

# new york minute

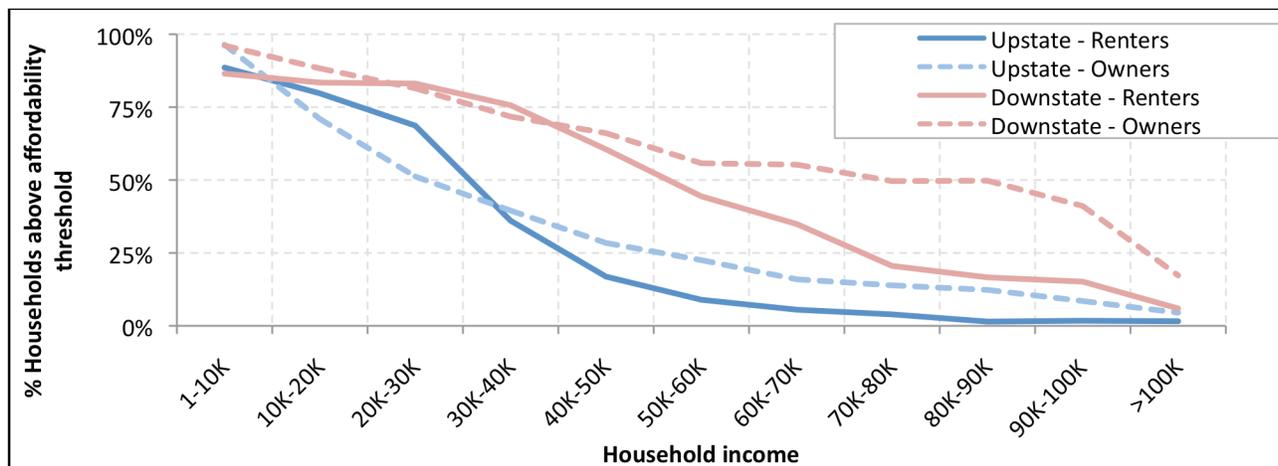
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## Housing Affordability in New York State

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In the United States, “housing affordability” is typically measured by the percent of household income spent on housing. If this figure exceeds 30 percent, a household is considered to be housing-cost burdened (those households spending more than 50% of their income on housing are considered severely housing cost burdened). Originally conceived in the 1930s as a way to establish eligibility for public rental housing programs, the 30 percent rule eventually began to be used as a threshold indicator of affordability for owner-occupied housing as well<sup>1</sup>. While many households, especially in the higher income brackets, may not actually be “burdened” if their housing costs exceed 30% of their income – their higher costs instead reflecting their choice for larger, more luxurious homes - this issue is much more of a problem for households at middle- and lower-income levels where stagnant or declining incomes combined with rising housing costs have made housing even less affordable. The percent of New York State (NYS) owner-households who are housing-cost burdened increased from 26.4% in 2000 to 33.9% in 2012 (for renter households, the figures are 40.5% and 50.6%, respectively)<sup>2</sup> Over 70% of downstate and over 36% of upstate households earning less than \$40,000 a year experienced a housing-cost burden in 2012. Owners tend to be more housing-cost burdened than renters at income levels above \$50,000, most significantly in the downstate region.

### Percentages of NYS Rental & Owner Households Housing-Cost Burdened, by Household Income, 2012



Source: <http://pad.human.cornell.edu/NYMinutes/NYMinute62stats.cfm>, (includes both 2000 and 2012 data)

### Additional Resources:

Census Bureau Housing Topics: <http://www.census.gov/housing/>

National Association of Realtors, Housing Statistics: <http://www.realtor.org/research-and-statistics/housing-statistics>

The State of the Nation's Housing 2014, Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, June 2014:

[http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/research/state\\_nations\\_housing](http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/research/state_nations_housing)

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/housing/special-topics/files/who-can-afford.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> For the NYS Comptroller's Report on Housing Affordability in New York State (March 2014), including county-level data, go to: [http://osc.state.ny.us/reports/housing/affordable\\_housing\\_ny\\_2014.pdf](http://osc.state.ny.us/reports/housing/affordable_housing_ny_2014.pdf)

