Studies in the News
California Research Bureau, California State Library

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**ECONOMY**


https://cepr.org/active/publications/discussion_papers/dp.php?dpno=13427#
https://www.nber.org/papers/w22247.pdf (free draft)

“Recent decades have witnessed the rise of large institutional players in financial markets…. [R]egulators have expressed concerns about systemic risks that could result from this high concentration of assets in a few large actors. The main threat is that institutional investors, when experiencing redemptions, liquidate their portfolios and destabilize asset prices. The effect may thus propagate to other investors’ balance sheets…. [The study shows] that ownership by large institutions increases volatility in the underlying securities, and that this increase reflects a rise of noise in stock prices…. The access to capital as well as the investment and trading activities of the different components within a conglomerate display higher correlation than for independent firms. This correlated behavior, combined with the sheer size of the
conglomerates, has repercussions on asset price stability that is mostly felt at times of market stress... and suggests that excessive concentration in the asset management industry may be harmful from the point of view of systemic risk.” (ProMarket, Jun. 7, 2019).

**EDUCATION**


“The percentage of intensely segregated schools, defined as those where less than 10 percent of the student body is white, tripled between 1988 and 2016, from 6 to 18 percent…. While segregation was once most severe in the former states of the Confederacy, in 2016 it was in four liberal states — New York, California, Maryland and Illinois — that black children were most likely to attend intensely segregated schools. Latinos were most likely to attend intensely segregated schools in California, New York, Texas and New Jersey.... With a growing population of Latino and Asian schoolchildren, segregation looks a lot different today than it did in the 1950s.... The authors of the report ... suggest several policy remedies, such as using magnet programs and busing to draw students voluntarily to schools outside their neighborhoods and districts.” (New York Times, May 10, 2019)

https://www.educationnext.org/is-school-segregation-really-getting-worse/

“[A] competing body of rigorous research ... finds that segregation has been relatively flat, or even declined, over the past few decades. At the root of the discrepancy is an issue of measurement.... The share of minority students has increased such that they now make up a majority of all students in U.S. schools, and this has implications for how we measure segregation.... Absolute measures quantify the extent to which students from one demographic group are exposed to or isolated from another demographic group.... [T]he measure used in the Civil Rights Project's analysis compares schools to an absolute benchmark.... Absolute measures are descriptively useful and important, but they are strongly influenced by the demographic composition of the broader school system.... Schools can appear to be more segregated merely because minority students constitute an increasingly larger share of all students.... [E]vidence using relative measures of segregation that adjust for the underlying composition of students in school systems ... find that segregation has been flat or modestly decreased over the past 20 years.”

**EMPLOYMENT**


“The large rise in job density during the recent economic expansion suggests that place actually matters more, not less, in today's digital economy.... Job density is increasing in U.S. cities and metropolitan areas and has been since 2007.... [T]he increase was driven primarily by New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Seattle.... Job density offers metropolitan areas a means to increase productive and economic growth, improve social and environmental outcomes, increase civic engagement, and reduce fiscal stress.... For workers, job density means productivity and better wages.... City and regional leaders can build stronger, more inclusive economies by investing in policies that promote more concentrated development patterns that better meet the needs of businesses and workers.... [T]hese policies can
include everything from public transportation to zoning to affordable housing. ‘Job density is a result of good urban density. That’s what good density is — everything from housing costs to transportation costs to the design of sidewalks.’ (Deseret News, Jul. 3, 2019).

**Faster-growing metro areas tended to see larger increases in job density**

Change in job density across 94 of the nation’s largest metro areas, 2004 to 2015

Source: Brookings analysis of Census LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics

**GENERAL GOVERNMENT**


https://www.brookings.edu/events/8th-annual-municipal-finance-conference/

“The nation’s public pension underfunding crisis isn’t the overwhelming issue for the municipal finance industry that it’s often made out to be. ‘We find that in the aggregate pensions can be stabilized with moderate fiscal adjustments.’… Most pension plans have … already taken significant steps to assure their long-term viability…. The study found that if COLAs equaled inflation, benefits would rise about 25% over next two decades. If plans eliminated COLAs, and many could do so legally, benefits would eventually fall an additional 9%. The authors contend that focusing on the long-term sustainability of public pension plans rather than their underfunding as required by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board [GASB] standards allows communities to focus on immediate pressing priorities such as reducing the lead in their drinking water. The sustainability approach is rooted in the history of public pension plans, which were not required to be fully funded several decades ago.” (The Bond Buyer, Jul. 16, 2019).
HEALTH


“[D]rug overdoses were the second-leading cause of postpartum death and suicide was the seventh in California…. Over the past few decades, pregnancy-related deaths have been steadily increasing across the U.S. Most research and preventive measures have focused on physical causes of death, such as blood clots and postpartum hemorrhage. However, deaths related to drugs and suicide have rarely been part of the conversation…. [T]wo-thirds of maternal deaths happen six to 12 months after delivery, calling attention to the period after birth, rather than just during the pregnancy….One possible policy direction is to ensure that women are able to stay insured and have access to health care for the first year after birth…. Another is to require all state Maternal Mortality Review Committees to keep a record of deaths related to drugs and suicide.” (Sacramento Bee, Jun. 14, 2019).

HUMAN SERVICES


“Low-income families in the United States tend to live in neighborhoods that offer limited opportunities for upward income mobility…. We provided services to reduce barriers to moving to high-upward-mobility neighborhoods: customized search assistance, landlord engagement, and short-term financial assistance…. These findings imply that most low-income families do not have a strong preference to stay in low-opportunity areas; instead, barriers in the housing search process are a central driver of residential segregation by income. Interviews with families reveal that the capacity to address each family’s needs in a specific manner from emotional support to brokering with landlords to financial assistance was critical to the program’s success.”

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