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**CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY**


“[A] new study of Mexican immigrants, both documented and undocumented, finds that, by several key gauges, they are integrating into American society to a far greater degree than in previous decades.... ‘The general trend for Mexican migrants is one of increasing contact and interaction with people outside of the Mexican community, regardless of whether they were temporary, long-term, or settled migrants,’ [study author David Lindstrom] writes. ‘On the other hand, employment, financial, and asset integration ... do not appear to have changed over time.’... He also discovered that ... having family members in the
United States is ‘associated with higher levels of integration in all domains.’ This finding suggests that the process derisively known as ‘chain migration’ actually facilitates integration into American society.” (*Pacific Standard*, July 15, 2019).


“Almost every problem elected officials have struggled to solve seems even worse for Latinos, who have almost double the poverty rate of white Californians and less than half the growth in household income over the last two decades compared with Asian Americans.... Fewer Latinos own homes than their white neighbors in every region of California, led by a 24-percentage-point gap along the Central Coast.... Educational inequality further complicates the picture. The report notes that many Latino students are ‘disproportionately attending segregated and underperforming schools’ and have less access to the resources that would prepare them for college.... Lawmakers have taken strides in the latest state budget to improve the lives of those who struggle the most, but no subgroup of Californians is both so large and so behind.” (*Los Angeles Times*, July 14, 2019).
ECONOMY

https://www.mercatus.org/publications/healthcare/why-are-prices-so-damn-high

“There are as many explanations for the ballooning cost of such services as there are politicians. … [Helland & Tabarrok] write that quality has improved far too little to account for it. Administrative bloat is not the answer either. … The real culprit, the authors write, is a steady increase in the cost of labour—of teachers and doctors. That in turn reflects the relentless logic of Baumol's cost disease, named after the late William Baumol, who first described the phenomenon. Productivity grows at different rates in different sectors. It takes far fewer people to make a car than it used to—where thousands of workers once filled plants, highly paid engineers now oversee factories full of robots—but roughly the same number of teachers to instruct a schoolful of children. Economists reckon that workers’ wages should vary with their productivity. But real pay has grown in high- and low-productivity industries alike. That, Baumol pointed out, is because teachers and engineers compete in the same labour market." ([The Economist](https://www.economist.com), June 20, 2019).

EDUCATION


This report is a summary of the "quantitative analysis that identifies districts in which students of color, as well as their White peers, have demonstrated extraordinary levels of academic achievement, measured by California’s new assessments in English language arts and mathematics, taking into account race and family income and education levels." The researchers found that "aside from socioeconomic status, a major predictor of student achievement is the preparedness of teachers. The proportion of teachers holding less than a full credential (i.e., an intern credential, temporary or short-term permit, or waiver for their teaching position) shows a strong negative association with student achievement for all student groups. In addition, teachers’ average experience levels are positively associated with achievement for African American and Hispanic students." Chula Vista Elementary District is the "top district in which both White and African American students perform higher than predicted,"

EMPLOYMENT

https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2019/07/02/all-school-and-no-work-becoming-the-norm-for-american-teens/

“It is striking how the labor market behavior of teens deviates from that of other age groups. The teen labor force participation rate reached an all-time peak in 1979 (57.9%) and gradually declined until about 2000, when it then dropped precipitously to a 2010-18 plateau of about 35%. While the participation rate of prime-age workers (25- to 54-year-olds) has edged down since its peak in the late 1990s and older workers’ (55- to 64-year-olds) participation has increased, the scale of the shift in teen participation dwarfs these other changes."
GENERAL GOVERNMENT


“Things could get worse before they get better at California’s Department of Motor Vehicles…. As many as 28.2 million Californians could request a Real ID between March 2019 and October 2020, raising the possibility of long wait times for customers and a return to the hours-long delays seen last summer…. The 18-page report largely focuses on the DMV’s challenges with implementing Real ID—a program mandated by federal law that requires people to get an updated ID card by Oct. 1, 2020 if they want to board airplanes or enter other federal facilities without a passport…. [T]he report outlines a series of recommendations to prevent delays and fix a department [Governor Gavin] Newsom once called ‘chronically mismanaged.’” (Sacramento Bee, July 23, 2019).

HEALTH

https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/abs/10.1161/CIRCULATIONAHA.118.038160

Researchers at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health estimated that “scaling up treatment of high blood pressure to 70% of the world’s population could extend the lives of 39.4 million people. Cutting sodium intake by 30% could stave off another 40 million deaths and could also help decrease high blood pressure, a major risk factor for CVD. And eliminating trans fat could prevent 14.8 million early deaths.” Together, these three interventions have the potential to prevent approximately 94 million premature deaths over a quarter century. “The researchers acknowledged that scaling up the three interventions would be a ‘huge challenge,’ requiring countries to commit additional resources to boost health care capacity and quality. But they added that previous analyses have shown that the interventions are achievable and affordable.” (Science Daily, June 10, 2019).

HUMAN SERVICES

https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2735808?resultClick=1

“Obesity rates among preschool children receiving government food aid are declining, national health experts note a positive trend for the U.S., where the health condition remains prevalent. Nearly 14% of children ages 2 to 4 years old in a supplemental nutrition program were obese in 2016, a drop from 16% in 2010…. While reasons for the decline in obesity among WIC [the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children] children ‘remain undetermined’… the addition of more whole grains, fruits and vegetables to government food packages and local, state and national initiatives might play a role.” (Washington Times, June 20, 2019).
“Less than 16 months from the next Election Day, the picture of American preparedness is mixed. The report issued Thursday by the Senate Intelligence Committee found that ‘some states were highly focused on building a culture of cybersecurity; others were severely underresourced and relying on part-time help.’… There are a flurry of studies and reports, including the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, Harvard’s Defending Digital Democracy program that trains campaign workers and state officials, and a new Microsoft program, Election Guard, that the company is providing free to states and election-machine manufacturers so that voters can track their ballots from casting to counting. Most echo the same advice: Make sure systems have ‘tamper alarms’ that alert officials to intrusions, employ the same kind of two-factor authentication methods for passwords that millions of Americans use for their bank accounts, and conduct regular audits to look for irregularities.” (New York Times, July 26, 2019).

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