

Pain Point Analysis: Brooklyn

July 19, 2022



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Overview

Brooklyn Snapshot



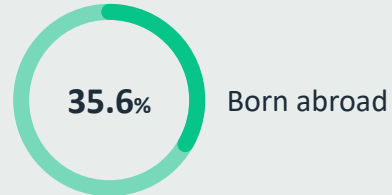
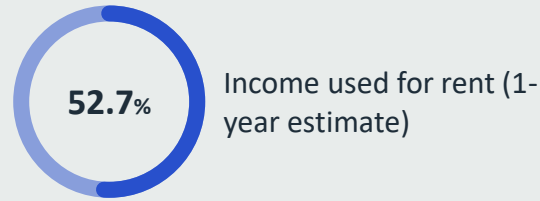
2,641,052
Total population



\$63,973
Median household
income

Zeitgeist

Brooklyn's diverse population, including its large population of residents born abroad, makes culture a vital factor in engaging the community, in addition to its challenges with poverty, housing and gentrification, and access to health care.



37.0%	White alone, non-Hispanic
33.3%	Black
18.8%	Hispanic/Latinx
12.9%	Asian
1.0%	American Indian
0.1%	Other

Overview

- With an estimated population of nearly 2.7 million, Brooklyn is New York City's most populous borough. Over the last decade, Brooklyn's population has increased by 9.4 percent, or 230,000.
- Brooklyn has one of the highest rates of gentrification in the city and across the U.S. The borough's Black population declined by 8.7 percent over the last decade, while its non-Latinx white population grew by 8.4 percent.
- Eighty percent of Brooklyn residents have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. The COVID-19 death rate in East New York, and the predominantly low-income Black community, is 1.5 times higher than that of Brooklyn Heights, an affluent and majority white neighborhood (53 vs. 358 per 100,000). The two neighborhoods also report disparities in vaccination and case rates relative to their population sizes.
- The Brooklyn Public Library system (BPL), a key New York City institution, is one of the nation's largest public library systems, with more than 850,000 active cardholders. It offers 1,858 ESOL classes annually and access to books in nearly 100 languages to support the local immigrant community.
- The borough is home to more than 20 colleges and universities, including four colleges-part of the CUNY system. Cultural institutions in Brooklyn include the Brooklyn Museum, the New York Aquarium, and the Weeksville Heritage Center, which celebrates one of the largest known independent Black communities in pre-Civil War America.



Pain Points

Public Health and Access to Care

- Housing issues such as overcrowding, lack of maintenance, and poor air quality, have a higher incidence across low-income communities – and contribute to poor health outcomes. East New York, in which 70 percent of homes report maintenance defects, has a child asthma hospitalization rate 1.6 times higher than the borough average. Over a quarter of adults in the area report not having health insurance, and obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and smoking rates are all higher than the Brooklyn average.
- In 2021, COVID-19 vaccination deserts across Brooklyn significantly affected immigrant and low-income communities. Researchers found the number of vaccination sites in primarily non-white areas was significantly less than primarily white areas. Another study showed that Black individuals in Brooklyn were twice as likely to require hospitalization due to COVID-19 than white individuals.
- The CDC found that Brooklyn has one of the largest disparities in internet access between high- and low-income neighborhoods, with a digital divide limiting education and access to public health solutions.
- Governor Kathy Hochul opened vaccine sites in underfunded neighborhoods and launched a statewide mobile air monitoring initiative, which will deploy in Brooklyn in fall 2022.



Poverty

- In Brooklyn, 17.8 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, compared to 17.3 percent in New York and 11.4 percent in the country. Poverty is particularly prevalent among the borough's Black, Indigenous, and Latinx communities, which face poverty rates of 19.6, 26.7, and 25.6 percent, respectively. Brooklyn also has the highest number of children living in poverty in New York City, with 580,522.
- More than 400,000 Brooklyn residents – or over 15 percent – experience food insecurity, which can lead to significant health problems, especially among children. Worsening this, 62 percent of Brooklyn residents stated it has become more difficult to afford groceries since the pandemic began.
- In 2017, the state announced Vital Brooklyn, a \$1.4 billion initiative to improve health statistics and the poverty rate in Brooklyn, specifically central Brooklyn. Vital Brooklyn has provided \$700 million for health care and created 3,000 affordable housing units and 7,600 new jobs to help reduce poverty.



Housing and Homelessness

- Between 2002 and 2012, families entering homeless shelters came predominantly from three neighborhoods in Brooklyn, with the highest percentages from North Crown Heights, East New York, and Stuyvesant Heights. Nearly 60 percent had most recently lived in rent-regulated apartments or public housing.
- Brooklyn's poverty rate remains the second-highest by borough in New York City, behind the Bronx. The lack of affordable housing options is demonstrated in Brooklyn's 29.8 percent homeownership rate. The price per square foot on listing prices in Brooklyn is nearly five times the national average.
- The city and local organizations have made efforts to limit gentrification. Grassroots organizations such as the Brooklyn Anti-Gentrification Network, a community-based tenant and homeowner coalition, fight this issue through advocacy and public demonstrations.
- In June 2022, Mayor Eric Adams released a Housing and Homelessness Plan to create affordable and sustainable housing in low-income communities. The plan focuses on areas such as Central Brooklyn, most notably East New York, to address displacement. In June 2022, Governor Hochul and state leaders announced a 25-member Affordable Housing Commission.




Priority Neighborhoods

Borough Park

Population: 127,737*

Borough Park is the center of Orthodox Jewish life in New York City, with one of the largest Jewish communities in the U.S. The neighborhood has a distinctly high level of non-English speakers, with 76.9 percent reporting a lack of proficiency. The primary language spoken is Yiddish. While the region is not classified as low-income, with a median household income of \$48,386, Borough Park reports a high rate of rent burden.

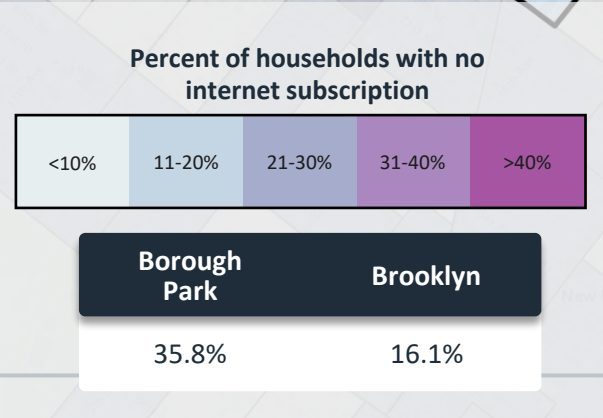
Affordability and food insecurity are major concerns in the neighborhood, as 29.4 percent of residents receive government benefits and 30.6 of residents receive SNAP benefits. These issues are compounded by lack of access, particularly digitally; 35.8 percent of the population reports no internet access. These qualities generate barriers to engagement and disseminating information effectively. Over half of the neighborhood's residents have no vehicle, further limiting access to essential community resources.

 Borough Park Neighborhood Boundary

Zip Codes Represented	Approximate Enrollees within Zip Codes**
11204,11219	114,209

*Population data for the neighborhoods is calculated using combined and averaged census tract level information. As neighborhood boundaries do not perfectly align with the census boundaries, the data for neighborhoods is only an estimated value as some additional areas from surrounding neighborhoods are included.

**Approximate enrolled population is derived from New York State of Health's publicly available data, last updated in April of 2022. The data is published at the zip code level and reflects the average number of enrollees per zip code by all data collection options. Neighborhoods were assigned the total enrollment population reflective of the zip code they fall within.



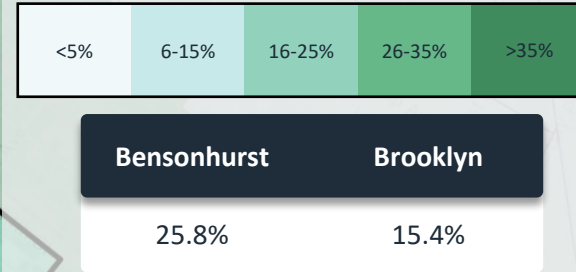
Bensonhurst

Population: 83,929*

Bensonhurst, commonly referred to as the “Little Italy of Brooklyn,” is one of the most diverse neighborhoods in New York. Bensonhurst has the most residents from Hong Kong and China of any neighborhood in New York City. It contains a 62.4 percent non-white population and 75.2 percent of its residents are non-native English speakers, with Italian, Chinese, and Spanish being the most spoken languages. Bensonhurst’s median household income is below the national mark of \$64,944, at \$56,315; 23 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.

Bensonhurst struggles economically, contributing to the area’s food insecurity. Ten percent of Bensonhurst adults lack daily fruit and vegetables. Over 42 percent of the neighborhood’s population does not have access to a vehicle, requiring many residents to rely on local resources. Furthermore, the area lacks fitness facilities, as 35 percent of the population does not exercise regularly, compared 27.1 percent of the city overall. This may be compounded by Bensonhurst’s median age 39.3, compared to the city’s median age of 36.9.

Percent of population with less than high school diploma



Zip Codes Represented	Approximate Enrollees within Zip Codes**
11204,11214	103,642

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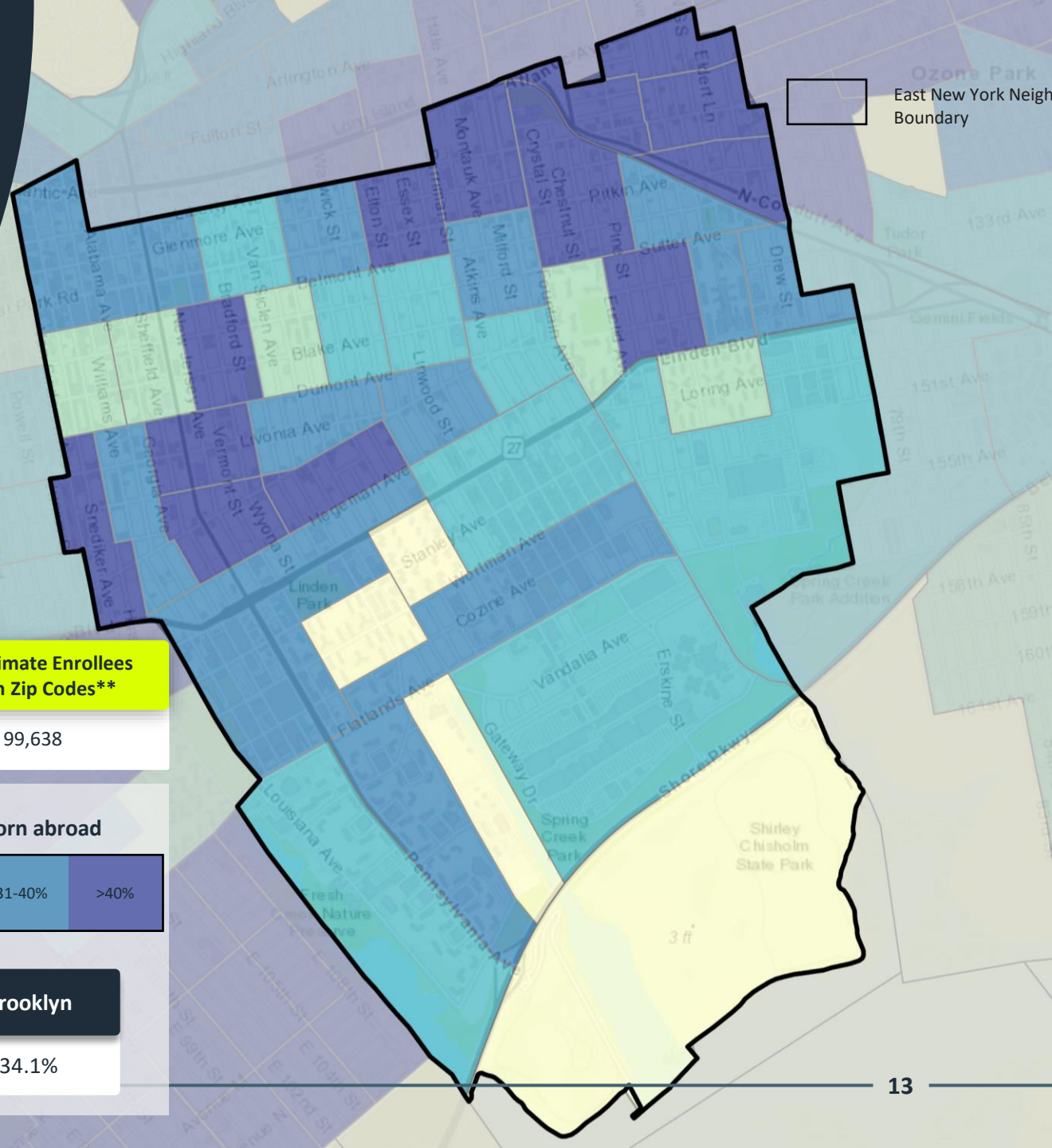
Bensonhurst Neighborhood Boundary

East New York

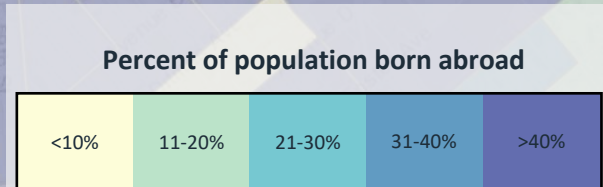
Population: 144,545*

East New York, a largely residential area, has a population that is over 92 percent people of color. The area is home to large Black, Latinx, Bangladeshi, and Caribbean communities. The median household income is \$40,097, and nearly 30 percent of the population lives in poverty. Additionally, 32.4 percent of residents report no proficiency in English, with Spanish being the primary native language.

Lack of English proficiency contributes to health disparities, as residents are unable to access public health resources and information. Numerous confluent accessibility issues pervade the neighborhood; residents do not have a vehicle, the highest of any other priority community, and 18.2 percent report no internet access. Considered a food desert, East New York residents also rank health, particularly lack of adequate nutrition, as a top concern.



Zip Codes Represented	Approximate Enrollees within Zip Codes**
11207,11208	99,638



East New York	Brooklyn
31.7%	34.1%

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Key Findings

Key Findings

High poverty rates and economic disparities exacerbate poor health outcomes for residents throughout Brooklyn, particularly low-income people of color. With a high foreign-born population, Brooklyn residents face linguistic barriers in addition to resource limitations to re-enroll in public health insurance.

- Given that many of Brooklyn’s low-income residents live in subsidized and affordable housing developments, leveraging tenant associations, affordable housing groups, and NYCHA could help NY State of Health reach some of the most vulnerable populations in the borough.
- Low literacy rates in Brooklyn’s highest need communities, as well as in other geographies with large foreign-born and immigrant populations, indicate that engagement strategies must be multi-modal. Paired with limited access to the internet, enrollees must receive information beyond print media and online. Partnering with community organizations, hosting in-person events, and using alternative media such as radio in multiple languages can help reach this audience.
- Given the influence and prevalence of the Jewish community throughout Brooklyn, particularly in Borough Park, it will be integral to work with local synagogues and faith leaders to inform congregants and gain trust within the highest need communities. NY State of Health may consider partnering with these institutions to host pop-up in-person enrollment events.

