



Studies in the News

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Sentencing and Prison Practices in Germany and the Netherlands: Implications for the United States. By Ram Subramanian, et al. Vera Institute of Justice. Oct. 2013. 24 p.

<http://www.vera.org/pubs/sentencing-prison-germany-netherlands>

“Germany and the Netherlands have significantly lower incarceration rates than the United States and make much greater use of non-custodial penalties, particularly for nonviolent crimes. In addition, conditions and practices within correctional facilities in these countries—grounded in the principle of ‘normalization’ whereby life in prison is to resemble as much as possible life in the community—also differ markedly from the U.S.... [T]his report describes the considerably different approaches to sentencing and corrections these leaders observed [a delegation of corrections and justice systems leaders from

Colorado, Georgia, and Pennsylvania] in Europe and the impact this exposure has had (and continues to have) on the policy debate and practices in their home states.” This visit occurred in Feb. 2013 and was funded by the California-based Prison Law Office as part of the European-American Prison Project.

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

The State of Women in America: A 50-State Analysis of How Women Are Faring Across the Nation. By Anna Chu, et al. Center for American Progress. Sep. 2013.

Report. 53 p.: <http://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/StateOfWomenReport.pdf>

The State of Women in CA Fact Sheet. 2 p.:

http://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/StateOfWomen_California.pdf

The changing roles for women over the last several decades has meant more women working outside of the home, leading the country, and ensuring access to free contraception. Despite gains, there is a gender pay gap that deepens for women of color. “A deeper examination shows that disparities for women also exist among states. Women in Vermont, for example, make on average close to 85 cents for every dollar a man makes, while women in Wyoming make only 64 cents—more than 25% less than women in Vermont. On leadership, 15 states have no female elected leaders in the House of Representatives or the Senate. Lastly, while less than 10% of women in Vermont, Wisconsin, Hawaii, and Massachusetts are uninsured, nearly 25% of women in Texas do not have health insurance.”

ECONOMY

The NonProfit Sector in Brief: Public Charities, Giving and Volunteering, 2013.

By Sarah L. Pettijohn. Urban Institute. Oct. 1, 2013. 8 p.

<http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/412923-The-Nonprofit-Sector-in-Brief.pdf>

The number of nonprofits registered with the IRS increased by 21.5% from 2001 to 2011—an estimated total of 1.58 million organizations. The recession left its mark on nonprofit organizations—with private giving and revenues falling. However, the nonprofits contributed \$836.9 billion to the U.S. economy in 2011, and made up 5.6% of the country’s Gross Domestic Product.

World Ultra Wealth Report 2012-2013. Wealth-X. Sep. 18, 2012. 53 p.

<http://wealthx.com/wealthreport/Wealth-X-world-ultra-wealth-report.pdf> [free after short registration]

“Wealth gap in U.S. widest in 85 years; 95% of income gains since 2009 have gone to top 1%.... The very wealthiest Americans earned more than 19% of the country’s household income last year—their biggest share since 1928, the year before the stock market crash. And the top 10% captured a record 48.2% of total earnings last year.... The top 1% of American households had pre-tax income above \$394,000 last year. The top 10% had income exceeding \$114,000.” Economists point to several reasons for widening income inequality including the decline of unions, competition with and outsourcing to low-wage labor internationally, and advances in technology that have displaced workers performing routine tasks. (*Stockton Record*, Sep. 11, 2013).

EDUCATION

Transfer Incentives for High-Performing Teachers: Final Results from a Multisite Randomized Experiment. By Steven Glazerman, et al. Institute of Education Sciences. Nov. 2013. 243 p.

http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/pdfs/education/tti_high_perform_teachers.pdf

“One way to improve struggling schools’ access to effective teachers is to use selective transfer incentives. Such incentives offer bonuses for the highest-performing teachers to move into schools

-serving the most disadvantaged students. In this report, we provide evidence from a randomized experiment that tested whether such a policy intervention can improve student test scores and other outcomes in low-achieving schools. The transfer incentive successfully attracted high value-added teachers, had a positive impact on test scores, and increased teacher-retention rates.”

EMPLOYMENT

Course Correction: Reversing Wage Erosion to Restore Good Jobs at American Airports.
By Miranda Dietz, et al. UC Berkeley Labor Center. Oct. 2013. 32 p.
http://laborcenter.berkeley.edu/livingwage/restore_good_jobs_american_airports.shtml

“Certain airport occupations faced both substantial increases in outsourcing and dramatic decreases in wages between 2002 and 2012.... More than one-third (37%) of cleaning and baggage workers at airports, both directly hired and outsourced, live in or near poverty. Because of low wages and benefits, a similar share of these workers and their families must rely on public benefit programs to make ends meet. Average weekly wages in the airport operations industry generally (excluding air traffic control) did not keep up with inflation, but fell in real terms by 14% from 1991 to 2011.... In 2011, workers in airport operations made an average of \$545 a week.”

ENERGY

Hydraulic Fracturing: Selected Legal Issues. By Adam Vann, et al. Congressional Research Service. Oct. 22, 2013. 37 p.
<http://www.fas.org/sqp/crs/misc/R43152.pdf>

“Hydraulic fracturing is a technique used to recover oil and natural gas from underground low permeability rock formations. Its use along with horizontal drilling has been responsible for an increase in estimated U.S. oil and natural gas reserves. Hydraulic fracturing and related oil and gas production activities have been controversial because of their potential effects on public health and the environment. Several environmental statutes have implications for the regulation of hydraulic fracturing by the federal government and states.”

HEALTH

The Coverage Gap: Uninsured Poor Adults in States that Do Not Expand Medicaid. Kaiser Family Foundation. Oct. 2013. 9 p.
<http://kff.org/health-reform/issue-brief/the-coverage-gap-uninsured-poor-adults-in-states-that-do-not-expand-medicaid/>

“In states that do not expand Medicaid, over five million poor uninsured adults have incomes above Medicaid eligibility levels but below poverty and may fall into a ‘coverage gap’ of earning too much to qualify for Medicaid but not enough to qualify for Marketplace premium tax credits. Most of these people have very limited coverage options and are likely to remain uninsured. This brief describes the coverage gap and presents state estimates of the population that falls into this situation.”

HUMAN SERVICES

***The California Poverty Measure: A New Look at the Social Safety Net.* By Sarah Bohn, et al. Public Policy Institute of California. Oct. 2013. 27 p.**

<http://www.ppic.org/main/publication.asp?i=1070>

This report introduces the California Poverty Measure (CPM)—a poverty measure taking into account variation in the cost of living across California counties and the impact of social safety net programs. “According to the CPM, about 8.1 million Californians—or 22% of the population—lived in poor families in 2011.... Across age groups, children had the highest poverty rate (25%) and adults over 65 had the lowest (19%).... Need-based social safety net programs dramatically lowered the number in deep poverty, defined as living at less than half of the poverty threshold. Together, programs like the EITC [Earned Income Tax Credit], CalFresh, and CalWORKs helped keep nearly 2.8 million Californians—or nearly 8% of the population—out of deep poverty.... Californians—particularly children—would look strikingly more impoverished without the assistance provided by safety net programs funded at the federal, state, and local level.”

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

***The Cost of Connectivity 2013: A Comparison of High-Speed Internet Prices in 24 Cities Around the World.* By Hibah Hussain, et al. New America Foundation. Oct. 2013. 14 p.**

http://newamerica.net/sites/newamerica.net/files/policydocs/Cost_of_Connectivity_2013_Data_Release.pdf

“While the plans and prices have been updated in the intervening year, the 2013 data shows little progress, reflecting remarkably similar trends to what we observed in 2012....The new data underscores the extent to which U.S. cities lag behind cities around the world, further emphasizing the need for policy reform. Rather than allowing American cities to fall behind, policymakers should reassess current policy approaches and implement strategies to increase competition, in turn fostering faster speeds and more affordable access.”

VETERANS

***Native American Veterans: DOL Needs a Clear Plan to Improve Employment and Training Services on Tribal Lands.* Government Accountability Office. GAO-13-664. Sep. 2013. 45 p.**

<http://www.gao.gov/assets/660/658214.pdf>

“The unemployment rate for all veterans has risen since the beginning of the economic downturn, but the unemployment rate for Native Americans living on tribal lands has been higher. In addition, tribal land is frequently located in remote areas characterized by limited economic development.... In October 2010, DOL submitted a report to Congress recommending that the agency take actions to increase employment and training opportunities for Native American veterans living on tribal lands. GAO assessed (1) the status of DOL efforts to implement the report’s recommendations and (2) whether and how DOL can improve on its efforts to implement the report’s recommendations....” The GAO report includes several recommendations the DOL can take to strengthen its response to the 2010 report.

Veterans and Educational Benefits: An Overview. By Pamela Martin. California Research Bureau. Nov. 2013. 2 p.

<http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/13/S-13-020.pdf>

Through the GI Bill, the Veterans Administration provided educational benefits for over 900,000 active military service members, veterans and dependents in 2011, nearly 10% of whom were Californians. Approximately a third of all U.S. veterans who use the GI Bill to pay for college are women, which is close to the proportion of women veterans under age 50. This Short Subject overview gives a summary of the ways in which service members are using these benefits to pay for their education.

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