



## Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

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## **CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT**

*Immigration and Public Safety*. By Nazgol Ghandnoosh, et al. The Sentencing Project. Mar. 2017. 18 p.

<http://www.sentencingproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Immigration-and-Public-Safety.pdf>

This report examines immigrants' impact on public safety in the United States. "Foreign-born residents of the United States commit crime less often than native-born citizens. Policies that further restrict

immigration are therefore not effective crime-control strategies. These facts—supported by over 100 years of research—have been misrepresented both historically and in recent political debates.”

## CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

***The Changing Economics and Demographics of Young Adulthood: 1975-2016.*** By Jonathan Vespa. Census Bureau. Apr. 2017. 23 p.

<https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2017/demo/p20-579.html>

“This report looks at a snapshot of the young adult population, defined here as 18 to 34 years old, and focuses on two periods: 1975 and today (using data covering 2012 to 2016 to reflect the contemporary period). Many of the milestones of young adulthood are reflected in the living arrangements of young people: when they move out of their parents’ home and when they form families. Because these milestones are tied to young adults’ economic security, the report also focuses on how education and work experience vary across young adult living arrangements.”

## ECONOMY

***Understanding the Downward Trend in Labor Income Shares.*** By Mai Chi Dao, et al. International Monetary Fund. Apr. 10, 2017. 52 p.

<http://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2017/04/04/world-economic-outlook-april-2017#Chapter%203>

“After being largely stable in many countries for decades, the share of national income paid to workers has been falling since the 1980s.... falling labor income shares are likely to raise income inequality.... In advanced economies, about half of the decline in labor shares can be traced to the impact of technology. The decline was driven by a combination of rapid progress in information and telecommunication technology, and a high share of occupations that could be easily automated.... the decline in labor shares in advanced economies has been particularly sharp for middle-skilled labor. Routine-biased technology has taken over many of the tasks performed by these workers, contributing to job polarization toward high-skilled and low-skilled occupations.”

## EDUCATION

***Teacher Merit Pay and Student Test Scores: A Meta-Analysis.*** By Lam D. Pham, et al. Vanderbilt University. Apr. 3, 2017. 57 p.

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/vu-my/wp-content/uploads/sites/868/2013/02/05145950/Pham-Nguyen-Springer-2017.pdf>

“In recent years, teacher merit pay programs have garnered considerable political and financial support, spurring rapid growth in the number of research studies investigating the association between teacher pay incentives and student test scores.... Our meta-analysis finds that the presence of a merit pay program is associated with a modest, statistically significant, positive effect on student test scores. We also find that effect sizes are highly sensitive to program design and study context, which suggests that while some merit pay programs have the potential to improve student test scores in some contexts, researchers and policymakers should pay close attention to how the program is structured and implemented.”

## EMPLOYMENT

***Involuntary Part-time Employment: A Slow and Uneven Economic Recovery.*** By Rebecca Glauber. Carsey School of Public Policy. Mar. 28, 2017. 6 p.

<https://carsey.unh.edu/publication/involuntary-part-time>

Involuntary part-time workers, defined as those who would like full-time work but cannot find it, are part of a trend that raises questions about the ability of the economy to deliver employment security. “Involuntary part-time employment is down 34% since the Great Recession but is still above its pre-recession level.... Involuntary part-time workers earn 19% less per hour than full-time workers in similar jobs.... Racial disparities persist. Since the recession, involuntary part-time employment declined by over 30% for white, Asian, and Hispanic workers but by less than 20% for black workers.”

## ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

***State of the Air 2017.*** American Lung Association. Apr. 2017. 164 p.

Full Report. 164 p.: <http://bit.ly/2pHiDxr>

Chart: <http://bit.ly/2oW1Juy>

“California’s smoggy reputation appears to be deserved: Six of the USA’s 10 cities with the worst air pollution are in the Golden State.... In addition to the worst spikes of short-term pollution—led by Bakersfield—the report also lists the cities with the worst overall year-round pollution—led by Visalia/Hanford, Calif.—and the worst ozone pollution, led by the Los Angeles/Long Beach area. California’s soaring population and topography allow air pollution to overcome the state’s strict environmental laws, said Paul Billings of the American Lung Association. The boom in people brings with it an increase in cars and trucks on the road, and many of the people live in valleys and basins, right where pollution tends to settle.... Overall, the report is a mixture of good and bad news: While year-round pollution has improved, short-term spikes of intensely polluted air have increased.” ([USA Today](#), Apr. 19, 2017).

## GENERAL GOVERNMENT

***How States Engage in Evidence-Based Policymaking.*** Pew Charitable Trusts. Jan. 2017. 46 p.

<http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/reports/2017/01/how-states-engage-in-evidence-based-policymaking>

“Evidence-based policymaking is the systematic use of findings from program evaluations and outcome analyses (‘evidence’) to guide government policy and funding decisions.” Use of the term “evidence-based policymaking” is growing within state legislatures, yet there had been no review of which states actually deploy the practice. This report identifies six actions states can take to incorporate research findings into their decision-making practices, assesses the prevalence of these practices across all 50-states within four human services areas, and categorizes states based on whether they are Leading, Established, Modest, or Trailing in Evidence-based policymaking. According to the report, California falls into the Modest category.

## HEALTH

**“Association between Concurrent Use of Prescription Opioids and Benzodiazepines and Overdose: Retrospective Analysis.”** Bu Eric Sun, et al. *The BMJ*, vol. 356 (Mar. 14, 2017) 7 p. <http://www.bmj.com/content/bmj/356/bmj.j760.full.pdf>

“In a sample of privately insured patients, we found that the incidence of concurrent benzodiazepine/opioid use increased by roughly 80% from 2001 to 2013. Moreover, we found that opioid users who concurrently used benzodiazepines were at an increased risk of opioid overdose and that eliminating concurrent benzodiazepine/opioid use could reduce the risk of opioid overdose by 15%. Opioid prescribing, use, and overdose are receiving increased attention given the sharp increase in the number of opioid related adverse events over the past decade. Understanding the underlying causes for these secular increases in opioid related events is an important step towards developing policies aimed at reducing their incidence.”

## HUMAN SERVICES

***The Changing Geography of U.S. Poverty.*** By Elizabeth Kneebone. Brookings Institution. Feb. 15, 2017. 11 p. <https://www.brookings.edu/testimonies/the-changing-geography-of-us-poverty/>

“Poverty in the United States has long been associated with large urban centers or rural communities, where it has historically been most concentrated.... However, the rapid pace of growth in the suburban poor population during the 2000s fueled a significant ‘tipping point’ in the geography of the nation’s poor. For the first time, suburbs became home to more poor residents than cities. In 2015, 16 million poor people lived in the suburbs, outnumbering the poor population in cities by more than 3 million, small metro areas by more than 6 million, and rural areas by more than 8 million.”

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