

Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

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CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

Over 16 Million Children in Poverty in 2011. By Marybeth J. Mattingly, et al. Carsey Institute.

Sep. 20, 2012. 8 p.

<http://carseyinstitute.unh.edu/publication/IB-Same-Day-Child-Poverty-2012>

"In the wake of the recession, child poverty remains high, presenting significant challenges for children's futures. Findings from the American Community Survey suggest the dramatic increases in deep poverty, poverty, and low-income families that have been observed since the onset of the Great Recession persist and, in some places, continue to grow.... 45% of American children reside in homes where the total family income is below 200% of poverty (including those in poor and deeply poor families). This estimate suggests that a vast proportion of our youth resides in homes confronting day-to-day financial pressures that may influence their growth and development."

The Gender Wage Gap: 2011. Institute for Women's Policy Research. Sep. 2012. 4 p.
<http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/the-gender-wage-gap-2011-1/>

"The ratio of women's and men's median annual earnings was 77.0 for full-time/year-round workers in 2011, essentially unchanged from 77.4 in 2010. (This means the gender wage gap for full-time/year-round workers is now 23%.) During the last decade the wage gap narrowed by less than half of one percentage point. In the previous decade, between 1991 and 2000, it closed by almost four, and in the decade prior to that, 1981 and 1990, by over ten percentage points.... Women's earnings have become increasingly important to family incomes. The continuing gender wage gap depresses not only women's earnings but has a negative effect on their families."

ECONOMY

2011 FDIC National Survey of Unbanked and Underbanked Households. By Susan Burhouse, et al. Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. Sep. 2012. 155 p.
<http://www.fdic.gov/householdsurvey/>

"In the aftermath of one of the worst recessions in history, more Americans have limited or no interactions with banks, instead relying on check cashers and payday lenders to manage their finances.... Not only are these Americans more vulnerable to high fees and interest rates, but they are also cut off from credit to buy a car or a home or pay for college.... [T]he study found that 821,000 households opted out of the banking system from 2009 to 2011 and that the 'unbanked' population grew to 8.2% of U.S. households." Besides the executive summary and full report, detailed state and MSA tables are available. (*Sacramento Bee*, Sep. 14, 2012).

EDUCATION

Responses to Impact of Budget Cuts Survey Questions. California Community College Chancellor's Office. Aug. 28, 2012. 15 p.
http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/DocDownloads/PressReleases/AUG2012/PR_BudgetImpactSurveyQuestions_082812_FINAL.pdf

"More than 472,000 of the 2.4 million students in the California Community Colleges system were put on waiting lists for classes this fall, according to the results of a survey released on Wednesday by the system's chancellor, Jack Scott.... The informal survey was conducted by the chancellor's office, and 78 of the system's 116 colleges responded. Among the respondents, 70.5% indicated that their enrollment had dropped since the 2011-12 academic year, and 20% reported increases. While 20.5% of the colleges reported no waiting lists or did not respond to the question, 79.5% reported that their students faced waiting lists for classes in the coming semester. At the responding institutions, 78.7% of all classes were expected to be full this fall." (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Aug. 29, 2012).

EMPLOYMENT

Bad Jobs on the Rise. By John Schmitt, et al. Center for Economic and Policy Research. Sep. 2012. 20 p.
<http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/bad-jobs-2012-09.pdf>

A "bad job" may be defined as "one that pays less than \$37,000 per year (in inflation-adjusted 2010 dollars); lacks employer-provided health insurance; and has no employer-sponsored retirement plan.... A decline in health-insurance coverage ... was a major driver of the increase in bad jobs. About 47% of workers did not have employer-provided health insurance in 2010, up from 30% in 1979.... The decline in

the economy's ability to create good jobs is related to deterioration in the bargaining power of workers, especially those at the middle and the bottom of the pay scale."

ENERGY

Saturation Wind Power Potential and Its Implications for Wind Energy. By Mark Z. Jacobson, et al. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.* Sep. 10, 2012. 6 p.
www.ceoe.udel.edu/cms/carcher/my_papers/Jacobson_Archer_saturation_PNAS_2012.pdf

There is enough wind over land and near to shore to provide more than half of the world's power demand. A recently-developed weather model contradicts previous studies that questioned the overall potential for wind power. While additional turbines reduce wind speeds and limit the energy produced by existing turbines, "there is no fundamental barrier to obtaining half (approximately 5.75TW) or several times the world's all-purpose power from wind in a 2030 clean-energy economy." Four million turbines at 100 meters could provide more than enough energy without negatively affecting climate or the environment.

ENVIRONMENT

National Wildland Significant Fire Potential Outlook. National Interagency Fire Center. Sep. 2012. 8 p.
http://www.predictiveservices.nifc.gov/outlooks/monthly_seasonal_outlook.pdf

For at least the next few months, large portions of California face an elevated risk of wildfires. High summer temperatures, combined with low average rainfall, have created drier than normal fuel sources in Northern California. As we move into fall, the risk of fire events will drop and return to normal. However, in Southern California, the risk of wildfires is expected to trend above normal through the end of the year.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

The 2012-13 Budget: California Spending Plan. Legislative Analyst's Office. Sep. 2012. 74 p.
http://www.lao.ca.gov/reports/2012/bud/spending_plan/spending-plan-091312.pdf

"California reached an unfortunate budget benchmark in June – for the fourth consecutive fiscal year, the state ended with a deficit. Now the question is whether California can break that streak with the new budget signed into law by Gov. Jerry Brown." According to the LAO, "Brown's budget leaves nearly \$1-billion cushion in case tax revenue dips or the state spends more than expected.... that won't come close to covering the gap if voters in November reject Brown's push for tax hikes. The governor's plan would raise \$8.5 billion by raising the sales tax by a quarter of a cent and increasing levies on the wealthiest. Without the taxes, almost \$5.5 billion would be cut from public schools." (*Los Angeles Times PolitiCal*, Sep. 14, 2012).

HEALTH

California Hospitals Serving Large Minority Populations Were More Likely Than Others to Employ Ambulance Diversion. Renee Yuen-Jan Hsia, et al. *Health Affairs.* Aug. 2012. 11 p.
<http://content.healthaffairs.org/content/31/8/1767.full.pdf+html>

Racial and ethnic minority populations often use emergency departments for safety-net care. This study found that "hospitals serving large minority populations were more likely to divert ambulances than were hospitals with a lower proportion of minorities, even when controlling for hospital ownership, emergency

department capacity, and other hospital demographic and structural factors.... [E]stablishing more-uniform criteria to regulate diversion may help reduce disparities in access to emergency care.”

HOUSING

***Foreclosure Externalities: Some New Evidence.* By Kristopher Gerardi, et al. Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. Aug. 2012. 46 p.**

<http://www.frbatlanta.org/documents/pubs/wp/wp1211.pdf>

“While properties in virtually all stages of distress have statistically significant, negative effects on nearby home values, the magnitudes are economically small, peak before the distressed properties complete the foreclosure process, and go to zero about a year after the bank sells the property to a new homeowner ... the most plausible explanation for these results is an externality resulting from reduced investment by owners of distressed property. Our analysis shows that policies that slow the transition from delinquency to foreclosure likely exacerbate the negative effect of mortgage distress on house prices.”

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

***Where the Money Goes: State-by-State General Expenditures by Function.* By Jennifer Burnett. The Council of State Governments Knowledge Center. Aug. 21, 2012.**

<http://knowledgecenter.csg.org/drupal/content/where-money-goes-state-state-general-expenditures-function>

This useful compilation of general expenditures includes a brief and a spreadsheet for ease of comparison. “State government general expenditures totaled \$1.59 trillion in 2010, an increase of 2.4% over 2009. When adjusted for inflation, however, the increase from 2009 to 2010 is less than one-half of a percent.... nearly 73% of state general expenditures go to three major categories by function: education, public welfare, public health and hospitals, with education and public welfare making up nearly 65% of spending in 2010.”

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

***Study of U.S. Inland Containerized Cargo Moving Through Canadian and Mexican Seaports.* Committee for the Study of U.S. Inland Containerized Cargo Moving Through Canadian and Mexican Seaports. Federal Maritime Commission. July 2012. 65 p.**

http://www.fmc.gov/assets/1/News/Study_of_US_Inland_Containerized_Cargo_Moving_Through_Canadian_and_Mexican_Seaports_Final.pdf

“Ports across the United States, Canada, and Mexico compete on a wide variety of variables. Each port might offer particular benefits in rates, transit times, and location relative to population centers. This competition benefits all aspects of the container shipping industry, and the Commission encourages this competition, and recognizes that many importers in the United States benefit greatly from having foreign ports available as a resource.” However, “the fact that each container requires, on average, a \$109/FEU [Forty-foot Equivalent Unit] fee to use a U.S. port places those ports at a competitive disadvantage before the container has even been offloaded. A detailed empirical study that is addressed in this report shows the impact that the HMT [Harbor Maintenance Tax] may potentially have on the flow of U.S.-bound cargo through ports in Canada and Mexico.”

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