Study focuses on red-tape barriers as a significant source of trade costs. “Red-tape barriers” are policy-induced trade barriers that do not generate revenue or rents. These barriers “have important impacts on the extensive margin of trade, and respond in non-standard ways to changes in tariffs and natural trade costs.” Findings suggest that reductions in natural trade costs reduce government incentives
to enforce red-tape barriers. If such barriers are ignored, then there will be an overstatement of welfare gains from tariff liberalization; while at the same time an underatement of gains from globalization.

**EDUCATION**


“This report seeks to inform state policy for increasing the supply of high school instructors who are qualified to teach in dual enrollment programs. First, a brief definition of dual enrollment is provided. Second, results are presented from a content analysis of state policies for dual enrollment instructor qualifications. Third, the faculty qualification policies of regional accreditation organizations are compared with a particular emphasis on the Higher Learning Commission and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Fourth, several strategies are identified that aim to bolster graduate education programs and encourage teachers to complete relevant graduate coursework.”


http://educationnext.org/rating-teacher-preparation-programs-value-added-make-useful-distinctions/

In this study, researchers question the most common means of rating teacher preparation programs—measuring teacher’s impact on student test scores on standardized tests. They note, “[t]he differences between programs are typically too small to matter. And they’re practically impossible to estimate with any reliability. The errors that we make in estimation will often be larger than the differences we are trying to estimate. Program rankings will consist largely of noise, and program rankings will bounce up and down randomly from one year to another.” They suggest other ways for rating these programs: 1) using principal or supervisor observations of teachers 2) having teachers rate the programs and 3) tracking teacher placement and retention in the profession.

**EMPLOYMENT**


“Despite significant headwinds from population aging in most advanced economies (AEs), labor force participation rates show remarkably divergent trajectories both across countries and across different groups of workers. Participation increased sharply among prime-age women and, more recently, older workers, but fell among the young and prime-age men…. We find that the bulk of the dramatic increase in the labor force attachment of prime-age women and older workers in the past three decades can be explained by changes in labor market policies and institutions, structural transformation, and gains in educational attainment. Technological advances such as automation, on the other hand, weighed on the labor supply of prime-age and older workers…. [O]ur findings underscore the need to invest in education and training, reform the tax system, reduce early retirement incentives, improve the job-matching process, and help individuals combine family and work life in order to alleviate the pressures from aging on labor supply.”
In a study underwritten by Service Employees International Union, Economic Roundtable researchers report the benefits of raising the minimum wage for nearly 40,000 airport workers in New York and New Jersey. “The increased annual spending resulting from workers’ wage increases will support over 2,700 added jobs in the regional economy. Sales to local businesses will grow by $465.1 million. Federal tax revenue will also rise with these added sales, generating over $43.7 million more a year for public services. State and local tax revenue will increase by $33.7 million a year.”

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT


Direct air capture of carbon dioxide (CO2) to reduce atmospheric levels is not a new technology, but it has been considered too expensive to be economically viable. However, new research appears to have discovered ways to reduce the cost of CO2 capture per ton. The final method has been tested in a pilot plant since 2015, and assessed by an independent third party. The final cost of capturing CO2 from the atmosphere is estimated to be anywhere between $94 and $232 per ton of CO2, potentially representing a six-fold cost reduction from previous estimates. Each plant can capture roughly 1 megaton of CO2 per year, representing .25% of California’s annual carbon emissions.

HEALTH


“Police killings of unarmed black Americans were associated with worse mental health among other black Americans in the general US population.... Our estimates suggest that police killings of unarmed black Americans have a meaningful population-level impact on the mental health of black Americans. Specifically, our estimates imply that police killings of unarmed black Americans could contribute 1.7 additional poor mental health days per person per year, or 55 million (95% CI 27 million–87 million) excess poor mental health days per year among black American adults in the USA.... This substantial burden is even more striking given that our results might underestimate the true mental health spillover effects of police killings of unarmed black Americans.... These findings bolster calls to more accurately measure police killings and provide an additional public health rationale to better understand and address the potential pathogenic effects of police killings of unarmed black Americans and other manifestations of structural racism in the USA.”
HUMAN SERVICES

https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/98455/assessing_changes_to_snap_work_requirements_in_the_2018_farm_bill_3.pdf

The purpose of this report is to examine the potential impacts due to changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in the House Committee’s farm bill proposal. “The Agriculture and Nutrition Act of 2018 (the 2018 reauthorization of the farm bill) … significantly expands and intensifies work requirements in [SNAP] and implements significant penalties for those who do not comply with those requirements.” The proposed expansions would likely result in states bearing part of the administrative costs of monitoring work compliance. Food retailers could lose revenue due to stricter participant requirements.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

https://datasociety.net/output/beyond-disruption/

“While ridehail driving and other male-dominated sectors have been at the forefront in conversations about the future of work, the working lives of domestic workers like housecleaners and nannies usually aren’t included. By bringing these three types of platforms and workers together, this report complicates simple narratives about technology’s impact on labor markets and highlights the convergent and divergent challenges workers face when using labor platforms to find and carry out their work. Interviewees reported increasing financial and personal risk due to platform policy and design loopholes. For example, workers with marginalized identities (e.g., people of color and undocumented workers; largely women) report inequitable conditions that arise from common features such as rating systems.”

TRANSPORT ATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

https://pubs.er.usgs.gov/publication/sir20175013v2

What would happen to the San Francisco Bay region during and after a magnitude-7 earthquake? This report describes a hypothetical yet scientifically realistic earthquake sequence called the HayWired scenario. Analysis suggests that 800 deaths and 16,000 nonfatal injuries would result from shaking alone, while property and business disruption could incur losses of more than $82 billion. “The Bay Area has invested tens of billions of dollars in earthquake protections since the magnitude 6.9 Loma Prieta earthquake rattled the San Andreas Fault in 1989…. But an earthquake on the ‘heavily urbanized’ Hayward Fault would be more severe than Loma Prieta.” (San Francisco Chronicle, Apr. 18, 2018).

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