



## Studies in the News

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### **CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY**

***Deaths Exceed Births in Record Number of U.S. Counties.* By Kenneth M. Johnson. Carsey Institute. Winter 2013. 2 p.**

<http://www.carseyinstitute.unh.edu/publication/719>

The Great Recession continues to have a negative impact on U.S. births. New data released by the Census Bureau reveals that 36% of all U.S. counties experienced a birth rate decrease in 2012, while deaths increased due to an aging population. "Demography is not destiny, but one ignores it at their peril.

With few young adults and a growing older population, the future viability of many natural decrease areas is not encouraging.”

## ECONOMY

***2013-2014 Economic Forecast & Industry Outlook: California and Southern California Including the National and International Setting.*** By Robert A. Kleinbenz, et al. Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation, The Kyser Center for Economic Research. Feb. 2013. 96 p.  
<http://laedc.org/reports/2013-14EconomicForecastandIndustryOutlook.pdf>

This annual report provides economic information and analysis on global, national, state and regional economies. It anticipates that the U.S. economy will continue to grow modestly and that the California state economic growth will outpace the national economy. The Southern California economy should experience widespread but modest improvement across industries and counties, led by Orange County and Inland Empire (Riverside-San Bernardino) in labor market gains. The report includes brief outlooks for each of the five counties as well as for the twelve major industries in the region.

## EDUCATION

***Shuttered Public Schools: The Struggle to Bring Old Buildings New Life.*** The Pew Charitable Trust. Feb. 11, 2013. 20 p.  
[http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Philadelphia\\_Research\\_Initiative/Philadelphia-School-Closings.pdf](http://www.pewtrusts.org/uploadedFiles/wwwpewtrustsorg/Reports/Philadelphia_Research_Initiative/Philadelphia-School-Closings.pdf)

Large-scale public school closures leave empty buildings. Deciding what to do with these buildings becomes a significant challenge. This report finds that when empty school buildings are sold, they often sell well-below initial projections. Letting buildings sit idle can lead to significant problems. Repurposing buildings may be an option. “Officials dealing with surplus buildings say that districts should move aggressively to sell or lease facilities soon after they become empty, make information readily accessible to prospective buyers and the public, take steps to insure that purchasers follow through on announced plans and promises, and, when possible, get outside help in determining appropriate uses of the properties and how they fit with the overall needs of the city.”

## EMPLOYMENT

***Employment Situation Summary.*** U.S Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Mar. 2013. 38 p.  
<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm>

“Total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 236,000 in February, and the unemployment rate edged down to 7.7%, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Employment increased in professional and business services, construction, and health care.”

## ENERGY

***Energy 2020: Independence Day Global Ripple Effects of the North American Energy Revolution.*** By Edward L. Morse, et al. Citi Global Perspectives and Solutions. Feb. 2013. 92 p.  
<https://ir.citi.com/VAT4yRRILsXqULXdMQYD7n1LgHn7SHeqddE5csJk8UTDUFNistp%2BLQ%3D%3D>

“Over just the last half-decade, natural gas production rose by some 14 billion cubic feet per day (Bcf/d), an increase of over 26%. Shale gas production rose during this half decade from 3.5-Bcf/d to over 26-

Bcf/d, an increase in market share from 6.7% to 40% of total US production, pushing out imports of pipeline gas from Canada and LNG from around the world... The impact of this extraordinary production growth is becoming increasingly apparent and even if the growth rate subsides in the years ahead, the mushrooming effects of this growth will have dramatic impacts. A half-decade from now, combined US and Canadian oil output could be in surplus of projected needs.”

## ENVIRONMENT

***Assessment of Effluent Contaminants from Three Facilities Discharging Marcellus Shale Wastewater to Surface Waters in Pennsylvania.*** By Kyle J. Ferrarr, et al. Mar. 4, 2013. 10 p.  
<http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/es301411q>

After concern over rising levels of bromide in the Monongahela River watershed, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection asked water treatment plants to voluntarily cease treating wastewater from hydraulic fracturing, or “fracking.” Samples were collected from treatment facilities that complied with the request as well as those that continued accepting fracking wastewater. Concentrations of a number of chemicals dropped significantly after fracking waste was removed from the system. However, among the plants that continued to treat, a number of chemicals in the system continued to exceed US EPA standards. California is currently considering new regulations regarding fracking in the state.

## GENERAL GOVERNMENT

***Black and Latino Youth Disproportionately Affected by Voter Identification Laws in the 2012 Election.*** By John G. Rogowski, et al. Black Youth Project. Feb. 28, 2013. 7 p.  
<http://research.blackyouthproject.com/files/2013/03/voter-ID-laws-feb28.pdf>

“As a handful of state legislatures around the country consider enacting stricter voter ID laws, a new study finds that young people – and especially young minorities – are disproportionately affected by these laws.” According to the study, over 72% of Black youth and 60% of Latino youth were asked to show their IDs at the polls, compared to 51% of White youth. In states that had no Voter ID laws, 66% of Black youth, 55% of Latino youth, and 43% of White youth were asked to show ID. As a result, according to the study, “even the concept of a required ID” was a primary reason some minority youth avoided the polls.

## HEALTH

***“The Relationship of Sugar to Population-Level Diabetes Prevalence: An Econometric Analysis of Repeated Cross-Sectional Data.”*** By Sanjay Basu, et al. *PLOS ONE*, vol. 8, no. 2 (Feb. 2013), 8 p.  
<http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0057873>

“A decade-long study of diabetes and eating habits in 175 countries around the world has found a surprising connection between rates of the disease and how much sugar is available to consumers. The study ... found that for every additional 150 calories of sugar available per person per day, the rate of diabetes in that country's population rose 1%. The same was not true for additional calories from non-sugar products. For many decades, doctors believed there was a direct connection between sugar consumption and diabetes risk, but multiple studies had shown that wasn't quite true, and that obesity, from eating too much of any kind of food, was the problem. So the new study results were unexpected, scientists said.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*, Mar. 5, 2013).

## HOUSING

***Livable Community Indicators for Sustainable Aging in Place.*** By Amanda Lehning, et al. MetLife Mature Market Institute and the Stanford Center on Longevity. Mar. 2013. 37 p.

<https://www.metlife.com/assets/cao/mmi/publications/studies/2013/mmi-livable-communities-study.pdf>

To meet the needs of an aging population, local governments can follow a set of indicators designed to help seniors “age in place.” Communities that offer accessible and affordable housing options, transportation, walkability, safe neighborhoods, emergency preparedness and support services like health care, retail outlets and social integration can ensure greater livability for seniors - and all residents, no matter their age.

## HUMAN SERVICES

***Military Caregivers: Cornerstones of Support for Our Nation’s Wounded, Ill, and Injured Veterans.*** By Terri Tanielian, et al. RAND Corp. Feb. 28, 2013. 22 p.

[http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RR200/RR244/RAND\\_RR244.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR200/RR244/RAND_RR244.pdf)

Military caregivers are spouses, parents or friends who provide care and assistance for the wounded veterans. There are anywhere from 275,000 to more than 1.1 million caregivers in the U.S. These are usually younger women with dependent-age children. “Studies indicate that caregivers in general suffer from physical strain and overall worse health and tend to put their own concerns behind those of the individuals for whom they are caring. Military caregivers suffer disproportionately from mental health problems and emotional distress.... Many government programs are still in their infancy, and community resources are scattered and uncoordinated. Difficulties are presented by differing eligibility criteria, lack of access, and the way caregivers’ needs change over time.”

## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

***Unemployment Rates. Economic Policy Institute’s Program on Race, Ethnicity, and the Economy.***

<http://www.epi.org/chart/unemployment-rates-state-race-2012q4/?view=embed-unemployment-map-2012q4>

This interactive map provides state unemployment rates by race and ethnicity for the fourth quarter of 2012.

## TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

***Major State Transportation Legislation, 2012.*** By Jocelyn Durkay, et al. National Conference of State Legislatures. Feb. 2013. 5 p.

<http://www.ncsl.org/documents/transportation/2012majortranleg.pdf>

“Once again, a top transportation issue for state legislatures in 2012 was how to pay for growing transportation needs, despite falling revenues. States also anticipated shouldering more of the burden for transportation infrastructure, given a deep uncertainty about ongoing federal support. Legislatures looked at a host of transportation funding and finance options in 2012, from raising taxes and fees, to tolling, to ensuring that transportation revenues are spent solely on transportation projects, to borrowing, bonding and other finance options. The trend has continued into 2013: More than 10 states already are exploring proposals to aid ailing transportation budgets. In Virginia, for example, the governor has proposed an unprecedented plan to end the state’s gas tax and replace it with a boosted state sales tax.”

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