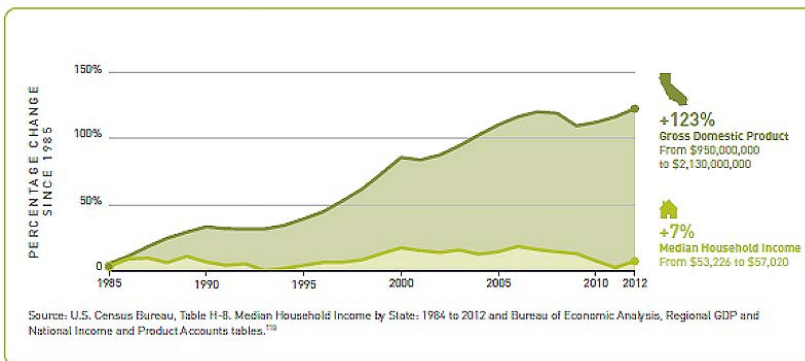


A Portrait of California 2014–2015: California Human Development Report

Mapping Inequality, Tracking Change, Engaging Policy Discussion

Over the past three decades, California's gross domestic product has increased by 123 percent. In the same period, the income of the typical California household has only gone up by 7 percent (see figure).



But GDP and other “money” metrics don’t tell the whole story in California.

While GDP and other economic metrics are commonly accepted as standards for overall progress, they fall short as gauges of societal well-being—how *people* are doing. There are many other factors to consider. Take life expectancy, for example. Here's a fact that is easily missed with a traditional economic approach:

An Asian American baby born today in California is expected to outlive an African American baby born the same day by more than 11 years.

A Portrait of California, 2014–2015 is the benchmark that brings together original data and innovative analysis to create the [Human Development Index](#), a simple 10-point scale that measures well-being in California's 265 census-defined neighborhoods and breaks down the numbers by county, major city, and racial and ethnic group. It also looks at how well-being has changed in these areas since the Great Recession.

Today, many Californians are feeling the national disconnect between what economic indicators tell us and the everyday experiences of diminishing opportunities, flat wages, and surging inequality. However, it isn't all bleak for 2014–2015. There are many bright spots, particularly in health and education. *A Portrait of California* provides the whole picture in three dimensions: health, education, and income.

Authors Kristen Lewis and Sarah Burd-Sharps update the inaugural [2011 report](#), which has become a go-to resource for policymakers, nonprofit organizations, scholars, philanthropic foundations, and residents. Here are just a few examples of who is using the report and how: **California Office of Health Equity**—report on health and mental health disparities; **Governor’s Office of Planning and Research**—reports for Governor Brown; **The California Endowment**—“Health Happens Here” campaign; **UC Berkeley, San Diego, and Davis**—*Governing California* textbook; **Los Angeles World Airports**—to improve service at California's airports; **The James Irvine Foundation**—community workshops; **Marin Community Foundation**—county-level report *A Portrait of Marin*; and **Sonoma County Department of Health Services**—county-level report *A Portrait of Sonoma County*.

Measure of America is a nonpartisan project of the Social Science Research Council that provides easy-to-use yet methodologically sound tools to help understand the distribution of well-being and opportunity in America and to stimulate fact-based dialogue about critical issues.