



Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

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CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

As Mexican Share Declined, U.S. Unauthorized Immigrant Population Fell in 2015 Below Recession Level. By Jeffrey S. Passel, et al. Pew Research Center. Apr. 25, 2017.

<http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/04/25/as-mexican-share-declined-u-s-unauthorized-immigrant-population-fell-in-2015-below-recession-level/#>

Interactive chart: <http://www.pewhispanic.org/interactives/unauthorized-trends/>

“The number of unauthorized immigrants living in the United States in 2015 fell below the total at the end of the Great Recession for the first time, with Mexicans continuing to represent a declining share of this population, according to new Pew Research Center estimates based on government data. There were 11 million unauthorized immigrants living in the U.S. in 2015, a small but statistically significant decline from the Center’s estimate of 11.3 million for 2009, the last year of the Great Recession.... Mexicans have long been the largest origin group among unauthorized immigrants – and the majority for at least a decade – but their numbers have been shrinking since peaking at 6.9 million, or 57% of the total, in 2007.”

ECONOMY

“Why People Prefer Unequal Societies.” By Christina Starmans, et al. *Nature Human Behaviour* vol. 1 article no. 82 (Apr. 7, 2017). 7 p.

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41562-017-0082>

“There is immense concern about economic inequality, both among the scholarly community and in the general public, and many insist that equality is an important social goal. However, when people are asked about the ideal distribution of wealth in their country, they actually prefer unequal societies. We suggest that these two phenomena can be reconciled by noticing that, despite appearances to the contrary, there is no evidence that people are bothered by economic inequality itself.... Drawing upon laboratory studies, cross-cultural research, and experiments with babies and young children, we argue that humans naturally favour fair distributions, not equal ones, and that when fairness and equality clash, people prefer fair inequality over unfair equality.”

EDUCATION

Hungry and Homeless in College: Results from a National Study of Basic Needs Insecurity in Higher Education. By Sara Goldrick-Rab, et al. Wisconsin HOPE Lab. Mar. 2017. 32 p.

<http://wihopelab.com/publications/hungry-and-homeless-in-college-report.pdf>

“We found substantially higher rates of food insecurity among community college students than previously reported, while rates of housing insecurity and homelessness were consistent with prior estimates. Our 2015 report indicated that about half of community college students were food insecure, but this study found that two in three students are food insecure. Both surveys revealed that about half of community college students were housing insecure, and 13 to 14% were homeless.”

EMPLOYMENT

“How Many Workers Are Employed in California Agriculture?” By Phillip Martin, et al. *California Agriculture* vol. 71 no. 1. (Feb. 7, 2017). pp. 30-34.

<http://ucanr.edu/repositoryfiles/ca2016a0011-162257.pdf>

A new UC study finds “surprising stability in the state’s huge agricultural workforce, largely composed of immigrants. By recognizing that many farm workers in California work at two seasonal jobs in a year’s time” estimates suggest “the number of farm workers employed in California in recent years at more than 800,000, larger than generally believed.... The report indicates that a major source of economic stability in the farm worker community is supplied by farm labor contractors.... [W]orkers attached to farm labor contractors generally receive higher pay than those who work directly for farmers. However, some of the highest paid workers are those who have worked directly for farmers for several years.” ([Porterville Recorder](#), Apr. 3, 2017).

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

Impact of California's Five-Year (2012-2016) Drought on Hydroelectricity Generation. By Peter Gleick. Pacific Institute. Apr. 2017. 16 p.

<http://pacinst.org/publication/impacts-californias-five-year-2012-2016-drought-hydroelectricity-generation/>

"The severe five-year drought afflicting California between 2012 and 2016 was the driest and hottest in the instrumental record.... Under normal conditions, electricity for the state's millions of users is produced from a blend of many sources, with natural gas and hydropower being the top two. During the drought, reductions to state river flows that power hundreds of hydropower stations meant that natural gas became a more prominent player in the mix. This was an expensive change. According to the report, the five years of drought led to an increase in electricity costs of approximately \$2.45 billion. The additional combustion of fossil fuels for electric generation led to a 10% increase in the release of carbon dioxide from California power plants. In addition, the report notes that the ability to expand California's hydroelectricity capacity is limited, as there are few undammed rivers, little unallocated water, and growing environmental, economic, and political constraints to adding new hydropower capacity."

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Volatility of the Personal Income Tax Base. Legislative Analyst Office. Feb. 2017. 12 p.

<http://lao.ca.gov/reports/2017/3548/Volatility-of-PIT-030817.pdf>

"Personal income is a widely used measure of the size of California's economy.... From 1990 to 2014, California personal income grew fairly consistently, with only a limited degree of volatility. On the other hand, the state's PIT [Personal Income Tax] tax base was much more volatile than personal income. This is because (1) some of the more stable pieces of personal income are not taxed under California's PIT and (2) the PIT tax base includes capital gains (gains on sales of stock, bonds, certain homes, and other assets), which are extremely volatile from year to year and are not counted by BEA [U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis] in personal income.... California has adopted a constitutional provision requiring PIT deposits into a state rainy-day fund in years when capital gains are plentiful."

HEALTH

"Vitamin D Supplement to Prevent Acute Respiratory Tract Infections: Systematic Review and Meta-analysis of Individual Participant Data." By Adrian Martineau, et al. *BMJ*. Feb. 2017. 14 p.

<http://www.bmj.com/content/bmj/356/bmj.i6583.full.pdf>

"Our study reports a major new indication for vitamin D supplementation: the prevention of acute respiratory tract infection. We also show that people who are very deficient in vitamin D and those receiving daily or weekly supplementation without additional bolus doses [a dose of vitamin D given intravenously at a controlled, rapid rate] experienced particular benefit. Our results add to the body of evidence supporting the introduction of public health measures such as food fortification to improve vitamin D status, particularly in settings where profound vitamin D deficiency is common."

HUMAN SERVICES

Family Stability and Instability among Low-Income Hispanic Mothers with Young Children. By Elizabeth Karberg, et al. National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families. Feb. 2017. 13 p.

<http://www.hispanicresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Family-Stability-and-Instability.pdf>

“This brief examines family (in)stability among low-income, urban mothers. Hispanic mothers ... who are foreign-born, experience relative stability in their family structure during their child’s early years, compared to black mothers. Additionally, compared to white, black, and U.S.-born Latina mothers, foreign-born Latina mothers are less likely to re-partner. These findings suggest that low-income Latino children are likely to live in stable families that may offer some protection against the negative effects of poverty.... [I]mmigrant Latina mothers seem to have more protective factors (relative family stability and psychosocial well-being) than U.S.-born Latina, white, and black mothers of similar circumstances (low-income and urban).”

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

***AT&T's Digital Divide in California: An Analysis of AT&T Fiber Deployment and Wireline Broadband Speeds in California.* By Garrett Strain, et al. Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society, UC Berkeley. Apr. 24, 2017. 32 p.**

http://haasinstitute.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/haas_broadband_042417-singles.pdf

“California households with access to AT&T's fiber service have a median income of \$94,208.... By contrast, the median household income is \$53,186 in California neighborhoods where AT&T provides only DSL.... In 4.1 million California households, representing 42.8% of AT&T's California service area, AT&T's fastest speeds fell short of the federal broadband definition.... The DirecTV merger conditions [set by the FCC] also required AT&T to offer Internet service for \$5 or \$10 a month to people with low incomes. But AT&T can use DSL to meet that condition, and at one point the company refused to provide the discount price.” ([Ars Technica](#), Apr. 25, 2017).

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

***Where Are the Most Distracted Drivers? Where Are the Safest?* By Tim Henderson. Pew Stateline. Apr. 13, 2017.**

<http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2017/04/13/where-are-the-most-distracted-drivers-where-are-the-safest>

***More States Adopt ‘Click It or Ticket’ Laws; Do They Work?* By Jenni Bergal. Pew Stateline. Apr. 28, 2017.**

<http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2017/04/28/more-states-adopt-click-it-or-ticket-laws-do-they-work>

In a pair of short reports, researchers at Pew Charitable Trusts provide snapshots of state-level driver safety trends, distracted driving, and seatbelt use. California ranked in the top 3rd of states for distracted driving habits, with high rates of hard braking, risky acceleration and abrupt turns. At the same time, California tied with Georgia for having the highest rate of seatbelt use in the country.

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