

Sociodemographics of Rent Stabilized Tenants

An analysis based on the 2017 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey (NYCHVS).

Tenants in rent stabilized units and tenants in unregulated units in New York City are distinct groups that vary beyond just their type of housing. Below, we utilize data from the 2017 NYCHVS to examine and compare these groups across several sociodemographic dimensions.

Approximately two thirds of the housing stock is made up of renter-occupied units. Here, we focus on a subset of renter-occupied units, specifically rent stabilized and private, non-regulated units, instead of the overall rental universe that also includes rent controlled, public housing, Mitchell-Lama rental, and other regulated units. Rent stabilized and private, non-regulated units make up about 87% of the rental stock. Table 1 shows the general distribution of renter- and owner-occupied units in New York City.

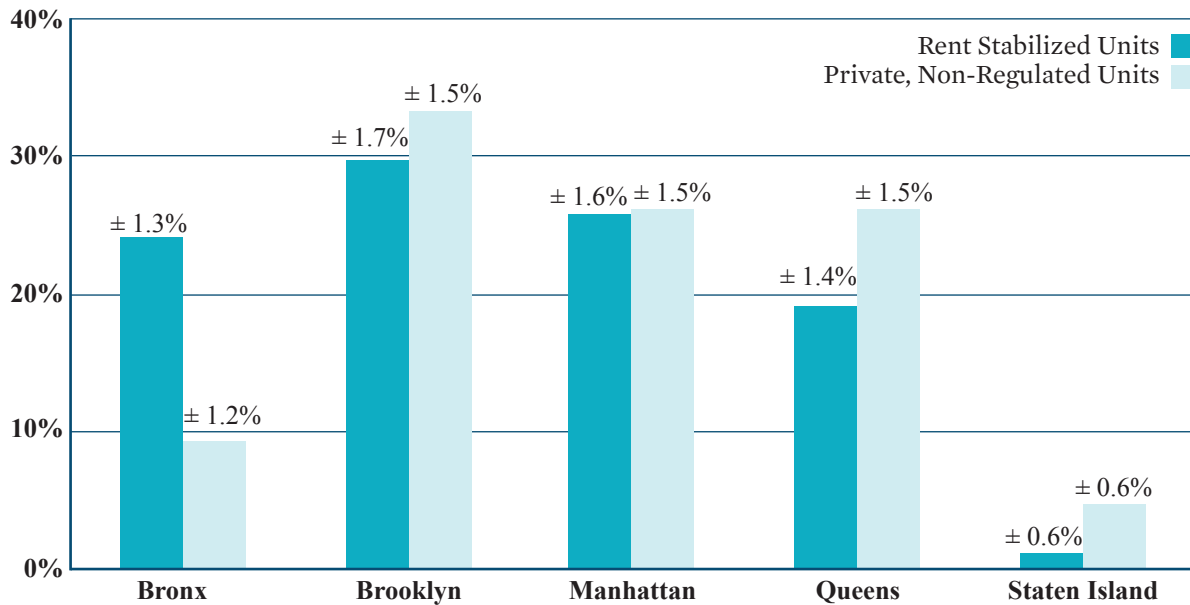
Table 1. Housing Stock

	Renter Occupied		Owner Occupied	
	Households	%	Households	%
Rent Stabilized	946,514	45%		
Private, Unregulated	879,995	42%		
Rent Controlled	21,751	1%		
Public Housing	184,729	9%		
Other Regulated	27,792	1%		
Mitchell-Lama Rental	43,092	2%		
Mitchell-Lama Coops			55,677	6%
1-4 Family			580,484	58%
Coop			261,667	26%
Condo			108,253	11%
Total	2,103,874	100%	1,006,081	100%
Renter + Owner	3,109,955			

Categories in this table are based on "New Control Status Recode" (CSR) variable. 'Other Regulated' encompasses two categories in the CSR: in rem and HUD or other regulated.

Rent stabilized units are found throughout the city, but the largest share of stabilized units are found in Brooklyn, Manhattan, and the Bronx. The Bronx has a much larger share of stabilized units than private, unregulated, while Queens has a higher share of unregulated units than stabilized units. Manhattan has a similar share of stabilized and private, unregulated units.

Figure 1. Distribution of Units by Borough



Data labels indicate margins of error and are based on 95% confidence intervals.

New York City residents living in rent stabilized apartments differ from those living in private, non-regulated units in a variety of ways that are important to keep in mind when discussing rent regulation and considering changes to the current rent stabilization laws. Here, we examine the demographics, income and employment, and family composition of those living in stabilized and private units.

Table 2. Sociodemographics

	Tenants in Renter-Occupied Units			
	Rent Stabilized		Private, Non-Regulated	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
Race/Ethnicity				
White, non-Hispanic	24%	±1.5%	33%	±1.6%
Black, non-Hispanic	22%	±1.6%	19%	±1.6%
Hispanic	42%	±2.0%	28%	±2.0%
Asian, non-Hispanic	11%	±1.4%	17%	±1.4%
Other, non-Hispanic	1%	±0.5%	3%	±1.0%
Median Age	34	±2.0	31	±2.9
Educational Attainment				
Less than High School	21%	±1.1%	16%	±1.2%
High School Diploma	27%	±1.4%	22%	±1.0%
Some College	20%	±1.1%	18%	±1.0%
College Degree or Above	33%	±1.4%	43%	±1.5%
Total	2,421,011		2,465,419	

Tenants are considered Other, non-Hispanic if they reported being “Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander alone, not-Hispanic” or “American Indian, Alaska native alone, not-Hispanic” or “two or more races, not-Hispanic.” Tenants age 14 or younger are not included in estimates of educational attainment. Margins of error are based on 95% confidence intervals.

As shown in Table 2, residents living in rent stabilized units are more likely to be Hispanic and less likely to be White, Non-Hispanic or Asian, non-Hispanic than non-regulated tenants. Residents in stabilized units are less likely to have at least a college degree than residents in private, unregulated units. About one third of rent stabilized residents have a college degree or above, compared with 43% of their counterparts. The median age of residents in rent stabilized units is similar to that of residents in unregulated units.

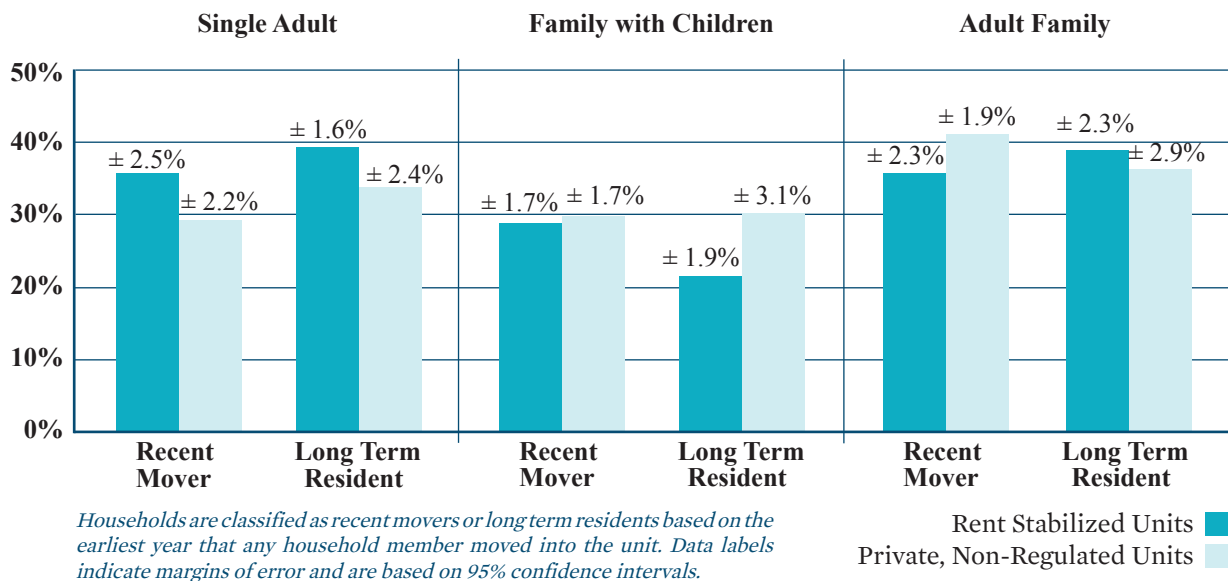
Table 3. Family Composition

	Renter-Occupied Units			
	Rent Stabilized		Private, Non-Regulated	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
Household Type				
Single Adult	37%	±1.3%	31%	±1.7%
Family with Children	25%	±1.2%	30%	±1.6%
Adult Family	37%	±1.5%	40%	±1.7%
Average Household Size	2.24	±0.03	2.5	±0.03
Female Householder	55%	±1.4%	50%	±1.5%
Householder Is Foreign Born	47%	±1.7%	42%	±2.0%
Households with 1+ Adult Age 62 or older	31%	±1.6%	19%	±1.5%
Total	946,514		879,995	

Householders are considered to be foreign born if their place of birth is anywhere other than the United States including Puerto Rico. Householders that did not report a place of birth are not included in this calculation. Margins of error are based on 95% confidence intervals.

Rent stabilized households have a similar average household size to those in private, non-regulated units, but they are more likely to have at least one adult that is sixty-two or older in the household. Rent regulated units are also more likely to house single adults and be headed by someone who identifies as female than private, non-regulated units.

Figure 2. Tenure by Household Type



The graphs above show household type by length of residence. Among long term residents, households in private, unregulated units are more likely to have children. Rent stabilized households are more likely to be single adults than unregulated households, regardless of tenure. A recent mover is defined as a household that moved into the unit in 2010 or later. A long term resident is defined as someone who moved into the unit in 2009 or earlier. 2009 is the median year moved in for rent stabilized householders.

Table 4 provides further information about the income and employment of residents in rent stabilized and private, non-regulated units.

Table 4. Income and Employment
Panel A. Household-level

	Renter-Occupied Units			
	Rent Stabilized		Private, Non-Regulated	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
Median Household Income	\$44,560	±\$2,062	\$67,000	±\$3,245
HUD Income Eligibility				
Below 30% HUD Income Limits	27%	±1.6%	19%	±1.3%
31%-50% HUD Income Limits	17%	±1.2%	13%	±1.3%
51%-80% HUD Income Limits	20%	±1.0%	17%	±1.2%
Above 80% HUD Income Limits	36%	±1.7%	52%	±1.5%
Households with at Least One				
Type of Public Assistance	29%	±1.6%	14%	±1.4%
Households Below the				
Poverty Line	20%	±1.3%	13%	±1.1%
Total	946,514		879,995	

Households that reported having no income were counted as having \$0 income and were included in the calculation of median household income. HUD Income Limits are for Fiscal Year 2017 and are based on HUD's published Income Limits for households with 1-8 persons at the 30%, 50%, and 80% levels; households were placed into one of four income limit categories above based on their gross income and number of persons in the household. Households with nine or more persons are excluded from these estimates. Public Assistance comprises TANF, Safety Net Assistance, SSI, SNAP, and WIC; households where information about all these programs was either unknown or not reported were excluded from these estimates. Margins of error are based on 95% confidence intervals.

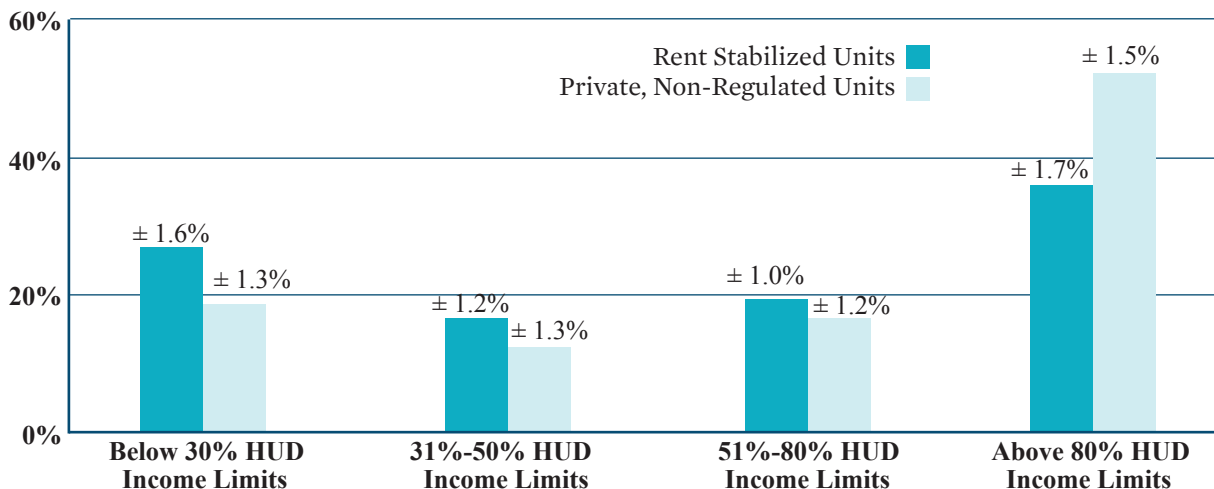
Panel B. Person-level

	Tenants in Renter-Occupied Units			
	Rent Stabilized		Private, Non-Regulated	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
Employment Status of Tenant				
In Labor Force - Employed	60%	±1.3%	68%	±1.3%
In Labor Force - Unemployed	4%	±0.4%	3%	±0.4%
Not in Labor Force	36%	±1.3%	29%	±1.1%
Sector of Employment of Tenant				
Private, For-Profit	71%	±1.5%	70%	±1.1%
Private, Not-for-Profit	9%	±0.8%	10%	±0.9%
Government (Federal, State, Local)	11%	±0.9%	11%	±1.0%
Self Employed	9%	±1.1%	10%	±0.9%
Total	2,421,011		2,465,419	

All tenants age 15 years or older were categorized with an occupation code, as unemployed, or as not in the labor force; those categorized with an occupation code were counted as employed in the table above. Tenants age 14 or younger were not included in the calculation of employment status. Tenants were categorized into one of five sectors of employment: private for profit, private not for profit, government-federal, government-state or local, and self-employed. In the table above the government-federal and government-state or local were collapsed. Tenants that had not worked since before 2012, had never worked, or were 14 years old or younger were not included the calculation of sector of employment. Margins of error are based on 95% confidence intervals.

The median income of rent stabilized households is \$44,560 compared to \$67,000 for households in private, non-regulated units. Although rent stabilized units are not means-tested, the households that occupy them are more likely to have incomes that place them below 30% of HUD Income Limits (the income range that is typically served by public housing, housing choice vouchers, and deeply subsidized affordable housing programs) and below 80% of HUD Income Limits (the income range targeted by LIHTC and many other affordable housing programs) than households in non-regulated units.

Figure 3. HUD Income Eligibility



Data labels indicate margins of error and are based on 95% confidence intervals.

A smaller proportion of rent stabilized tenants are employed and in the labor force compared to householders in unregulated units (60% compared to 68%). There are not, however, differences in the sectors in which they are employed. Rent stabilized households are twice as likely to receive at least one type of public assistance program such as TANF, Safety Net Assistance, SSI, SNAP, or WIC as households in non-regulated units.

Overall, higher proportions of rent stabilized tenants belong to a racial/ethnic minority group, live alone, and have an older tenant in the household than private, non-regulated tenants. A smaller proportion of rent stabilized tenants are employed, but stabilized and non-regulated tenants that are employed work in similar sectors. Higher proportions of rent stabilized households are now low income and receive public assistance than private, non-regulated households.

The New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey

All data cited here come from the 2017 New York City Housing and Vacancy Survey (NYCHVS). The NYCHVS is a representative survey of the New York City housing stock and population sponsored by the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. It is the longest running housing survey in the country and is statutorily required. Data from the survey cover many characteristics of the City’s population, households, housing stock, and neighborhoods, including: size and composition of the housing inventory, housing costs and affordability, housing quality, housing subsidy, tenure and building characteristics, demographics, education, income, household composition and length of residence, and vacancy status.

For more information about the NYCHVS, please visit:
www.census.gov/programs-surveys/nychvs.html

Glossary

Rent Stabilization - Rent stabilization generally covers buildings built after 1947 and before 1974, and apartments removed from rent control. It also covers buildings that receive J-51 and 421-a tax benefits. The NYC Rent Guidelines Board sets rates for rent increases in stabilized apartments in the five boroughs. Rent stabilization provides protections to tenants in addition to limitations on the amount of rent increases.

Rent Control - Rent control limits the rent an owner may charge for an apartment and restricts the right of any owner to evict tenants. It dates back to the housing shortage immediately following World War II and generally applies to buildings constructed before 1947. Rent Control provides protections to tenants in addition to limitations on the amount of rent increases.

Unregulated - In this document, we refer to rental units with no rent regulation, subsidy, or additional housing intervention as unregulated, non-regulated, or private units. Unregulated units are market-rate and are not subject to limits on rent increases.

For more definitions and information about rent regulation, please visit:

www.nyshcr.org/Rent/FactSheets/

For more information on HUD income limits in New York City, please visit:

www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/il.html

Margins of Error

All numbers reported in this memo are estimates of the population and are subject to sampling and non-sampling error. The precision of these estimates is captured in the margins of error, which are reported along with each estimate. All margins of error in this memo are based on a 95% confidence interval meaning, that there is a 95% chance the actual figure for any estimate is within the range of that estimate plus and minus the corresponding margin of error. For example, in the demographics table on page two we report that 33% of rent stabilized tenants have at least a college degree; the margin of error for this estimate is 1.4%. This should be interpreted as there being a 95% chance that the actual percentage of rent stabilized tenants with at least a college degree is within the range of 31.6% and 34.4%. One way to check whether two groups are meaningfully different is to compare the ranges to see if they do not overlap.

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