National Equity Atlas

California Jobs First:
Equity Indicators for the Southern Border Region

January 2024

PolicyLink **USCDornsife**
Equity Research Institute

About the National Equity Atlas

The **National Equity Atlas** is a first-of-its-kind data and policy tool, produced through a partnership between PolicyLink and the USC Equity Research Institute. It equips communities, advocates, and policymakers with actionable data and strategies to advance racial and economic equity in the United States.

About This Profile

This data portrait provides insights on racial equity, economic inclusivity, and environmental justice to support community and labor groups engaged in planning efforts related to **California Jobs First** (formerly the Community Economic Resilience Fund). It also demonstrates how community groups and analysts can leverage available data to explore equity issues and identify opportunities to address regional disparities.

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Introduction
California Jobs First

California Jobs First (formerly the Community Economic Resilience Fund) represents a generational opportunity for California's regions to advance economic strategies anchored in racial equity, economic inclusivity, and environmental sustainability.

Established by the state of California in 2021, the $600 million fund was designed to "deliver a sustainable and equitable economic future that meets communities and regions where they are by supporting new regional plans and investing in strategies and projects that help diversify regional economies and develop or expand environmentally sustainable industries that create high-quality, broadly accessible jobs for all Californians."

The program's vision is to:

- Promote a sustainable and equitable recovery from Covid-19 that creates high-quality and accessible jobs for all Californians;
- Support the development of regional economic roadmaps for building sustainable economic growth and driving investments in industries that will thrive in a carbon-neutral future;
- Align and leverage state, federal, philanthropic, and private-sector investments to maximize recovery efforts and catalyze long-term economic resilience; and
- Integrate the priorities of community residents into regional planning processes.

Introduction
The Southern Border Region

California's Southern Border region, which consists of San Diego and Imperial counties, is home to a combined 3.6 million residents. Through California Jobs First, private and public sector leaders and community-based organizations from across the region have come together to form the Southern Border Collaborative (formerly known as the CERF Southern Border Region Coalition). The collaborative developed a proposal to build community wealth in the region. The plan lays out a commitment to build strong and resilient economic systems that are grounded in "equity, sustainability, job quality, economic competitiveness, and economic resilience."

This data portrait provides insights on racial equity, economic inclusivity, and environmental justice to support community and labor groups engaged in the California Jobs First program. These indicators, along with additional indicators on the National Equity Atlas, can be used to inform planning for projects that would address the impacts of the state's historical exclusion of low-income communities and communities of color from economic development planning processes and economic opportunities.
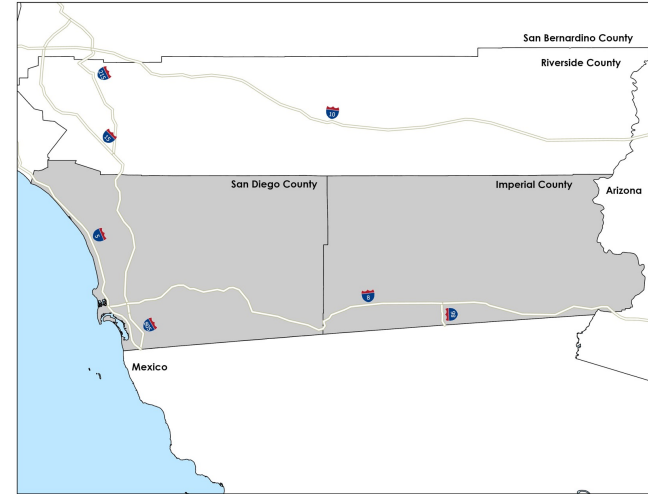
Introduction
Defining an Equitable Region

Regions are equitable when all residents — regardless of their race/ethnicity, nativity, gender, income, neighborhood of residence, or other characteristics — are fully able to participate in the region's economic vitality, contribute to the region's readiness for the future, and connect to the region's assets and resources.

Strong, equitable regions:

- Have **economic vitality** that supports residents to secure high-quality jobs and to produce new ideas, products, businesses, and economic activity so the well-being of the residents is sustainable.

- Are **ready for the future**, with a skilled, ready workforce and a healthy population.

- Are **places of connection**, where residents can access the essential ingredients to live healthy and productive lives in their neighborhoods, reach opportunities located throughout the region (and beyond) via transportation and technology, participate in civic processes, and productively engage with other diverse residents.

Introduction
Data Summary

This data snapshot of the Southern Border is a resource for community and labor organizations engaged in the California Jobs First program to understand key demographic, social, and economic trends in the region. The data in this profile reveals that:

The Southern Border's racial and ethnic diversity is growing.

- Nearly 60 percent of the region's population are people of color, and a quarter of its residents are immigrants. Large increases in populations of color — especially US-born and immigrant Latinx residents — have contributed to substantial growth in the region's diversity. Since 1990, the region's white population has declined by more than 156,000 people. Over the same period, the Latinx and Asian American populations (and, to a smaller degree, Black immigrants) in the Southern Border have all grown, with Latinx residents accounting for 79 percent of the region's net population growth.

The region needs good jobs for all workers.

- Every worker should have access to stable, sustainable jobs that provide a living wage. However, economic insecurity is commonplace in the Southern Border, especially for Latinx, Native American, and Black workers and residents with lower incomes. For example, while the median wage in the region has increased by four percent since 1980, not all racial/ethnic groups saw progress: wages for Latinx and Native American workers actually declined over this period, and the median wage of Latinx workers in 2020 was only 58 percent that of their white counterparts in the region. Furthermore, most workers of color have lower wages than white workers

Introduction
Data Summary *(continued)*

regardless of educational attainment, and wage gaps between most workers of color and their white counterparts are greatest for those with a bachelor's degree or higher. Those at the lower end of the wage distribution are especially impacted, as the region has seen a steady yet significant share of workers of color who are employed full time yet earn poverty wages, which means that they experience "working poverty." Across the region, 8 percent of workers are making poverty wages in 2020, but the rate for Latinx workers is nearly double that of the region's overall workforce, at 15 percent. Overall, workers of color have a working-poor rate nearly three times that of their white counterparts, a pattern that has persisted since 1990.

- Not all workers are experiencing the same difficulties: those in the top 10 percent of wage earners have actually seen their inflation-adjusted incomes grow by 36 percent since 1980 — 50 percent greater than similar workers nationally — while those in the bottom half of the wage distribution have seen their incomes drop by 3 to 5 percent over the same period Occupational segregation has been a contributing force to this divide, with Latinx workers representing 34 percent of the region's workforce but comprising disproportionate shares of workers in lower-paying jobs such as agriculture (73 percent of workers), construction (48 percent), and retail trade (43 percent) industries.

Addressing the unequal geography of opportunity will be essential for the region.

- Many communities in the region have high levels of poverty, including some areas with poverty rates above 20 percent. Census tracts where the poverty rate is greater than 20 percent are 74 percent people of color, while tracts with 4 percent poverty or below are only 47 percent people of color. High levels of poverty in the Southern Border are felt most by the region's Latinx residents, who make up 37 percent of the population but over half of those in the highest poverty census tracts. Compounding the effects of high poverty, Black and Latinx residents are exposed to higher levels of air pollution and disproportionately live in areas with higher environmental health risks when compared to their white counterparts.

- These systemic conditions all contribute to considerable differences in life expectancy across racial/ethnic groups: the number of years Black and Native American residents can expect to live is four to six years shorter than the regional average, respectively.

Growing good jobs and connecting workers of color to good jobs of the future can promote an equitable economy in the region.

- For workers in the San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos metropolitan area, only 27 percent of the area's workers are in "good jobs" — stable jobs that provide family-sustaining wages and are automation-resilient. Yet the likelihood of securing a good job depends on the educational requirements of the position: roughly 1 percent of workers whose jobs require at most a high school diploma are in good jobs, compared to 65 percent of workers in jobs that require a bachelor's degree or higher. Only 14 percent of workers in jobs that require an associate's degree and 13 percent of those in jobs requiring only postsecondary training are in good jobs themselves. However, racial disparities in educational attainment suggest that workers of color would face substantial challenges to obtaining a good job: only 18 percent of Latinx adults, 20 percent of Native American adults, and 27 percent of both Pacific Islander and Black adults have a bachelor's degree in the region.

- Even after accounting for differences in educational attainment across racial/ethnic groups, white workers are greatly overrepresented in good jobs in the region. Despite making up more than half of the San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos metropolitan area's workforce, workers of color account for only a third of the workers in good jobs, and the racial disparities in good jobs rise substantially for jobs that do not require a college degree: while white workers make up only 46 percent of the metropolitan area's workforce and 67 percent of the working population with good jobs overall, they comprise 71 percent of those in good jobs that require non-degree post-secondary training and 89 percent of the workers in the few good jobs that only require a high school education. Unfortunately, job growth projections suggest that the metropolitan area's new jobs expected to employ the greatest number of workers of color are not good jobs. For the Southern Border to build an equitable economy, all workers should have greater access to good jobs, regardless of educational requirements.

Introduction
General Discussion Questions

Inclusive Decision-Making

- Are the communities most deeply impacted by poverty and historic marginalization in your region *meaningfully engaged* in initiatives, priorities, and outcomes? How?

- Do the communities most deeply impacted by poverty and historic marginalization have any decision-making power to shape investments that can affect their future? In what way?

Targeted and Disaggregated Analysis

- What populations or communities aren't reflected in this data profile?

- Given how you plan to analyze economic vitality, connectedness, and readiness in your region, what are the most pressing inequities or disparities that you can isolate for further analysis? How will you perform this analysis to center the needs and priorities of frontline or deeply impacted communities?

California Jobs First represents a generational opportunity for California's regions to advance economic strategies anchored in racial equity, economic inclusivity, and environmental sustainability.
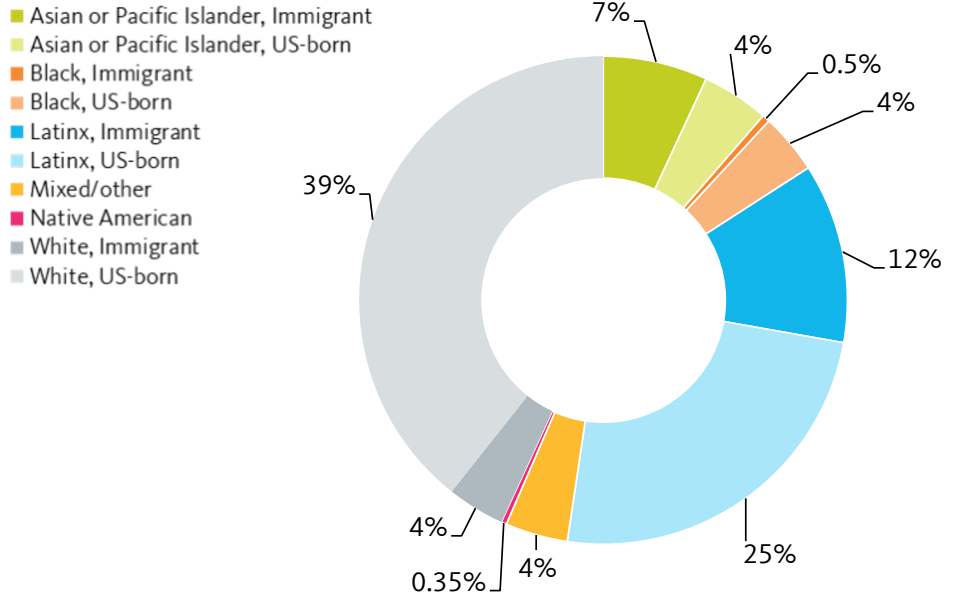
Demographics

Demographics
Who lives in the region and how is this changing?

Three out of five of the Southern Border's residents are people of color.

The Southern Border is a racially and ethnically diverse region with a large immigrant population. Nearly 60 percent of the region's population are people of color, and a quarter of residents are immigrants. Among residents of color, Latinx residents represent over a third of the region's population, followed by Asian American or Pacific Islander (AAPI) residents (11 percent), Black residents (4.5 percent), and residents of other or mixed race. Approximately one-third of the Latinx and half of the AAPI populations are immigrants. The demographics between San Diego and Imperial Counties, however, are vastly different: while only a third of San Diego County's residents are Latinx, more than four-fifths of Imperial County's population are Latinx. The region's high (and fragmented) levels of racial/ethnic and immigrant diversity highlight the need for inclusive, equitable growth strategies that take county differences into account.

Race, Ethnicity, and Nativity, 2020

Legend:
- Asian or Pacific Islander, Immigrant
- Asian or Pacific Islander, US-born
- Black, Immigrant
- Black, US-born
- Latinx, Immigrant
- Latinx, US-born
- Mixed/other
- Native American
- White, Immigrant
- White, US-born

Donut chart values: 7%, 4%, 0.5%, 4%, 12%, 25%, 4%, 0.35%, 4%, 39%

Demographics
Who lives in the region and how is this changing?

The region's population has grown by nearly 900,000 since 1990, driven largely by an increase in Latinx and Asian American residents.

The Southern Border region has undergone significant shifts in demographics over the past three decades, with large increases in Latinx and Asian American residents. Since 1990, the region's white population has declined by over 156,000 people, but Latinx and Asian American populations (and, to a smaller degree, Black immigrants) have all grown during the same period. Latinx residents — both immigrant and US-born — have been a large part of this boom, accounting for four-fifths of the region's net population growth.

Change in Major Groups by Race/Ethnicity and Nativity, 1990 to 2020

Group	Change
All	897,231
Asian American, Immigrant	119,492
Asian American, U.S.-born	88,576
Black, Immigrant	12,435
Black, U.S.-born	-5,783
Latinx, Immigrant	174,189
Latinx, U.S.-born	531,829
Native American	-7,065
Pacific Islander, U.S-born	-1,144
Pacific Islander, Immigrant	317
White, Immigrant	43,757
White, U.S.-born	-200,583

Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 2020 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average.
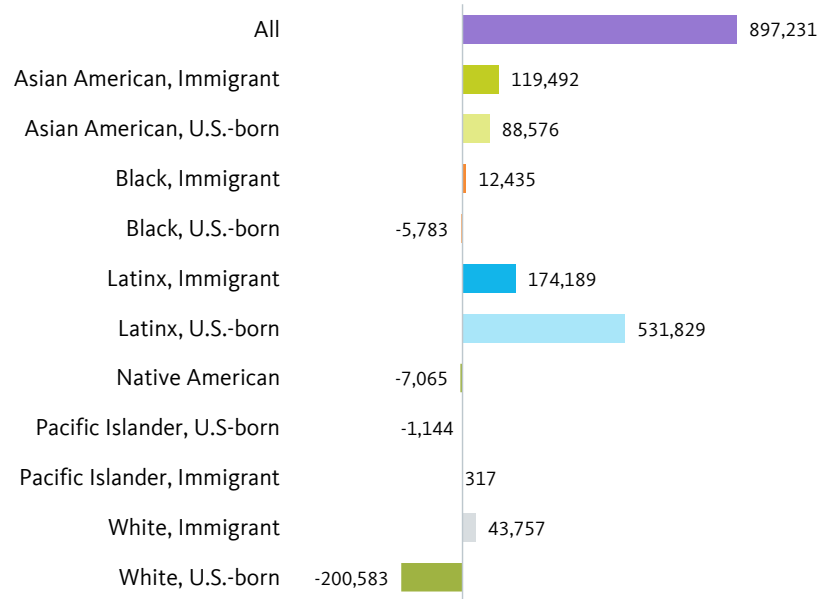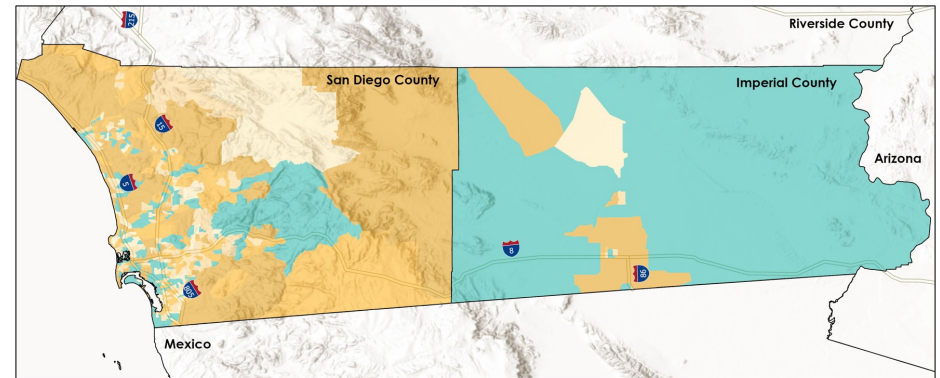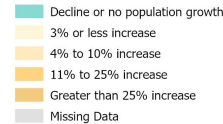
Demographics
Who lives in the region and how is this changing?

Population growth patterns differ greatly between San Diego and Imperial counties.

Much of San Diego County has seen substantial population growth over the past two decades. Some patches of decline or no population growth are sprinkled along the westernmost third of the county, along with communities in and around the heavily forested central core of the county — home to Cuyamaca Rancho State Park and Cleveland National Forest. Meanwhile, Imperial County's population growth is generally concentrated in and around the El Centro metropolitan area, a subregion that contains many of the county's most populous cities. Additionally, towns near the Salton Sea, such as Salton City, have seen significant growth since 2000. The rest of the county, however, has experienced either declining or stagnant population growth. Strategies for inclusive governance and equitable economic development should account for the substantial demographic, geographic, and economic differences between San Diego and Imperial counties.

Population Growth by Census Tract, 2000 to 2020

- Decline or no population growth
- 3% or less increase
- 4% to 10% increase
- 11% to 25% increase
- Greater than 25% increase
- Missing Data

Source: National Equity Atlas Analysis of 2020 ACS Summary File Data. Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average.

Demographics
Further Data Exploration and Discussion Questions

- What parts of the region are growing the most quickly? What has driven growth in those areas?

- How do the demographics of San Diego and Imperial Counties differ from one another? How are they similar?

- What is the potential impact investments will have on where people live, work, and play in the region?

- How will proposed investments address disinvestment and bring resources to historically underinvested areas?

- Given the growth in more metro areas, how can the region ensure that its investments reach and benefit communities with smaller or declining populations?

Regions are equitable when all residents — regardless of their race/ethnicity, nativity, gender, income, neighborhood of residence, or other characteristics — are fully able to participate in the region's economic vitality, contribute to the region's readiness for the future, and connect to the region's assets and resources.
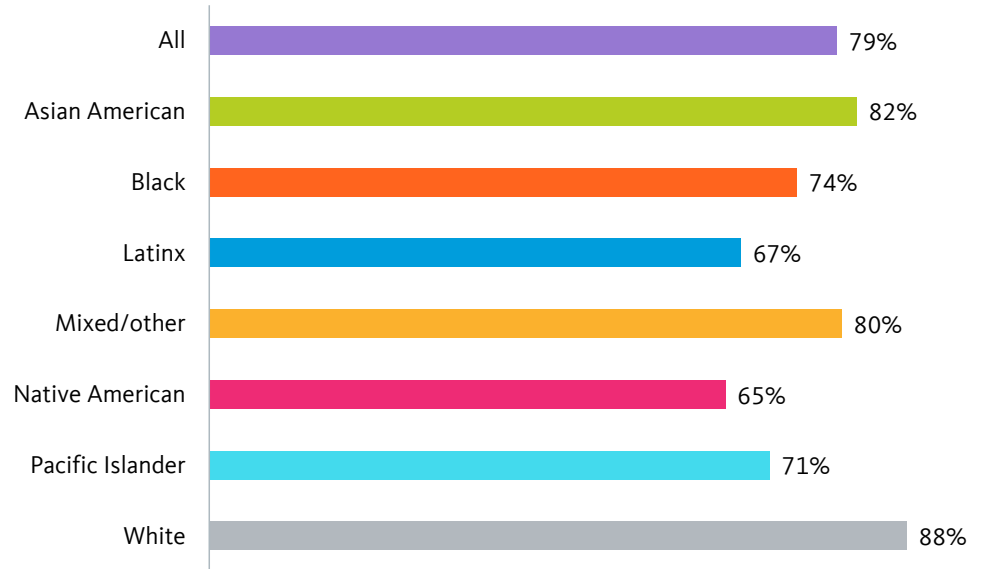
Economic Vitality

Economic Vitality
Do all workers earn a livable wage?

Nearly 90 percent of white workers earn at least $15/hour, compared to just two-thirds of Latinx and Native American workers.

There are high levels of economic insecurity in the Southern Border region, with just over one in five workers not earning at least $15/hour. Native American and Latinx workers are the least likely to earn at least $15/hour — with only two-thirds of both groups earning at least $15/hour. By comparison, 88 percent of white workers earn at least $15/hour. Given the disparate impacts of wage stagnation and suppression on people of color in the US due to shifts in the economy, policy choices at all levels of government, and occupational segregation, interventions toward economic equity must prioritize ensuring living wages for all.

Percent of Workers Earning at least $15/hour by Race/Ethnicity, 2020

Race/Ethnicity	Percent
All	79%
Asian American	82%
Black	74%
Latinx	67%
Mixed/other	80%
Native American	65%
Pacific Islander	71%
White	88%

Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Universe includes the civilian noninstitutionalized labor force ages 25 through 64 years. Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average.

Economic Vitality

Is the median hourly wage increasing for all workers?

The median wages of Latinx and Native American workers have declined since 1980 and remain below the regional average.

Since 1980, the median wage in the region has only slightly increased from $25 to $26/hour. However, there are differences across racial/ethnic groups. While the wages of Asian American and white workers increased by $10/hour and $7/hour, respectively, wages for Black workers only increased by $1/hour. Wages for Latinx and Native American workers have declined over this period and along with Black workers, have median hourly wages that are below the regional average. The resulting wage gap between Latinx and white workers is not only substantial but has doubled since 1980. In 1980, the median wage of Latinx workers was 77 percent that of white workers. By 2020, the median wage of Latinx workers decreased to just 58 percent that of white workers.

Median Hourly Wage by Race/Ethnicity, 1980 to 2020

Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA.
Universe includes civilian noninstitutional full-time wage and salary workers ages 25 through 64 years.
Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 - 2020 average. Values are in 2020 dollars.

Economic Vitality
Do racial economic gaps persist across educational levels?

Most workers of color across all levels of educational attainment earn less than their white counterparts.

Equity in higher educational attainment is essential, but insufficient, to achieve racial economic inclusion. White workers earn the most across nearly all levels of educational attainment. And despite higher wages at higher levels of educational attainment for all workers, wage gaps between most workers of color and their white counterparts are greatest for those with a bachelor's degree or higher. For example, Latinx workers with a bachelor's degree or higher earn 76 and 78 cents for every dollar that their Asian American and white counterparts earn. The returns to education also vary by race/ethnicity: Asian Americans with a bachelor's degree or higher earn $27/hour more than their counterparts with less than a high school diploma. For Latinx workers, there is only a $17/hour increase between workers with less than a high school diploma and those with a bachelor's degree or higher.

Median Wage by Race/Ethnicity and Educational Attainment, 2020

Legend:
- Asian American
- Black
- Latinx
- Mixed/other
- White

Less than a HS Diploma: $14, $14, $20
HS Diploma, no College: $16, $18, $18, $18, $22
Some College, no Degree: $20, $20, $20, $21, $25
AA Degree, no BA: $24, $21, $22, $21, $28
BA Degree or higher: $41, $34, $31, $36, $40

Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Universe includes civilian noninstitutional full-time wage and salary workers ages 25 through 64 years. Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average. Values are in 2020 dollars.
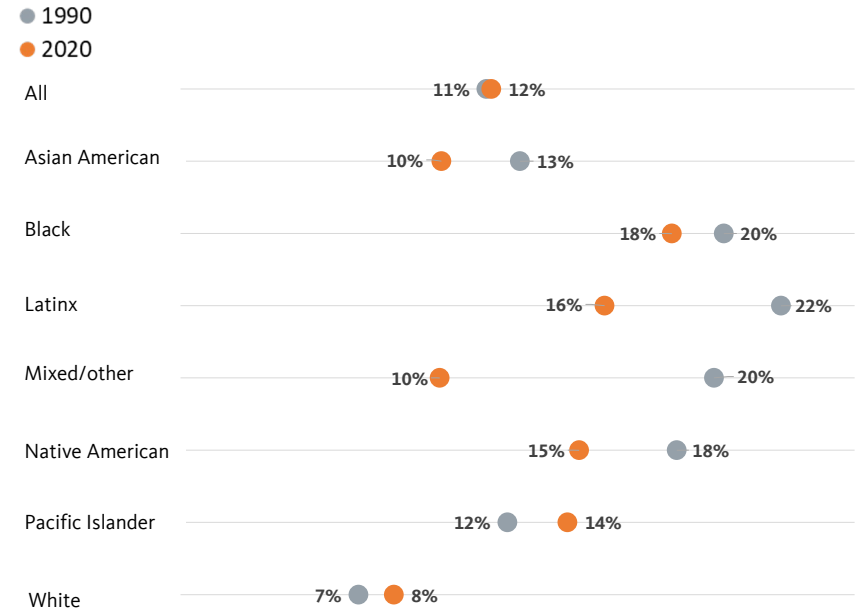
Economic Vitality
Is poverty low and decreasing?

Black, Latinx, and Native American poverty rates are roughly double that of white residents.

Economic insecurity is persistent in the Southern Border region with one in eight residents living in poverty, a slight decrease from one in nine residents in 1990. While poverty levels over the last three decades have decreased for residents of other or mixed race, Latinx, Native Americans, and Asian Americans, poverty levels for the region's residents of color remain higher than the regional average. Nearly one in five Black residents, one in six Latinx residents, and one in seven Native American residents are currently living in poverty, all rates roughly double that of white residents. For context, the Federal Poverty Level in 2020 was $13,171 for an individual working adult with no children (the equivalent of $6.33/hour working full time) and $26,246 for a family of four with two working adults and two children. MIT's Living Wage Calculator estimates a living wage for a single adult with no children is between $11.25 (in Imperial County) and $16.57 (in San Diego County), while for a family of four with two working adults and two children, the living wage is estimated to be between $17.52 (in Imperial County) and $21.19 (in San Diego County).

Poverty Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 1990 and 2020

● 1990
● 2020

	1990	2020
All	11%	12%
Asian American	13%	10%
Black	20%	18%
Latinx	22%	16%
Mixed/other	20%	10%
Native American	18%	15%
Pacific Islander	12%	14%
White	7%	8%

Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Universe includes all persons for whom poverty is determined. Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average.
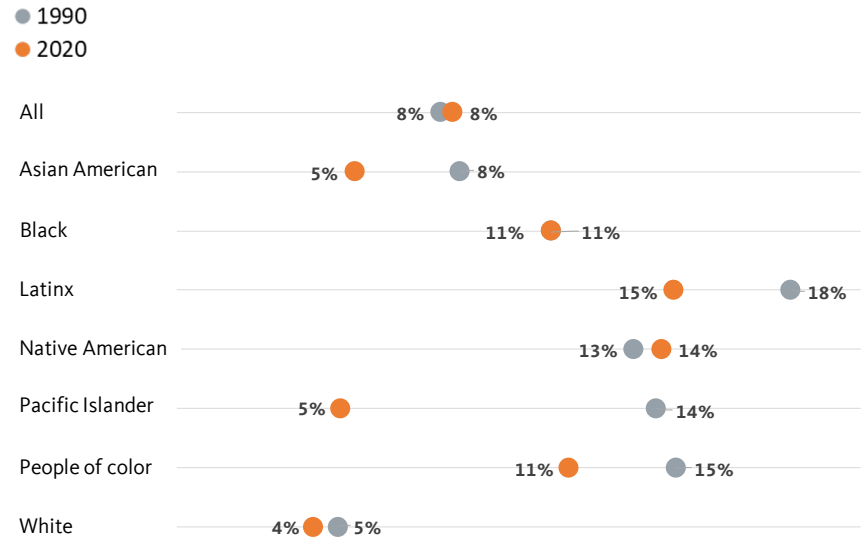
Economic Vitality

Is the share of workers who work full-time and have incomes below poverty low and decreasing?

Since 1990, the share of workers who earn poverty-level wages while working full-time has remained unchanged.

While high-wage workers have benefited from earnings growth in recent decades, those on the lower end of the wage distribution have experienced stagnant or declining wages. As a result, there is an increasing share of workers — particularly workers of color — who are working full time yet continue to earn poverty wages. The "working poor," defined as those working full-time with family incomes at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level has remained stable at eight percent since 1990. While one in 25 white workers experience working poverty in the Southern Border region compared to one in nine workers of color. Overall, workers of color have a working-poverty rate nearly three times that of their white counterparts, a pattern that has persisted since 1990. Advancing economic equity in the region will require raising the floor on low-wage work.

Working-Poverty Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 1990 and 2020

● 1990
● 2020

	1990	2020
All	8%	8%
Asian American	8%	5%
Black	11%	11%
Latinx	18%	15%
Native American	13%	14%
Pacific Islander	14%	5%
People of color	15%	11%
White	5%	4%

Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Universe includes the civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64 years not living in group quarters who worked at all during the year prior to the survey. Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average. Data for some racial/ethnic groups are excluded due to small sample sizes.
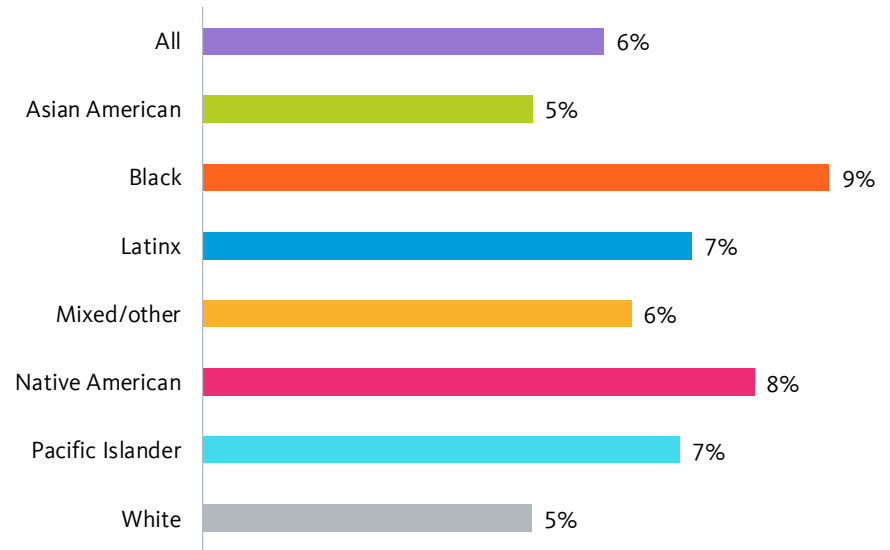
Economic Vitality
Can all residents access employment?

Black and Native American residents have the highest levels of unemployment in their region.

Over the past five years, the Southern Border region has had two drastically different experiences with unemployment at the county level. San Diego County experienced relatively low unemployment rates, followed by exceedingly high joblessness brought on by the global Covid-19 pandemic, reaching a peak of 16.1 percent in April 2020 before returning to pre-pandemic levels of between 3 and 4 percent in early 2023. Imperial County, on the other hand, has persistently high unemployment — in fact, the highest unemployment rate in the US, in part due to a heavy economic reliance on agricultural, retail, and fast-food work. Workers of color face the brunt of unemployment, particularly Black, Native American, Latinx, and Pacific Islander residents. In Imperial County alone, Latinx unemployment approaches 13 percent, double the regional average.

Unemployment Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2020

Race/Ethnicity	Rate
All	6%
Asian American	5%
Black	9%
Latinx	7%
Mixed/other	6%
Native American	8%
Pacific Islander	7%
White	5%

Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA.
Universe includes the civilian noninstitutionalized labor force ages 25 through 64 years.
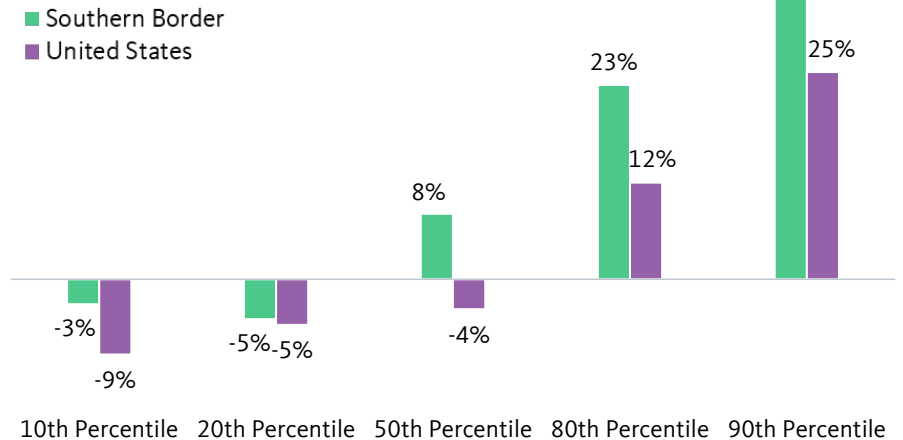Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average.

Economic Vitality
Are incomes increasing for all workers?

The growth in earnings over the last 40 years has outpaced the national average, especially for the top half of the region's workers.

Wage growth in the Southern Border mirrors similar trends to the nation overall but with more pronounced gains for higher wage earners. Workers at the lower half of the wage distribution have seen their inflation-adjusted incomes drop by between 3 and 5 percent since 1980 — declines less steep than those seen nationally for similarly situated workers. Southern Border workers at the 50th percentile of income earners experienced an 8 percent increase in income, whereas their national counterparts saw a 4 percent decrease. And workers in the 80th percentile have seen their wages increase at nearly twice the national rate, while those in the top ten percent of earners had income growth that was 50 percent greater than similar workers nationally. Ultimately there were wage declines for those at the lower end of the income distribution and larger gains for those at the top.

Real Earned Income Growth for Full-Time Wage and Salary Workers Ages 25–64 Years, 1980 to 2020

Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA.
Universe includes civilian noninstitutional full-time wage and salary workers ages 25 through 64.
Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average. Growth rates are adjusted for inflation.
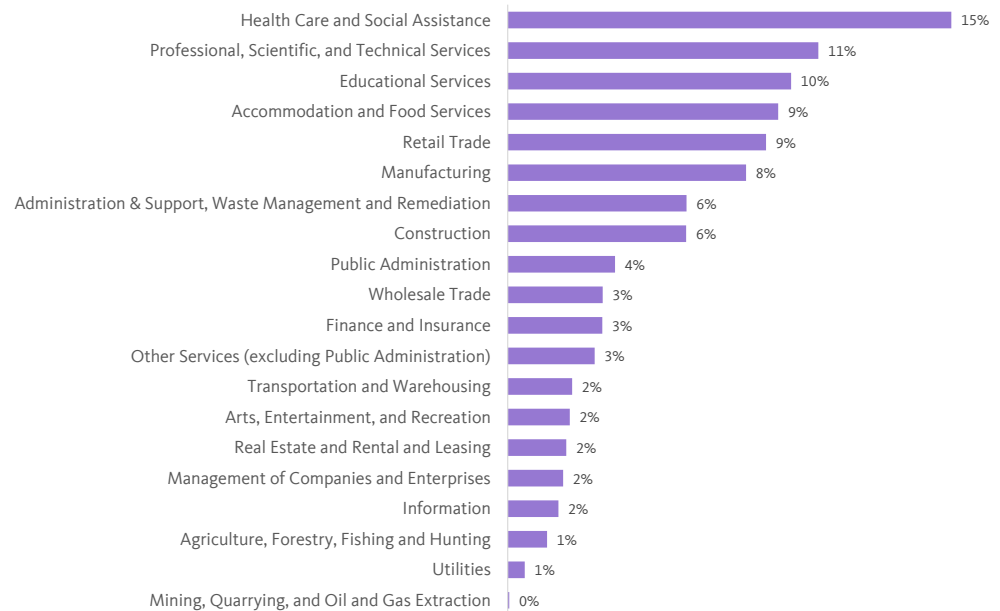
Economic Vitality
Which industries employ the most workers?

Four industries employ nearly half of the Southern Border's workers.

Many workers in the region are employed in industries considered "essential," facing extremely high pressures as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Health care and social assistance, an industry with the highest share of essential workers, is the most common industry in the Southern Border, comprising a little over a seventh of the region's workers. The region also has a highly concentrated economy, with four industries employing nearly 50 percent of workers in the Southern Border: health care and social assistance; professional, scientific, and technical services; education; and accommodation and food services. (At 11 percent, the share of Southern Border workers employed in professional, scientific, and technical services outpaced the California state average of 8 percent during the same period, largely due to the share of such workers in San Diego County.) Given the essential nature of much of the work throughout the region, an equitable recovery demands an expansion and strengthening of labor protections and benefits for workers in these industries.

Share of Workers by Industry, 2019

Industry	Share
Health Care and Social Assistance	15%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	11%
Educational Services	10%
Accommodation and Food Services	9%
Retail Trade	9%
Manufacturing	8%
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	6%
Construction	6%
Public Administration	4%
Wholesale Trade	3%
Finance and Insurance	3%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	3%
Transportation and Warehousing	2%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	2%
Information	2%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1%
Utilities	1%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0%

Source: US Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2020).
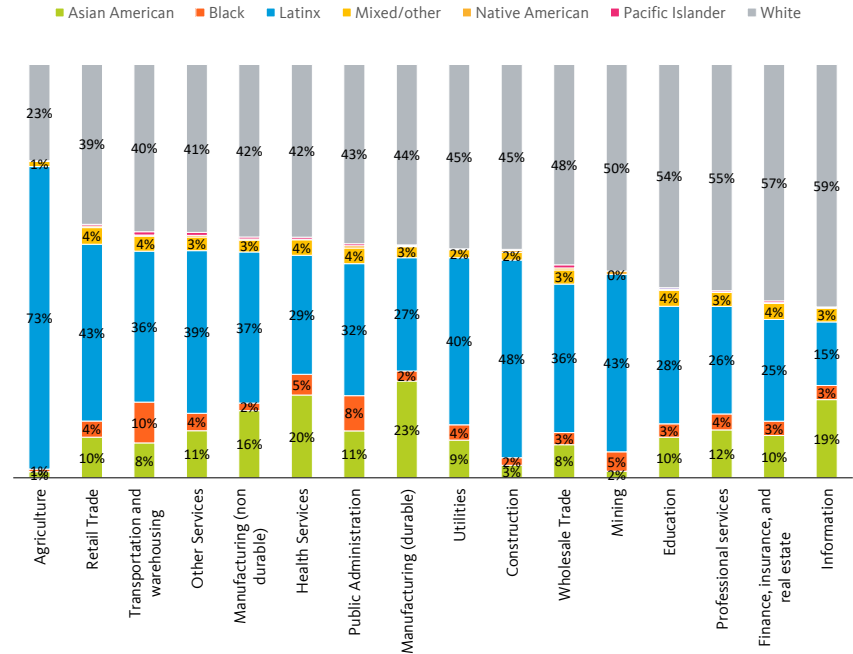
Which industries employ the most workers of color?

Latinx workers are overrepresented in agriculture, retail, and construction, but they are underrepresented in industries with higher pay.

Latinx people make up 34 percent of the Southern Border's workforce, yet they are represented at varying rates across the region's industries. Latinx workers are overrepresented in lower-paying industries such as agriculture (73 percent), construction (48 percent), and retail trade (43 percent) industries. Meanwhile, Latinx workers are underrepresented in industries with typically higher pay such as information, professional services, finance, insurance, and real estate, where white workers are overrepresented.

Industry by Race/Ethnicity, 2020

Legend: Asian American, Black, Latinx, Mixed/other, Native American, Pacific Islander, White

Industry	Asian American	Black	Latinx	Mixed/other	White
Agriculture	1%		73%	1%	23%
Retail Trade	10%	4%	43%	4%	39%
Transportation and warehousing	8%	10%	36%	4%	40%
Other Services	11%	4%	39%	3%	41%
Manufacturing (non durable)	16%	2%	37%	3%	42%
Health Services	20%	5%	29%	4%	42%
Public Administration	11%	8%	32%	4%	43%
Manufacturing (durable)	23%	2%	27%	3%	44%
Utilities	9%	4%	40%	2%	45%
Construction	3%	2%	48%	2%	45%
Wholesale Trade	8%	3%	36%	3%	48%
Mining	2%	5%	43%	0%	50%
Education	10%	3%	28%	4%	54%
Professional services	12%	4%	26%	3%	55%
Finance, insurance, and real estate	10%	3%	25%	4%	57%
Information	19%	3%	15%	3%	59%

Universe includes the civilian, noninstitutional labor force ages 25 through 64 years.
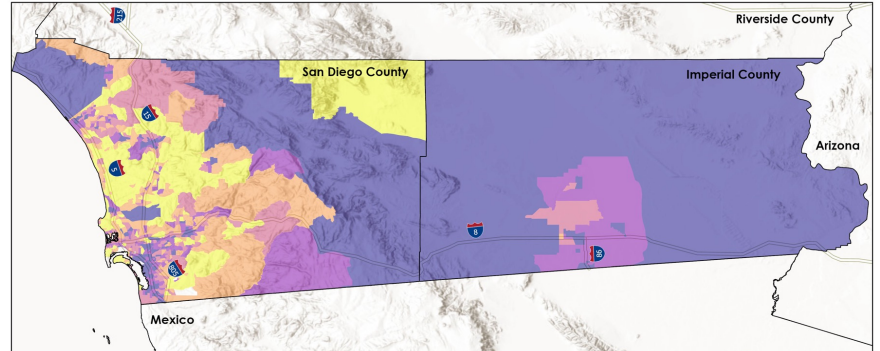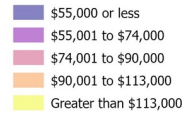Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average.

Economic Vitality
Do all workers across the region earn a living wage?

Aside from pockets of affluence within the San Diego metropolitan area, most of the region has relatively low median household incomes.

The spatial dynamics of average household income in the Southern Border reveal the highly varied economic realities across the region. Communities directly east of San Diego Bay — National City, Chula Vista west of the 805, and others — have some of the lowest median household incomes in San Diego County, and pockets of low median household incomes in cities such as Escondido and El Cajon are surrounded by more affluent communities. Meanwhile, much of San Diego (particularly the coastal and northern parts of the city), coastal communities from Del Mar up to Carlsbad, and eastern parts of Chula Vista have many of the highest median household incomes in the region, with some tracts having average household incomes exceeding $113,000 in 2020. In Imperial County, only one census tract — located in southwestern El Centro — has median household incomes above $113,000. The majority of the county's tracts outside of the El Centro metropolitan area have median household incomes of $55,000 or below, highlighting the vastly different financial realities for the two counties within the Southern Border region.

Median Household Income by Census Tract, 2020

- $55,000 or less
- $55,001 to $74,000
- $74,001 to $90,000
- $90,001 to $113,000
- Greater than $113,000

Source: National Equity Atlas Analysis of 2020 ACS Summary File Data. Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average.
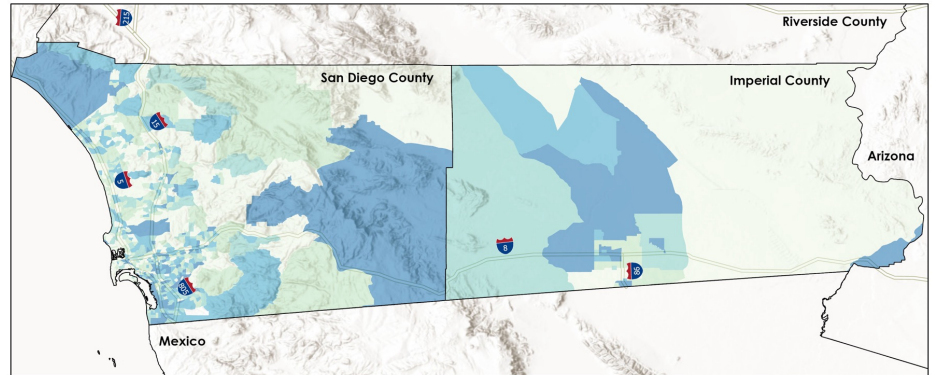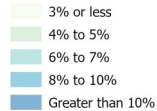
Economic Vitality
How does unemployment vary across the region?

People of color are twice as likely to live in high unemployment census tracts compared to their white counterparts.

Across the Southern Border, areas of high unemployment are common in many of the region's population hubs. Pockets of low unemployment are occasionally adjoined by communities with double-digit unemployment rates in and around San Diego, while unemployment is consistently high in population centers throughout the El Centro metropolitan area. A look at the racial/ethnic dynamics of unemployment and space suggests that this form of economic insecurity is disproportionately felt most by communities with higher shares of people of color: census tracts where the unemployment rate is greater than 10 percent are 73 percent people of color, while communities with 3 percent unemployment or below are 46 percent people of color. Furthermore, 20 percent of the region's residents of color are in census tracts with greater than 10 percent unemployment, compared to only 10 percent of the region's white residents.

Unemployment Rate by Census Tract, 2020

3% or less
4% to 5%
6% to 7%
8% to 10%
Greater than 10%

Source: National Equity Atlas Analysis of 2020 ACS Summary File Data. Note: Universe includes the civilian, noninstitutional labor force ages 25 through 64 years. Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average.

Economic Vitality
Further Data Exploration and Discussion Questions

- Where are the highest-earning jobs located? Who is being left out of those jobs, and what strategies can ensure equitable access?

- What is driving poverty in certain parts of the region?

- What investments are necessary for the Southern Border to address inequitable income growth?

- How should public investments be targeted to help disadvantaged communities access higher-paying jobs?

- How can public dollars compel local private organizations to improve community members' access to good jobs?

- How can local leaders better support the region's undocumented workers, particularly farmworkers and others who work in agriculture?

Equitable regions have economic vitality that supports residents to secure high-quality jobs and to produce new ideas, products, businesses, and economic activity so the well-being of the residents is sustainable.
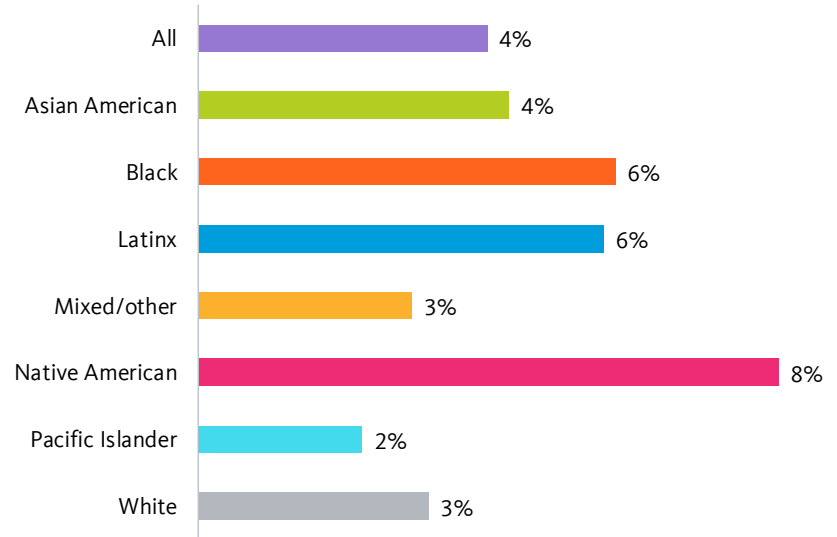
Connectedness

National Equity Atlas

PolicyLink

USCDornsife
Equity Research Institute

Connectedness
Do residents live in high-opportunity neighborhoods?

Neighborhood poverty is high for Native American, Black, and Latinx residents of the Southern Border.

High neighborhood poverty levels often have roots in systemic discrimination and policies that underinvest in or extract from communities of color. In the Southern Border, the racial/ethnic differences in neighborhood poverty suggest similar mechanisms at play. White residents are among the least likely to live in neighborhoods with high poverty levels at three percent. Meanwhile, Latinx and Black residents tend to live in neighborhoods with twice the rate of poverty as white residents. Native American residents face the highest levels of neighborhood poverty, with rates twice the regional average and nearly three times that of white residents.

Neighborhood Poverty Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2020

Race/Ethnicity	Rate
All	4%
Asian American	4%
Black	6%
Latinx	6%
Mixed/other	3%
Native American	8%
Pacific Islander	2%
White	3%

Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Summary File. Universe includes all people. Note: Data represent the percentage of the population living in high-poverty neighborhoods, defined as census tracts with a poverty rate of 30 percent or higher. Data represent a 2016 through 2020 average.
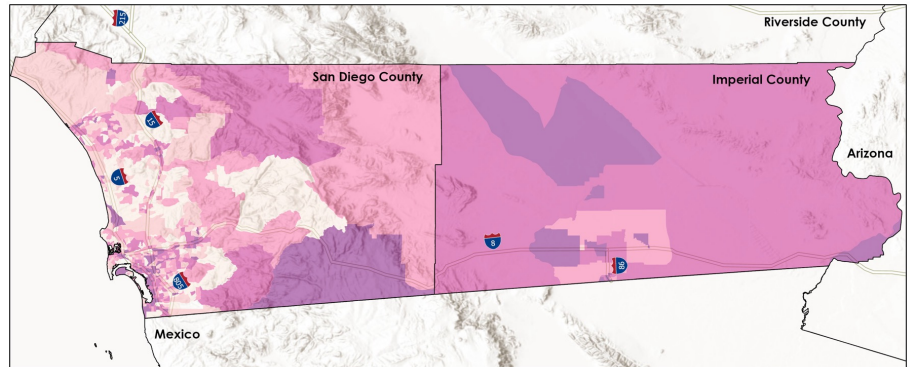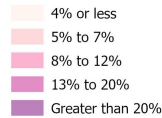
Connectedness
Which neighborhoods have the highest poverty rate?

A quarter of Latinx and Black households live in areas of high poverty.

High levels of poverty in the Southern Border is felt most by the region's Latinx residents, who make up 37 percent of the population but over half of those in the highest poverty census tracts. Census tracts where the poverty rate is greater than 20 percent are 74 percent people of color, while tracts with 4 percent poverty or below are only 47 percent people of color. For Latinx residents alone, the highest poverty communities are 55 percent Latinx, and the lowest poverty communities are only 23 percent Latinx. Furthermore, a quarter of the region's Black and Latinx residents are in census tracts with greater than 20 percent poverty, compared to only a tenth of the region's white residents. Interventions that account for both the structural and spatial dynamics of poverty will be essential for addressing high levels of poverty across the diversity of communities in the region.

Percent of the Population below the Poverty Line by Census Tract, 2020

- 4% or less
- 5% to 7%
- 8% to 12%
- 13% to 20%
- Greater than 20%

Source: National Equity Atlas Analysis of 2020 ACS Summary File Data. Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average.
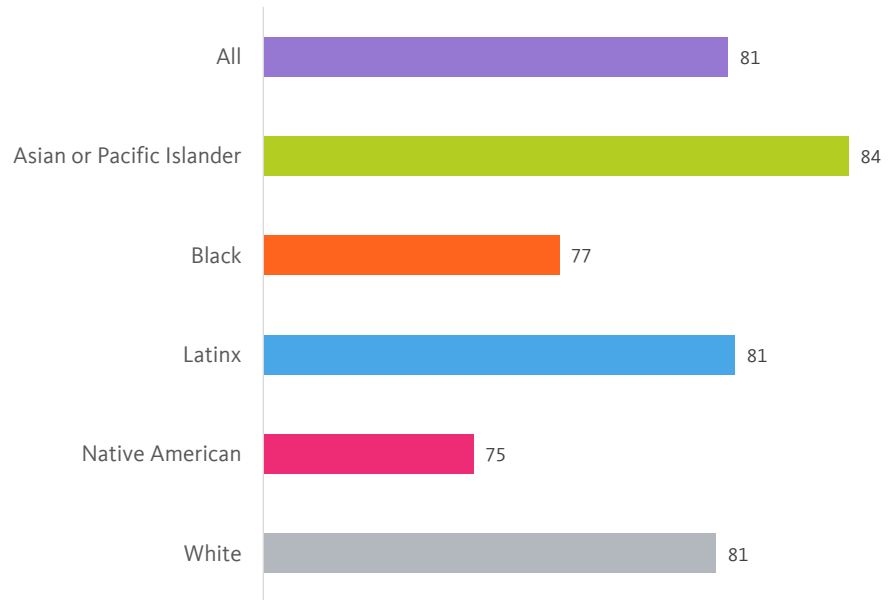
Connectedness

Are all residents able to live a full life?

There is a nine-year difference in life expectancy across racial/ethnic groups in the Southern Border.

How long a person is expected to live rests on a wide range of social, economic, and political factors that shape a person's environment, opportunities, shelter, food access, healthcare access, and more. Systemic discrimination and present-day manifestations of oppression and differential access to opportunity have resulted in racial/ethnic gaps in life expectancy. In the Southern Border region, these racial/ethnic disparities are laid bare, particularly for Black and Native American residents, whose life expectancies are respectively four and seven years shorter than both white residents and the regional average. (The Native American-white life expectancy gap is greater than the statewide equivalent, where there's only a four-year gap between Native American and white life expectancies.) Asian American or Pacific Islander residents have the region's highest life expectancy at 84 years, illustrating the range of differences across racial/ethnic groups.

Life Expectancy (Years) by Race/Ethnicity, 2020

Race/Ethnicity	Years
All	81
Asian or Pacific Islander	84
Black	77
Latinx	81
Native American	75
White	81

Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 2016 through 2020 CDC WONDER from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average.
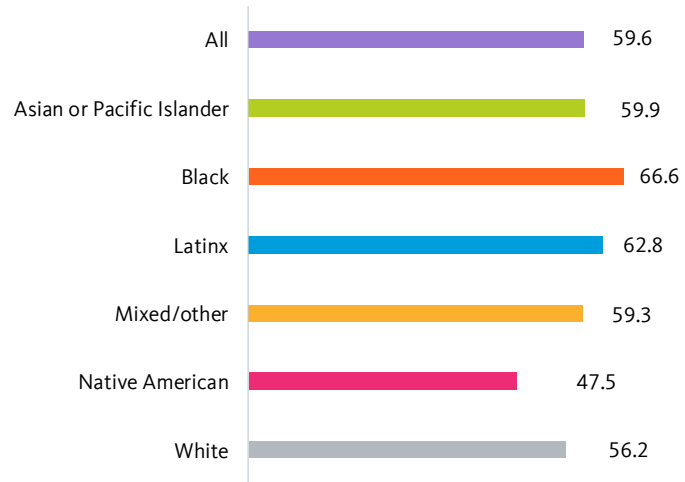
Connectedness
Do all residents have access to clean air?

Air pollution exposure in the Southern Border is higher than nearly 60 percent of the census tracts in the United States overall.

Regionally, the typical resident lives in a census tract that is exposed to a level of air pollution higher than nearly 60 percent of US census tracts. However, when broken down by race and ethnicity, disparate experiences become apparent. The average Black resident in the Southern Border experiences the worst air pollution exposure of the region's racial/ethnic groups, living in neighborhoods with pollution levels higher than two-thirds of census tracts nationwide. Latinx residents also experience air pollution at levels higher than the regional average, while white and Native American residents live in areas with less air pollution than the average regional resident.

Air Pollution Exposure Index by Race/Ethnicity, 2020 (air pollution data from 2018)

Race/Ethnicity	Index
All	59.6
Asian or Pacific Islander	59.9
Black	66.6
Latinx	62.8
Mixed/other	59.3
Native American	47.5
White	56.2

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2018 National-Scale Air Toxics Assessment (NATA); U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census Summary File 3, 2010 and 2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Summary File.
Note: Index of exposure to air toxics for cancer and noncancer risk (combined and separately). Values range from 1 (lowest risk) to 100 (highest risk) on a national scale based on the distribution across census tracts nationwide.
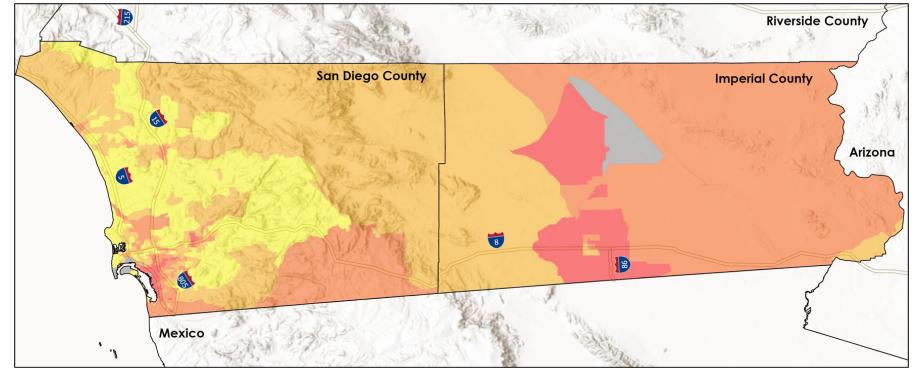
Connectedness

Do all residents live in a clean pollution-free environment?

People of color disproportionately live in environmentally "disadvantaged communities."

The CalEnviroScreen (CES) — a tool developed by the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) and its Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) — maps the impacts of multiple types of pollution and environmental health conditions. The CES designates any census tract scoring in the top 25th percentile of the state as a disadvantaged community; in the Southern Border, such communities are overwhelmingly communities of color. While people of color make up 57 percent of the population, disadvantaged communities are composed of 89 percent people of color. Meanwhile, communities not designated as disadvantaged are only 55 percent people of color. While Latinx residents make up 37 percent of the region's residents, they comprise 75 percent of those who live in disadvantaged communities. White residents make up only 11 percent of residents living in disadvantaged communities despite comprising 43 percent of the region's residents.

CalEnviroScreen (CES) Score Percentile by Census Tract, 2020

- 1st to 25th percentile
- 26th to 50th percentile
- 51st to 75th percentile
- 76th to 100th percentile
- Missing Data

Source: CalEnviroScreen 4.0, California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, California Environmental Protection Agency. Note: CalEnviroScreen percentiles shown are based on a statewide ranking of census tracts. The top 25 percent of tracts statewide are among those identified as disadvantaged communities under Senate Bill 535.

Connectedness
Further Data Exploration and Discussion Questions

- What is driving the gap in life expectancy in the region? How are the contributing factors different between San Diego County and Imperial County?

- What are the primary sources of pollution in the Southern Border?

- Who is experiencing the greatest burden of pollution? Who would be burdened by the polluting activity of the investments being proposed?

- How can investments advance a just transition by supporting environmental rehabilitation and new clean activity in the region?

- How can we involve the whole community in addressing these shared problems?

Equitable regions are places of connection, where residents can access the essential ingredients to live healthy and productive lives.

Readiness

National Equity Atlas
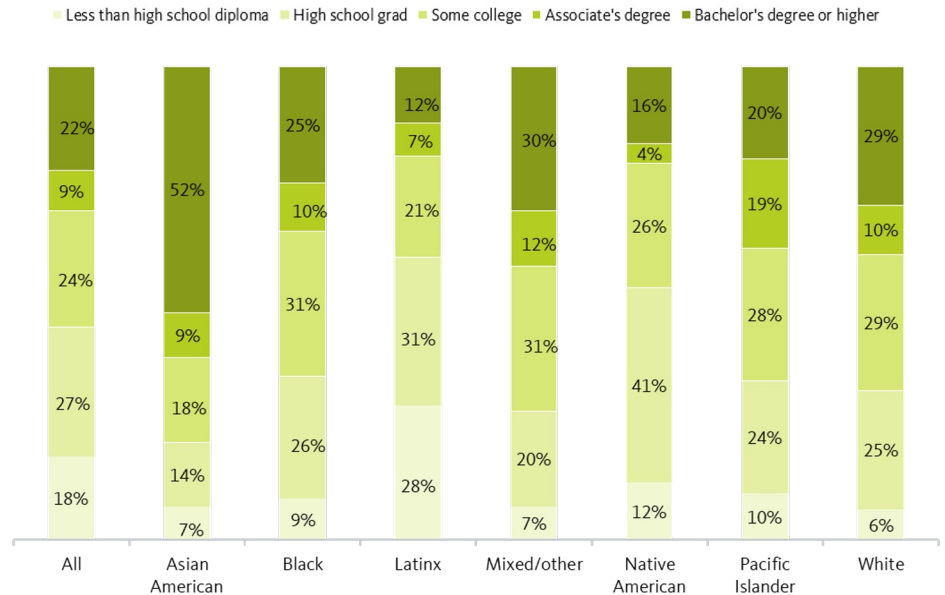
PolicyLink

USCDornsife
Equity Research Institute

Readiness

How prepared are the region's residents for jobs of the future?

Nearly two in five adults in the Southern Border have a bachelor's degree or higher.

Higher levels of education attainment are often associated with increased access to economic security through better-paying jobs. Overall, nearly 40 percent of adults in the Southern Border have a bachelor's degree or higher, but almost 70 percent have had some time in college. Roughly 57 percent of Asian American adults have a bachelor's degree or higher, making them the most likely to have a four-year college degree, followed by white residents at 51 percent and those of mixed or another race at 46 percent. Latinx and Native American adults are least likely to have a four-year degree, at just 18 and 20 percent, respectively. To promote an inclusive and equitable economy, college education should be made more accessible for all, and the region should expand the range of workforce development strategies alongside educational attainment that support residents in securing stable, life-sustaining employment.

Educational Attainment by Race/Ethnicity, 2020

Legend: Less than high school diploma · High school grad · Some college · Associate's degree · Bachelor's degree or higher

Category	Less than high school diploma	High school grad	Some college	Associate's degree	Bachelor's degree or higher
All	18%	27%	24%	9%	22%
Asian American	7%	14%	18%	9%	52%
Black	9%	26%	31%	10%	25%
Latinx	28%	31%	31%	7%	12%
Mixed/other	7%	20%	31%	12%	30%
Native American	12%	41%	26%	4%	16%
Pacific Islander	10%	24%	28%	19%	20%
White	6%	25%	29%	10%	29%

Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 2020 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Universe includes the working-age population ages 25-64. Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average.
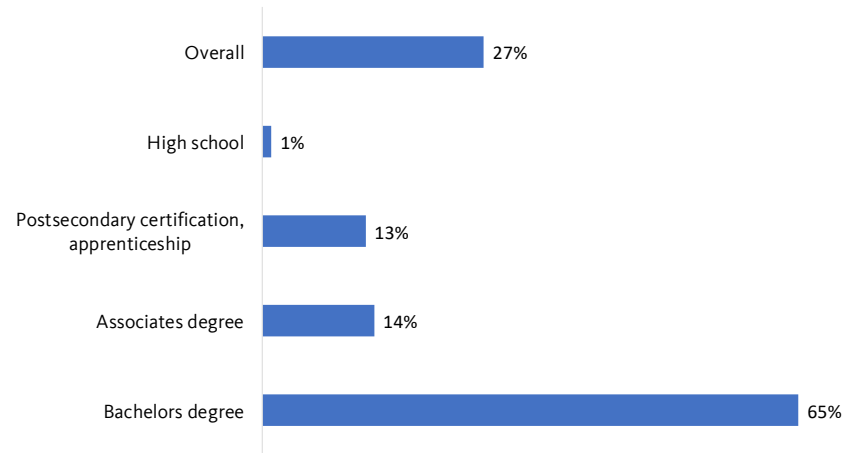
Readiness
How prepared are the region's residents for jobs of the future?

Around one in four workers in the region are employed in "good jobs."

There is a growing need for "good jobs" in the region: stable jobs that provide family-sustaining wages and are automation-resilient. Unfortunately, for workers in the San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos metropolitan area, only one in four workers are in jobs that meet that definition. And the likelihood of finding a good job is closely associated with the educational requirements of the role. Currently, 1 percent of workers in positions requiring only a high school diploma or less are in a good job, compared to 13 percent of workers in jobs that require postsecondary certification, license, or apprenticeship and 14 percent of workers in jobs requiring an associate's degree. Meanwhile, 65 percent of workers in jobs that require a bachelor's degree or higher are in good jobs. However, only 18 percent of Latinx adults, 20 percent of Native American adults, and 27 percent of both Pacific Islander and Black adults have a bachelor's degree in the region, suggesting that these groups face immense barriers to finding good jobs. For the Southern Border to build an economically resilient and equitable ecosystem for all, workers should have greater access to good jobs across all educational levels.

Share of Workers in Good Jobs, Overall and by Educational Requirements, San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos MSA, 2020

Category	Share
Overall	27%
High school	1%
Postsecondary certification, apprenticeship	13%
Associates degree	14%
Bachelors degree	65%

Source: Employment from 2020 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA, and occupational characteristics from Lightcast job posting data and 2020 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA.
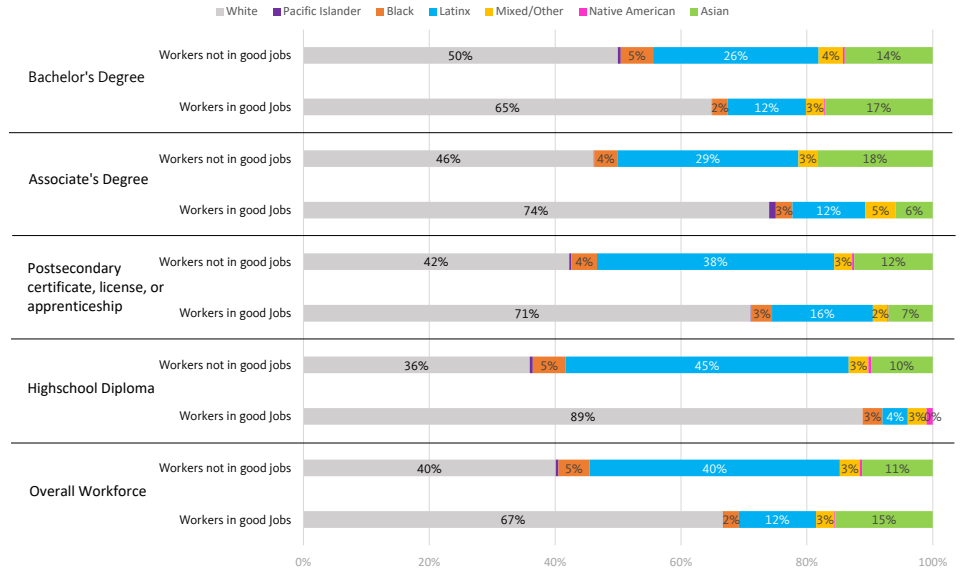
Readiness

How prepared are the region's residents for jobs of the future?

Workers of color are currently underrepresented in good jobs.

In the San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos metropolitan area, workers of color are underrepresented in good jobs across all levels of educational requirements. Despite making up [more than half](#) of the metropolitan area's workforce, workers of color account for only a third of the workers in good jobs. The racial disparities in good jobs are starkest for jobs that do not require a college degree: while white workers make up only 46 percent of the metropolitan area's workforce and 67 percent of the working population with good jobs overall, they comprise 71 percent of those in good jobs that require non-degree post-secondary training and 89 percent of the workers in the few good jobs that only require a high school education. All told, the Southern Border's racial disparities in educational attainment, the San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos metropolitan area's lack of good jobs with educational requirements less than a bachelor's degree, and the overrepresentation of white workers in those good jobs underscore the need for a layered approach to eliminate regional barriers to family-sustaining jobs for people of color.

Distribution of Workers by Race/Ethnicity, Job Quality, and Educational Requirements, San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos MSA, 2020

Legend: White, Pacific Islander, Black, Latinx, Mixed/Other, Native American, Asian

Bachelor's Degree
- Workers not in good jobs: 50%, 5%, 26%, 4%, 14%
- Workers in good Jobs: 65%, 2%, 12%, 3%, 17%

Associate's Degree
- Workers not in good jobs: 46%, 4%, 29%, 3%, 18%
- Workers in good Jobs: 74%, 3%, 12%, 5%, 6%

Postsecondary certificate, license, or apprenticeship
- Workers not in good jobs: 42%, 4%, 38%, 3%, 12%
- Workers in good Jobs: 71%, 3%, 16%, 2%, 7%

Highschool Diploma
- Workers not in good jobs: 36%, 5%, 45%, 3%, 10%
- Workers in good Jobs: 89%, 3%, 4%, 3%, 0%

Overall Workforce
- Workers not in good jobs: 40%, 5%, 40%, 3%, 11%
- Workers in good Jobs: 67%, 2%, 12%, 3%, 15%

Sources: Employment and worker demographics from 2020 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA, and occupational characteristics from Lightcast job posting data and 2020 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA.

Readiness

How prepared are the region's residents for jobs of the future?

Projected job growth for Latinx and Black workers is heavily concentrated in lower-paying jobs.

As the Southern Border region has increased in racial diversity over the last few decades, it follows that the workforce will grow in diversity as well. However, of the San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos metropolitan area's new jobs that are expected through the end of the decade, the ones projected to employ the most workers of color are not good jobs. White and Asian American workers account for large shares of projected job growth in "good jobs" like software developers and physical scientists. In fact, only one of the top 10 occupations projected to add the greatest number of workers of color — software developers — could be classified as a good job. Meanwhile, Latinx and Black workers make up disproportionately high shares of projected jobs in personal care, truck driving, cleaning and custodial work, and manual labor—sectors with low pay, long-term job insecurity, and/or poor working conditions. Given the Southern Border's Latinx population growth over the past few decades, high-impact strategies that dismantle occupational segregation must be enacted to ensure that workers of color have equitable access to good jobs.

Occupations Projected to Add the Most Workers of Color, by Race/Ethnicity, San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos MSA, 2020- 2030

Legend:
- White
- Black
- Latinx
- Asian American
- Pacific Islander
- Native American
- Mixed/Other

Occupations (top to bottom):
- Personal Care Aides
- Software Developers*
- Janitors and Building Cleaners
- Driver/Sales Workers and Truck Drivers
- Nursing Assistants
- Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand
- Construction Laborers
- Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses
- Medical Assistants
- Taxi Drivers
- Couriers and Messengers
- Accountants and Auditors
- Computer Support Specialists
- Financial Managers*
- Preschool and Kindergarten Teachers
- Physical Scientists, All Other*
- Security Guards and Gaming Surveillance Officers
- Teaching Assistants
- Fast Food And Counter Workers
- Management Analysts*
- Constructions Managers*
- Dental Assistants
- Other Engineers*
- Manicurists and Pedicurists
- Physical Therapists*
- Other life scientists*
- Shuttle Drivers and Chauffeurs
- Lawyers, and judges, magistrates, and other judicial workers*
- Miscellaneous Production Workers, Including Equipment Operators and Tenders
- Other Teachers And Instructors

Sources: Lightcast modeling for occupational growth and 2020 5-year ACS microdata from IPUMS for demographic characteristics of occupations. Note: Occupations marked with asterisks are classified as good jobs.

Readiness
Further Data Exploration and Discussion Questions

- Is education attainment connected to employment in good jobs?

- What economic investments can be targeted to sub-regions based on the educational attainment of different communities?

- What are strategies for making all jobs good jobs?

- What are strategies to ensure that the jobs connected to your proposed investments become good jobs and to address barriers to accessing those jobs?

- What strategies can prepare workers for the good jobs of the future?

- How ready is this region to transition to future environmentally sustainable industries?

Equitable regions are ready for the future, with a skilled, ready workforce and a healthy population.

Data and Methods

Data and Methods
Indicators

Demographics

Economic Vitality

Data and Methods
Indicators *(continued)*

Economic Vitality *(continued)*

Connectedness

Data and Methods
Indicators *(continued)*

Readiness

Data and Methods
Data Source Summary and Regional Geography

Unless otherwise noted, all the data and analyses presented in this profile are the product of PolicyLink and the USC Equity Research Institute (ERI), and they reflect the San Diego-Carlsbad-San Marcos , California, metropolitan statistical area. The specific data sources are listed in the table displayed on the right-hand side of this page.

While much of the data and analysis presented in this profile are fairly intuitive, in the following pages we describe some of the estimation techniques and adjustments made in creating the underlying database and provide more detail on the terms and methodology used. Finally, the reader should bear in mind that while only a single county is profiled here, many of the analytical choices in generating the underlying data and analyses were made with the intent to replicate the analyses in other counties and regions and to ensure that they could be updated over time. Thus, while more regionally specific data may be available for some indicators, the data in this profile is drawn from our regional equity indicators database, which provides data points that are comparable and replicable over time.

Source	Dataset
Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS)	1980 5% State Sample
	1990 5% Sample
	2000 5% Sample
	2020 American Community Survey, 5-year microdata sample
U.S. Census Bureau	1980 Summary Tape File 1 (STF1)
	1980 Summary Tape File 2 (STF2)
	1980 Summary Tape File 3 (STF3)
	1990 Summary Tape File 2A (STF2A)
	1990 Modified Age/Race, Sex and Hispanic Origin File (MARS)
	1990 Summary Tape File 4 (STF4)
	2000 Summary File 1 (SF1)
	2000 Summary File 3 (SF3)
	2010 Summary File 1 (SF1)
	2010 TIGER/Line Shapefiles, 2010 Census Block Groups
	2010 TIGER/Line Shapefiles, 2010 Census Tracts
	2010 TIGER/Line Shapefiles, 2010 Counties
	OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics
Geolytics	1980 Long Form in 2010 Boundaries
	1990 Long Form in 2010 Boundaries
	2000 Long Form in 2010 Boundaries
	2020 Long Form in 2010 Boundaries
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	WONDER Life Expectancy
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	National-Scale Air Toxics Assessment (NATA)
California Office of Environmental Health	CalEnviroScreen 4.0

Data and Methods
Selected Terms and General Notes

Broad Racial/Ethnic Origin

Unless otherwise noted, in every analysis presented, all categorization of people by race/ethnicity and nativity is based on individual responses to various census surveys. All people included in our analysis were first assigned to one of several mutually exclusive racial/ethnic categories, depending on their response to two separate questions on race and Hispanic origin as follows:

- "White" and "non-Hispanic White" are used to refer to all people who identify as white alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.

- "Black" and "African American" are used to refer to all people who identify as Black or African American alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.

- "Latinx" refers to all people who identify as being of Hispanic origin, regardless of racial identification.

- Asian American refers to all people who identify as Asian American alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.

- "Pacific Islander" or "Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander" refer to all people who identify as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.

- "Asian American and Pacific Islander," "Asian or Pacific Islander," and "API" are used to refer to all people who identify as Asian American or Pacific Islander alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.

- "Native American" and "Native American and Alaska Native" are used to refer to all people who identify as Native American or Alaskan Native alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.

- "Mixed/other" and "Other or mixed race" are used to refer to all people who identify with a single racial category not included above, or those who identify with multiple racial categories, and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.

- "People of color" or "POC" is used to refer to all people who do not identify as non-Hispanic white.

Nativity

The term "US-born" refers to all people who identify as being born in the United States (including US territories and outlying areas), or those born abroad to at least one US-citizen parent. The term "immigrant" refers to all people who identify as being born abroad, outside of the United States, to non–US-citizen parents.

Data and Methods
Selected Terms and General Notes *(continued)*

Other Selected Terms

Below we provide definitions and clarification for some of the terms used in the profile.

The term "region" refers to metropolitan areas or other large urban areas (e.g., large cities and counties). The terms "metropolitan area," "metro area," and "metro" are used interchangeably to refer to the geographic areas defined as Metropolitan Statistical Areas under the December 2003 definitions of the US Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

The term "neighborhood" is used at various points throughout the profile. In the introductory portion of the profile, this term is meant to be interpreted in the colloquial sense. However, in relation to any data analysis, it refers to census tracts.

The term "communities of color" generally refers to distinct groups defined by race/ethnicity among people of color.

The term "high school diploma" refers to both an actual high school diploma as well as a high school equivalency or a General Educational Development (GED) certificate.

The term "full-time workers" refers to all persons in the IPUMS microdata who reported working at least 45 or 50 weeks (depending on the year of the data) and who usually worked at least 35 hours per week during the year prior to the survey. A change in the "weeks worked" question in the 2008 American Community Survey (ACS), as compared with prior years of the ACS and the long form of the decennial census, caused a dramatic rise in the share of respondents indicating that they worked at least 50 weeks during the year prior to the survey. To make our data on full-time workers more comparable over time, we applied a slightly different definition in 2008 and later than in earlier years: in 2008 and later, the "weeks worked" cutoff is at least 50 weeks while in 2007 and earlier it is 45 weeks. The 45-week cutoff was found to produce a national trend in the incidence of full-time work over the 2005-2010 period that was most consistent with that found using data from the March Supplement of the Current Population Survey, which did not experience a change to the relevant survey questions. For more information, visit https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/2012/demo/Gottschalck_2012FCSM_VII-B.pdf.

Data and Methods
Selected Terms and General Notes *(continued)*

General Notes on Analyses

Below, we provide some general notes about the analysis conducted.

In relation to monetary measures (e.g., income, earnings, and wages) the term "real" indicates the data has been adjusted for inflation. All inflation adjustments are based on the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U) from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Data and Methods
Summary Measures from IPUMS Microdata

Although a variety of data sources were used, much of our analysis is based on a unique dataset created using microdata samples (i.e., "individual-level" data) from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) for four points in time: 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2016-2020 pooled together. The 1980 through 2000 files are based on the decennial census, which each covering about 5 percent of the US population. The 2016-2020 files are from the ACS, and they cover only about 1 percent of the US population each. The five-year pooled ACS file was used to improve statistical reliability and achieve a sample size that is comparable to that available in previous years.

Compared with the more commonly used census "summary files," which include a limited set of summary tabulations of population and housing characteristics, the use of the microdata samples allows for the flexibility to create more illuminating metrics of equity and inclusion. It also provides a more nuanced view of groups defined by age, race/ethnicity, and nativity for various geographies in the United States.

The IPUMS microdata allows for the tabulation of detailed population characteristics, but because such tabulations are based on samples, they are subject to a margin of error and should be regarded as estimates — particularly in smaller regions and for smaller demographic subgroups. In an effort to avoid reporting highly unreliable estimates, we do not report any estimates that are based on a universe of fewer than 100 individual survey respondents.

A key limitation of the IPUMS microdata is geographic detail. Each year of the data has a particular lowest level of geography associated with the individuals included, known as the Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA) for years 1990 and later, or the County Group in 1980. PUMAs are generally drawn to contain a population of about 100,000. They also vary greatly in geographic size — from being fairly small in densely populated urban areas to very large in rural areas — often with one or more counties contained in a single PUMA.

While the geography of the IPUMS microdata generally poses a challenge for the creation of regional summary measures, this was not the case in this instance, as the geography of the region could be assembled perfectly by combining entire 1980 County Groups and 1990, 2000, and 2010 PUMAs.

Data and Methods
Good Jobs Analysis

The analysis presented here draws from two key data sources: the 2018 five-year American Community Survey (ACS) microdata from IPUMS USA and a proprietary occupation-level dataset from Lightcast (expressed at the six-digit Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) level). While detailed sources and notes are included beneath each figure throughout the report, here we provide additional information on these two key data sources and methods used for the analysis of "good jobs," automation risk, and income/GDP gains with racial equity in the workforce.

Unless otherwise noted, the ACS microdata is the source of all tabulations of demographic and workforce equity metrics by race/ethnicity and nativity included in this report. In addition, unless otherwise noted, racial/ethnic groups are defined such that all groups are non-Latinx (excluding those who identify as Hispanic or Latinx), leaving all persons identifying as Hispanic or Latinx in the "Latinx" category. The term "US-born" refers to all people who identify as being born in the United States (including US territories and outlying areas), or those born abroad to at least one US-citizen parent. The term "immigrant" refers to all people who identify as being born abroad, outside of the United States, to non–US-citizen parents.

The ACS microdata was aggregated to the detailed occupation level and merged with data from Lightcast to conduct the "good jobs" and "automation risk" analyses that appear in the report.

The proprietary data from Lightcast is based on job postings by collecting data from close to 50,000 online job boards, newspapers, and employer sites daily. Lightcast then de-duplicates postings for the same job, whether it is posted multiple times on the same site or across multiple sites.

Finally, Lightcast applies detailed text analytics to code the specific jobs, skills, and credentials requested by employers.

The equity gap for good jobs was calculated using occupation characteristics from the ACS (employment and average salary), Lightcast data models (typical education requirements advertised on job postings and metropolitan-area occupational employment projections), and the automation risk associated with each occupation from the Frey and Osborne's 2013 paper, *The Future of Employment: How Susceptible Are Jobs to Computerisation*.

Data and Methods
Additional Data Resources

The National Equity Atlas: The National Equity Atlas is the most detailed report card on racial and economic equity in the United States. It equips advocates and policymakers with actionable data and strategies to advance racial equity and shared prosperity.

California Immigrant Data Portal: The California Immigrant Data Portal is a resource and progress tracker for immigrants and those serving immigrant communities across the state. It presents data and case studies that can be used to better understand and promote the well-being of immigrants, their families, and their communities.

Statewide Vulnerability & Recovery Index: This index — developed by the California Advancement Project — uses zip code-level data to identify California communities most in need of immediate and long-term pandemic and economic relief. Policymakers and community stakeholders can use it to determine where to target interventions.

CalEnviroScreen: This mapping tool helps identify California communities that are most affected by multiple sources of pollution and where people are often especially vulnerable to pollution's effects.

California Opportunity Area Maps: These maps — created by the Othering & Belonging Institute for the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTCAC) and the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) — measure and visualize place-based characteristics linked to critical life outcomes, such as educational attainment, earnings from employment, and economic mobility. Opportunity maps can be used to inform how to target investments and policies in a way that is conscious of the independent and interrelated effects that research has shown that place — the conditions in communities where people live — has on economic, educational, and health outcomes.

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PolicyLink

PolicyLink is a national research and action institute advancing racial and economic equity by Lifting Up What Works®.

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USCDornsife
Equity Research Institute

The USC Dornsife Equity Research Institute (formerly known as USC PERE, the Program for Environmental and Regional Equity) seeks to use data and analysis to contribute to a more powerful, well-resourced, intersectional, and intersectoral movement for equity.

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