

# It Will Take Black Americans 320 Years to Catch Up to White Neighbors



Commuters at the Times Square subway station in New York.

Photographer: Yuki Iwamura/Bloomberg

By [Kelsey Butler](#)

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It will take more than three centuries for Black Americans to achieve the same quality of life as their White neighbors, according to [McKinsey & Co.](#), after the racial gap widened in more than half the country in the past decade.

Based on the rate of change in quality of life metrics between 2012 and 2021, it would take roughly 320 years for Black residents in rural counties like Caddo Parish, Louisiana, to achieve parity, [a new report](#) from the consultancy shows. Even in megacities like New York and San Francisco, where outcomes overall are better for Black residents, parity would take 160 years.

## Years to Parity Between Black and White Residents

Source: McKinsey & Co.

“We have a really clear picture of the urgency of the situation,” said Shelley Stewart III, an author of the report and senior partner at McKinsey.

There are other sobering data points: only 48% of US counties reduced the racial gap in the past decade, no US county with a significant Black population has achieved parity, and the 37 that are close to it house just 0.1% of the total US Black population.

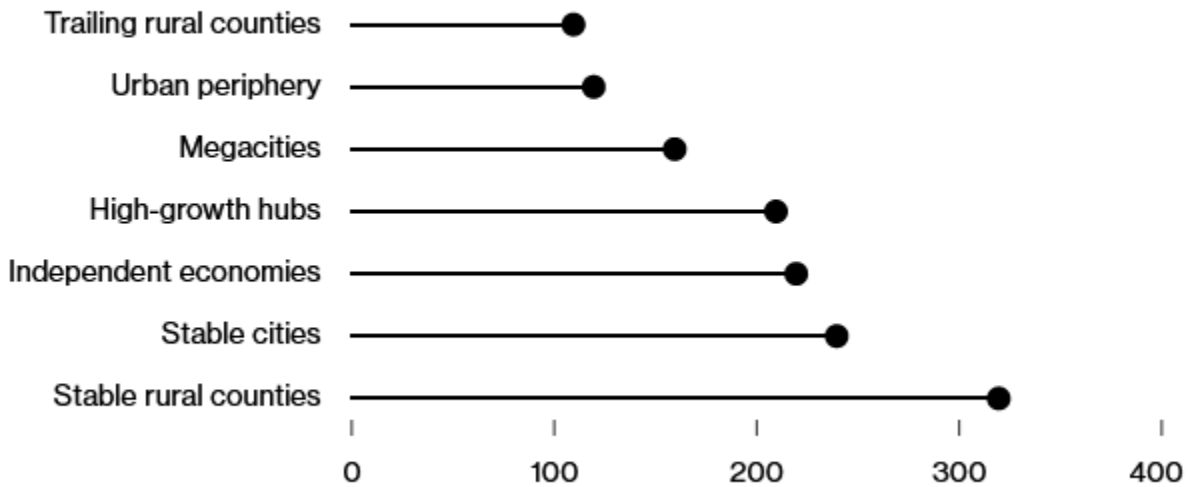
The study assumes that results for White residents will remain at today’s levels, but notes that those estimates are conservative because their conditions are likely to improve over time.

McKinsey analyzed 25 metrics related to quality of life, including rates of poverty and food insecurity, job opportunities, life expectancy and incarceration rates across the US, from megacities to rural areas.

The report also highlights a number of solutions that could help bridge the gap, including affordable housing in mixed-income neighborhoods, health insurance for US residents without coverage and the expansion of high-quality early childhood education programs.

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Source: McKinsey & Co.