living in NYC

50% of working-age households do not have earnings that meet the minimum cost of living in New York City. Many New York City residents, particularly Black residents, are leaving the city partially due to the ever-increasing cost of raising a family in New York. This trend of migration has wide-ranging implications for the workforce, with labor shortages in industries including healthcare, food service, and hospitality, where Black workers have traditionally been overrepresented.

Source: the Fund for the City of New York

Appendix A: A Deeper Look – Community-Level Data

Community District	Name	Pre-Pandemic (2018 & 2019)		Pandemic (2020 & 2021)		OSOW 16 to 24 Absolute Difference Pre-pandemic & Pandemic	Pre-Pandemic (2018 & 2019)	Pandemic (2020 & 2021)
		OSOW 16 to 24 year olds	OSOW 16 to 24 year olds Rate	OSOW 16 to 24 year olds Rate	OSOW 16 to 24 year olds		Share of population below 200% of Federal Poverty Level	
BRONX								
CD 11	Pelham Parkway, Morris Park & Laconia	1475.5	12%	3338.5	20%	1,863	33%	41%
CD 4	Concourse, Highbridge & Mount Eden	2618	16%	3795	24%	1,177	59%	55%
CD 10	Co-op City, Pelham Bay & Schuylerville	922.5	9%	1751	16%	829	31%	35%
CD 12	Wakefield, Williamsbridge & Woodlawn	2655	16%	3407	24%	752	39%	35%
CD 1 & 2	Hunts Point, Longwood & Melrose	5088	23%	5610.5	27%	523	67%	65%
CD 8	Riverdale, Fieldston & Kingsbridge	1477	13%	1576.5	15%	100	42%	35%
CD 9	Castle Hill, Clason Point & Parkchester	5269.5	22%	5265	24%	-5	48%	49%
CD 7	Bedford Park, Fordham North & Norwood	3047	17%	2914	20%	-133	58%	50%
CD 5	Morris Heights, Fordham South & Mount Hope	4791.5	25%	4531.5	25%	-260	59%	62%
CD 3 & 6	Belmont, Crotona Park East & East Tremont	4609.5	17%	3967	16%	-643	63%	64%
MANHATTAN								
CD 12	Washington Heights, Inwood & Marble Hill	2433	12%	5142.5	18%	2,710	39%	42%
CD 11	East Harlem	1634.5	14%	3521	27%	1,887	56%	50%
CD 3	Chinatown & Lower East Side	1519.5	8%	2798.5	12%	1,279	47%	45%
CD 10	Central Harlem	1821	13%	2897	25%	1,076	41%	36%
CD 6	Murray Hill, Gramercy & Stuyvesant Town	327.5	2%	970.5	7%	643	15%	17%
CD 8	Upper East Side	763.5	6%	1238	9%	475	11%	14%
CD 4 & 5	Chelsea, Clinton & Midtown Business District	412	3%	651	5%	239	21%	23%
CD 9	Hamilton Heights, Manhattanville & West Harlem	1818	7%	1771	8%	-47	42%	49%
CD 1 & 2	Battery Park City, Greenwich Village & Soho	729	4%	549.5	3%	-180	14%	16%
CD 7	Upper West Side & West Side	1564.5	14%	337	3%	-1,228	18%	20%
STATEN ISLAND								
CD 3	Tottenville, Great Kills & Annadale	1172	7%	1848	11%	676	16%	16%
CD 1	Port Richmond, Stapleton & Mariner's Harbor	3578	17%	3297	15%	-281	29%	29%
CD 2	New Springville & South Beach	1559.5	12%	1220	10%	-340	21%	27%

Appendix A: A Deeper Look – Community-Level Data

Community District	Name	Pre-Pandemic (2018 & 2019)		Pandemic (2020 & 2021)		OSOW 16 to 24 Absolute Difference Pre-pandemic & Pandemic	Pre-Pandemic (2018 & 2019)	Pandemic (2020 & 2021)
		OSOW 16 to 24 year olds	OSOW 16 to 24 year olds Rate	OSOW 16 to 24 year olds Rate	OSOW 16 to 24 year olds		Share of population below 200% of Federal Poverty Level	Share of population below 200% of Federal Poverty Level
BROOKLYN								
CD 18	Canarsie & Flatlands	2371.5	12%	4396.5	16%	2,025	25%	26%
CD 11	Bensonhurst & Bath Beach	1705.5	10%	3009.5	13%	1,304	39%	45%
CD 2	Brooklyn Heights & Fort Greene	833	6%	1943.5	13%	1,111	27%	28%
CD 10	Bay Ridge & Dyker Heights	1220.5	11%	1976	15%	756	31%	30%
CD 4	Bushwick	2168	12%	2912.5	19%	745	40%	40%
CD 15	Sheepshead Bay, Gerritsen Beach & Homecrest	1998.5	14%	2608	17%	610	31%	33%
CD 9	Crown Heights South, Prospect Lefferts & Wingate	1362.5	12%	1903.5	17%	541	35%	38%
CD 12	Borough Park, Kensington & Ocean Parkway	2494	14%	2890	13%	396	55%	51%
CD 3	Bedford Stuyvesant	2902.5	16%	3112	20%	210	44%	40%
CD 1	Greenpoint & Williamsburg	1511.5	11%	1701	11%	190	38%	33%
CD 6	Park Slope, Carroll Gardens & Red Hook	271.5	4%	436.5	8%	165	14%	15%
CD 8	Crown Heights North & Prospect Heights	2269	16%	2404	23%	135	35%	32%
CD 16	Brownsville & Ocean Hill	3149.5	23%	3282.5	27%	133	54%	49%
CD 14	Flatbush & Midwood	1909	11%	1807.5	12%	-102	37%	35%
CD 17	East Flatbush, Farragut & Rugby	2636.5	18%	2506.5	18%	-130	28%	34%
CD 7	Sunset Park & Windsor Terrace	1461	13%	1167.5	10%	-294	43%	48%
CD 13	Brighton Beach & Coney Island	2175.5	23%	1370	12%	-806	51%	44%
CD 5	East New York & Starrett City	5148	24%	3133.5	19%	-2,015	45%	42%
QUEENS								
CD 12	Jamaica, Hollis & St. Albans	3686.5	14%	7012.5	21%	3,326	32%	29%
CD 10	Howard Beach & Ozone Park	1365.5	11%	2930.5	19%	1,565	23%	26%
CD 9	Richmond Hill & Woodhaven	2275.5	14%	3660.5	20%	1,385	28%	28%
CD 13	Queens Village, Cambria Heights & Rosedale	2906	15%	3983	17%	1,077	18%	19%
CD 14	Far Rockaway, Breezy Point & Broad Channel	2214	16%	2780	23%	566	40%	39%
CD 5	Ridgewood, Glendale & Middle Village	2438	14%	2996	15%	558	27%	28%
CD 1	Astoria & Long Island City	1561	11%	2106.5	15%	546	28%	26%
CD 3	Jackson Heights & North Corona	2119	12%	2614.5	19%	496	41%	36%
CD 2	Sunnyside & Woodside	741	7%	1128.5	13%	388	27%	26%
CD 11	Bayside, Douglaston & Little Neck	687.5	7%	974.5	11%	287	19%	21%
CD 7	Flushing, Murray Hill & Whitestone	1675	9%	1787.5	11%	113	39%	35%
CD 6	Forest Hills & Rego Park	486.5	9%	582.5	9%	96	18%	18%
CD 4	Elmhurst & South Corona	1422.5	9%	1232.5	9%	-190	41%	43%
CD 8	Briarwood, Fresh Meadows & Hillcrest	2305	11%	1532	10%	-773	32%	30%

Acknowledgements

Reversing Nearly a Decade of Positive Trends is a publication of JobsFirstNYC and Community Service Society of New York. Thanks are due to the JobsFirstNYC staff who shepherded this process: Allyson Bay, Keri Faulhaber, Christine James-McKenzie, Marjorie Parker, Amanda Rosenblum, and Lily Roth.

Thanks are due to the CSS staff who contributed research and analysis: Debipriya Chatterjee, Jennifer Hinojosa, Emerita Torres, and Alia Winters.

Design by Tracey Maurer.