



*Penn IUR Releases Three Publications on Effects of the Pandemic on Metros and Cities*

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PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA—The Penn Institute for Urban Research (Penn IUR) released three new publications on the implications of the pandemic for urban areas: a national overview assessing the recovery trajectories in the nation’s 105 most populous metros; a report monitoring and interpreting the recovery of New York City, the original epicenter of the pandemic in the U.S. and a bellwether for other urban places; and a report focusing on cities in the Galapagos Islands, Ecuador, that have the chance to re-invent themselves in a more ecologically sensitive way.

In [\*The Covid-19 Recession: Which Urban Economies Have Performed Better or Worse and Why?\*](#), John Landis, Crossways Professor Emeritus and Penn IUR Faculty Fellow, analyzes the effects of the pandemic across the nation by looking at the unemployment rates between January 2020 and May 2021 in the nation’s 105 most populous metros. In assessing unemployment over the course of the pandemic, Landis reports a substantial recovery across the metros (a comeback rate of 96 percent of the January 2020 level), though rates of recovery varied. Landis’s analysis leads him to the counter-intuitive observation that metros that possess agglomeration economies, considered a critical success factor for positive economic growth in ordinary times, may in fact slow down recovery.

In [\*Recovering New York City: A One Year Look Back on the Penn IUR Recovering Cities Project, and a Look Forward towards Recovery\*](#), Penn IUR researchers Bill Lukashok, Chandan Deuskar, and Eugénie Birch offer a close look at the ups and downs of the pandemic and its effects on New York City. From July 2020 to September 2021, they tracked metrics including employment, health, public transport use, crime, residential and commercial real estate markets, park usage, retail, arts and culture, and foot traffic in key places. By monitoring these metrics effects bi-monthly, they were able to illustrate detailed dimensions of the recovery on one major city. All of the bi-monthly reports are available on the Penn IUR website.

In [\*#Galapagos Goes Green\*](#), Penn IUR researchers in its City Climate-Resilient Infrastructure Financing Initiative (C2IFI) report on a study they began in the winter of 2020 with planners and officials in Ecuador’s Galápagos Islands to investigate sustainable transportation infrastructure investments focused mainly on the islands’ two largest town centers, Puerto Ayora and Puerto Baquerizo Moreno, and the intra-island waters. When the pandemic struck and tourism collapsed, the study evolved. In their brief, the researchers envision new land and sea transportation and outline supportive training programs and links to multi-development bank funding efforts to transform the island’s power grid to renewables and upgrade oil-dependent ports. While this brief stands alone as a case study of the potential for local reinvention while



rebuilding from the pandemic, it is part of a larger C2IFI project aimed at assisting subnational leaders in early stage planning and development of mitigation projects in partnership with the global entity, the Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance.

These publications are just the most recent way in which Penn IUR is covering the pandemic's impact on cities. Visit the [Cities and COVID-19 Resource Library](#) to keep up with the latest events, publications, and research.

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