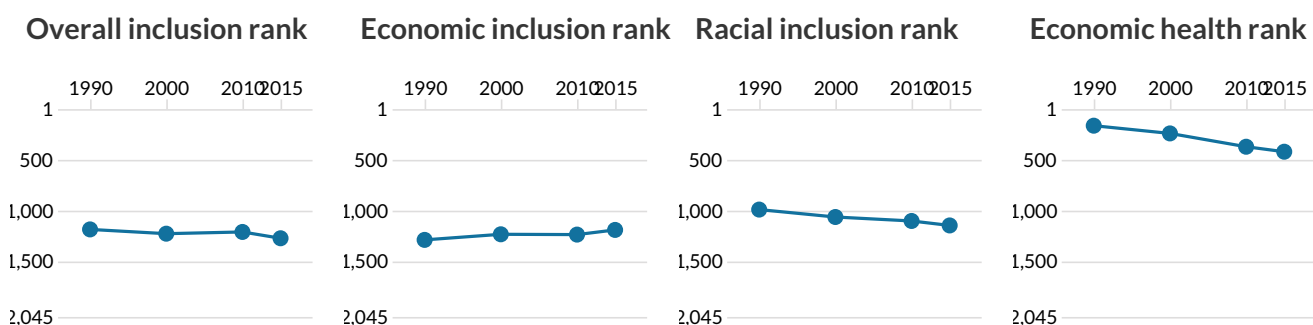# New Bedford, MA

Population in 2015: 95,125

Everyone should have the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from economic prosperity. This is our definition of inclusion and is a goal toward which all cities should strive. Being more inclusive can make cities stronger and more stable and can give all residents a chance to improve their quality of life.

To better understand what makes cities inclusive, we collected data on 2,046 of the largest US cities and ranked those cities on economic, racial, and overall inclusion across four decades. We also measured economic health to see whether cities could harness growth to improve inclusion.

In 2013, New Bedford ranked 1271 out of 2,046 cities on overall inclusion, 1189 on economic inclusion, and 1145 on racial inclusion. From 2000 to 2013, New Bedford's economic health rank decreased from 371 to 420. The city also became less inclusive, falling from 1209 to 1271 in the overall inclusion rankings. Dive deeper into New Bedford's economic health and inclusion measures below.
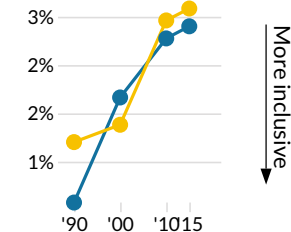
Overall inclusion rank

Economic inclusion rank

Racial inclusion rank

Economic health rank

Economic inclusion

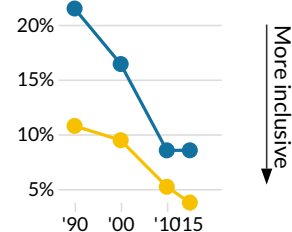Average across cities ●   New Bedford, MA ●

Rent-burdened residents
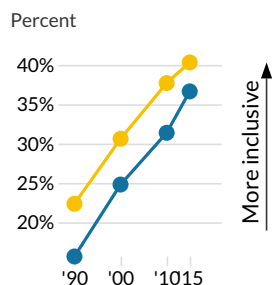Percent
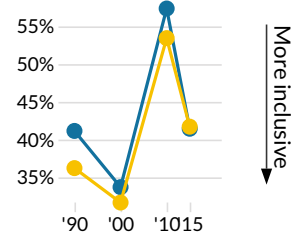
Working-poor families
Percent

High school drop-out rate
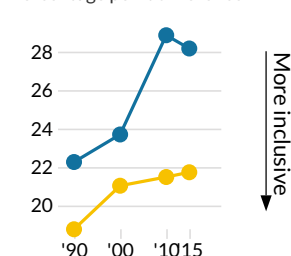Percent

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Racial inclusion

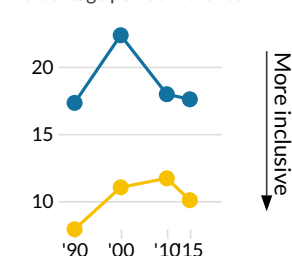Average across cities ●   New Bedford, MA ●

People of color as a share of the population
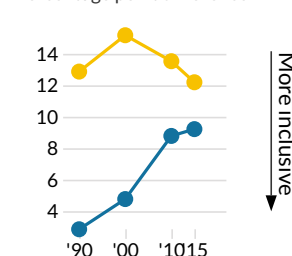Percent

Racial homeownership gap
Percentage point difference

Racial poverty gap
Percentage point difference

Racial education gap
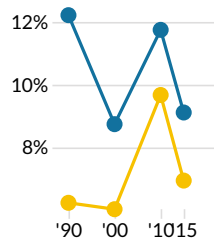Percentage point difference
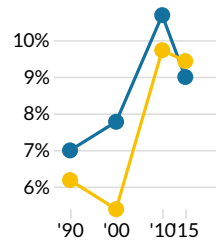
Economic health

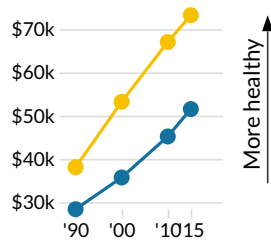**Unemployment rate**
Percent

Housing vacancy rate
Percent

Median family income
Dollars

How do we measure inclusion?

"Overall inclusion" reflects the ability of *historically excluded populations*—in this case, lower-income residents and people of color—to contribute to and benefit from economic prosperity. We measure this by combining economic inclusion and racial inclusion.

- "Economic inclusion" reflects the ability of *residents with lower incomes* to contribute to and benefit from economic prosperity. We measure this by looking at income segregation, housing affordability, the share of working poor residents, and the high school drop-out rate.

- "Racial inclusion" reflects the ability of *residents of color* to contribute to and benefit from economic prosperity. We measure this by examining racial segregation, racial gaps in homeownership, poverty, and educational attainment, and the share of the city's population that are people of color.

To learn more about why we selected these indicators and how we measured them, click here (https://www.urban.org/research/publication/inclusive-recovery-us-cities) .

How do we measure economic health?

Economic health captures the strength of a city's local economy. We measure this by looking at employment growth, the unemployment rate, the housing vacancy rate, and median family income.

What can cities do to become more inclusive?

Although no single model for success exists, we can learn a lot from cities that have become more inclusive, particularly as they recovered from downturns. How did those cities try to ensure that all residents shared in the economic recovery?

To answer this question, we met with leaders from four cities that improved their racial and economic inclusion as they recovered from economic distress. By combining their insights with previous research about inclusive growth, we identified the following eight building blocks for inclusion growth.

1. **Adopt a shared vision** early on and get buy-in from local stakeholders.

2. **Inspire and sustain bold leadership** from committed public officials or other dedicated stakeholders.

3. **Recruit partners from across sectors,** including resident groups, the media, and business leaders. Diverse partners can create buy-in, generate and elevate insights, and support solutions.

4. **Build voice and power** within traditionally underrepresented or disenfranchised communities. Ensure diverse representation in planning and political processes.

5. **Leverage assets and intrinsic advantages,** such as a city's physical spaces and the potential of its residents.

6. **Think and act regionally.** Job and housing markets cross jurisdictional lines and residents often live, work, and use services outside their city. Regional partnerships can help secure broadly shared prosperity.

7. **Reframe inclusion as integral to growth** to encourage progress in both areas. A growing body of evidence suggests that diversity and inclusion is a catalyst for economic development.

8. **Adopt policies and programs to support inclusion.** Policies and programs that promote inclusion in education, housing, economic development, and fiscal policy can lead to long-term success.

To learn more about our case study cities, the lessons learned from them, and examples of these building blocks in action, see the full report *Inclusive Recovery in US Cities* (https://www.urban.org/research/publication/inclusive-recovery-us-cities) .

ABOUT THE DATA

This dashboard contains measures calculated from data compiled by the US Census Bureau's 1980 Decennial Census, 1990 Decennial Census, 2000 Decennial Census, and 2011–15 American Community Survey and accessed through the National Historic Geographic Information System's online portal (IPUMS NHGIS, University of Minnesota, www.nhgis.org (http://www.nhgis.org/)). The racial segregation measure was obtained from Brown University's American Communities Project for the years 1980, 1990, and 2000. We define people of color as those who are African American, Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, another race, or multiracial.

The racial inclusion index is made up of five measures: racial segregation (white/person of color dissimilarity index), homeownership gap, educational attainment gap, poverty rate gap, and share of people of color. The economic inclusion index is made up of four measures: income segregation (rank-order information theory index), rent burden, share of 16- to 19-year-olds who are not in school and have not graduated, and working poor. The overall inclusion index is the composite of these two inclusion indices. The economic health index is made up of four indicators: percentage change in employed people period over period, median family income, unemployment rate, and vacancy rate.

We chose to focus on cities rather than metro areas since local decisions around policies, taxes, and services happen more often at the city level than the regional level. We include only incorporated cities in our analysis and exclude census-designated places (https://www.census.gov/geo/reference/gtc/gtc_place.html) because they lack a municipal government that can adopt policies that support economic growth or inclusion. A city is classified as "recovered" if it has moved from the bottom third to the top half of our sample in the economic health index. A city's recovery period is the time span over which it achieves this upward movement.

PROJECT CREDITS

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