

A PORTRAIT OF **LOS ANGELES COUNTY 2026**

TOWARD AN EQUITABLE FUTURE FOR ALL ANGELENOS

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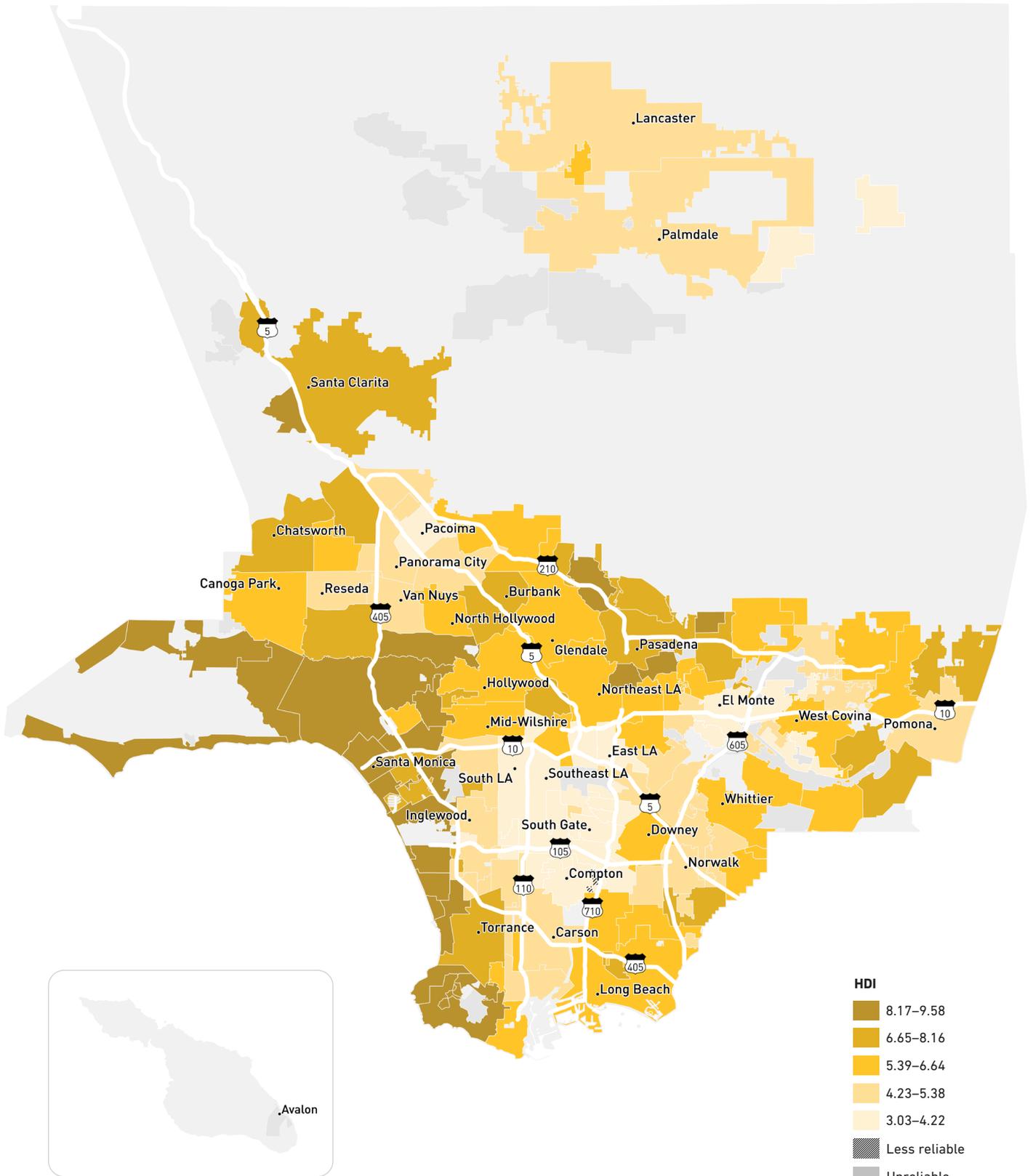
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THE MEASURE OF AMERICA SERIES

A PORTRAIT OF
LOS ANGELES
COUNTY 2026

Toward an Equitable Future for All Angelenos

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As always, we are beyond grateful to our first funder and most enthusiastic champion, Ed Cain; he is truly the godfather of the Measure of America series.

Lastly, the lion's share of thanks goes to the amazing Measure of America team. Preparing these reports is invariably an all-hands-on-deck affair, and all of us wore many hats, from fundraising and stakeholder engagement to project management to research and writing right through to the final map-making and design processes. I stand in awe of the commitment, talent, flexibility, kindness, good cheer, smarts, creativity, professionalism, and work ethic of this small-but-mighty group. Alex, Kate, and Tara: thank you!

thank you!

Kristen

Foreword

It is my pleasure to present the 2026 *Portrait of Los Angeles*, a comprehensive examination of the well-being and equity of our diverse County. This report offers critical insight into the conditions that shape the lives of Los Angeles residents, exploring dimensions such as health, education, living standards, environmental justice, housing, homelessness, and community safety.

Los Angeles County is a place of extraordinary diversity, innovation, and resilience. Yet, we also recognize a legacy of inequities, such as persistent disparities across neighborhoods, unequal access to services, and gaps in housing stability and economic opportunity. These historical and ongoing inequities require deliberate attention as we strive toward a more just and equitable County.

The value of the *Portrait of Los Angeles* lies not only in the data it presents but also in the stories it tells. Data-informed narratives allow us to identify disparities, prioritize investments, and track progress over time. By examining these indicators, we gain a clearer understanding of where targeted interventions are needed, ensuring that resources are directed to the communities that need them most.

Behavioral health is a cornerstone of overall well-being. Through the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) planning process, we have learned the importance of meaningful community engagement and culturally competent approaches. Input from residents and stakeholders guides the development of programs that are responsive, inclusive, and effective, ensuring that behavioral health services are accessible and equitable for all.

As we move forward, this report will serve as both a guide and a call to action. It reminds us that achieving equity is an ongoing effort, requiring collaboration across County departments, community partners, and residents themselves. By centering equity in our planning, investing in the needs of historically underserved communities, and tracking outcomes with care and transparency, we can continue building a Los Angeles County where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

I thank the many teams, community members, and stakeholders whose contributions made this report possible, and I invite you to use it as a tool for informed action, shared understanding, and collective progress.

Sincerely,



Lisa H. Wong, Psy.D.

Director, Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health

What's in This Report?

Human development is about the real freedom ordinary people have to decide who to be, what to do, and how to live. We measure this idea using the American Human Development Index (HDI).

The HDI, a gauge of well-being and access to opportunity, combines data on three basic building blocks of a good life—a long and healthy life, access to knowledge, and a decent standard of living—into a single number that falls on a scale between 0 and 10.

In this report, HDI scores are available in three ways: _____

ADDITIONAL CONTENT INCLUDES:

- Real people's voices from community events; scan the QR code on the right to listen!
- Data and analysis on: environmental justice, mental health, migration, cost of living, youth disconnection, unequal access to good jobs, justice involvement, transportation, housing and homelessness, and LGBTQ Angelenos





BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

All data in the report are disaggregated, to the extent possible, by demographic group.

Data are presented by:

- **Race and ethnicity**
- **Gender**
- **Asian and Latino subgroups**
- **Nativity**



BY PLACE

Data in the report are also presented for different places. The 220 places in the report include:

- **115 Census-Designated Cities and Unincorporated Areas** = 98% of the LA County population
- **34 Community Plan Areas** within the City of Los Angeles
- **71 Neighborhood Clusters** (Census-Designated Public Use Microdata Areas)



BY “THE FIVE LA COUNTIES”

The Five LAs are groups of LA places clustered together based on their HDI scores. The Five LAs include:

- **Glittering LA** (HDI scores 9.00+)
- **Elite Enclave LA** (7 to 8.99)
- **Main Street LA** (5 to 6.99)
- **Struggling LA** (3 to 4.99)
- **Precarious LA** (<3.00)

Key Findings

Key Findings

This report takes an in-depth look into well-being and opportunity in Los Angeles County, one of the most diverse places in the nation. This project is a follow-up to Measure of America's *A Portrait of Los Angeles County 2017*, which featured a ranked well-being index for different places and demographic groups in the County. The result of an impressive collaboration among a diverse range of stakeholders, the 2017 report laid out an ambitious set of goals to improve Angelenos' overall well-being and to address the inequalities laid bare by the analysis. Since then, numerous organizations have used it to inform their planning, programming, and policymaking. *A Portrait of Los Angeles County 2026* presents updated scores and analysis and assesses the County's progress toward meeting its well-being goals.

Numbers are important, but they can't tell the whole story. This report also incorporates input gathered from a diverse range of community members who shared their experiences, insights, and priorities. While the County has made great strides in some areas of well-being, it also faces urgent challenges: deadly wildfires, a skyrocketing cost of living, Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids, deep cuts to federal funding, and the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Understanding who is flourishing and who is being left behind is a critical step to making sure that every Angeleno has what they need to thrive.

About the American Human Development Index

To understand how Angelenos are faring, Measure of America uses the American Human Development Index (HDI), a composite measure that takes into account three essential facets of a life of freedom and opportunity—a **long and healthy life**, **access to knowledge**, and **a decent standard of living**. The American HDI is based on the Human Development Index developed by the United Nations, the gold standard for measuring the well-being of people in every nation. To calculate HDI scores, Measure of America uses the latest official government data on health, measured by life expectancy at birth; education, measured by school enrollment and educational attainment; and earnings, measured by median personal earnings.

This report presents HDI scores for a deep dive into each of these areas individually—for 115 cities and unincorporated areas in LA County, as well as for the 34 community plan areas within the City of Los Angeles, for major racial and ethnic groups, for women and men, and for US- and foreign-born residents.

This report takes an in-depth look into well-being and opportunity in Los Angeles County, one of the most diverse places in the nation.





Women in Los Angeles County outscore men by roughly half a point—5.91 compared to 5.40—due to their higher scores on the health and education components of the index.

American Human Development Index

- The 2017 and 2026 *Portrait of Los Angeles County* reports used the latest data available, from 2015 and 2023, respectively. In the intervening years, **LA County's score on the American Human Development Index rose from 5.43 to 5.64.** This score represents a modest improvement but falls far short of the set goal of a 1.0-point increase. This score is slightly lower than that of the state as a whole, 5.82.
- **Women in Los Angeles County outscore men** by roughly half a point—5.91 compared to 5.40—due to their higher scores on the health and education components of the index. Women have higher HDI scores than their male counterparts in all major racial and ethnic groups, although the size of the gap varies. Black women (5.33) and Black men (4.07) have the largest gender gap of the County's racial and ethnic groups. Women's overall HDI score has also improved more than men's score since 2015; it increased 7.8 percent, whereas men's score increased 4.4 percent.
- **A significant well-being gap separates US-born and foreign-born Angelenos.** US-born LA County residents have a score of 6.06, and foreign-born residents have a score of 4.95. While foreign-born Angelenos enjoy a higher life expectancy, their significantly lower earnings and educational attainment drive down their HDI score.
- Scores also vary widely by race and ethnicity. **Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders (NHOPI) in LA County have the lowest HDI score, 4.01.** NHOPI Angelenos are also the only group whose score decreased since 2015, down from 4.44. White residents saw the greatest improvement in well-being; their score increased 5.9 percent between 2015 and 2023. Of the County's six major racial and ethnic groups, **Asian residents have the highest HDI score, 7.68.** The County's Asian population is not a monolith, however, and Asians' well-being advantage becomes more complicated when broken down by subgroup: a vast gap separates the highest-scoring subgroup from the lowest—9.38 for Indian Angelenos to 4.76 for Cambodian Angelenos.
- Even greater disparities come to light when HDI scores are broken down by place. **The highest HDI is found in Brentwood-Pacific Palisades,** which scores 9.58 out of 10 (these data predate the January 2025 Palisades Fire that devastated much of the area). **Southeast Los Angeles scores the lowest, 3.03.**

The “Five LA Counties”

The Five Los Angeles Counties framing sorts the cities, Census-designated places, and City of Los Angeles community plan areas featured in this report into “Five Los Angeles Counties” based on where they fall on the index. Doing so offers a way to understand what communities with similar HDI scores have in common in terms of their residents’ day-to-day realities and opportunities.

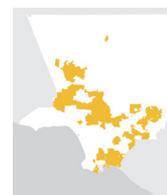
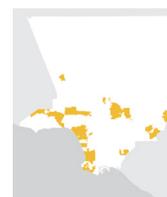
Glittering LA: Home to just 194,500 Angelenos (2 percent of the LA County population), Glittering LA communities have HDI scores of 9.0 or above. Glittering LA includes two City of Los Angeles neighborhoods, five cities that hug the Pacific Coast, and one city in the foothills of the Verdugo Mountains.

Elite Enclave LA: Encompassing 15 percent of the County population, or 1,461,700 Angelenos, Elite Enclave LA includes communities with scores between 7.0 and 8.99 on the HDI. The majority of the 32 locales that make up Elite Enclave LA are found on the outer edges of the County—from the South Bay, north along the coast to the Santa Monica Mountains, and east to the Verdugos and the San Gabriel Valley.

Main Street LA: The most populous and diverse of the Five LA Counties, Main Street LA is where most Angelenos call home. With HDI scores between 5.0 and 6.99, Main Street LA communities include suburban areas of the southern and eastern parts of the County and the Santa Clarita and San Fernando Valleys to the north, as well as LA City neighborhoods in the north part of the LA Basin.

Struggling LA: The second-most populous of the Five LAs, Struggling Los Angeles is home to 3,823,700 people, 39 percent of the County population. With scores between 3.0 and 4.99, Struggling LA communities have a lower level of well-being than LA County as a whole. Slightly over one-third of residents, 36.3 percent, are foreign-born, the largest share among the Five LAs.

Precarious LA: In the 2017 report, roughly 3 percent of the LA County population lived in communities that scored less than 3.0 on the HDI—Cudahy, Westmont, Lennox, East Rancho Dominguez, and Florence–Graham—plus one neighborhood in the City of Los Angeles, Southeast Los Angeles. Today no city, unincorporated area, or community plan area falls below 3.0 on the HDI.





A striking 15-year gap separates the longest- and shortest-living racial and ethnic groups.

Health

KEY FINDINGS: A LONG AND HEALTHY LIFE

- The health component of the index is measured by average life expectancy at birth. Based on 2019–2023 mortality data, a baby born today in LA County can expect to live **80.5 years, on average**. While this is longer than the life expectancy of the average Californian or American, it is a **1.6-year decrease** since the 2017 report, which used 2010–2014 data. There are multiple reasons for this decline, including the COVID-19 pandemic and an increase in deaths from drug overdose and cardiovascular disease.
- A striking 15-year gap separates the longest- and shortest-living racial and ethnic groups; **Asian** Angelenos have the highest life expectancy at **86.2 years**, while **Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders** (NHOPI) have the lowest, **71.2 years**. In terms of change over time, every racial and ethnic group experienced a decline in life expectancy since the 2017 report. White Angelenos saw the smallest decline, and Latino Angelenos the largest.
- As in California and the United States as a whole, **women in LA County live longer than their male counterparts** across all major racial and ethnic groups. The average life expectancy at birth for women is 83.6 years, 6.1 years longer than for men. Asian women have the longest life expectancy of any gender/race combination, 88.6 years, while NHOPI men have the shortest, 65.9 years—a more-than-20-year difference.
- **Foreign-born LA County residents outlive those born in the United States by 3.6 years**, but they also experienced a sharper life-expectancy decline since the 2010–2014 period—4.2 percent compared to 0.8 percent for US-born residents—in part due to the disparate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Among the County’s cities, Census-Designated Places, and City of Los Angeles Community Plan Areas, **life expectancy in the 2019–2023 period ranged from 88.1 years in Westwood to 71.8 years in Sun Village** in the Antelope Valley—a span of 16.3 years. The 10 places with the highest life expectancy, 85.6 years and up, are largely on the Westside and along the coast. The 10 with the lowest life expectancy, 76.9 years and less, are mostly in the Antelope Valley, the Gateway Cities region, and South Los Angeles.

Education

KEY FINDINGS: ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE



- Overall, LA County made considerable progress between 2015 and 2023 in terms of education. The Education Index, which combines data on enrollment and educational attainment, **increased by roughly 10 percent, from 4.96 to 5.46**. While enrollment remained stagnant, educational attainment saw a significant and heartening increase. Despite this progress, however, Los Angeles County is behind the state as a whole when it comes to high school diploma and bachelor's and graduate degree attainment.
- On average, **LA County women have higher Education Index scores than men, 5.66 compared to 5.26**, outperforming men on both the school-enrollment and degree-attainment components of the index. Women's education scores have also improved at a faster clip since 2015—a 11.0 percent increase for women compared to a 9.1 percent increase for men.
- The County's overall Education Index score conceals significant disparities between racial and ethnic groups. On the high end, **white Angelenos score highest, 7.62**, while Asian Angelenos are not far behind at 7.56. Black, Native American, NHOPI, and Latino Angelenos all have scores below the County average. **Latino Angelenos have the lowest score, 3.29**. One-third of Latino adults ages 25 and older lack a high school diploma, and the share of Latino adults with bachelor's degrees, 16.5 percent, is less than half the rate for the County as a whole, 36.6 percent. These gaps are a modern-day manifestation of past discrimination as well as present-day bias and differential access to resources.
- Breaking scores down by place, communities in Los Angeles County have some of the highest Education Index scores in the country—as well as some of the lowest. The highest score, 9.91, can be found in Westwood, the City of Los Angeles neighborhood home to the University of California, Los Angeles. Maywood, a city in southeast Los Angeles, has the County's lowest Education Index score, 1.67.
- The youth disconnection rate—the share of young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are neither working nor in school—is an important marker for a community's overall well-being. Rates of youth disconnection in LA County vary widely by geography; **a 17-percentage-point difference separates the neighborhood clusters in Los Angeles with the highest and lowest disconnection rates**.

While enrollment remained flat, educational attainment saw a significant and heartening increase.



Latina women earn the least of all gender/race combinations, \$31,800, a shocking \$48,500 less than white men.

Earnings

KEY FINDINGS: A DECENT STANDARD OF LIVING

- **The typical LA worker in Los Angeles County earns about \$44,600**, \$3,500 less than the California median, \$48,100. Median personal earnings have risen since the 2017 report, **from \$39,500 to \$44,600** (adjusted for inflation and presented in 2023 dollars). While earnings are higher, the costs of many bare-bones necessities, from housing and childcare to food and transportation, have outpaced the increase in earnings.
- **White workers in Los Angeles County earn \$70,200 per year**, well above the countywide earnings figure and higher than any other racial or ethnic group. The next-highest-earning group, Asian Angelenos, still earn \$13,700 less than their white counterparts. **Latino Angelenos earn the least, \$35,900.**
- The differences are even more dramatic when gender is taken into account. **Overall, men in Los Angeles County take home \$9,300 more annually than their female counterparts**, \$49,700 compared to \$40,400, respectively. White workers have the largest gender earnings gap of all race/gender combinations: white men earn \$21,000 more than white women. Men outearn women in every racial and ethnic group except for Black Angelenos; Black women earn approximately \$600 per year more than Black men. **Latina women earn the least of all gender/race combinations, \$31,800, a shocking \$48,500 less than white men.**
- The 10 highest-earning places in the County are found on its outer edges, hugging the Pacific coast and ensconced in the foothills. The lowest-earning places, on the other hand, are largely at the center of the County, with the exception of Westwood, where the presence of UCLA students depresses median earnings (students tend to work many fewer hours than the typical worker). **In Palos Verdes Estates, the typical worker earns \$120,200, more than 2.5 times the Los Angeles County median and over four times the typical worker in Cudahy**, the lowest-earning place excluding Westwood.
- Housing cost burden is a severe issue in the County, affecting even those in wealthier neighborhoods. In fact, **in all LA County neighborhoods, a resident earning the median salary for that neighborhood would need to work over 40 hours a week** to afford monthly median housing costs without being housing cost-burdened. In 31 neighborhoods, a median-salary earner would need to work more than 80 hours per week, double the standard workweek.

Agenda for Action

TOWARD AN EQUITABLE FUTURE FOR ALL ANGELENOS

To address the disparities in education, health, and earnings pinpointed in this report, the Portrait of Los Angeles County 2026 Advisory Committees developed an agenda for action to help guide policymaking and programming to ensure that every Angeleno has the security and support they need to thrive. Informed by a series of community conversations, the agenda identifies three cross-cutting imperatives to tackle the county's greatest obstacles:

- Address Disparities in Well-Being among Angelenos.** Well-being in Los Angeles County varies widely—by racial and ethnic background, gender, immigration status, sexual orientation, disability status, and housing circumstances. Policies and programs must address the striking gaps in life expectancy, median earnings, and educational outcomes between different demographic groups. Every LA County resident deserves the ability to lead a long, healthy, and freely chosen life of value, but as the data in this report show, this opportunity is not enjoyed equally. Targeted policies and programs that address the specific challenges to health, education, and earnings faced by different groups are key.
- Prioritize Places Where the Well-Being of Children and Families Is at Risk.** The neighborhood in which you are born should not determine the caliber of your education, your chances for rewarding employment and financial security, or your ability to access basic necessities like healthy food, safe public spaces, and quality health care. Los Angeles County is home to a vast spectrum of well-being. Depending on where they live, LA County residents may enjoy an unparalleled level of resources, or they may struggle to make ends meet and access basic services. Investments and programming should be targeted toward the neighborhoods where children and families face the greatest obstacles to well-being and opportunity, especially those that fall into Struggling LA. Stakeholders can learn from the communities that have made the greatest strides in well-being since 2017.
- Implement Prevention Programs and Services.** Many of the greatest hardships facing Angelenos, from unemployment and homelessness to chronic illness and climate-related disasters, are years in the making. The policies and programs put in place today—such as accessible mental health and substance abuse treatment, diversion programs, climate resilience strategies, and tenant protection and affordable housing—can help head off these challenges before they occur. The County has recently made great strides toward implementing and strengthening prevention efforts; this vital work must continue.

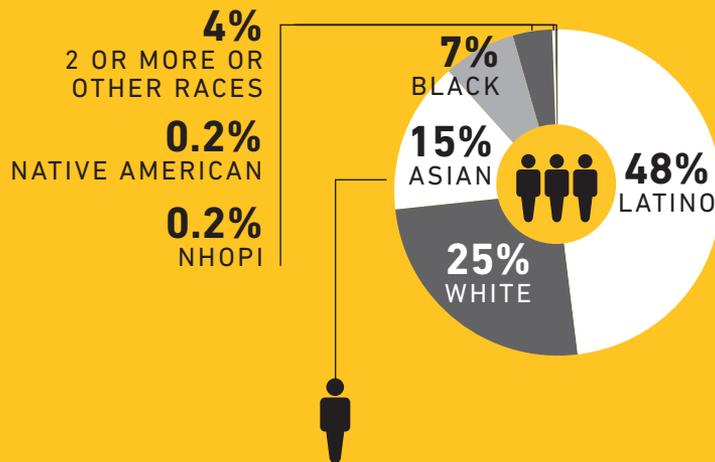
We need to address the inequality between wealthy and impoverished areas. I think we should have greater access to the resources that other, more privileged areas have. I believe all young people and children deserve the same opportunities and equal treatment.



Long Beach resident

Who Are We?

Los Angeles County Population



9%
LGBTQ
=
665,000
LGBTQ
ADULTS

12%
HAVE A
DISABILITY

ASIAN SUBGROUPS



LATINO SUBGROUPS



66%
US-BORN

34%
FOREIGN
BORN

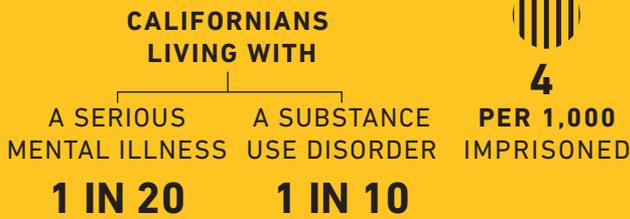
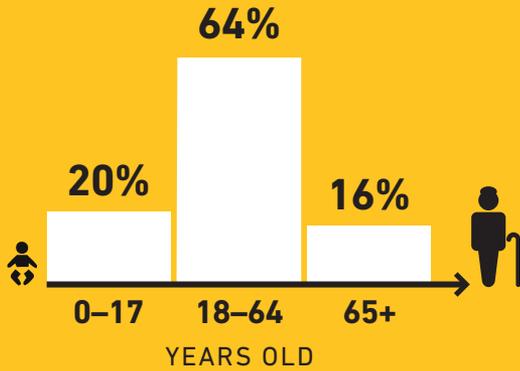


24%
LIMITED ENGLISH
PROFICIENCY



52%
OF CHILDREN
HAVE AT LEAST ONE
IMMIGRANT PARENT

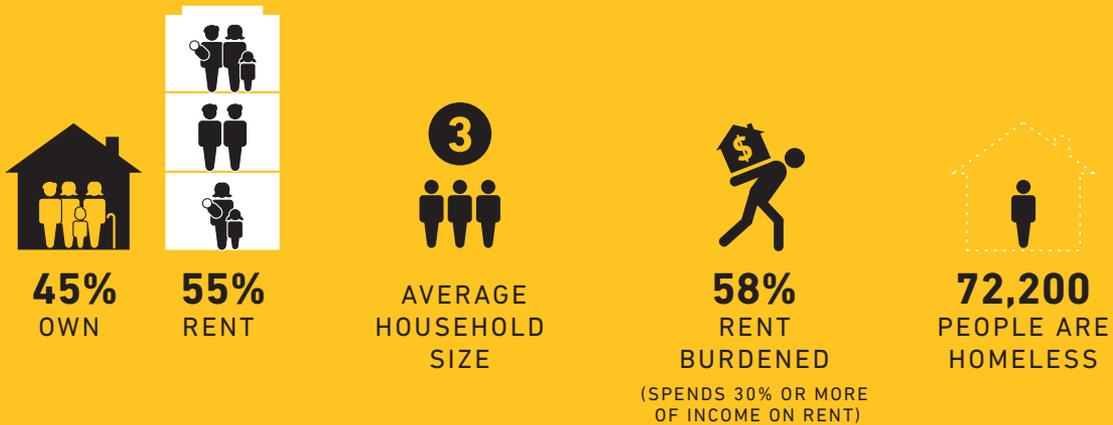
DEMOGRAPHICS



EMPLOYMENT



HOUSING



POVERTY & YOUTH WELL-BEING



Understanding Human Development



Introduction

What Is Human Development?

How Is Human Development Measured?

Why the American Human Development Index?

Why Don't All Groups and Places Have an HDI Score?

What About Children?

IN THIS SECTION

Introduction

A Portrait of Los Angeles County 2017 featured a ranked well-being index for 115 cities and unincorporated areas in Los Angeles County, as well as the 34 community plan areas within the City of Los Angeles—149 places in all—for major racial and ethnic groups, for women and men, and for US- and foreign-born LA County residents. It introduced a “Five LA Counties” framing that distilled the distinct sets of opportunities and risks that shape the lives and life chances of different groups of Angelenos.

Its research and analysis, recommendations, and targets for the future were guided from the start by more than 70 highly involved stakeholders—including a group of representatives of County and city agencies and departments, a data group of individuals involved with indicators projects, representatives from the 14 philanthropic foundations supporting the project convened by Southern California Grantmakers, scholars and researchers, and a group of nonprofits brought together by the Center for Financial Empowerment. We also worked closely with the LA County Office of Child Protection, Department of Public Health, and Department of Children and Family Services, and received additional support from the LA County Quality and Productivity Commission.

Numerous organizations drew on *A Portrait of Los Angeles County 2017* in their planning, programming, and policymaking. A few examples include the following:

- **The LA County Department of Mental Health** used *A Portrait of Los Angeles County* for needs assessment.
- *A Portrait of Los Angeles County* served as a model for the **Los Angeles County Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative’s** “State of Black Los Angeles County” online interactive report series.
- **The City of Los Angeles** relocated some of its workforce development sites based on need using the neighborhood HDI scores as a guide.
- **The County Community Development Commission** relied on the report in its assessment of impediments to access to housing and compliance with the Fair Housing Act.
- **The LA County Department of Arts and Culture** paired *A Portrait of Los Angeles County* findings with their own arts education survey in an analysis showing how arts education funding is correlated with the American Human Development Index.
- **The LA County Office of Education** used the report for strategic planning around community schools, to develop regional networks to advance prevention and improve opportunities for foster youth and justice-involved young people, and to guide the routes of literacy vans through underserved neighborhoods.
- **The Department of Recreation and Parks** drew on the report in the development of its new operational strategic plan to expand park access and programming, especially in those communities with poor access and low HDI scores.

Human development is the process of improving people's well-being and expanding their freedoms and opportunities.

An innovation in the preparatory process for this report has been greater focus on community engagement.

This current report on Los Angeles came into being largely thanks to the interest of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, which reached out to Measure of America in 2023 to find out if and when a follow-up to the 2017 report might be released; the department had been using the report for needs assessments and was eager for updated data and analysis. The resulting County funding and the vote of confidence it signaled, support from previous and new philanthropic partners—including the James Irvine Foundation, the Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, and Cedars-Sinai—and partnership with First 5 LA made this report possible.

Community Engagement

An innovation in the preparatory process for this report has been greater focus on community engagement. As in the past, we were guided in this work by two advisory committees, one comprising County officials from a range of departments, the other made up of civil society representatives, including those from service delivery, advocacy, and philanthropic organizations. This time, we added a new element to the consultative process: in-person and virtual data walks with LA County residents to gather community perspectives, feedback, and information. Data walks are typically in-person events during which information is shared with community members in a variety of ways, such as via large posters or monitors arrayed around the room and small group discussions that allow participants to ask questions, reflect on the information, and offer their own interpretations and solutions. The data walks provided an important complement to the report's quantitative statistics, lifting up residents' perspectives on their communities' challenges and assets.

We originally planned in-person data walks in five communities across the County, identified in partnership with First 5 LA through their Best Start programming: Palmdale in the Antelope Valley, the Arleta/Pacoima area in the San Fernando Valley, East Los Angeles, Watts in South LA, and Long Beach. As the July 2025 dates for the data walks drew near, however, our partners began to voice well-founded concerns they and their community members had about gathering in person. In the end, the sharp uptick in the frequency and severity of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) actions across LA County, particularly in predominately Latino neighborhoods, forced our partners in the San Fernando Valley, East LA, and South LA to move all their community programming, including the data walks, online. One counterpart said that ICE agents were posted just down the block from their center and she could not in good conscience ask anyone to risk an in-person visit; another had seen someone snatched off the street in her neighborhood by masked agents about an hour before our scheduled planning call; a third noted that the local Saturday farmers' market, typically a thriving hub of community activity that was expected to attract people to the nearby center for the data walk, had become a ghost town.

The three now-virtual and the two in-person community events (in Palmdale and Long Beach)—all of which offered translation, compensation, and other



mechanisms like childcare to facilitate participation—brought together more than 200 Angelenos. In addition to the data walks with First 5 LA, we also held virtual data walks for countywide communities that are too often invisible in public datasets, such as former foster youth and LGBTQ Angelenos. These data walks were held in partnership with the LA Youth Collaborative and the Los Angeles LGBT Center, respectively. Finally, in partnership with the Department of Mental Health, we held a virtual data walk with the Behavioral Health Services Act Community Planning Team, a body of some 160 members representing the social and cultural diversity of Los Angeles County across three stakeholder categories: people with lived experience with mental health and substance use needs, service providers working with this population, and systems representatives working in the mental health and substance use areas.

Our conversations with these diverse, highly engaged groups of Angelenos frequently centered on concerns around rising housing costs, unreliable public transportation, childcare affordability, mental health, health care and other benefits for the elderly, and pathways to educational and career opportunities for young people. Ultimately, we found that these data walks were beneficial not only to our research process but also to the partner organizations and participants involved. Listening to the real experiences of residents provided valuable context around the numbers and strengthened our recommendations to address the greatest concerns facing Angelenos. Participants expressed feeling validated in their experiences after seeing the data, empowered by their access to the data, and appreciation for the opportunity to directly voice their opinions, as many felt that they had often been overlooked in the decision-making processes that affect their lives.

These data walks have helped shape the report's recommendations, and quotes from community members are integrated throughout. Additionally, we have developed an online portal to accompany the report that serves as a dedicated space for these conversations. The portal highlights key issues that surfaced during our discussions and allows people to listen to residents' insights and experiences in their own words. Access the portal here: www.measureofamerica.org/los-angeles-2026/.

New Threats to Well-Being

Over the course of researching and writing this report, the County experienced several shocks that we have tried to address as best we could, such as the Eaton and Palisades wildfires, dramatic cuts in federal spending since early 2025, and the sharp uptick in ICE raids, the last of which caused us to cancel some in-person events and move them online to protect participants, as discussed above. The data we have on these current and evolving events are incomplete, but given how consequential they are for the well-being of many Angelenos, we have sought to incorporate them where possible.

Fires. In January 2025 Los Angeles County faced devastating wildfires, including the Palisades and Eaton Fires, among the deadliest in California history. Early reports attributed 31 deaths to the fires, but an August 2025 report by the Boston

You know, we, we acknowledge the interconnectedness of a lot of the challenges...in the data presented. It seems like something of a kaleidoscope of issues, right? Everything ranging from health to education to gainful employment. And so I think that was one of the things that certainly I walked away with is the interconnectedness of these seemingly systemic issues.



San Fernando Valley resident

We would like to see the government show respect to people, treat people as human beings as we are brother and sister...Do not just arrest people and then send people back home. Sometimes we split the family into pieces and then we need to understand the feeling of the people. What happens if we lose father, we lose mother, we lose children—we are separate from each other. People crying. Are we happy to see people crying like this? Not at all.



Long Beach resident

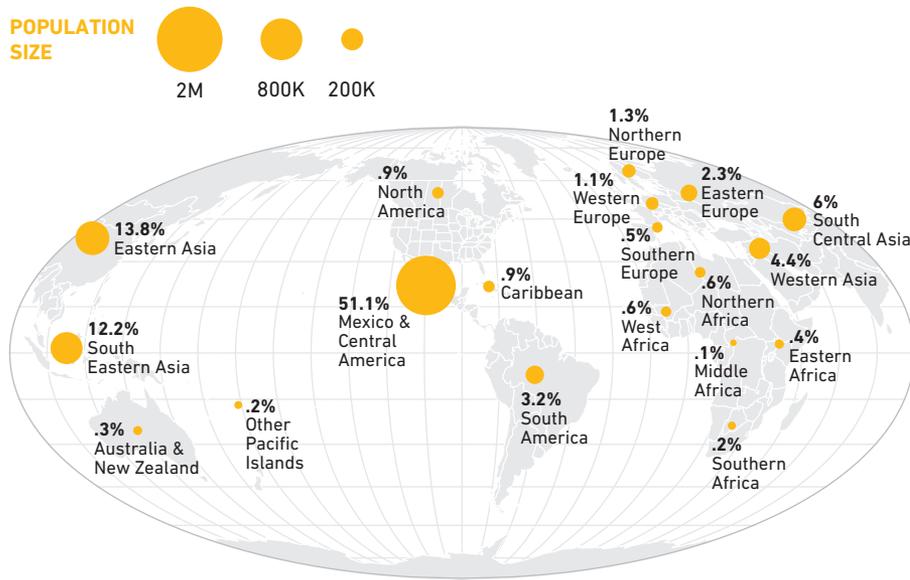
School of Public Health and the University of Helsinki argues that the fires contributed to the deaths of 440 additional people, who perished when wildfire smoke and the stress of fleeing exacerbated existing lung or heart conditions, care for chronic conditions was interrupted, and the strain on the medical system caused delays in accessing care.¹ These early-season fires destroyed thousands of homes, businesses, schools, and community facilities, displacing tens of thousands of people. In Pacific Palisades, 55.8 percent of single-family homes and nearly all mobile homes were destroyed; in Altadena, half the homes were lost. Property damages are estimated at as much as \$131 billion, with significant economic disruption and job losses expected through 2029.² Recovery efforts have involved clearing thousands of properties, restoring schools and water systems, and distributing billions of dollars in aid.³

Beyond physical destruction, survivors grappled with fear and uncertainty, grief at the loss of all that was familiar, displacement from cherished communities, and practical challenges related to accessing basic needs—for example, clothing and places to stay, masks and air filters to protect them from the smoke, physical and mental health care, and accurate information on everything from the current wildfire status to filling out insurance paperwork to the long-term health effects of the smoke and burned debris.⁴ Across the region, some 700,000 children and young adults saw their daily lives and educations turned upside down.⁵ Schools prioritized students' emotional well-being amid closures and relocations, and some education outcomes remained largely intact despite displacement.⁶ Insurance claims were often complicated and emotionally taxing, with some companies imposing strict damage standards that conflicted with state law, leading to lawsuits.⁷ People in or near the fire zones whose houses are still standing are rightly concerned about the dangers of toxic contamination; debris, smoke, soot, and ash contain hazardous substances, such as asbestos and heavy metals like lead and arsenic, and getting insurers to pay for testing and remediation has been extremely difficult if not impossible for many fire survivors.⁸

Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids. Los Angeles County is among the most diverse places in the United States, with over three million immigrants making up about one-third of the county's population.⁹ More than half (51.5 percent) of the County's 1.9 million children have at least one immigrant parent, further demonstrating how deeply immigrants are woven into Los Angeles County's social fabric.¹⁰ In addition, 67 percent of green-card holders and undocumented residents participate in the labor force, highlighting their significant economic and cultural contributions.¹¹ Plainly put, Los Angeles is a place defined and enriched by immigration; immigrants are the lifeblood of the metropolis, and their presence is essential to the ability of all Angelenos to flourish and thrive.

As this report was being written, an unprecedented surge in ICE raids dramatically altered Los Angeles County's social and economic landscape. The enforcement actions, which were most intense during June and July 2025 but continue as this report goes to press, targeted predominantly Latino immigrant neighborhoods, resulting in thousands of arrests of undocumented immigrants

MAP 1 Birthplaces of Foreign-Born Residents by Population Size



Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

as well as green-card holders and US citizens, the vast majority of whom have no criminal history. The raids have significantly disrupted daily life, with many immigrants and their families avoiding work, public gatherings, stores, parks, and even schools, hospitals, and churches due to fear of deportation. The raids have led to business closures, rising food prices, and increased housing insecurity, especially because a large share of undocumented immigrants are renters.¹² Communities have also faced emotional distress and social strain, with churches and other institutions expressing concern over reduced attendance and heightened fear.¹³

The raids have been carried out using aggressive, military-style tactics, including arrests in public places by masked officers—such as at car washes, Home Depot parking lots, and street vending spots—and a forceful response to protests, with the deployment of the National Guard and Marines marking a major escalation.¹⁴ Detention centers report harsh conditions, including inadequate food and poor sanitation. The enforcement has not only affected undocumented immigrants but also US citizens and green-card holders living in mixed-status families. These broad and brutal operations reflect racial profiling and have profound economic, social, and psychological consequences for immigrant communities and the wider region.¹⁵ The disruption to lives and livelihoods across the County prompted the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to declare a state of emergency on October 14, 2025, an order designed to assist tenants who have lost income due to the raids and potentially shield them from eviction.¹⁶

The enforcement has not only affected undocumented immigrants but also US citizens and green-card holders living in mixed-status families.

Overall, the federal funding cuts are expected to create significant challenges for public services and working families throughout the County and state.

Federal funding cuts. The passage of the federal government’s so-called Big Beautiful Bill in July 2025 has major implications for California, especially Los Angeles County. The law makes deep cuts to federal funding for health care, food assistance, education, and environmental protection. In Los Angeles County, the public health system is facing a severe financial crisis due to the loss of \$750 million in annual support, leading to hiring freezes and potential hospital closures. Programs like CalFresh (SNAP) and Medi-Cal are also being scaled back, putting health care and food access at risk for hundreds of thousands of residents. Many of the cuts come with new work and eligibility requirements that could push low-income families out of vital programs.¹⁷

Education and the environment are also being hit hard.¹⁸ Over \$800 million in education funds meant for teacher training, after-school programs, and services for English learners were temporarily withheld from California, impacting school districts like the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). At the same time, major cuts to environmental agencies are reducing California’s ability to manage wildfires, respond to climate threats, and meet clean energy goals. Although the bill includes some tax breaks and credits, especially for businesses and higher-income earners, it also raises costs for low-income families. Overall, the federal funding cuts are expected to create significant challenges for public services and working families throughout the County and state.

What Is Human Development?

The framework that guides this work is the **human development approach**. Human development is an expansive, hopeful concept that values, above all, human freedom—not just legal or theoretical freedom, but the real, actual freedom to decide for ourselves what to do, how to live, and who to be. Formally defined as the process of improving people’s well-being and expanding their freedoms and opportunities, the human development approach puts people at the center of analysis. It is concerned with how political, social, environmental, and economic forces interact to shape the range of choices open to us.

The human development concept is the brainchild of the late economist Dr. Mahbub ul Haq. In his work at the World Bank in the 1970s, and later as minister of finance in his home country of Pakistan, Dr. Haq argued that existing measures of human progress failed to account for the true purpose of economic growth and development: to improve people’s lives. Economic growth, he believed, was only valuable when translated into concrete achievements for people: healthier children, more literacy, greater political participation, cleaner environments, more widely shared prosperity, and greater freedom.

Working with Harvard professor and Nobel laureate Amartya Sen and other gifted social scientists and statisticians, Dr. Haq devised not only the idea of human development but also a way to measure it: the Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI provides a yardstick to assess the degree to which people are able to live long and healthy lives, have access to knowledge, and enjoy a decent standard of living. Haq introduced this new way of thinking about and measuring progress in the first Human Development Report, which was released in 1990 under the auspices of the United Nations Development Programme. The report ranked all the world’s countries not by the size of their economies but by the well-being of their people. Since then, the annual Human Development Report has served as the global gold standard for tracking human progress. In addition, more than 160 countries have produced national human development reports in the last two decades, raising taboo subjects, bringing long-ignored inequities to light, and spurring public debate and political engagement.

In 2007 Measure of America adapted the approach and index to the context of an affluent democracy and in 2008 released a first-ever American Human Development Report.¹⁹ Since then, organizations and communities across the country have worked with Measure of America to understand community needs and shape evidence-based policies and people-centered investments using this powerful concept.

The human development approach rests on a robust framework: Amartya Sen’s seminal work on capabilities.²⁰ Capabilities can be understood as a person’s tool kit for living a freely chosen, flourishing life of value—shaping the actual possibilities open to people, governing the real freedom they have to lead the kind of lives they want to live, and ultimately determining what a person can do and become. Someone rich in capabilities has a full tool kit for making their vision of a good life a reality. Someone with few capabilities has fewer options and fewer opportunities;

The Human Development Index measures three fundamental capabilities: a long and healthy life, access to knowledge, and a decent standard of living.

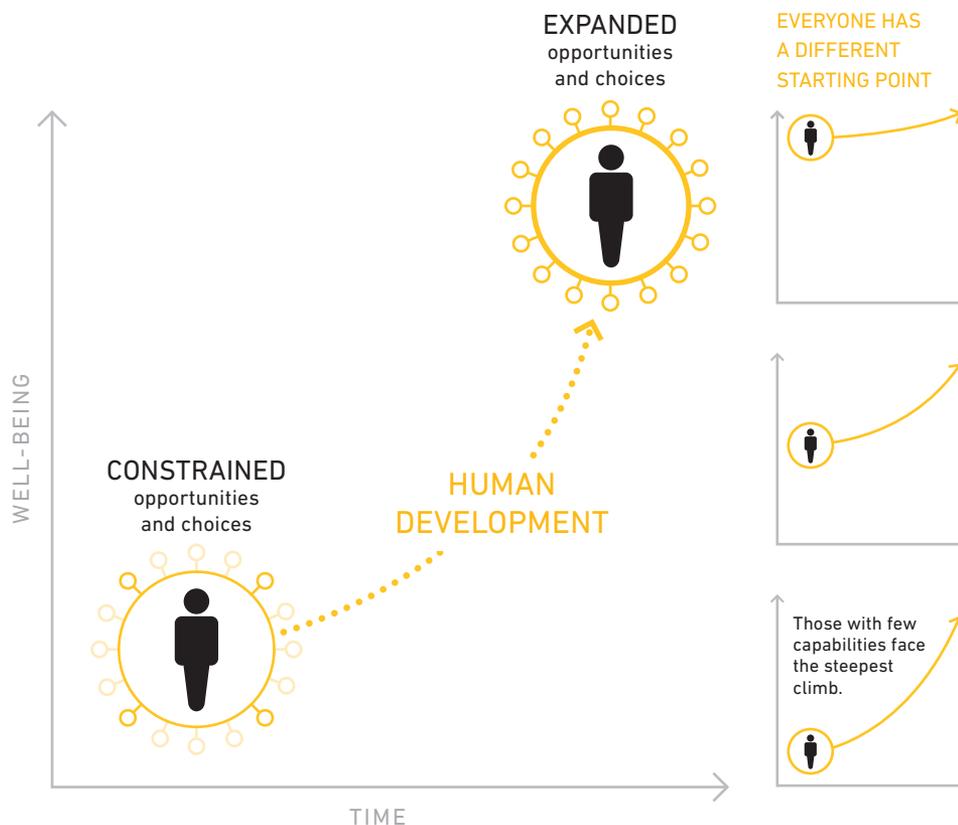
What Is Human Development?

Human development is about the real freedom ordinary people have to decide who to be, what to do, and how to live. These diagrams illustrate the central ideas of human development and visually depict how we measure it using the American Human Development Index.

CONCEPT

Human development is defined as *the process of enlarging people's freedoms and opportunities and improving their well-being.*

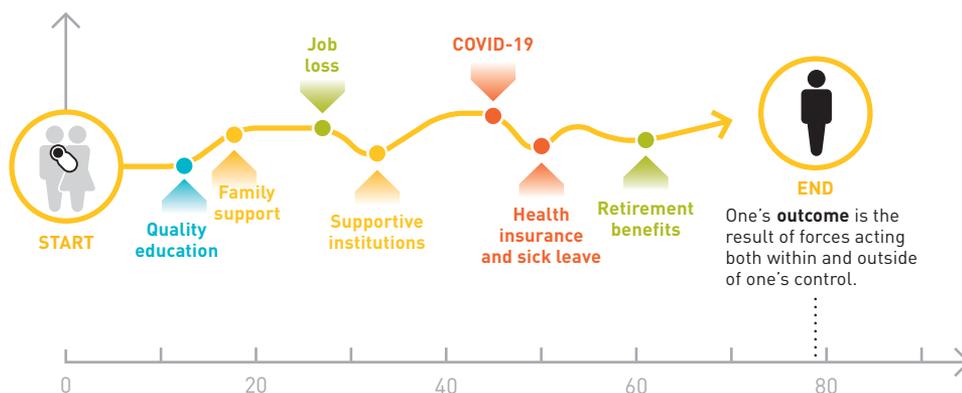
The idea was born at the United Nations and is used around the world to promote better lives for everyone. It is measured using the Human Development Index, which combines data on people's health, education, and incomes.



JOURNEY

Human development can be understood as a journey. Even before one's life begins, families and communities play a role in setting the trajectory of one's human development.

Numerous factors and experiences alter the course of one's journey through life, helping or hindering one's ability to live a life of choice and value.



CAPABILITIES

Capabilities are central to the human development concept. They can be understood as a person's tool kit for living a freely chosen, flourishing life.

Valued capabilities include good health, a quality education, sufficient income, bodily integrity, physical safety, dignity and societal respect, equality under the law, social inclusion, access to public services, and more.

Our capabilities are expanded both by our own efforts and by the institutions and conditions of our society.

DIMENSIONS

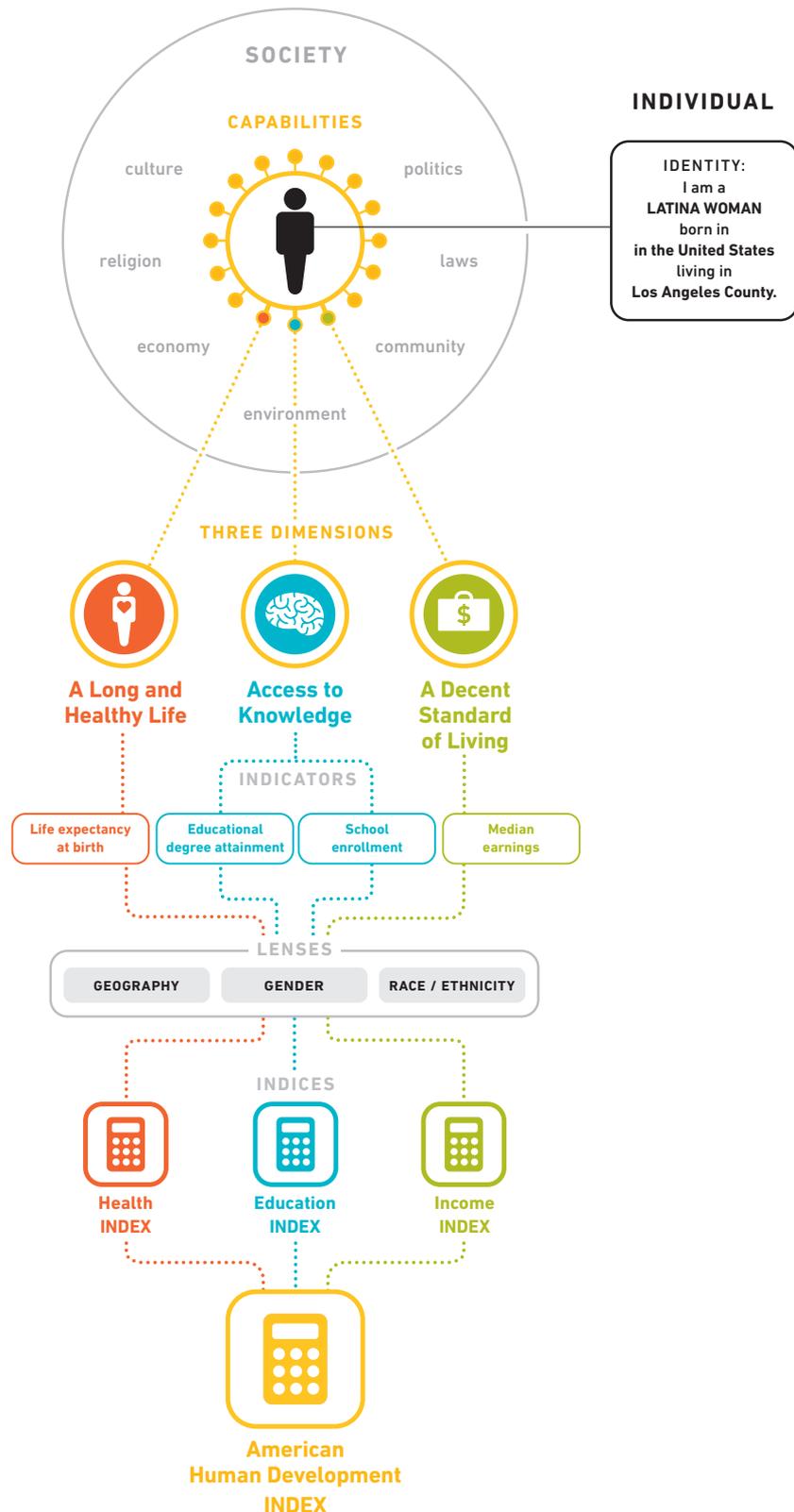
The Index includes indicators for just three capabilities, all of which are relatively easy to measure. They are considered core human development dimensions.

LENSES

The results of the American Human Development Index reveal variations among different communities, between women and men, and among racial and ethnic groups.

INDEX

The American Human Development Index measures the same three areas as the UN Index, but uses different indicators to better reflect opportunities and challenges in the United States. Measure of America created this modified index in 2008. It allows for well-being comparisons across places, between demographic groups, and over time.



A core premise of the capability approach is that expanding people's real freedoms is both the point and the proof of progress.

many rewarding paths are blocked. We tend to think of capabilities as an individual's skills and talents, but in the human development approach, the word's meaning is much more expansive. Valued capabilities include good health, bodily integrity, access to knowledge, sufficient income, physical safety, freedom of speech and religion, political participation, love and friendship, dignity and societal respect, equality under the law, social inclusion, access to the natural world, self-expression, agency, the ability to influence decisions that affect one's life, and more.²¹

Some capabilities are built through one's own efforts, such as working hard in school, eating a healthy diet, and getting physical exercise. Others are the result of the conditions and institutions around a person, such as having access to high-quality schools, stores that sell nutritious food, opportunities to engage in the arts and express creativity, and parks in which to walk or jog safely; many capabilities come from the interplay between the two. Some capabilities are bestowed on people through a circumstance of birth: having rich parents or well-connected relatives or belonging to a dominant social group. Capabilities can stem from legally protected rights, such as freedom of conscience or assembly, or freedom from arbitrary detention or family violence. They can be reinforced or eroded by the state of the economy, the state of the natural environment, the state of public discourse, and even the state of our democracy.

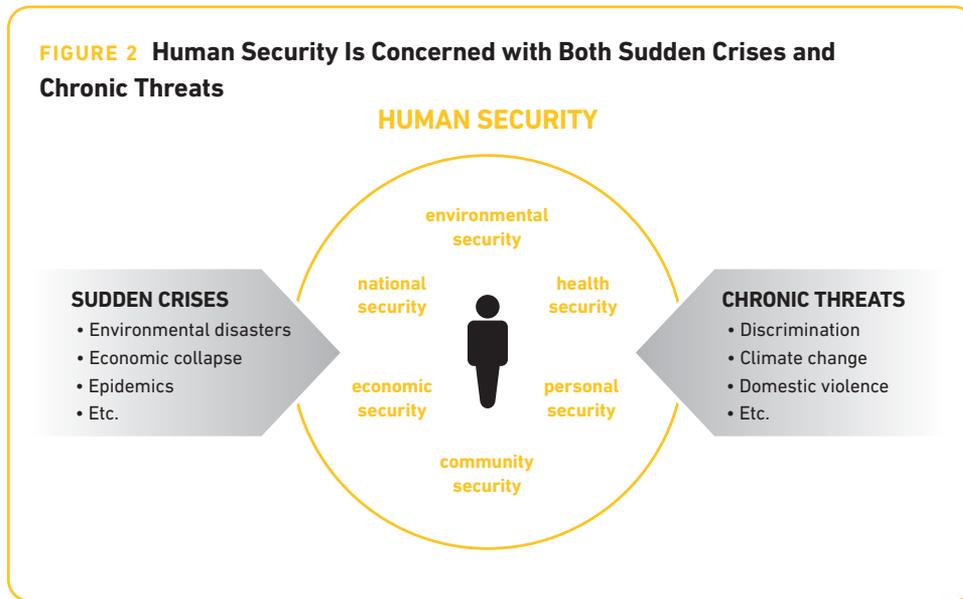
A core premise of the capability approach is that expanding people's real freedoms is both the point and the proof of progress.²² Real, or effective, freedom differs from formal freedom. US citizens headed to the ballot box have the right—the formal freedom—to cast a vote for president, but the need to be at work, the lack of someone to care for their disabled partner in their absence, or an hours-long wait at their official polling station may mean that they do not have the real freedom to do so.²³ Everyone in Los Angeles has the formal freedom to earn a bachelor's degree; by law, UCLA, USC, and other County colleges and universities are open to all, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual identity, national origin, or disability status. But too often the real freedom of, for instance, a young person growing up in Sun Valley or Huntington Park to earn that degree is limited

FIGURE 1 Two Approaches to Understanding Progress in America



by strained finances, few connections to people who can help them navigate the college application process, and underresourced neighborhood high schools. This is not to dismiss the accomplishments of college-bound young people from areas like Calabasas or Arcadia, but their climb to college is less steep, they face far fewer barriers along the way, and they are more likely to have knowledgeable guides in their families and communities. Formal freedoms, in these and other cases, are necessary but not sufficient for real freedom.

FIGURE 2 Human Security Is Concerned with Both Sudden Crises and Chronic Threats



Human security centers on people’s safety and freedom.

Another important idea in the human development framework is the concept of **human security**.²⁴ Human security centers on people’s safety and freedom, rather than a nation’s protection against foreign intervention. While human development can be understood as people’s freedom *to*—to choose what to do and who to be and make those choices reality—human security can be understood as people’s freedom *from*—from fear and want, from violations of their rights, from both chronic and sudden threats to their lives and livelihoods. Human development is concerned principally with expanding choices and opportunities; human security is more concerned with protection and prevention of harm in the face of downturns and crises.

Los Angeles has faced serious human security shocks over recent years, from the health shock of the COVID-19 pandemic to the environmental shock of the Eaton and Palisades Fires. Climate change continues to make such shocks more frequent and severe—and chronic threats are also on the rise. Undocumented Angelenos and those in mixed-status households have a well-founded fear of arrest and deportation without due process; federal employees and nonprofit and university staff have been fired abruptly; nearly one in three Los Angeles County renters pay more than half of their incomes on rent and are thus vulnerable to eviction; some 72,200 Angelenos have no permanent place to call home.²⁵ Expanding opportunities and protecting the foundations of well-being are equally important.

Healthy lives, good educations, and decent wages are the core building blocks of a life of value, freedom, and dignity.

How Is Human Development Measured?

Trying to measure all the facets of the expansive concepts of human development is impossible. Thus, the UN Human Development Index as well as the adapted American Human Development Index featured in this report measure just three fundamental capabilities: a long and healthy life, access to knowledge, and a decent standard of living. Why only three areas, and why these three in particular? People around the world view them as core building blocks of a life of value, freedom, and dignity. Healthy lives, good educations, and decent wages are not controversial aims. In addition, these foundational capabilities make other capabilities possible, such as adequate housing in safe neighborhoods. They are also bedrocks of human security. And from a practical perspective, one can measure these areas comparatively easily with reliable and regularly collected proxy indicators.

It is tempting to include in a well-being index indicators of a host of important capabilities—such as affordable housing, food security, and political participation. Indexes with large numbers of indicators can be tricky, however. Using many indicators can lead to counting the same phenomenon two or three times, to confusing results, and to a false equivalence between fundamental and derivative issues. A housing indicator, for instance, may be counting the same thing, to a large degree, as an earnings indicator—how much money a person has to pay for life’s essentials. Indexes that include a large number of indicators can be difficult to explain and understand, diluting their advocacy power. What’s more, including many indicators can limit the places and demographic groups for which unique scores can be calculated. Nonetheless, being realistic about the limitations of a parsimonious index like this one is important.

The American Human Development Index is not the end of a discussion on well-being; it is the start. Once disparities in basic outcomes have been identified using the Index and its constituent parts, the critical task is to examine the *why*—the underlying conditions like power disparities, historical realities, past and present policy choices, and more that have led to different outcomes for different groups of people. For this exploration, a whole host of other indicators is required—indicators that are featured throughout the report.

Now for the technical part. The American Human Development Index for Los Angeles comprises the following indicators:



A Long and Healthy Life is measured using life expectancy at birth. Measure of America calculates life expectancy using 2019–2023 mortality data from the California Department of Public Health and population data from the US Census Bureau. (Rolling up several years of data allows us to provide reliable estimates for small populations. This approach increases reliability but decreases timeliness; using just the most recent year improves timeliness but makes it impossible to calculate rates for small populations. It’s a trade-off, and we generally err on the side of granularity.)



Access to Knowledge is measured using two indicators: school enrollment for the population 3 to 24 years of age and educational degree attainment for people ages 25 and older. A one-third weight is applied to the enrollment indicator and a two-thirds weight to the degree attainment indicator to reflect the relative importance of earning degrees as compared to attending school. Both are from the US Census Bureau’s 2023 American Community Survey.



A Decent Standard of Living is measured using median earnings of all full- and part-time workers ages 16 and older from the same 2023 American Community Survey. The three components are weighted the same on the premise that each is equally important for human well-being.

In broad terms, the first steps for calculating the index are to compile or calculate the four indicators that constitute it: life expectancy, school enrollment, educational degree attainment, and median personal earnings. Because these indicators use different scales (years, dollars, percentages), they must be put on a common scale so that they can be combined. Three subindexes, one for each of the three dimensions that make up the index—health, education, and earnings—are created on a scale of 0 to 10. The process requires the selection of minimum and maximum values—or “goalposts”—for each of the four indicators. These goalposts are determined based on the range of the indicator observed from the data and also taking into account possible increases and decreases in years to come. For life expectancy, for example, the goalposts are 90 years at the high end and 66 years at the low end. The three subindexes are then added together and divided by three to yield the American Human Development Index value. (A more detailed technical description can be found in the Methodological Note on [PAGE 182](#).)

In this and other Measure of America reports, the index score is presented for the whole population—the score for Los Angeles County is 5.64 out of 10—as well as for different slices of the population, including by **demographic group** and by **place**.

The following pages present the results of the overall HDI; explore in greater detail the constituent parts of the HDI, namely health, education, and earnings; discuss other issues that affect people’s well-being, such as mental health, homelessness, child welfare, and youth disconnection; and make recommendations for how to increase the HDI scores for everyone, particularly for the groups with the lowest scores.

Had we only been given a category that was like BIPOC [Black, Indigenous, People of Color], you wouldn’t see the stark disparities that you see in terms of the Latino population and other people within that category. So it’s really good that we have it separated out. Because if you didn’t, you wouldn’t see that there’s a massive difference.



Department of Mental Health stakeholder

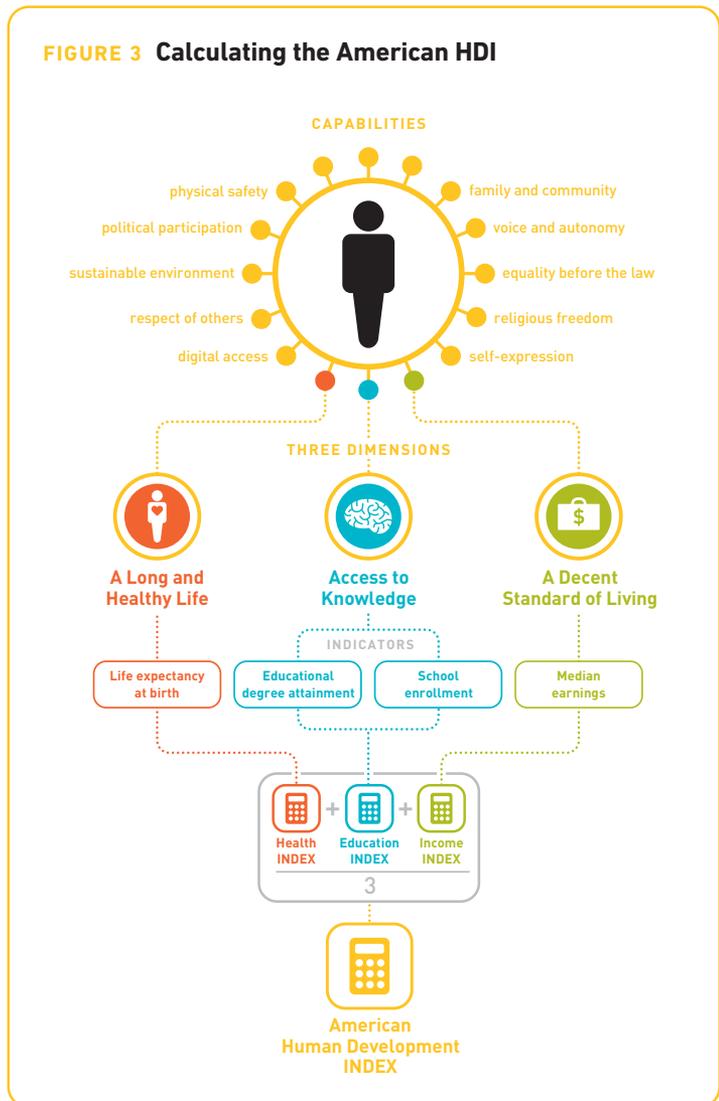
Why the American Human Development Index?

Dashboards and indexes that seek to capture and quantify concepts of well-being, mobility, inclusion, equity, prosperity, security, and sustainability are thick on the ground. What does the American Human Development Index add to Los Angeles County's heavily populated data landscape? Several features make the HDI particularly useful for understanding and addressing inequities in Greater Los Angeles.

The HDI directly measures inequality in a way that is easy to grasp and noncontroversial.

- **California has embraced the HDI for over a decade.** When Measure of America published the first *Portrait of California* in 2011, the HDI was among the state's only yardsticks of well-being for different groups and places within the County. Since then, MOA has worked with partners to apply the human development approach and HDI not just statewide most recently in 2021—but also at a more local level in Los Angeles, Sonoma, Marin, Del Norte, Mendocino, and Santa Barbara Counties; in the Inland Empire and the San Joaquin Valley; for the Latino population; and for out-of-school-and-work young people. This decade-and-a-half-long application of the HDI allows for apples-to-apples comparisons across time and place, making clear which groups are surging ahead and which are being left behind. Using this report in conjunction with the 2017 *Portrait of Los Angeles County* helps local leaders and residents measure progress on issues of concern.
- **HDI scores are available by neighborhood and demographic group.** Indicators and scores at the state or county level are useful for many purposes, but they fail to capture the often-stark differences between men and women, racial and ethnic groups, and cities and neighborhoods. This report presents scores by gender, by major racial and ethnic groups, by Asian and Latino subgroups, for US-born and foreign-born Angelenos, and for 149 communities.
- **The HDI directly measures inequality in a way that is easy to grasp and noncontroversial.** The HDI synthesizes a complex reality into a single number that allows for easy comparisons between groups. The wide variation in HDI scores along its 10-point scale makes plain the extent of fundamental disparities among LA residents. The components that make up the index—living a long and healthy life, getting a good education, and earning a decent wage—are not controversial aims. They are universally valued and intuitively understood measures that, even in this age of extreme polarization, are widely accepted, and how these factors translate into human flourishing—or languishing—is readily understood.

- The index supplements money metrics with human metrics.** An overreliance on economic metrics such as GDP can provide misleading information about the everyday conditions of ordinary people’s lives and the opportunities available to them. For example, using money as the sole gauge of well-being in Los Angeles would lead us to conclude that white men, who earn the most (\$80,300), have the best life outcomes. While that may be true economically, it is not true in terms of health. Asian women, who earn roughly \$29,000 less than white men do, can expect to live some 11 years longer. Eleven additional years to walk the earth is an invaluable outcome that money metrics miss.
- The HDI rests on a robust framework developed by world-renowned scholars.** The American HDI is based on a road-tested international tool that is the global gold standard for measuring human well-being. Leading scholars from the social sciences, mathematics, statistics, and philosophy have engaged with and built upon human development concepts for decades, yielding a rich body of work in support of this powerful idea: the true measure of progress is the degree to which all people are able to imagine and attain the kind of life they value.²⁶ The rich engagement of global scholars from a range of disciplines in creating, exploring, researching, and building upon the HDI sets it apart from other well-being measures.
- The HDI connects different sectors to show problems and their solutions from a people-centered perspective.** The cross-sectoral American HDI broadens the analysis of the interlocking factors that create or obstruct opportunities and fuel both advantage and disadvantage. It captures the key interrelated conditions that enable people to realize their full potential—or that hold them back.



Why Don't All Groups and Places Have an HDI Score?

On some maps, specific areas appear in gray, and in some tables, values for certain groups or locales are missing. **Gray areas and missing values indicate that the data for that place or demographic group are not statistically reliable.** Most of the cases of unreliability in this report stem from having a sample size that is too small to allow for statistically reliable calculations.

Another limitation in our ability to provide everyone an HDI score stems from the way in which the data we use for the index are collected. We would like, for example, to calculate scores for LGBTQ Angelenos. LGBTQ people are an integral part of Los Angeles County; approximately 665,000 LGBTQ adults call the County home, and they make up nearly 9 percent of the total adult population.²⁷ Unfortunately, we cannot calculate HDI scores for LGBTQ Angelenos because the American Community Survey does not provide a way for people to report information about their sexual orientation or gender identity beyond marking the box for male or female. As a result, we must rely on other research and data sources to discuss the well-being of LGBTQ Angelenos. Each chapter of this report includes a section focused on LGBTQ communities that draws on robust research conducted by the Williams Institute, the TransLatin@ Coalition, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, the California Department of Education, and other organizations. For similar reasons, calculating scores for specific populations that face disproportionate challenges—such as young adults aging out of the foster care system, people with disabilities, people who are homeless, or people who have been incarcerated—is also impossible. We try to address these gaps by bringing in other data sources but understand that this approach is not ideal.

In short, we can calculate scores only for groups that are given the chance to self-identify on the American Community Survey and that are sufficiently large as to allow reliable calculations. Right now, the survey only asks respondents to report their gender (male or female), their race, if they are or are not Hispanic or Latino, if they are US- or foreign-born, their country of origin if they are foreign-born, and the language they speak at home.

We can calculate scores only for groups that are given the chance to self-identify on the American Community Survey and that are sufficiently large as to allow reliable calculations.

What about Children?

How young Angelenos are faring is critically important to the current and future well-being of the County. The different choices and opportunities available to today's 1.9 million people under age 18—more than a million of them Latino and more than half with at least one foreign-born parent—will determine not just their life trajectories but also what Los Angeles as a whole will be like tomorrow. Having a way to understand meaningful differences in children's lives is thus critically important. Unfortunately, the index cannot be disaggregated by age group as it can for place, gender, and race and ethnicity. While life expectancy at birth is calculated using mortality data for the entire population, the Education Index includes an indicator for degree attainment for the population ages 25 and above, and the earnings figures are for all workers ages 16 and older, both of which leave children out. Children grow up in families and communities and their well-being depends almost entirely on the resources, capabilities, and choices of the adults around them, however, so arguably the HDI is a sound proxy for how different groups of children are faring. There are strong correlations between the American HDI and key independent indicators of child well-being; for instance, there are negative relationships between state-level HDI scores and infant mortality, child mortality, child poverty, and youth disconnection—in other words, states with higher HDI scores have lower rates of these negative outcomes for children.²⁸

Nonetheless, the HDI falls short as a tailored measure of child well-being. All human beings share a set of very basic needs, such as access to water and food, adequate shelter and clothing, and essential services like health care and education. These areas are well captured for adults and communities in general by the index, but not for children in particular; more specific, child-focused indicators are needed since deficits in these areas take different forms for children than for adults and have distinct and especially negative impacts. Living in areas of concentrated poverty—places where at least 30 percent of households live below the federal poverty line—during childhood is associated with poor adult health outcomes, for example, and in the 2016–2020 period, roughly one in every 12 of the County's children lived in such areas.²⁹ Food insecurity is especially harmful to children, who need adequate nutrition for their bodies to grow and their minds to develop, and 18.4 percent of Los Angeles children live in food-insecure households.³⁰ Among the County's public school students, 3.6 percent are homeless; stability is important for everyone, but children suffer particular harms from disruptions in their home lives.³¹

In addition, children have an additional set of needs that are distinct from those of adults. Satisfying these needs is essential to the development of capabilities required to lead lives of choice and value. Two areas in particular are protection and attachment.³² Young children's need for protection from harm is far greater than that of other age groups: they are small, comparatively helpless, and unable



I believe we need to provide more support to young people and children so they are better prepared, and that families truly give them that support and instill in them the belief that they can succeed and achieve their goals. We must give them the support and help they need to make it happen, because I believe everything starts with families.



Long Beach resident

Developing an index or other tool that captures key aspects of child well-being, such as the availability of affordable, high-quality early care and education or the prevalence of adverse childhood experiences, could be part of a future *Portrait of Los Angeles* project.

to defend themselves, and their immature, still-developing brains and bodies are particularly vulnerable to hazards of all sorts, from infectious diseases, polluted air, and nutritional deficits to accidents, neglect, and abuse, all of which can have lifelong impacts. Adverse events and environments thus do children disproportionate harm in the present and also increase their vulnerability to harm in the future. In 2022, roughly three in 10 Los Angeles children went through an adverse childhood experience, and one in six experienced at least two.³³ This speaks to the need for greater support to families with children, such as rental subsidies to ensure hazard-free housing, affordable childcare that keeps children safe while allowing their parents to work, and behavioral health services that support parents to be the mothers and fathers they want to be.

Also vital to children’s well-being and development is their attachment to their primary caregivers.³⁴ Primary relationships shape the child’s world, creating the context in which they learn about life and cope with its inevitable frustrations and sorrows as well as its joys. In order to thrive and eventually fulfill their human potential, children need a “secure attachment” with their parent or parents or another consistent caregiver. Secure attachment develops through positive, consistent interaction with loving, emotionally available caregivers who are attuned to the child and provide appropriate stimulation. Disruptions in attachment, which can come from a number of factors, ranging from maternal depression and family stress to household dissolution and the removal of a child from their home, thus imperil the development of capabilities, the exercise of choice, and the ability to form and maintain healthy relationships. In 2025, more than 9,500 LA County children were in foster care, evidence of serious disruptions in family relationships for those young people. Black children are disproportionately likely to be involved with the child welfare system.³⁵

Developing an index or other tool that captures these and other key aspects of child well-being, such as the availability of affordable, high-quality early care and education, the prevalence of adverse childhood experiences, chronic absenteeism, or juvenile arrests, could be part of a future *Portrait of Los Angeles* project.

Throughout this report, we supplement the HDI by drawing upon a host of child well-being indicators. In addition, we include here a dashboard of child well-being, which brings together a set of available indicators on children living in Los Angeles County. We have selected measures that are available by race and ethnicity as the countywide numbers obscure stark disparities critical to understanding how different groups of children are faring.



TABLE 1 Los Angeles County Child Well-Being Dashboard

	 ALL LA	 ASIAN	 BLACK	 LATINO	 NATIVE AMERICAN	 NHOPI	 WHITE
Health							
Births to mothers receiving first-trimester prenatal care (2020)	87.5%	88.3%	78.1%	84.5%	80.4%	73.0%	90.2%
Infants born at a low birthweight (2024)	7.6%	8.2%	12.7%	7.5%			6.0%
Teen births, rate per 1,000 (2021–2023)	7.8	0.4	10.8	11.0			1.8
No usual source of health care (2023–2024)	12.2%	12.9%	19.1%	12.2%			9.6%
Health status excellent or very good (2023–2024)	75.0%	79.8%	70.4%	68.7%			83.6%
Depression-related feelings among 11th graders (2021–2023)	36.0%	33.0%	37.0%	38.0%	26.0%	43.0%	31.0%
Alcohol/drug use in past month among 11th graders (2021–2023)	1.0%	7.0%	16.0%	13.0%	21.0%	13.0%	22.0%
Infant mortality, rate per 1,000 (2023)	4.0	2.7	8.9	4.3			2.6
Education							
Preschool enrollment for 3- and 4-year-olds (2019–2023)	48.0%	52.6%	46.2%	40.7%			65.2%
Public school enrollment (#) (2024–2025)	1.3 M	104,000	86,000	832,000	2,000	3,000	162,000
School connectedness rated high among 11th graders (2021–2023)	54.0%	55.0%	46.0%	53.0%	48.0%	71.0%	62.0%
Students meeting or exceeding grade-level standards in math (2024–2025)	39.3%	76.3%	22.6%	30.4%	32.2%	35.1%	58.3%
Students meeting or exceeding grade-level standards in English (2024–2025)	50.5%	78.6%	35.2%	43.3%	45.4%	48.3%	67.4%
Chronic absenteeism, miss 10% of school days or more (2024–2025)	20.5%	5.9%	32.5%	22.8%	29.9%	31.9%	14.8%
Students suspended (2024–2025)	1.8%	0.6%	5.4%	1.7%	4.2%	3.4%	1.4%
Students not completing high school (2024–2025)	7.4%	2.2%	11.2%	7.9%	10.6%	7.1%	5.4%
Youth disconnection rate (2019–2023)	11.9%	6.4%	20.3%	12.9%	13.4%	14.1%	9.1%
Living standards							
Children in poverty (2019–2023)	18.0%	10.0%	26.0%	22.0%	19.0%		8.0%
Broadband access (2022)	95.4%	97.6%	93.9%	94.4%	100.0%		98.1%
Protection, Attachment, Justice-Involvement							
Substantiated child maltreatment, rate per 1,000 (2024)	6.3	1.2	17.2	7.4	10.9		3.4
In foster care, rate per 1,000 (2025)	4.9	0.6	18.6	5.6	12.5		2.3
Gang membership (2017–2019)		2.0%	5.8%	4.2%	7.7%	3.1%	3.4%
Juvenile felony arrest, rate per 1,000 (2023)	3.5		16.1	3.3			1.1

Source: Please refer to the Methodological Note.

What the Human Development Index Reveals



Introduction

Variation by Demographic Group

Variation by Place

Who Lives Where and Why It Matters

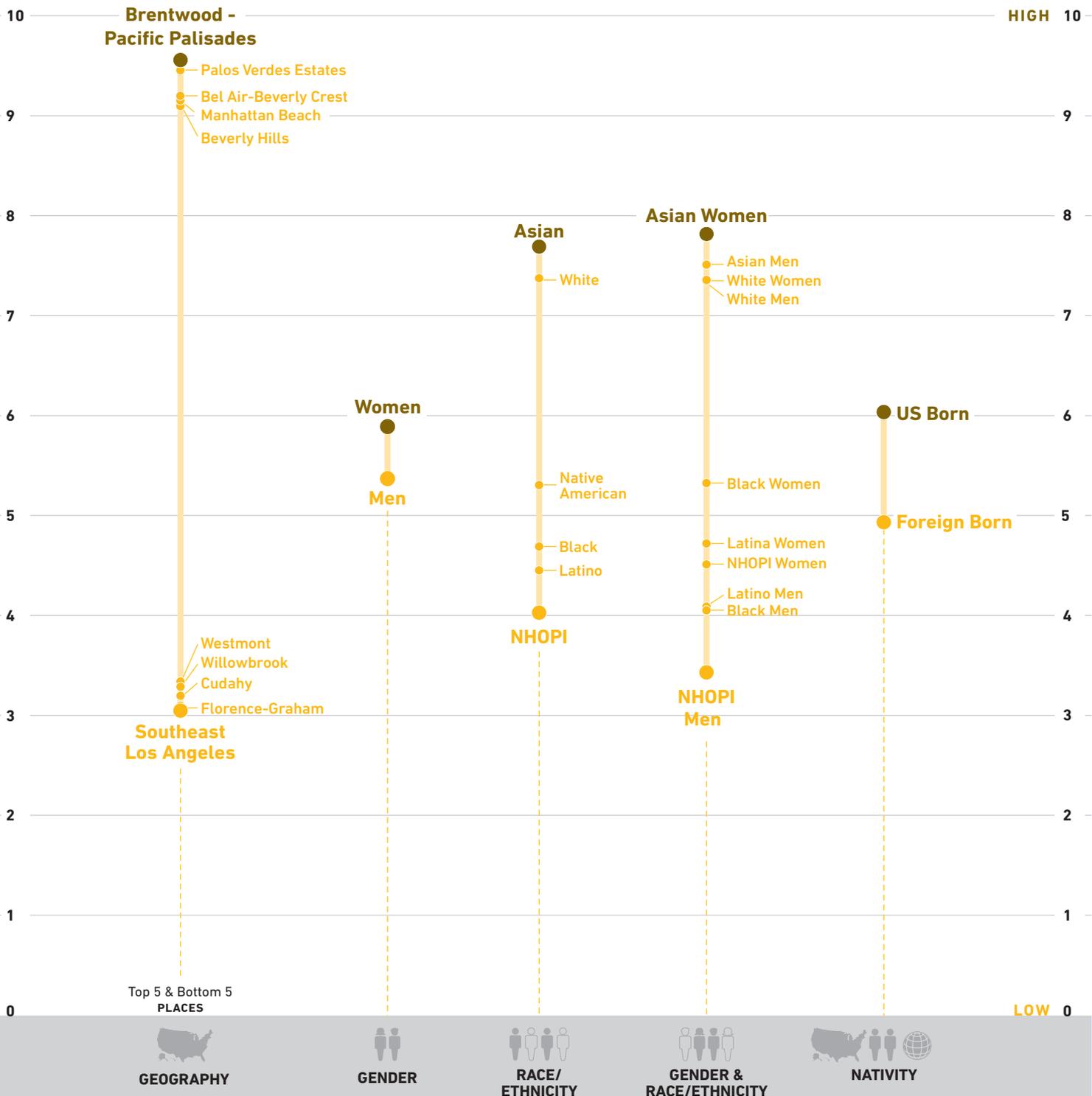
Los Angeles County Comings and Goings

HDI by Place: Change over Time

IN THIS SECTION

How Do We Stack Up?

Human Development Index



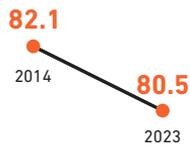
Introduction

An important benefit of the Human Development Index is that it allows for tracking progress over time.

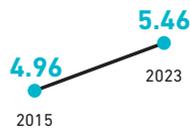
An important benefit of the Human Development Index is that it allows for tracking progress over time. In the first *Portrait of Los Angeles County*, which used data from 2015, the County's score was 5.43. In the years since the publication of that first report, the County's score rose to 5.64, a modest 3.9 percent improvement. Progress across the dimensions of the Index was uneven, however. While both educational attainment and earnings surged ahead, school enrollment was flat, and life expectancy at birth fell, largely a casualty of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 2017 *Portrait of Los Angeles County* included targeted goals, developed by the project's advisory committees described on **PAGE 167**, for each component of the HDI; the goals aimed at increasing the well-being of all Angelenos and narrowing the gaps between groups by 2025. No one could have predicted the scale of the COVID-19 pandemic and the profound impact it would have on society, the effects of which are still being felt today. The HDI target was 6.43, a 1-point increase. Although the overall HDI score in Los Angeles County did improve, the current score of 5.64 represents just 20 percent of the desired increase.

2015–2023 Change



Health. Of the HDI components, the one most directly affected by COVID-19 was health. Between the five-year periods 2010–2014 and 2019–2023, life expectancy at birth in Los Angeles County fell from 82.1 years to 80.5 years, a 1.6-year drop. This decrease is a striking departure from the target goal of a six-month increase and reflects the pandemic's devastating impact.



Education. The Education Index rose from 4.96 to 5.46 between 2015 and 2023, a half-point increase that brought this component just over the finish line. The targets were for enrollment and educational attainment both to increase by 10 percent. The enrollment rate for all young people ages 3 to 24 remained relatively unchanged from 2015 to 2023, dipping slightly from 79.5 percent to 79.3 percent, but educational attainment saw striking improvement, enough for the County to meet the education goal. The share of adults ages 25 and above with at least a bachelor's degree jumped from 30.9 percent in 2015 to 36.6 percent in 2023, an 18.4 percent increase. The share of adults in the County with graduate degrees shot up as well, from 10.8 to 13.6 percent, a 25.9 percent increase.



Income. Looked at one way, the County surpassed the earnings goal by a mile: median personal earnings went from \$30,700 in 2015 to \$44,600 in 2023, a \$13,900 jump. This eight-year period was marked by bouts of very high inflation, however; the Consumer Price Index rose 29 percent over this time, eroding the value of wages and salaries. If we adjust for inflation and present 2015 earnings figures in 2023 dollars, then the starting point is \$39,500 rather than \$30,700, bringing the increase to \$5,100, a few thousand dollars shy of the \$8,000 goal—but an improvement nonetheless. Further, increases were seen across all gender, racial, and ethnic groups for which changes could be reliably calculated. The gender gap in earnings did not improve, however; rather, it widened from \$7,500 in 2015 (adjusted for inflation) to \$9,300 in 2023.

Variation by Demographic Group

Los Angeles County's score on the American Human Development Index is 5.64 out of 10. Los Angeles has a slightly lower score than California as a whole, 5.82. Compared to their fellow Californians, Angelenos live longer, but despite improvements since 2015, they earn college and graduate degrees at lower rates; they also earn less.

Countywide outcomes conceal inequities that emerge when data are analyzed by gender, nativity, race and ethnicity, and locality. The disparities in well-being outcomes separating different demographic groups in Los Angeles are the focus of the rest of this section.

Gender. **Women** in Los Angeles County have a higher HDI score than **men**, 5.91 compared to 5.40. Women live longer than men—six years on average—and have more education, but men earn \$9,300 more. Women's score also improved more between 2015 and 2023 than men's score; it increased 7.8 percent, whereas men's score increased 4.4 percent. Women perform better on the HDI than men in every racial and ethnic group, but the gender gap is larger for Black and Latino Angelenos than for Asian or white Angelenos.

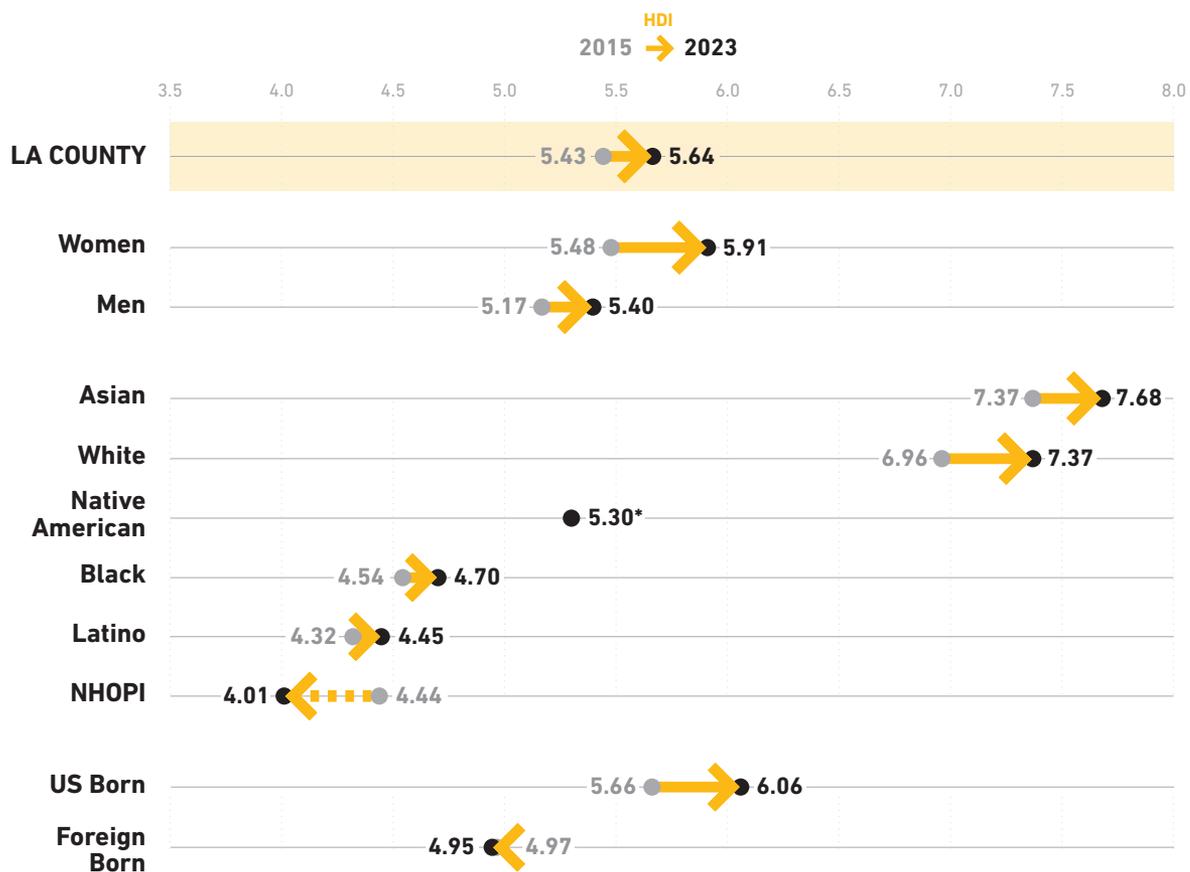
Nativity. Los Angeles is a land of immigrants; 33.6 percent of Angelenos are immigrants themselves, and over half the children in Los Angeles have at least one immigrant parent.³⁶ Immigration makes Los Angeles great: dynamic, diverse, entrepreneurial, exciting, accepting, open, and culturally rich. Immigrants immeasurably enrich the social, economic, and cultural life of Los Angeles, but they also have some distinct vulnerabilities, in addition to the recent ICE crackdown and the virulent anti-immigration sentiment coming from the current presidential administration. **US-born Angelenos** have a much higher HDI score than **foreign-born Angelenos**, 6.06 and 4.95, respectively. Foreign-born Angelenos enjoy a sizeable longevity advantage; their life expectancy at birth is 82.9, compared to 80.5 years for LA overall and 79.3 for US-born residents. One-third of foreign-born residents do not hold a high school diploma, however, which brings down their score and limits their options in the labor market; foreign-born Angelenos are 4.5 times as likely to lack a high school degree as US-born Angelenos. Roughly three in 10 foreign-born adults hold at least a college degree, compared to about four in 10 US-born adults. Earnings are strikingly dissimilar, with US-born workers outearning foreign-born workers by ten thousand dollars—\$49,700 compared to \$39,700. Among Asian, Latino, and white Angelenos, the US-born have a higher HDI score; among Black Angelenos, however, the foreign-born have a much higher score (6.71) than the US-born (4.62).

Los Angeles is a land of immigrants; 33.6 percent of Angelenos are immigrants themselves, and over half the children in Los Angeles have at least one immigrant parent.

Race and ethnicity. The six racial and ethnic groups in this report appear as defined by the US Office of Management and Budget. They include Asian, Black, Latino, Native American, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and white; each of these groups has an HDI score. All those who identify as Latino or Hispanic are grouped together, regardless of their racial background.

In addition, in Los Angeles County, some 415,000 residents identify as two or more or other races; this group of Angelenos makes up 4.3 percent of the County's total population. The majority, 77 percent, identify as two races, 16 percent identify as some other race, and 7 percent identify as three or more races.³⁷ Among Angelenos who identify as two or more or other races, 31 percent identify as Asian and white, 13 percent identify as Black and white, and 10 percent identify as some other race and white. We are not able to calculate HDI scores for these subcategories of the "two or more or other" racial and ethnic group due to the way in which death data are collected and coded.

FIGURE 1 Human Development Index by Gender and by Race and Ethnicity, 2015–2023



Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty. Dotted lines mean change over time is not statistically significant.
 Source: Measure of America calculations using data from the California Department of Public Health, 2010–2014 and 2019–2023 and US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2015 and 2023. Native American and NHOPI data using ACS 2011–2015 and 2019–2023.

Asian Angelenos, who make up 15 percent of the County population, have the highest HDI score of any group, 7.68, thanks to their extremely high life expectancy, a striking 86.2 years—88.6 years for women and 83.5 years for men. More than half of Asian residents of Los Angeles County have earned a bachelor’s degree or higher, and 86.4 percent of young people ages 3 to 24 are enrolled in school, the highest rate among any racial or ethnic group. They have the second-highest median personal earnings, \$56,500. Their score improved 4.2 percent between 2015 and 2023, slightly more than the score for Los Angeles as a whole.

Asian women and men have similar educational outcomes but, like other demographic groups, diverge when it comes to life expectancy and earnings: women live 5.1 years longer, but men earn about \$10,000 more.

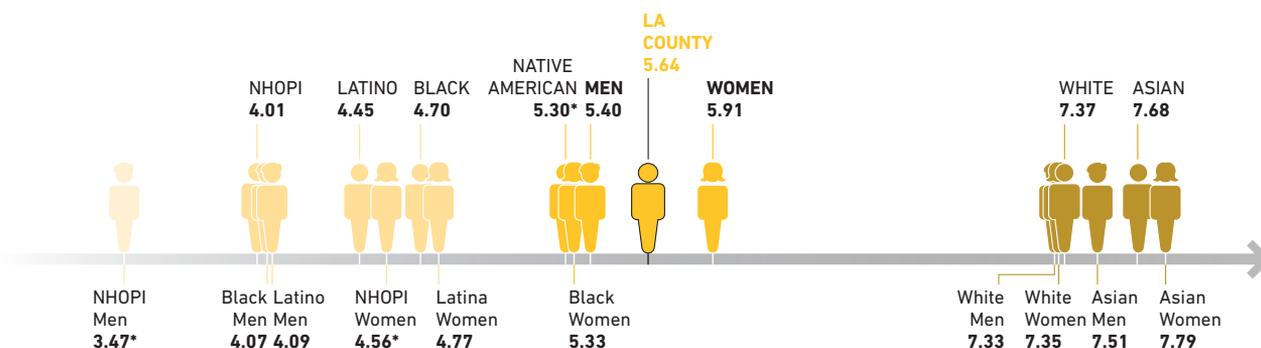
“Asian” is a demographic category that the US Office of Management and Budget defines as people “having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent.”³⁸ The category is thus highly diverse, encompassing US-born citizens whose families have called the United States home since the 1800s as well as Asian immigrants, some long settled and others newly arrived. These immigrants came from extraordinarily varied circumstances—from uprooted refugees carrying the trauma of war and displacement to affluent elites in search of educational and economic opportunities. Fortunately, thanks to the activism of Asian advocacy groups over many years, California requires that data be collected by Asian subgroup, allowing us to calculate HDI scores for nine such groups. Asian subgroup HDI scores range from 9.38 for Indian Angelenos to 4.76 for Cambodian Angelenos. Angelenos who trace their heritage to India have the highest level of well-being of any group in Los Angeles. Our 2021–2022 *Portrait of California* found that Indian residents statewide had this same score, though Taiwanese

TABLE 1 Human Development Index for Asian Subgroups in LA County, 2023

RANK	HDI	LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (years)	EDUCATION INDEX	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL (% of adults 25+)	AT LEAST BACHELOR'S DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (% ages 3 to 24)	MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS (\$)
1	9.38	88.7	9.16	5.7	74.7	39.3	86.2	80,400
2	8.90	87.6	9.47	4.0	77.4	36.4	89.4	66,800
3	8.04	85.8	7.94	2.9	56.3	16.9	87.2	64,100
4	7.82	87.0	7.80	7.1	57.6	17.8	86.7	55,300
5	7.58	87.6	7.21	15.7	52.2	20.5	85.7	52,300
6	7.26	85.3	7.03	4.9	56.9	10.2	81.5	53,800
7	7.01	87.2	6.82	12.1	49.1	16.0	83.6	44,400
8	6.87	89.6	5.20	26.1	34.1	10.7	82.6	45,700
9	6.42	79.9	7.34	12.4	53.8	18.7	85.7	49,300
10	4.76	79.4	4.04	31.1	23.4	4.1	80.8	39,900

Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

FIGURE 2 Human Development Index by Gender and by Race and Ethnicity, 2023



Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty.

Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2023. Native American and NHOPI using ACS 2019–2023.

The gender gap in well-being between Black women (5.33) and Black men (4.07) is the largest of the County's racial and ethnic groups.

Californians edged them out with a score of 9.58. These are among the highest scores seen in Measure of America's work across the United States.

The Asian category often includes Pacific Islanders, usually under the Asian Pacific Islander (API) umbrella. There are frequently good reasons for combining these groups, such as for solidarity and advocacy purposes. In this instance, however, doing so would mask the comparatively lower life expectancy, educational outcomes, and earnings of Pacific Islanders. This group is discussed below in the Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders (NHOPI) section.

White residents of Los Angeles County make up 24.6 percent of the County's population. They have the second-highest HDI score, 7.37; the highest Education Index score; and the highest median personal earnings, \$70,200, driven by the outsized earnings of white men. White men outearn white women by a broad margin—\$80,300 compared to \$59,300, a \$21,000 gap—and earn the most by far of all racial/gender combinations. White women have the highest rate of bachelor's degree and graduate degree attainment. The HDI score for white residents increased 5.9 percent between 2015 and 2023, the greatest increase among the major racial and ethnic groups.

Native American residents, 0.2 percent of the population, have an HDI score of 5.30. Although they represent just a small portion of the County population, more Native Americans live in Los Angeles than in any other US city.³⁹ Their life expectancy at birth, 79.5 years, is less than the countywide average; this figure is less reliable than other life expectancy estimates due to the small size of the population. The share of adults ages 25 years and up with bachelor's and graduate degrees is below the County average, but median personal earnings are slightly higher, at \$45,400.

Black residents comprise 7.4 percent of Los Angeles County's total population. Their HDI score, 4.70, is pulled down by a low life expectancy at birth. At just 72.9 years, it is the second-lowest among the major racial and ethnic groups in Los Angeles County and 7.6 years less than the County average. More than nine in 10

TABLE 2 Human Development Index by Gender and by Race and Ethnicity, 2023

RANK	HDI	LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (years)	EDUCATION INDEX	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL (% of adults 25+)	AT LEAST BACHELOR'S DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (% ages 3 to 24)	MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS (\$)
CALIFORNIA	5.82	80.0	5.66	15.1	37.6	14.8	78.8	48,100
LOS ANGELES COUNTY	5.64	80.5	5.46	18.7	36.6	13.6	79.3	44,600
GENDER								
1 Women	5.91	83.6	5.66	18.5	37.8	14.3	80.4	40,400
2 Men	5.40	77.5	5.26	18.9	35.3	12.9	78.2	49,700
RACE/ETHNICITY								
1 Asian	7.68	86.2	7.56	10.6	55.2	18.9	86.4	56,500
2 White	7.37	80.2	7.62	4.4	56.4	23.2	81.6	70,200
3 Native American	5.30*	79.5*	4.70	15.7	20.5	7.1	80.5	45,400
4 Black	4.70	72.9	5.43	8.3	32.8	12.9	76.2	47,100
5 Latino	4.45	80.7	3.29	33.9	16.5	5.1	76.9	35,900
6 NHOPI	4.01	71.2	3.84	11.9	19.3	5.4	71.0	48,700
Two or More or Other			7.72	5.7	53.1	20.4	86.0	55,000
GENDER AND RACE/ETHNICITY								
1 Asian Women	7.79	88.6	7.53	11.1	54.6	17.9	87.1	51,400
2 Asian Men	7.51	83.5	7.62	10.0	56.0	20.1	85.8	61,200
3 White Women	7.35	82.8	7.66	4.3	56.7	24.1	81.4	59,300
4 White Men	7.33	77.8	7.59	4.4	56.1	22.3	81.8	80,300
5 Black Women	5.33	76.7	5.69	8.3	35.8	14.8	76.6	47,500
6 Latina Women	4.77	84.3	3.61	33.3	18.4	6.1	78.7	31,800
7 NHOPI Women	4.56*	75.3*	4.58	12.3	23.2	7.8*	76.0	43,500
8 Latino Men	4.09	77.2	2.98	34.4	14.6	4.1	75.3	39,600
9 Black Men	4.07	69.1	5.14	8.3	29.4	10.8	75.8	46,900
10 NHOPI Men	3.47*	65.9	3.10*	11.5	14.8		66.5	58,600
Native American Men			4.83	15.9	22.0	7.2*	81.2	48,100
Native American Women			4.57	15.5	19.3	7.0*	79.6	42,900
Two or More or Other Men			7.55	5.2	50.6	20.2	85.3	60,500
Two or More or Other Women			7.89	6.1	55.5	20.6	86.8	49,800

Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty.

Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2023. Native American and NHOPI data using ACS 2019–2023.

Black adults over age 25 hold a high school diploma, the second-highest rate in the County, and personal earnings, \$47,100, are \$2,500 above the County median.

The gender gap in well-being between Black women (5.33) and Black men (4.07) is the largest of the County’s racial and ethnic groups. Black men’s score is very

much affected by their comparatively short life expectancy, just 69.1 years—11.4 years less than the countywide average. The better well-being outcomes for Black women are driven by a higher life expectancy (76.7 years), higher rates of bachelor’s and graduate school degree attainment, and slightly higher earnings. Black Angelenos are the only racial and ethnic group in the County for whom women’s earnings are equal to or higher than men’s earnings; women earn \$600 more per year than men. Although they live longer than Black men, Black women’s life expectancy is shorter than that of Los Angeles County women overall, 83.6 years.

The score for Black Angelenos increased 3.5 percent between 2015 and 2023, slightly less than the countywide improvement.

Los Angeles County’s **Latino** residents are the largest of the city’s racial and ethnic groups, making up 48.3 percent of the population. Overall, they have the second-lowest HDI score, 4.45; the highest rate of adults over age 25 who lack a high school diploma (roughly one in three); and the lowest median earnings, \$35,900. Life expectancy for Latino residents in Los Angeles County is 80.7 years, the second-longest after Asian Angelenos. Latina women, with a score of 4.77, live 84.3 years on average, longer than members of all other demographic groups except for Asian women. Latina women have slightly better educational outcomes than Latino men but earn \$7,800 less; in fact, at \$31,800, theirs are the lowest earnings among all race/gender combinations.

The HDI score for Latino residents increased less than the countywide score between 2015 and 2023, just 3.0 percent. The gender gap was significant, however: Latina women’s score increased 6.7 percent, the largest improvement among the race/gender combinations, whereas Latino men’s score fell by 1.7 percent.

Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders (NHOPi) represent 0.2 percent of the population. Theirs is the demographic group with the County’s lowest HDI score, 4.01. The very low life expectancy for this group, 71.2 years, is a principal cause. Educational outcomes are also well below the countywide average. Personal earnings, on the other hand, \$48,700, are higher than the Los Angeles County median. NHOPi men have the lowest life expectancy of all racial/gender combinations, 65.9 years, and NHOPi boys and young men ages 3 to 24 have the lowest school enrollment rate, just 66.5 percent.

Latina women usually are people who are supporting families, and I think it makes it harder for them to access care and services that they need because it’s a matter of, well, survival.



Department of Mental Health stakeholder

Variation by Place

This section explores well-being by place within LA County; the places included are cities; Census-Designated Places in unincorporated parts of the County; and, since the City of Los Angeles is so populous, the 34 Community Plan Areas within it. These different geographies are presented on **PAGES 176** and **179** in the reference section. We also include an analysis of places within Long Beach, the County's second-most-populous city (see **BOX 1**).

The range of well-being by place is larger than the range by race and ethnicity, gender, or nativity. The highest HDI is found in Brentwood-Pacific Palisades, which scores 9.58 out of 10. Keep in mind that these data predate the January 2025 Palisades Fire that devastated much of this area.

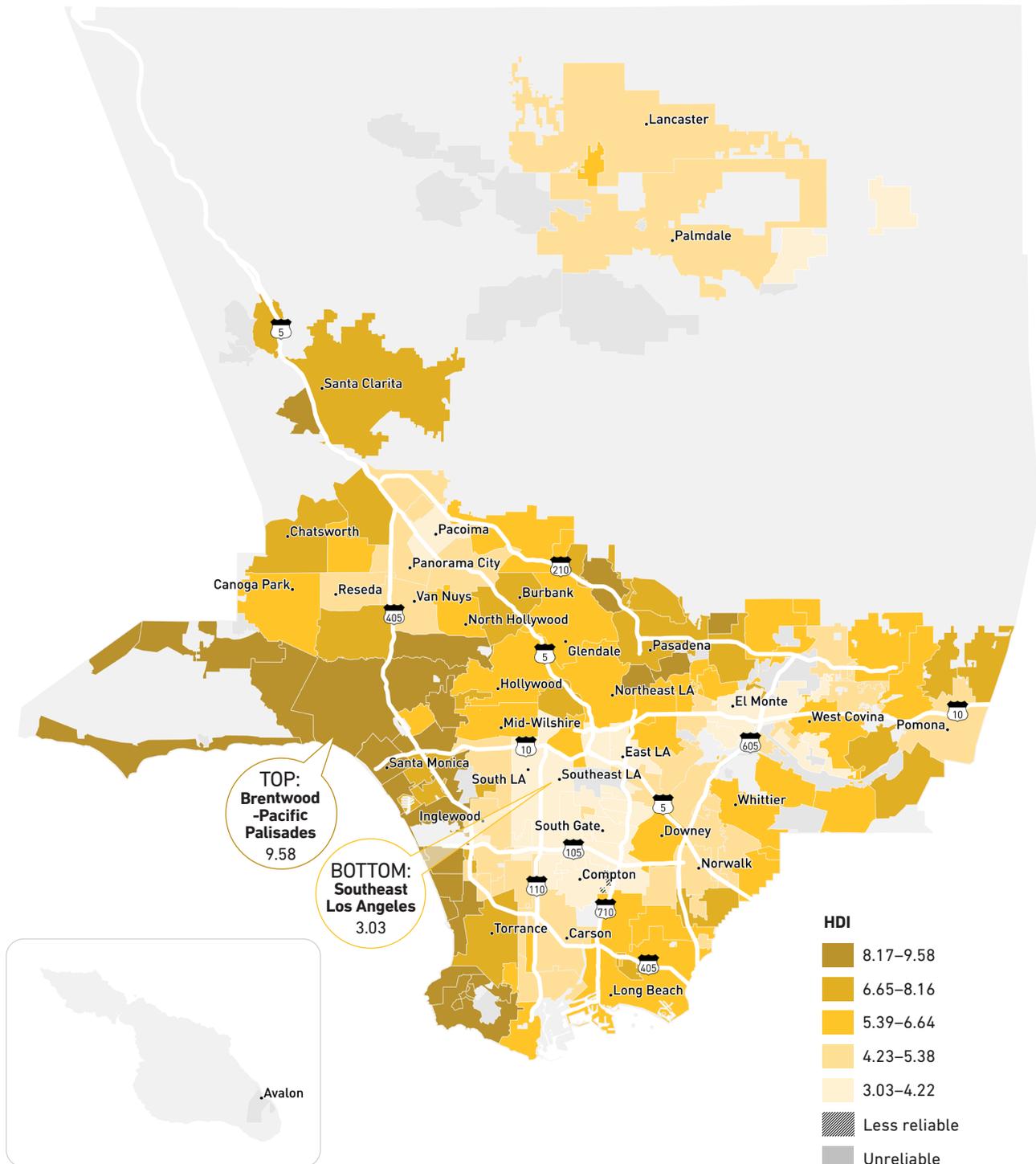
TABLE 3 Ten Highest-and Lowest-Scoring Places in Los Angeles County, 2023

RANK		HDI	LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (years)	EDUCATION INDEX	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL (% of adults 25+)	AT LEAST BACHELOR'S DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (% ages 3 to 24)	MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS (\$)
TOP TEN									
1	Brentwood-Pacific Palisades	9.58	88.0	9.61	1.1*	80.4	39.2	90.9	103,500
2	Palos Verdes Estates	9.49	87.0	9.72	2.3*	78.5	39.3	92.0	120,200
3	Bel Air-Beverly Crest	9.20	86.1	9.20	3.7*	73.7	39.5	86.7	98,000
4	Manhattan Beach	9.16	85.4	9.40	1.2*	79.0	37.3	88.7	114,200
5	Beverly Hills	9.09	87.7	9.49	3.3	69.4	34.8	89.6	71,700
6	Rolling Hills Estates	9.07	85.9	9.58	2.4*	72.2	31.5	90.6	78,800
7	Malibu	9.04	84.6	9.63	1.5*	71.6	33.1	91.1	83,400
8	La Cañada Flintridge	9.00	83.4	9.75	2.4*	75.5	38.5	92.4	110,200
9	Calabasas	8.98	85.1	8.98	1.8*	71.3	33.9	84.3	89,800
10	Rancho Palos Verdes	8.98	84.3	9.32	1.9	69.1	33.5	87.8	95,000
BOTTOM TEN									
1	Bell Gardens	3.51	78.8	2.46	47.1	6.9	1.1*	80.7	30,200
2	Lennox	3.51	78.8	2.20	45.8	11.9	2.3*	74.5	31,500
3	East Rancho Dominguez	3.46*	77.5	1.82	47.3	7.4	1.8*	73.6	35,100
4	Sun Village	3.44	71.8	2.58	31.2	7.9*	1.9*	73.8	43,800
5	Compton	3.42	76.2	2.30	35.6	10.9	3.3	70.8	35,000
6	Westmont	3.32	74.4	3.22	29.1	12.7	4.1	76.3	32,600
7	Willowbrook	3.26	74.1	2.78	39.4	13.3	2.6*	76.8	34,400
8	Cudahy	3.18	78.8	1.94	46.1	6.2	0.7*	75.3	28,300
9	Florence-Graham	3.08	77.2	1.85	52.1	7.5	1.6	76.2	30,200
10	Southeast Los Angeles	3.03	77.7	1.78	49.9	7.2	1.7	74.5	29,000

Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty.

Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

MAP 1 Human Development Index by Place, 2023



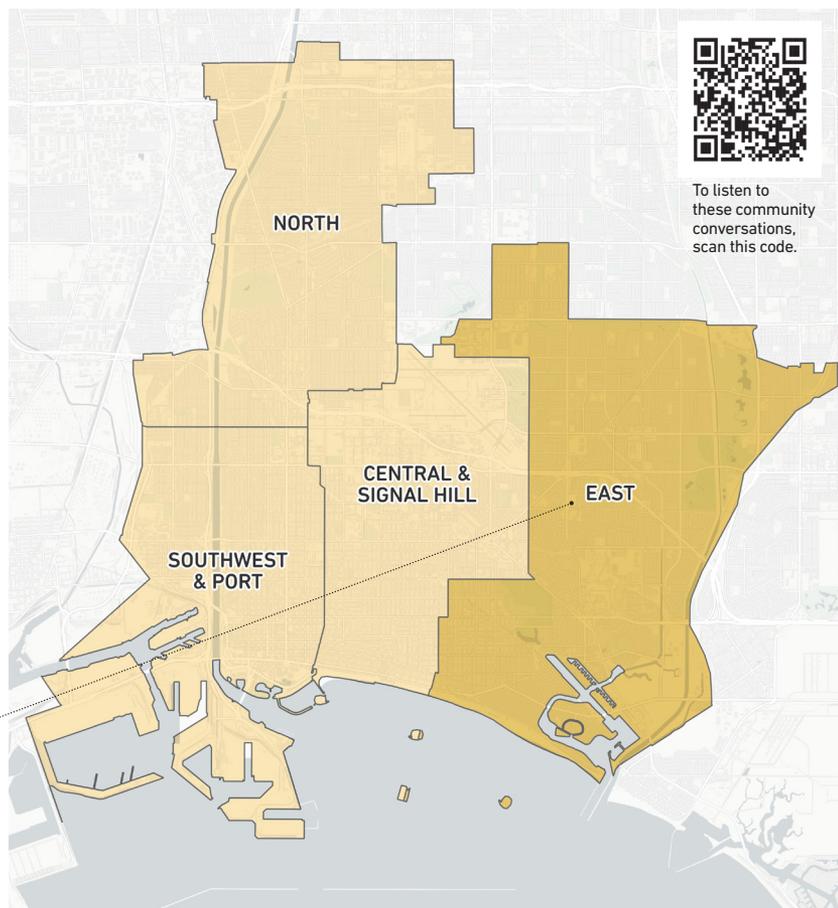
Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

BOX 1 Spotlight on Long Beach

Long Beach is the seventh-largest city in California, with a population of just over 450,000. While the city as a whole has an HDI of 5.40, a closer look reveals stark disparities in well-being across different areas.

The Census Bureau breaks Long Beach into four parts: North, Southwest & Port, East, and Central & Signal Hill.

Long Beach East has a much higher score, 7.79, than the other areas, which range from 4.39 to 4.83.



To listen to these community conversations, scan this code.

TABLE 4 Human Development in Long Beach

RANK	HDI	LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (years)	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL (% of adults 25+)	AT LEAST BACHELOR'S DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (% ages 3 to 24)	MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS (\$)
LOS ANGELES COUNTY	5.64	80.5	18.7	36.6	13.6	79.3	44,600
Long Beach East	7.79	83.0	5.5	54.3	22.2	85.0	69,900
Long Beach Central & Signal Hill	4.83	77.5	21.5	32.8	10.4	74.9	42,300
Long Beach North	4.65	78.2	21.8	24.7	8.3	77.0	39,200
Long Beach Southwest and Port	4.39	77.0	26.2	27.0	8.2	76.5	38,400

Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using data from the US Census Bureau ACS, 2019–2023.



Health. Long Beach (East) has the highest life expectancy in the city at 83.0 years, which is 4.8 to 6.0 years longer than in other parts of Long Beach. The share of the population without health insurance in the east is just 3.4 percent, compared to 12.5 percent in Long Beach (Southwest and Port), which has the city’s lowest life expectancy at 77.0 years.



Education. Educational attainment is similar across the central and western parts of Long Beach, where between one-quarter and one-third of adults have earned a bachelor’s degree. Long Beach (East) stands apart, with over half of its adult population holding a degree, a pattern that aligns with the highest school enrollment—85 percent—in the city.



Income. Median earnings in Long Beach (North) and Long Beach (Southwest and Port) are \$39,200 and \$38,400, respectively, both falling below Long Beach (Central)’s earnings of about \$42,300. However, despite the higher income levels, Long Beach (Central) has a higher child poverty rate, 25.3 percent, than Long Beach (North). Residents of Long Beach (East) have the highest median earnings, around \$69,900, and the lowest child poverty rate, 4.3 percent.



Housing. Citywide, 56.0 percent of households face high rent burdens, highlighting housing as a major concern in a city where nearly 60 percent of residents are renters. The challenge is even more pronounced in Long Beach (Southwest and Port), where over 60 percent of households are rent burdened, and 74.0 percent are renters.



Youth Well-Being. The youth disconnection rate—the share of young people who are neither working nor in school—is highest in Long Beach (Southwest and Port) at 19.3 percent. This rate is more than double the rate in Long Beach (Central), which stands at 7.4 percent. Long Beach (North) falls in between, with a youth disconnection rate of 14.8 percent—still above the Los Angeles County rate of 11.3 percent.

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អស់មួយជីវិតរបស់
ពួកគេ។



Long Beach resident

Translation from Khmer:
Please support the poor and homeless living on the streets by providing safe shelters and essential resources. In particular, let’s ensure that elderly individuals have access to housing, food, and financial support for the rest of their lives.

Where I live in East Los Angeles, I have to drive like 20 minutes to downtown to get to Whole Foods or get to Trader Joe's. And then also, the pricing of this food [in my neighborhood] usually is overpriced. And...a lot of these places in the wealthier areas actually they're underpriced. You know, so a lot of the grocery stores [there] have, you know, prices that are more friendly, I guess you could say, versus like, if you go to a Superior in the hood, the prices are skyrocketed. But like, why do we have higher prices in poorer neighborhoods, and you know, cheaper prices in the wealthier neighborhoods?



LA County young adult

This tragedy underscores the ways in which capabilities like high earnings, good health, and access to knowledge, so critical to well-being, are not guarantees. The nine other places in the top 10 are Palos Verdes Estates, Bel Air-Beverly Crest, Manhattan Beach, Beverly Hills, Rolling Hills Estates, Malibu, La Cañada Flintridge, Calabasas, and Rancho Palos Verdes; most of these places are on the Westside, along the coast, or in the foothills. In all these communities, life expectancy is well above the County average, nearly all adults have a high school diploma, between seven and eight in every 10 adults have at least a bachelor's degree, and earnings range from \$71,700 to \$120,200.

The 10 areas with the lowest scores on the HDI, ranging from 3.03 to 3.51, are found mostly in the core of the County, with the exception of Sun Village in the Antelope Valley.

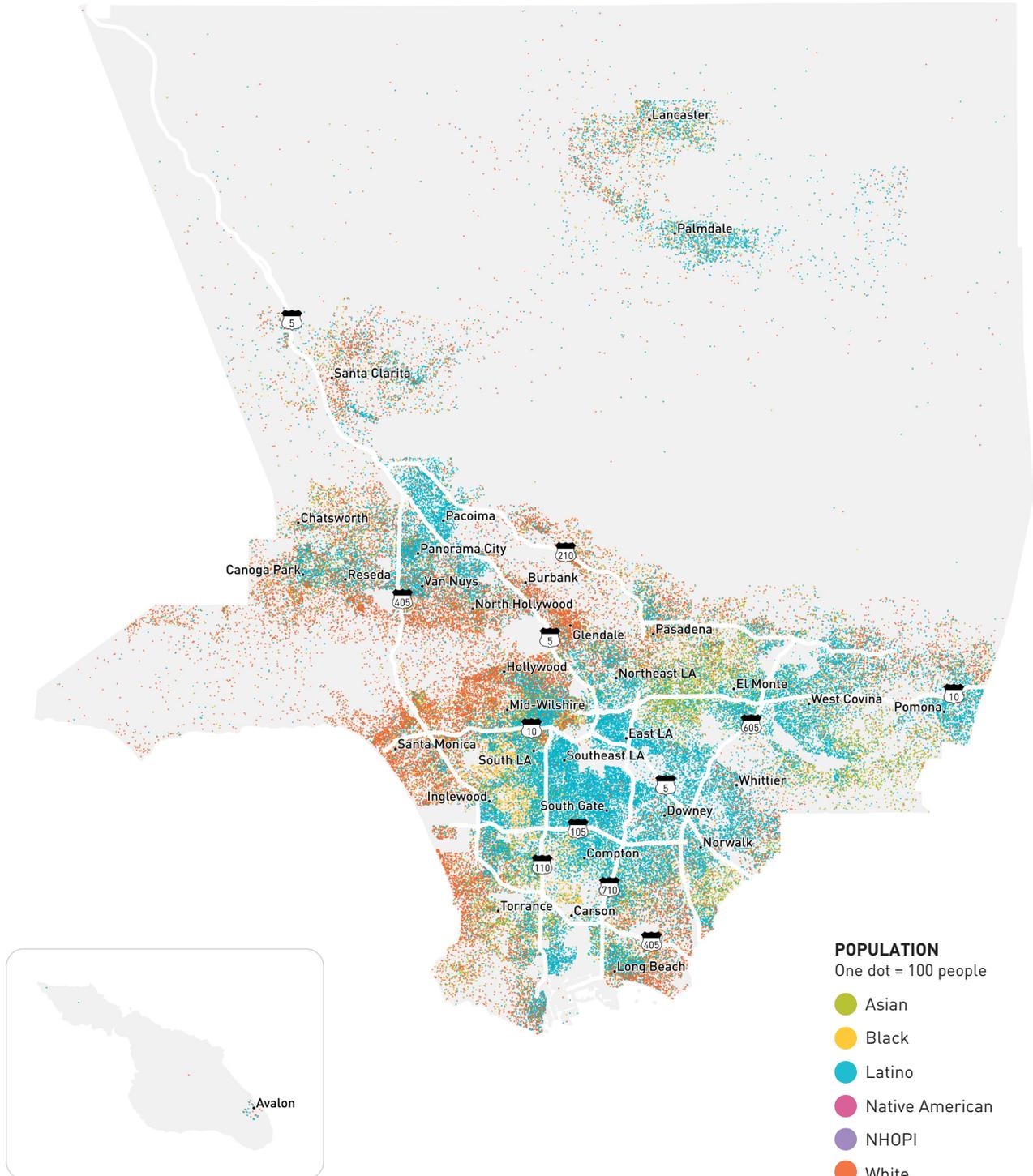
Who Lives Where and Why It Matters

The significant overlap between well-being scores by racial and ethnic group and by place is due to residential segregation—the physical separation of racial and ethnic groups in different neighborhoods. Segregation initially resulted from federal legislation and policy that was supported by economic and social institutions like banks and churches, upheld by the courts, and put into daily practice by the real estate industry, sellers and homeowners' associations, and restrictive covenants—all with the purpose of ensuring that white people could live in all-white communities and the effect of consigning people of color, particularly Black people, to the least desirable residential areas.⁴⁰ Although its legal underpinnings are long dismantled and many common practices that reinforced it are now illegal, the residential segregation of the past continues to cast its long shadow into the present.

Residential segregation can be detrimental to people's well-being because where they live gives form to their daily routine and defines key aspects of quality of life. It affects the jobs, schools, and community amenities like parks, arts venues, and grocery stores that people can access; determines level of exposure to risks of all sorts, among them crime, pollution, noise, harsh policing, and wildfires; influences the condition and value of people's homes; and shapes children's social world and life chances. Where a person lives can reinforce ties to their community's history, traditions, and cultural heritage in ways that can offer strength or represent a painful form of abandonment or displacement. Being driven from one's place—whether by fast-moving catastrophes like the 2025 fires or by more gradually evolving forces like gentrification—is a painful and alienating experience. For those excluded—either financially or by virtue of past and present discrimination, or both—from opportunity-rich communities like those found in many parts of Los Angeles County, segregation harms well-being and hinders mobility.

Residential segregation is still very much part of life in Los Angeles, as the map on the next pages show. Also still in evidence is the way in which Black and Latino Angelenos disproportionately live in areas with low HDI scores and high exposure to risks like pollution and food deserts.

MAP 2 Population by Race and Ethnicity



Source: Measure of America calculations using USC Neighborhood Data for Social Change, 2023.

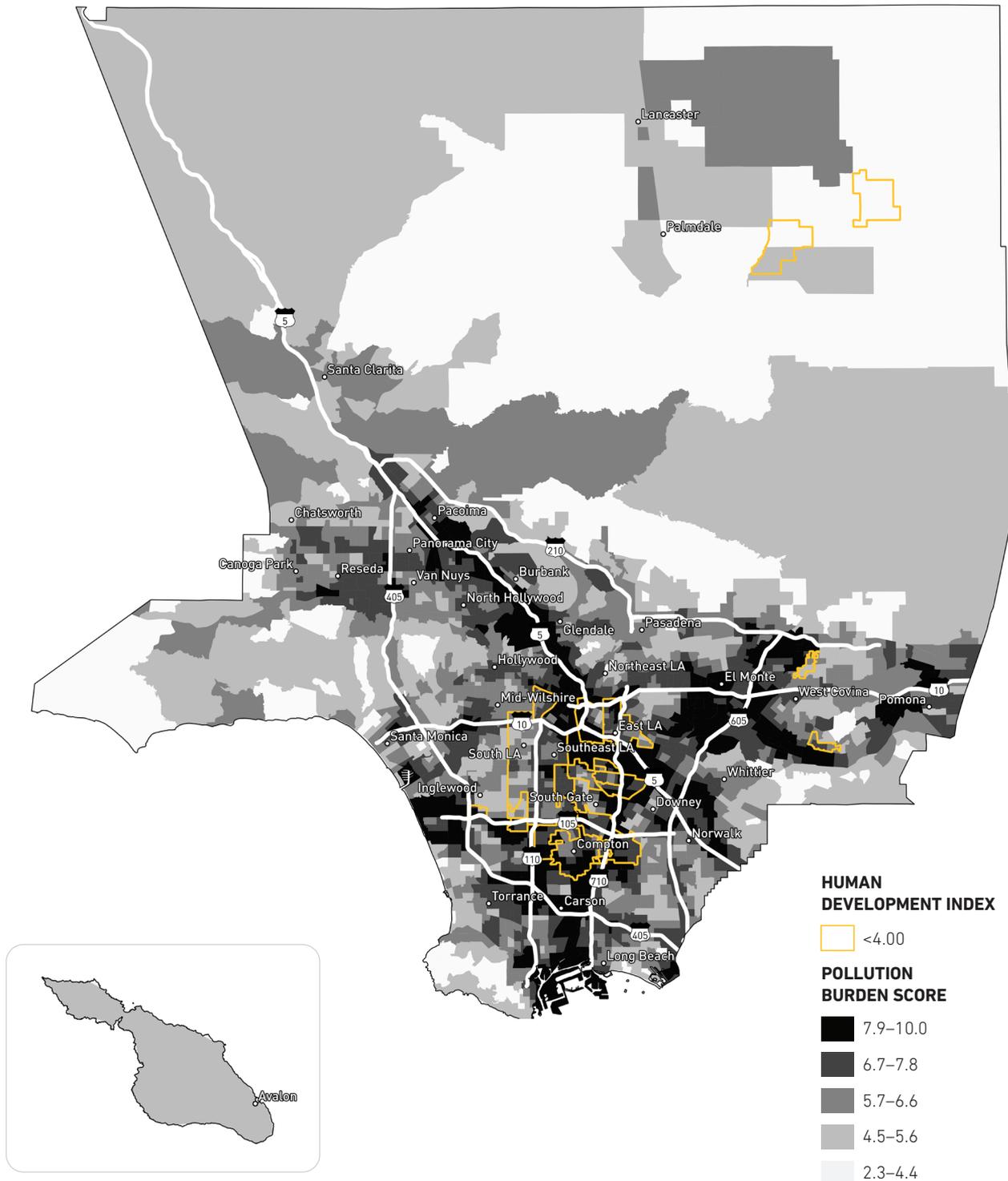
Living in a clean environment is essential to a long and healthy life, and the harmful effects of pollution on both physical and mental health, from higher levels of stress to increased risk of heart disease, are extensive and well documented.⁴¹ Angelenos lose nearly a year of life expectancy due to polluted air.⁴² While Los Angeles has seen decades of progress in reducing air pollution, it remains one of the most polluted cities in the country.⁴³ Furthermore, the impacts of environmental hazards differ across neighborhoods within the county.

The California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment CalEnviro-Screen tool shows which communities are most affected by—and vulnerable to the effects of—many sources of pollution. The Human Development Index provides a way to identify the communities that may be least able to reject the siting of polluting industries or mitigate their harmful effects. Capabilities like a decent standard of living and access to knowledge not only allow the more affluent to move to less polluted areas—they also grant greater political voice with which to keep polluting industries and infrastructure out of their communities.⁴⁴ Not surprisingly, there is much overlap between areas with high pollution and low HDI scores.

While high levels of air pollution afflict all of Los Angeles County, low-income residents are disproportionately impacted by hazardous air.⁴⁵ Of the 23 communities with HDI scores below 4.00, 18 are clustered together around two major freeways: the I-710 and the I-110. The I-710 is a vital commercial traffic route connecting the San Pedro Bay port complex (which handles 31 percent of all seaborne imports to the United States) to railyards and distribution centers in the center of the County, with up to 260,000 cars and over 40,000 diesel trucks traveling along it every day.⁴⁶ The I-110 is even busier—it ranks as one of the top 25 most-traveled routes in the country, carrying over 315,000 vehicles a day.⁴⁷ While Los Angeles County as a whole scores 6 out of 10.0 on the Pollution Burden scale, these communities' scores tend to fall within the 7–9 range.⁴⁸ In most of these communities, life expectancy is below the County average of 80.5 years, and more than one-third of adults have not completed high school. In all 23 of the lowest-scoring communities, median personal earnings fall below the County average.

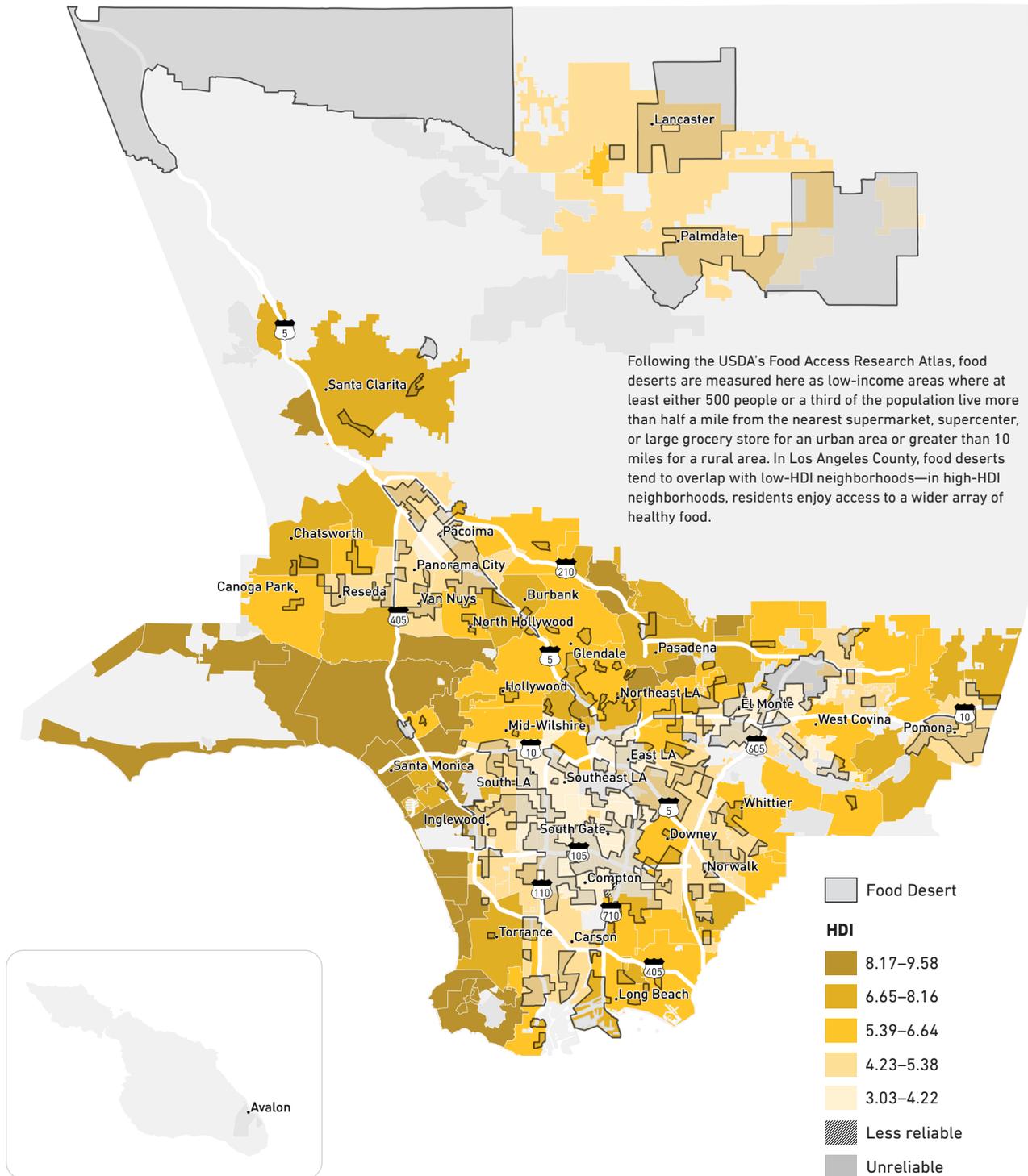
In the wake of the January 2025 wildfires, environmental concerns in Los Angeles are more relevant now than ever. Reports have shown toxins lingering in the air and soil months after the fires died down, the full consequences of which are yet to be fully understood.⁴⁹ And the majority of affected residents remained displaced and continued to struggle with housing support a year after the fires.⁵⁰ Disasters like these will surely happen again; fire activity is on the rise in California as average annual temperatures increase steadily.⁵¹ As environmental degradation worsens, LA County faces growing challenges surrounding health, safety, and displacement.

MAP 3 Pollution Burden in LA County



Source: Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment CalEnviroScreen 4.0, 2021.

MAP 4 Food Deserts Are Concentrated in Low-HDI Areas



Source: USDA Food Access Research Atlas, 2019.

TABLE 5 Human Development Index by Place and Supervisorial District

 DISTRICT 1 Supervisor Hilda L. Solis		 DISTRICT 2 Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell		 DISTRICT 3 Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath		 DISTRICT 4 Supervisor Janice Hahn		 DISTRICT 5 Supervisor Kathryn Barger	
Diamond Bar	7.45	Manhattan Beach	9.16	Brentwood - Pacific Palisades	9.58	Palos Verdes Estates	9.49	La Cañada Flintridge	9.00
Walnut	7.26	Westchester - Playa del Rey	8.88	Bel Air - Beverly Crest	9.20	Rolling Hills Estates	9.07	San Marino	8.82
La Verne	6.75	Hermosa Beach	8.77	Beverly Hills	9.09	Rancho Palos Verdes	8.98	Sierra Madre	8.82
Silver Lake - Echo Park - Elysian Valley	6.66	Culver City	8.71	Malibu	9.04	Cerritos	7.65	South Pasadena	8.66
Alhambra	6.35	Redondo Beach	8.58	Calabasas	8.98	Torrance	7.49	Stevenson Ranch	8.65
Hacienda Heights	6.30	El Segundo	8.27	Agoura Hills	8.93	Signal Hill	6.78	Sherman Oaks - Studio City - Toluca Lake - Cahuenga Pass	8.17
Monterey Park	6.05	Palms - Mar Vista - Del Rey	7.72	Westlake Village	8.91	East Whittier	6.48	La Crescenta-Montrose	7.95
Rowland Heights	6.05	View Park-Windsor Hills	7.28	Topanga	8.62	La Mirada	6.44	Arcadia	7.88
San Gabriel	5.99	Marina del Rey	7.21	Santa Monica	8.59	Lakewood	6.03	Altadena	7.54
Northeast Los Angeles	5.90	Del Aire	7.00	Venice	8.55	San Pedro	5.80	Claremont	7.35
West Covina	5.83	Wilshire	6.11	West Los Angeles	8.44	Whittier	5.76	Pasadena	7.31
Downtown	5.83	West Carson	5.89	Sherman Oaks - Studio City - Toluca Lake - Cahuenga Pass	8.17	Lomita	5.69	Burbank	6.76
Covina	5.28	Carson	5.36	Encino - Tarzana	7.93	Long Beach	5.40	La Verne	6.75
Avocado Heights	5.08	Gardena	4.95	Palms - Mar Vista - Del Rey	7.72	Downey	5.39	Castaic	6.74
Montebello	4.94	Harbor Gateway	4.84	West Hollywood	6.97	West Whittier-Los Nietos	5.21	Santa Clarita	6.65
Rosemead	4.76	West Adams - Baldwin Hills - Leimert	4.79	Chatsworth - Porter Ranch	6.77	Santa Fe Springs	4.99	East San Gabriel	6.56
Azusa	4.71	Alondra Park	4.71	West Hollywood	6.97	South Whittier	4.94	Glendale	6.48
West Puente Valley	4.54	Hawthorne	4.66	Granada Hills - Knollwood	6.67	Norwalk	4.89	Temple City	6.40
Pomona	4.34	Inglewood	4.52	Canoga Park - Winnetka - Woodland Hills - West Hills	6.39	Hawaiian Gardens	4.76	Monrovia	6.35
Citrus	4.23	Lawndale	4.38	Westwood	6.37	Pico Rivera	4.76	San Dimas	6.24
Baldwin Park	4.16	South Los Angeles	3.82	Hollywood	6.18	Artesia	4.70	Hollywood	6.18
El Monte	4.11	West Athens	3.72	Wilshire	6.11	Bellflower	4.61	Glendora	6.17
La Puente	4.11	West Rancho Dominguez	3.72	Northridge	5.97	Commerce	4.37	Duarte	5.75
Valinda	4.05	Lennox	3.51	North Hollywood - Valley Village	5.49	Wilmington - Harbor City	4.32	Sunland - Tujunga - Lake View Terrace - Shadow Hills - East La Tuna Canyon	5.73
South El Monte	4.00	East Rancho Dominguez	3.46*	Reseda - West Van Nuys	5.29	Walnut Park	4.30	North Hollywood - Valley Village	5.49
Vincent	3.97	Compton	3.42	Van Nuys - North Sherman Oaks	5.20	South Gate	4.08	Quartz Hill	5.48
Westlake	3.89	Westmont	3.32	Sylmar	5.06	Bell	4.05	Charter Oak	5.18
Boyle Heights	3.80	Willowbrook	3.26	San Fernando	4.48	Paramount	3.94	Lancaster	4.61
East Los Angeles	3.63	Florence-Graham	3.08	Mission Hills - Panorama City - North Hills	4.38	Huntington Park	3.77	Palmdale	4.47
South San Jose Hills	3.62	Southeast Los Angeles	3.03	Sun Valley - La Tuna Canyon	4.27	Lynwood	3.55	Sun Valley - La Tuna Canyon	4.27
				Arleta - Pacoima	4.16	Maywood	3.52	Lake Los Angeles	3.76
						Bell Gardens	3.51	Sun Village	3.44
						Cudahy	3.18		

Note: Places are listed according to the Supervisorial District in which they are primarily located. Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty. Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

Los Angeles County Comings and Goings

Between 2016 and 2020, 325,100 people moved out of Los Angeles County to other places in the United States each year, on average. About 267,500 new residents replaced departing residents annually, resulting in a net decrease each year of 57,600 residents. From 2020 to 2024, including international outflows, Los Angeles County lost 66,500 residents annually. Who is moving to Los Angeles and who is leaving?⁵²

Nearly four in 10 people who moved to Los Angeles came from other parts of California. Over one-fifth of new residents came from Los Angeles' neighboring counties. Other common places people moved from are the Bay Area and New York City; these account for about 5 and 4 percent of new arrivals, respectively. About 37 percent of new arrivals came from other parts of the United States, and a quarter came from abroad.

Of those who moved away from Los Angeles County but remained in the United States, 56 percent remained in California and 44 percent left the state altogether. Los Angeles' neighboring counties were a common destination for those who left; about 30 percent of those departing the county moved to Orange, Ventura, Kern, or San Bernardino Counties. **Nearly twice as many people moved away from Los Angeles to its neighboring counties as moved in;** about 51,000 new arrivals in Los Angeles County hailed from its neighboring counties, while 94,000 residents of Los Angeles moved to them. Nearly 5 percent of departing Angelenos moved to the five-county Bay Area (Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties). The most commonly moved-to counties outside of California are Clark County in Nevada (home to Las Vegas) and Maricopa County in Arizona (home to Phoenix). These counties make up about 4 and 3 percent of departures, respectively.

Movers either into or out of Los Angeles tend to be younger and better educated than the County median. This combination of youth and higher levels of education suggests that many of these movers are recent college graduates relocating for new jobs. Those who moved within the County also tend to be younger but have similar levels of educational attainment to those who didn't move at all. In general, young people move more frequently than older people. Fifty-five percent of adults who moved to Los Angeles had at least a bachelor's degree, compared to 35 percent of those who already lived in Los Angeles, perhaps because people with bachelor's degrees have more choice in the labor market than those without.⁵³

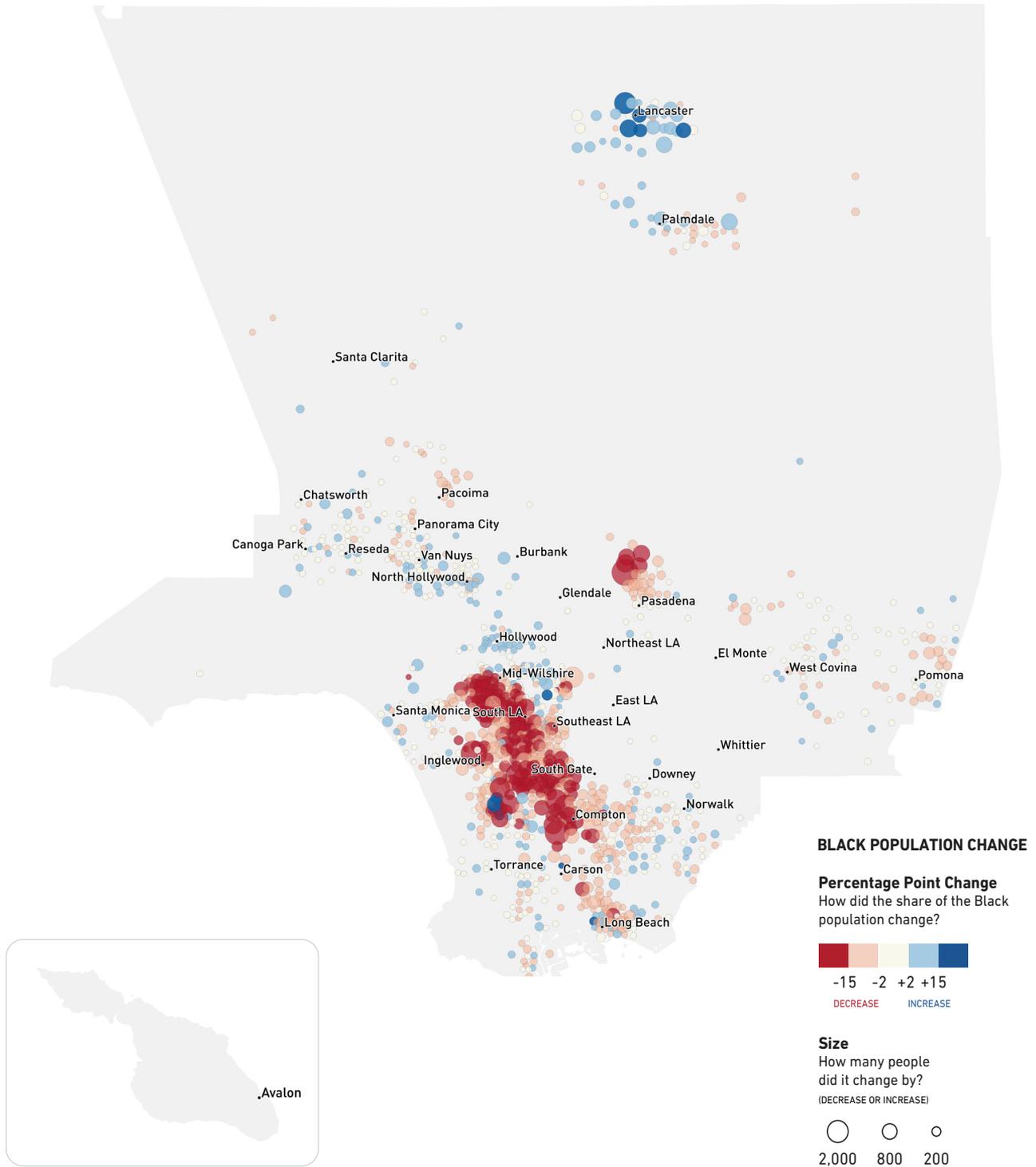
Within Los Angeles County, too, there is significant variation in the movement of different population groups. **Black Angelenos have shown substantial movement away from the central and south central regions of the city.** The neighborhoods between Compton and Leimert Park have experienced significant reductions in their Black population over this period, though they are still some of the main hubs for Black residents of Los Angeles. Areas farther away from this central region have shown some increase in Black population, with some gains in the percentage of Black residents found in the Antelope Valley. Gentrification and a lack of affordability—in particular, burdensome housing costs—are important factors associated with the movement of Black residents to smaller cities and suburbs in Southern California.⁵⁴

A lot of families move here and migrate here hoping for a better experience, a better opportunity because the housing apparently at this point is more affordable than anywhere else. However, there are many challenges once those families are up here. There's a lack of transportation, there's a lack of childcare providers and extracurricular activities for kids. And if there are those opportunities, they are not accessible for everybody.



Antelope Valley resident

MAP 5 Black Population Change in Los Angeles, 2000–2023



Source: Measure of America calculations using USC Neighborhood Data for Social Change, 2000 and 2023.

Survey data do not suggest a slowing down of this trend. LA's Council District 8, which includes Crenshaw, Leimert Park, and Baldwin Hills, experienced a 42 percent drop in Black population in recent years. In a survey of 250 area residents, **30 percent said they didn't expect to be living there in another five years.**⁵⁵

HDI by Place: Change Over Time

Six places across the County saw their HDI score increase by more than 1 point from 2015 to 2023: Agoura Hills, Signal Hill, Palms-Mar Vista-Del Rey, Culver City, Downtown, and Northeast Los Angeles.

Agoura Hills experienced the greatest increase in HDI: 7.53 to 8.93—an increase of 1.40 points—due to sizable improvements across health, education, and earnings. Life expectancy went from 81.8 to 84.7 years; the share of residents with at least a bachelor's degree rose from 51.3 to 66.5 percent; school enrollment for residents ages 3 to 24 improved from 85.9 to 88.8 percent; and inflation-adjusted earnings jumped from \$67,600 to \$89,400.

In **Signal Hill**, the HDI went from 5.43 to 6.78. This community saw the greatest positive increase in life expectancy across geographies within Los Angeles County, from 78.4 years to 82.0 years—an additional 3.6 years lived, on average. Educational indicators improved slightly but are in roughly the same neighborhood as they were in 2015. Median personal earnings increased from \$46,800 to \$61,200.

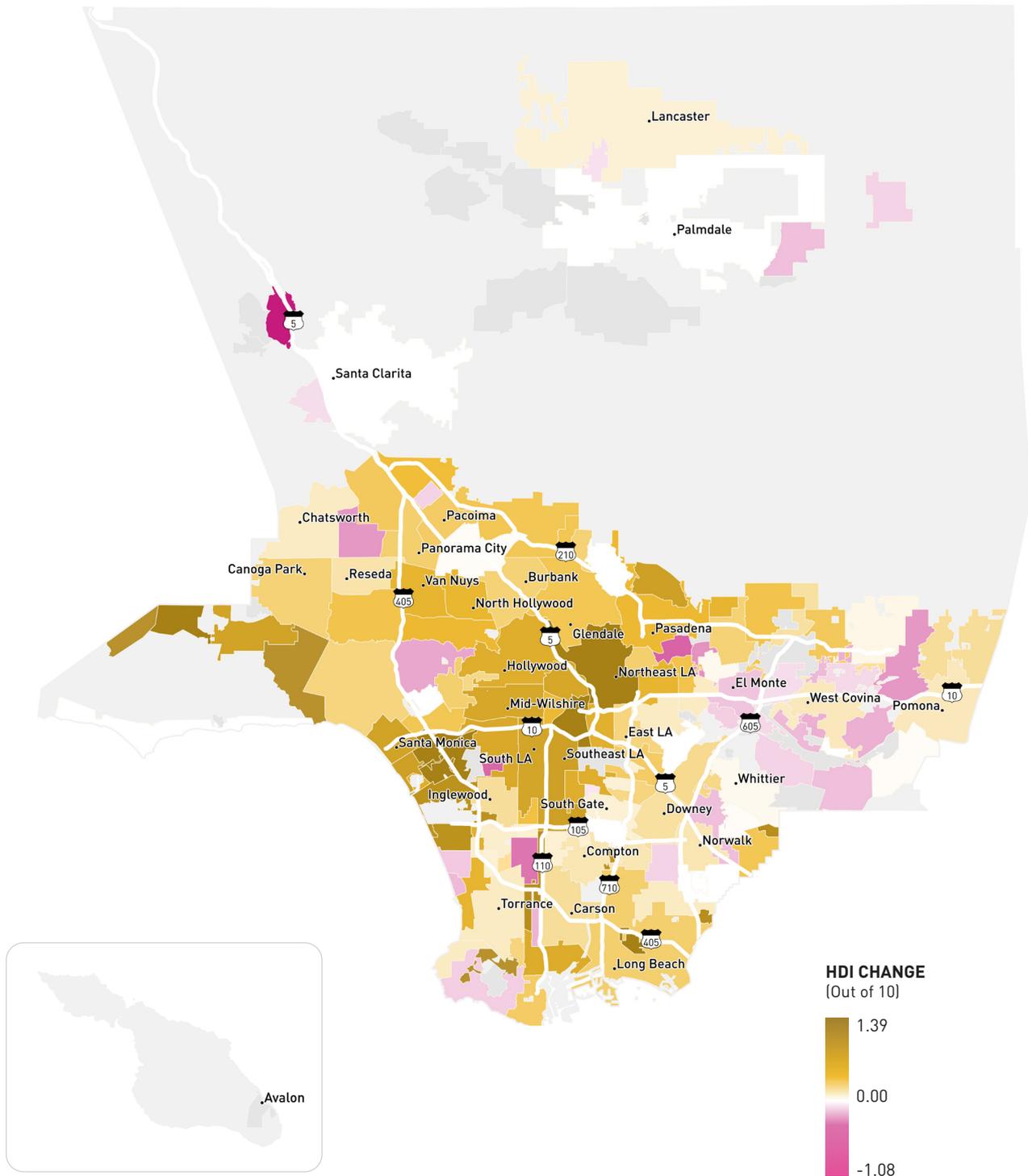
Palms-Mar Vista-Del Rey also enjoyed a notable increase in its human development score, from 6.40 to 7.72. Life expectancy increased by nearly two years, from an already high 82.4 years to an even-higher 84.1 years. The share of adults with a bachelor's degree or higher went from 52.6 percent to 63.2 percent, and school enrollment rose from 74.7 percent to 77.2 percent. Median personal earnings also increased, from \$48,400 to \$66,600.

Culver City experienced a large upswing in HDI, too: from 7.56 to 8.71. Life expectancy remained flat at 83.5 years—a long life expectancy by any measure—but bachelor's degree attainment went from 53.4 percent to 64.9 percent. School enrollment improved from 82.3 percent to 87.5 percent. Earnings increased dramatically, from \$64,800 to \$87,600—a \$22,800 increase, the third highest across the County.

Downtown Los Angeles saw significant improvement as well, from 4.73 to 5.83 on the HDI. The share of residents without a high school diploma shrank from 26.5 percent to 16.3 percent, bachelor's degree attainment went from 35.4 to 45.9 percent, and earnings increased from \$42,990 to \$59,700.

The HDI in **Northeast Los Angeles** rose to 5.90 from 4.85; as in Downtown LA, this change was driven by improvement in education and earnings indicators. The share of residents here without a high school diploma declined from 30.9 to 21.9 percent, residents with a bachelor's degree or higher increased from 25.4 to 36.5 percent, and earnings improved from \$31,600 to \$43,500.

MAP 6 HDI Change Over Time, 2015–2023



Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2010–2014 and 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using data from the US Census Bureau ACS, 2011–2015 and 2019–2023.

Even though Southeast Los Angeles still has the lowest HDI of any place at 3.03, it has made notable headway from 2.26 in 2015.

Even though **Southeast Los Angeles** still has the lowest HDI of any place at 3.03, it has made notable headway from 2.26 in 2015. The share of residents without a high school diploma went from 55.3 percent to 49.9 percent, those with at least a bachelor's degree went from 4.5 to 7.2 percent, and median personal earnings increased from \$21,800 to \$29,000. Life expectancy stayed flat at 77.7 years. This neighborhood didn't experience an HDI increase over 1.00, unlike the communities mentioned above, but a 0.77-point increase is still an above-average improvement. Accelerated investments in this community can continue to pay dividends, as would redoubling efforts to improve health outcomes and bring educational and standard-of-living indicators in line with the rest of the County.

Four communities in Los Angeles County had human development scores decrease by more than 0.5 points since 2015: **Castaic**, **San Marino**, **View Park-Windsor Hills**, and **Gardena**.

Castaic is an unincorporated community with the largest negative swing in HDI—a 1.07-point decrease from 7.81 to 6.74 driven primarily by life expectancy estimates moving from 88.9 years in 2015 to 80.3 years in 2023. The 2023 estimate is based on a roll-up of data from 2019 to 2023, so this includes more pandemic years than the LA County Department of Public Health's single-year life expectancy estimate of 82.6 for Castaic in 2022. Additionally, school enrollment in Castaic went from 86.4 percent to 79.8, enough to drag down the area's Education Index. Earnings saw a slight uptick, from \$61,700 to \$65,300.

In **San Marino**, a well-off neighborhood by most measures, three factors combined to drive HDI from 9.43 in 2015 to the latest reading of 8.82. Life expectancy dropped slightly from 86.5 years to 85.6 years—still a high life expectancy, but one affected by COVID-19. The share of adults with a bachelor's degree or higher remains strong at 80.2 percent, up from 71.1 in 2015, but the share of those ages 3 to 24 enrolled in school dropped from 92.1 to 87.7 percent—pulling down the Education Index score. Median earnings also dropped, from a very high inflation-adjusted \$100,600 to \$74,400. Disaggregating median earnings by gender shows that men in San Marino typically earn \$109,400 annually while women earn \$57,600—an unusually large chasm between female and male earnings.

View Park-Windsor Hills saw a 0.6-point decline in HDI, from 7.88 in 2015 to 7.28 in 2023. This was driven primarily by decreases in health and education. The life expectancy estimate for the neighborhood went down by 1.7 years—83.3 years to 81.6 years. There was a sharp decline in enrollment—the share of those ages 3 to 24 enrolled in school dropped from 91.2 to 74.9 percent.

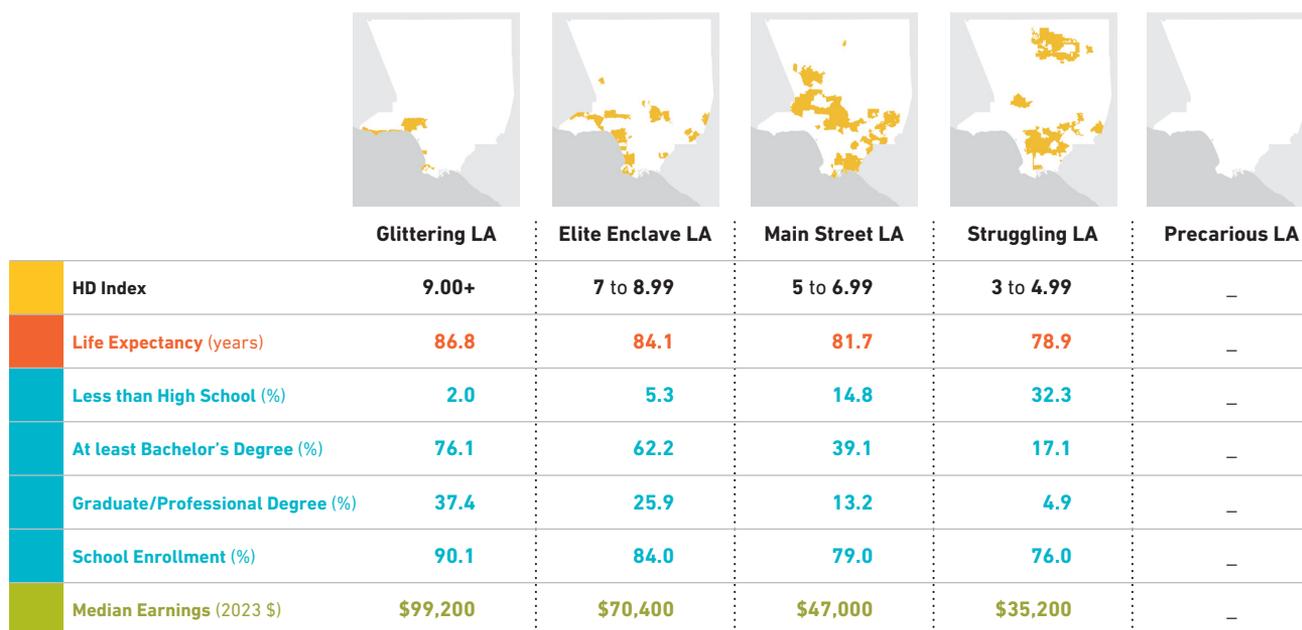
The HDI in **Gardena** went from 5.46 to 4.95, driven by a sharp decline in life expectancy from 83.5 years in 2015 to 78.9 years in 2023. This outweighed a slight uptick in educational outcomes—the share of adults with a bachelor's or higher degree went from 23.2 percent to 28.0 percent—and flat median earnings, which were \$38,800 in 2015 and \$39,800 in 2023, an increase of \$1,000 easily erased by the increased cost of living.

Living in The Five LAs

Looking at countywide human development highs and lows is informative; the striking differences in well-being between top-scoring areas like Palos Verdes Estates and Manhattan Beach and the County’s bottom-scoring areas like Florence-Graham and Cudahy help make clear how closely our chances for human flourishing are tied to the places we call home. But most Angelenos don’t live in either well-being extreme; rather, they find themselves somewhere along the vast space in the middle.

In this section, we sort the 149 cities, Census-Designated Places, and City of Los Angeles Community Plan Areas featured in this report into Five Los Angeles Counties based on where they fall on the American Human Development Index. Doing so offers a way to understand how index scores along the 10-point scale translate into the day-to-day realities and real-life opportunities of regular people. The Five Los Angeles Counties framing, based initially on the Five Californias introduced in *A Portrait of California 2011*, was also featured in *A Portrait of Los Angeles 2017*. Each of the Five LAs contains a wide range of outcomes, and not everyone shares all the attributes of the Los Angeles in which they live; nonetheless, the composite scores and indicators, which are calculated using US government and State of California data, reflect outcomes of the typical resident. Each Los Angeles community is unique in its combination of human development outcomes, demographics, environment, resources, history, and more; nonetheless, those with similar HDI scores share a great deal.

While each of the Five LAs is different from the others in terms of the choices and opportunities available to its residents, none are cut off from or unaffected by what happens in the rest of the County. Rather, the Five LAs are deeply interconnected: the



Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

decisions people make in Glittering Los Angeles profoundly affect the well-being of people in the others; the challenges to well-being and human security that people in Struggling LA experience affect what happens countywide. For example, decisions that people living in Elite Enclave Los Angeles make to forgo buses for Ubers or public schools for private ones remove powerful, influential stakeholders from critical public systems on which most Angelenos rely. Someone who has never taken a bus is unlikely to show up at a city council meeting to advocate for more frequent service or expanded routes—they have no skin in the game—and research consistently shows that politicians are far more responsive to the demands of affluent constituents than to poor or middle-income constituents.⁵⁶ When the rich opt out of public systems, the quality of those services tends to diminish. Similarly, ICE raids that keep immigrant Angelenos understandably afraid to leave their houses cause labor shortages in industries from construction and agriculture to childcare and hospitality that affect everybody.⁵⁷ When uninsured people who don't have a regular doctor must rely on emergency rooms for routine care, the result is long waits and overcrowding for anyone with a medical emergency.

The share of Angelenos living in each of the Five LAs has changed since the 2017 report, as have the overall scores. A positive trend is worth noting: this time around, no communities scored below 3.00 on the HDI, meaning that no city, Census-designated place, or City of Los Angeles community plan area qualifies for inclusion in the category of Precarious LA. The HDI went up in both Glittering and Elite Enclave LA, but down by 3.1 percent in Main Street LA and 6.7 percent in Struggling LA: overall things got better for people at the top of the scale and worse for those in the middle. This includes life expectancy; between the periods 2010–2014 and 2019–2023, life expectancy inched up in Glittering LA and Elite Enclave LA but fell by 1.2 years in Main Street LA and 2.6 years in Struggling LA. The lion's share of increases in earnings were captured in Glittering LA, where median person earnings rose 46 percent between 2015 and 2023; everywhere else, increases were on par with or well below the countywide increase of 12.9 percent. More Angelenos lived in Glittering LA (23.0 percent more) and Main Street LA (36.1 percent more) in 2023 than in 2015, fewer in both Elite Enclave LA (9.4 percent less) and Struggling LA (25.9 percent less). This reflects improved scores that nudged communities up into the next-higher category.

A positive trend is worth noting: this time around, no communities scored below 3.00 on the HDI.

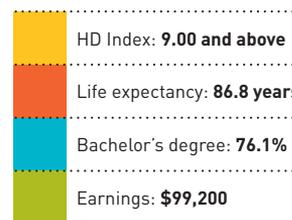
1 | The Five LAs Glittering LA

Glittering LA comprises eight places: two City of Los Angeles neighborhoods, five cities that hug the Pacific Coast, and one city in the foothills of the Verdugo Mountains. With HDI scores of 9.0 or above—a higher level of well-being than that found almost anywhere else in the United States—people living in Glittering LA have unmatched freedom to pursue the goals that matter to them and are able to offer their children a cornucopia of advantages and opportunities. Living in Glittering LA does not, however, come with an ironclad human security guarantee. The very top-scoring place in Los Angeles County, Brentwood-Pacific Palisades, suffered catastrophic loss during the January 2025 Palisades Fire, which essentially burned most of Pacific Palisades to the ground. Thus, this description of Glittering LA comes with a huge caveat: the very people whose score was highest when calculated using 2023 data are now grappling with worlds of loss.

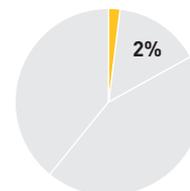
Life expectancy in Glittering LA is 86.8 years—about 6.3 years longer than the County average and 0.4 years longer than reported in the 2017 *Portrait of Los Angeles*. That Glittering LA gained life expectancy between the 2010–2014 and 2019–2023 periods is striking, given that the County as a whole lost 1.6 years during that same period. Virtually all adults completed high school, more than three in four adults have at least a four-year bachelor's degree, and more than one in three hold graduate degrees. Residents of Glittering LA, who already had the highest educational attainment in 2015, also gained the most ground in terms of the share of adults with graduate degrees. These educational credentials translate into high earnings: median personal earnings in Glittering LA are \$99,200, up an astonishing 46 percent since 2015 (adjusted for inflation), more than triple the rate of increase for the County as a whole. The poverty rate is 5.7 percent, less than half the countywide rate. Two in three households own their own homes.



Glittering LA Stats



% OF LA COUNTY POPULATION



Total number
194,500



Under age 18
22.2%

Median personal earnings in Glittering LA are \$99,200, up an astonishing 46 percent since 2015, more than triple the rate of increase for the County as a whole.

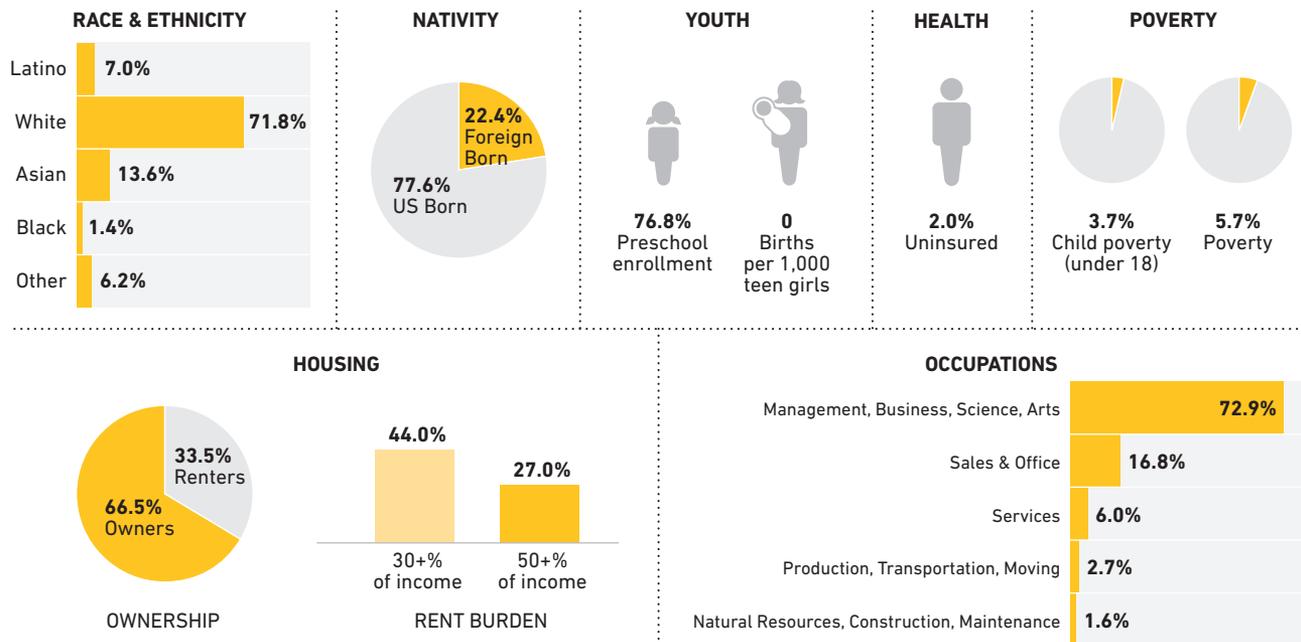
Outcomes for children are overwhelmingly positive. Seventy-seven percent of 3- and 4-year-olds attend preschool, the highest share among the Five LAs but less than the 83.5 percent in 2015. The child poverty rate is 3.7 percent. Parents in Glittering LA have the resources required to provide enriching environments and experiences that promote emotional and cognitive development, from book-filled bedrooms and private tutoring to engaging summer pursuits and activities tailored to their talents and interests.

Just 194,500 Angelenos (2.0 percent of Los Angeles County) call Glittering LA home; housing costs that easily run into the millions put these high-HDI communities out of reach for all but a few. The share of population that is white is 72 percent, up nearly 10 percent since 2015. The share that is Asian, on the other hand, has decreased from 20.2 percent in 2015 to 13.7 percent in 2023, a drop of about one-third; San Marino, where seven in 10 residents are Asian, was in Glittering LA in the last report but dropped into Elite Enclave LA this time around, which may account for some of the decline in the share of Asian residents. Just 1.4 percent of residents are Black and only 7.0 percent are Latino, striking in a county that is nearly half Latino. Slightly more than one in five residents were born outside the United States, the lowest share of foreign-born residents of any of the five LA Counties. Glittering LA is home to the oldest population; 22.6 percent of residents are at least 65 years old—nearly double the share in Struggling LA.

TABLE 1
HDI in GLITTERING LA

	HD INDEX
Brentwood-Pacific Palisades	9.58
Palos Verdes Estates	9.49
Bel Air-Beverly Crest	9.20
Manhattan Beach	9.16
Beverly Hills	9.09
Rolling Hills Estates	9.07
Malibu	9.04
La Cañada Flintridge	9.00

FIGURE 1 Glittering LA Well-Being Statistics

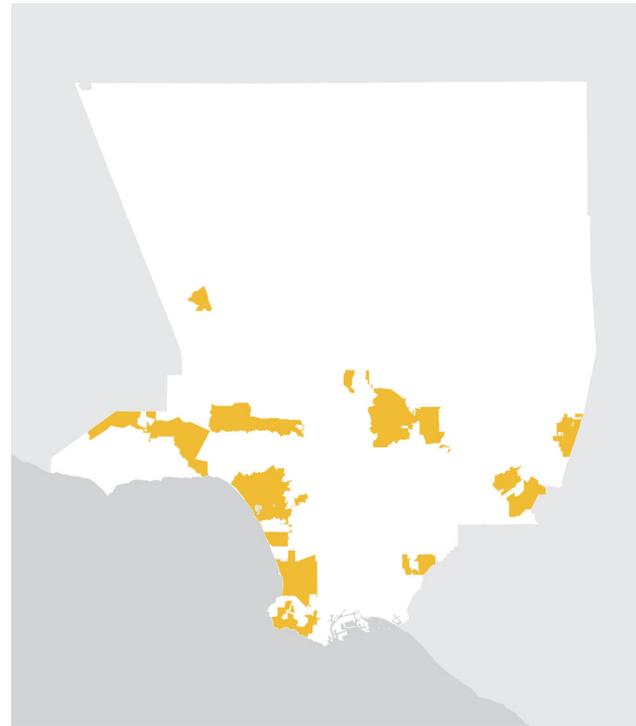


2 | The Five LAs Elite Enclave LA

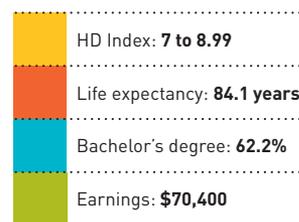
The majority of the 32 locales that make up Elite Enclave LA are found on the outer edges of the county—from the South Bay, north along the coast to the Santa Monica Mountains, east to the Verdugos and the San Gabriel Valley. Twenty-six cities and Census-Designated Places along with six City of Los Angeles neighborhoods in West LA and the South Valley are part of Elite Enclave LA.

Many Elite Enclave LA residents think of themselves as anything but “elite.” Los Angeles County’s high living costs mean that securing hallmarks of a good life like owning a home, sending one’s children to college, and saving for retirement can strain the finances even of high earners. Half the residents are renters, lacking the homeownership credential associated with financial security, and of those renters, half are rent-burdened, paying more than 30 percent of their incomes on housing costs. Residential segregation by income increasingly means that people tend to live near those in similar financial situations, so they may feel that their living standards are typical. The fact that it is human nature to compare ourselves to people who are better off than we are—in this case, to the residents of Glittering LA, especially those whose over-the-top lifestyles put them in the media spotlight—means that many Elite LA residents may imagine that they are part of the middle class—maybe the upper end of the middle, but the middle nonetheless.

Elite Enclave LA residents are not immune to hardship; Altadena, for example, which suffered harrowing losses in the January 2025 Eaton Fire, is an Elite Enclave community. In general, however, the capabilities of these residents, from educational credentials and well-paying jobs to insurance of various kinds and assets like 401(k)s, tend to reduce their exposure to risks and provide the means to recover from setbacks.



Elite Enclave LA Stats



% OF LA COUNTY POPULATION

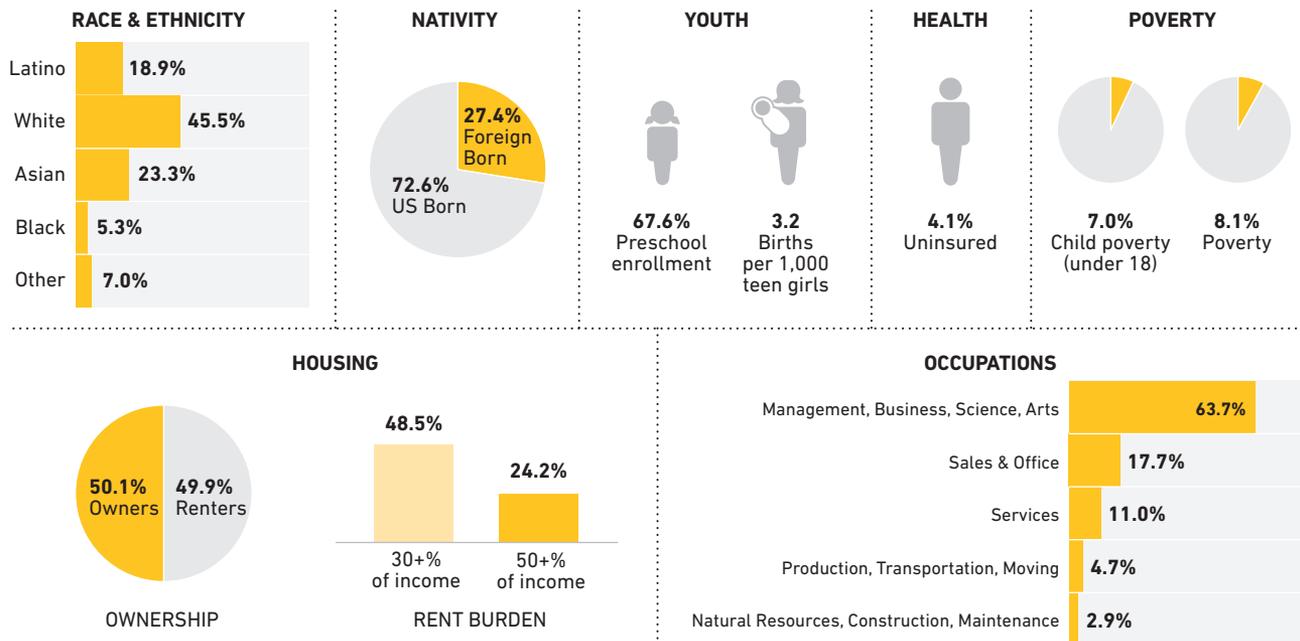


The capabilities of these residents, from educational credentials and well-paying jobs to insurance of various kinds and assets like 401(k)s, tend to reduce their exposure to risks and provide the means to recover from setbacks.

Overwhelmingly highly educated professionals, Elite Enclave residents tend to have the economic resources, skills, networks, and social capital to lead freely chosen, fulfilling lives. They can expect to live, on average, 84.1 years. More than six in 10 adults are college graduates, and about one in four have a graduate degree. Median personal earnings, \$70,400, are 58 percent higher than the County median and up 12.8 percent since 2015, on par with the countywide increase. The poverty rate, 8.1 percent, is well below the countywide rate of 13.7 percent. More than six in 10 workers (63.7 percent) are employed in the highest-paying occupational sector: management, business, science, and the arts.

The vast majority of children in Elite Enclave LA live in households with the resources required to set them on a positive life trajectory. About 68 percent of 3- and 4-year-olds are enrolled in preschool—fewer than the three in four Elite Enclave children of that age who were enrolled in preschool in 2015. The child poverty rate, 7.0 percent, is 10 percentage points below the countywide rate, 17.5 percent. In general, parents in Elite Enclave LA are able to provide their children with a strong start in life; they tend to have access to high-quality public schools or the resources to send their children to private schools. Though it may strain their finances, they are generally able to provide enriching environments and opportunities for their children, from high-quality early childhood care and education to sports teams and music lessons to summer camp and tutoring.

FIGURE 2 Elite Enclave LA Well-Being Statistics

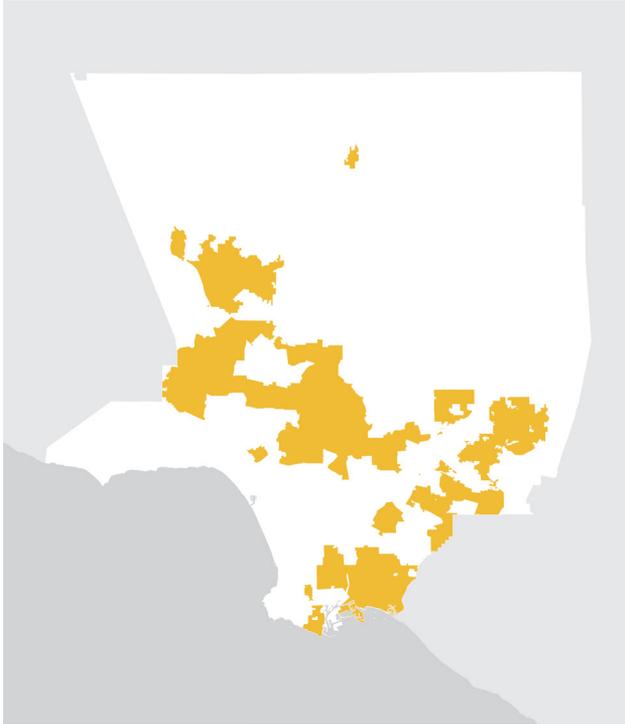


Elite Enclave LA is home to 1,461,700 Angelenos, 15 percent of the County population. A plurality of the population, 45.5 percent, is white, down 17 percent from 2015; 23.4 percent of residents are Asian, an increase of 30.7 percent since 2015; 18.9 percent are Latino, a 16.0 percent increase since 2015; and 5.3 percent are Black, a slight decrease since 2015. Elite Enclave LA has the second-largest share of adults ages 65 and up, 17.9 percent. Slightly over one in four residents (27.4 percent) are foreign born.

TABLE 2 HDI in ELITE ENCLAVE LA

	HD INDEX
Calabasas	8.98
Rancho Palos Verdes	8.98
Agoura Hills	8.93
Westlake Village	8.91
Westchester-Playa del Rey	8.88
San Marino	8.82
Sierra Madre	8.82
Hermosa Beach	8.77
Culver City	8.71
South Pasadena	8.66
Stevenson Ranch	8.65
Topanga	8.62
Santa Monica	8.59
Redondo Beach	8.58
Venice	8.55
West Los Angeles	8.44
El Segundo	8.27
Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass	8.17
La Crescenta-Montrose	7.95
Encino-Tarzana	7.93
Arcadia	7.88
Palms-Mar Vista-Del Rey	7.72
Cerritos	7.65
Altadena	7.54
Torrance	7.49
Diamond Bar	7.45
Claremont	7.35
Pasadena	7.31
View Park-Windsor Hills	7.28
Walnut	7.26
Marina del Rey	7.21
Del Aire	7.00

3 | The Five LAs Main Street LA

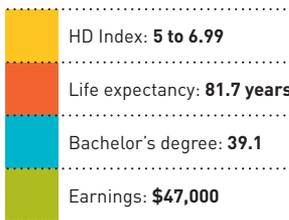


Main Street LA is home to the most Angelenos, 4,216,200 people, or 44 percent of the County population. Main Street LA communities encompass suburban areas of the southern and eastern parts of the County and Santa Clarita and San Fernando Valleys to the north, as well as LA City neighborhoods in the north part of the LA Basin. Residents of the 50 places in Main Street LA—34 cities and Census-Designated Places and 16 City of Los Angeles neighborhoods—enjoy higher levels of well-being than the majority of Americans.

But the County's high cost of living, driven by necessary expenditures that have higher price tags here than in the rest of the country, particularly housing, keeps many markers associated with middle-class life out of reach for Main Streeters. This is especially true for residents of areas with scores near the bottom of this grouping, many of whom share the challenges making ends meet that characterize life in Struggling LA.

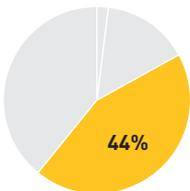
Life expectancy in Main Street Los Angeles, 81.7 years, is less than that found in Glittering and Elite Enclave LA, but still a bit over one year more than the LA County average. Main Street is also faring better than Los Angeles County as a whole when it comes to the share of adults with high school diplomas and four-year college degrees; four in 10 adults ages 25 and up have at least a bachelor's degree. Median personal earnings, \$47,000, exceed the countywide median by \$2,400, and the poverty rate is 12.8 percent, slightly below the countywide rate. Forty-five percent of workers have jobs in the highest-paying occupation category—management, business, science, and the arts—and one in five work in sales and office occupations. The homeownership rate in Main Street LA is 44.5 percent, less than the countywide rate. For the 55.5 percent of Main Streeters who rent their home, covering the cost of housing is a significant burden; well over half spend more than 30 percent

Main Street LA Stats



The County's high cost of living, driven by necessary expenditures that have higher price tags here than in the rest of the country, particularly housing, keeps many markers associated with middle-class life out of reach for Main Streeters.

% OF LA COUNTY POPULATION



Total number
4,216,200



Under age 18
18.8%

of their incomes on rent, and three in 10 dedicate at least half their incomes to keeping a roof over their head, leaving little for other necessities.

Children in Main Street LA are slightly less likely to live in poverty than children countywide; the child poverty rate is 15.3 percent. There is, however, a concerning jump in child poverty between Elite Enclave LA and Main Street LA; the rate more than doubles. Nearly half of all 3- and 4-year-olds attend preschool, slightly less than the rate in Los Angeles as a whole. This represents a large drop since 2015, when two in three preschool-age children were enrolled.

Taken as a whole, Main Street is arguably the most diverse of the Five Los Angeles Counties; the largest share of the population is Latino (40.2 percent), followed by white (31.5 percent), Asian (18.1 percent), and Black Angelenos (5.4 percent). About one-third of residents are foreign born, and two-thirds are US born, on par with the countywide rates.

FIGURE 3 Main Street LA Well-Being Statistics

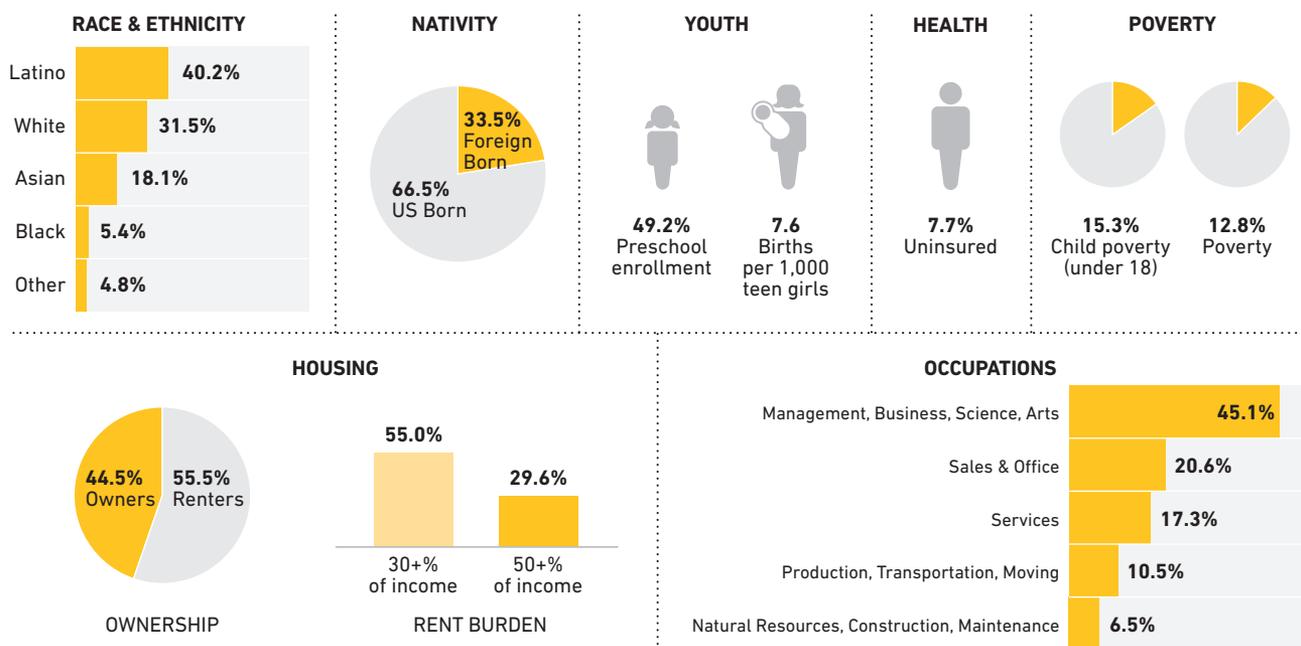


TABLE 3 HDI in MAIN STREET LA

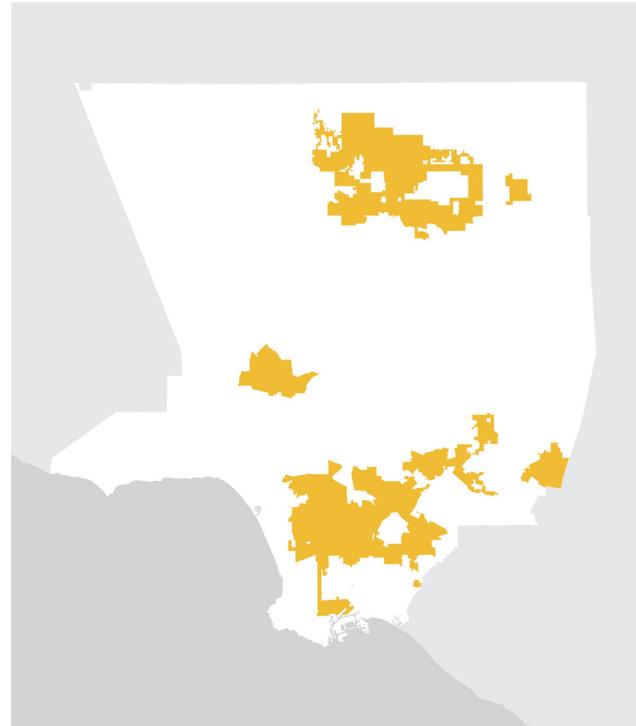
	HD INDEX		HD INDEX
West Hollywood	6.97	Lakewood	6.03
Signal Hill	6.78	San Gabriel	5.99
Chatsworth-Porter Ranch	6.77	Northridge	5.97
Burbank	6.76	Northeast Los Angeles	5.90
La Verne	6.75	West Carson	5.89
Castaic	6.74	West Covina	5.83
Granada Hills-Knollwood	6.67	Downtown	5.83
Silver Lake-Echo Park-Elysian Valley	6.66	San Pedro	5.80
Santa Clarita	6.65	Whittier	5.76
East San Gabriel	6.56	Duarte	5.75
East Whittier	6.48	Sunland-Tujunga-Lake View Terrace-Shadow Hills-East La Tuna Canyon	5.73
Glendale	6.48	Lomita	5.69
La Mirada	6.44	North Hollywood-Valley Village	5.49
Temple City	6.40	Quartz Hill	5.48
Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills	6.39	Long Beach	5.40
Westwood	6.37	Downey	5.39
Alhambra	6.35	Carson	5.36
Monrovia	6.35	Reseda-West Van Nuys	5.29
Hacienda Heights	6.30	Covina	5.28
San Dimas	6.24	West Whittier-Los Nietos	5.21
Hollywood	6.18	Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks	5.20
Glendora	6.17	Charter Oak	5.18
Wilshire	6.11	Avocado Heights	5.08
Monterey Park	6.05	Sylmar	5.06
Rowland Heights	6.05		

4 | The Five LAs Struggling LA

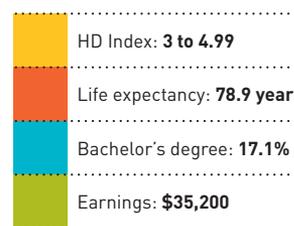
The second-most populous of the Five Los Angeles Counties, Struggling Los Angeles is home to 3,823,700 people, 39 percent of the County population. Fifty-nine places—49 cities and Census-Designated Places and 10 City of Los Angeles neighborhoods—are part of Struggling LA. Struggling LA has a lower level of well-being than LA County as a whole. Communities in Struggling LA are concentrated in the center of the county, in the east, and in the Antelope Valley. Within the City of Los Angeles, Struggling LA neighborhoods are found on the Eastside, Central and South LA, and the northeast San Fernando Valley. No Struggling LA communities are located along the coast from San Pedro to Malibu.

Angelenos who live in Struggling LA have a life expectancy of 78.9 years, less than the Los Angeles County average. Twelve percent of residents lack health insurance, the highest share among the Five LAs. Educational outcomes lag the rest of the County. One in three adults ages 25 and older lack a high school diploma, 5 percent higher than in 2015. The share of adults with at least a bachelor's degree, 17.1 percent, is less than half the countywide rate.

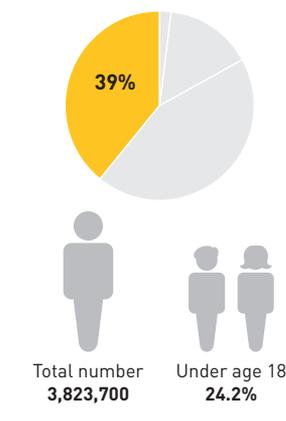
Financial pressure is unremitting in Struggling LA. Median personal earnings are \$35,200; keep in mind that this means that half of all workers there earn less. The poverty rate is 17.3 percent. The majority of Struggling Los Angeles residents are renters, and housing costs consume a huge share of their limited incomes; nearly six in 10 pay more than 30 percent of their incomes on housing, and more than three in 10 pay more than half. High rent burdens are commonplace in Los Angeles, but residents elsewhere have higher earnings, so even those paying one-third or more of their income on housing costs nonetheless have more left over each month to cover the other basics. For Struggling LA residents, paying the rent may mean skimping on groceries, skipping a doctor's visit, or falling behind on the utility bill. One in four workers are employed in management, business, science, and the arts, far fewer than in Main



Struggling LA Stats



% OF LA COUNTY POPULATION



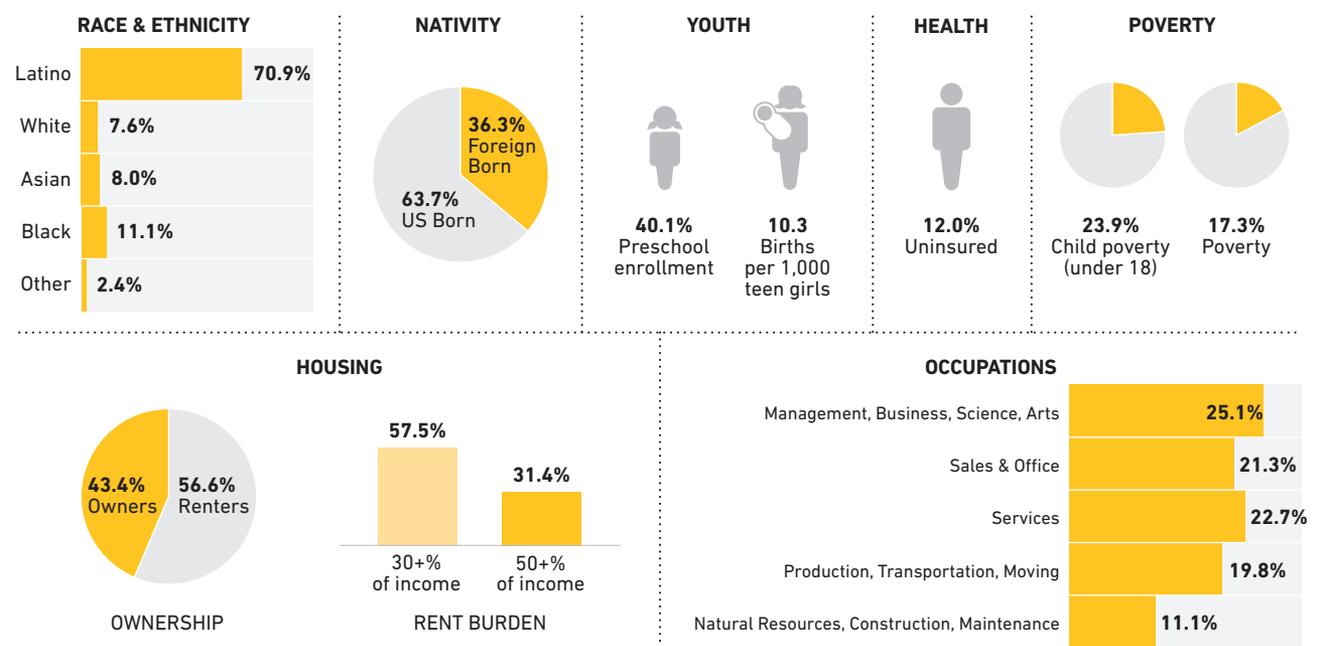
For Struggling LA residents, paying the rent may mean skimping on groceries, skipping a doctor's visit, or falling behind on the utility bill.

Street LA. Workers in Struggling LA are more likely than other Angelenos to work in service occupations (22.7 percent), where pay tends to be lower and benefits fewer. They are also more likely to work in physically demanding jobs in natural resources, construction, and maintenance (11.1 percent) and production, transportation, and material-moving (19.8 percent). Many Struggling LA communities are far from the opportunity-rich, economically vibrant areas of the County, limiting the jobs to which residents have easy access.

One in every four Struggling LA residents are children, which means that some 925,000 children are growing up in Struggling LA, the largest absolute number of Angelenos under age 18 among the Five LAs. Only 40.1 percent of all 3- and 4-year-olds are enrolled in preschool, a decline since 2015, when the rate was 51.1 percent. The child poverty rate of 23.9 percent, however, is lower than in 2015, when it was 30.0 percent. Struggling LA neighborhoods are disproportionately home to underresourced public goods; schools tend to have fewer experienced teachers, AP classes, and enrichment activities, for example, and access to green space in many areas is far more limited than in other parts of the County, so it's harder for children to play safely outside.

Struggling LA is largely Latino (70.9 percent); Latino residents are overrepresented in this LA and make up the lion's share of Angelenos for whom the stress of making ends meet is a constant companion. Black Angelenos are the

FIGURE 4 Struggling LA Well-Being Statistics



second-largest group, making up 11.1 percent of the population; like Latinos, they are overrepresented in Struggling LA. Asian and white Angelenos each account for about 8 percent of the population; they make up much smaller shares of Struggling LA than they do of Los Angeles County overall. Slightly over a third of residents, 36.3 percent, are foreign-born, the largest share among the Five LAs.

Considerable variation in well-being exists within Struggling LA. HDI scores range from 4.99 in Santa Fe Springs, which is basically on the line between Main Street LA and Struggling LA, to 3.03 in Southeast Los Angeles, 3.08 in Florence Graham, and 3.18 in Cudahy, scores that just missed the Precarious LA cutoff. There are high points in this group: 13 places have life expectancies that exceed the Los Angeles County average; in 15 places, at least 60 percent of households are owner-occupied, a much higher homeownership rate than Los Angeles County.

TABLE 4 HDI in STRUGGLING LA

	HD INDEX		HD INDEX
Santa Fe Springs	4.99	Arleta-Pacoima	4.16
Gardena	4.95	El Monte	4.11
Montebello	4.94	La Puente	4.11
South Whittier	4.94	South Gate	4.08
Norwalk	4.89	Bell	4.05
Harbor Gateway	4.84	Valinda	4.05
West Adams-Baldwin Hills-Leimert	4.79	South El Monte	4.00
Hawaiian Gardens	4.76	Vincent	3.97
Pico Rivera	4.76	Paramount	3.94
Rosemead	4.76	Westlake	3.89
Alondra Park	4.71	South Los Angeles	3.82
Azusa	4.71	Boyle Heights	3.80
Artesia	4.70	Huntington Park	3.77
Hawthorne	4.66	Lake Los Angeles	3.76
Bellflower	4.61	West Athens	3.72
Lancaster	4.61	West Rancho Dominguez	3.72
West Puente Valley	4.54	East Los Angeles	3.63
Inglewood	4.52	South San Jose Hills	3.62
San Fernando	4.48	Lynwood	3.55
Palmdale	4.47	Maywood	3.52
Lawndale	4.38	Bell Gardens	3.51
Mission Hills-Panorama City-North Hills	4.38	Lennox	3.51
Commerce	4.37	East Rancho Dominguez	3.46
Pomona	4.34	Sun Village	3.44
Wilmington-Harbor City	4.32	Compton	3.42
Walnut Park	4.30	Westmont	3.32
Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon	4.27	Willowbrook	3.26
Citrus	4.23	Cudahy	3.18
Baldwin Park	4.16	Florence-Graham	3.08
		Southeast Los Angeles	3.03



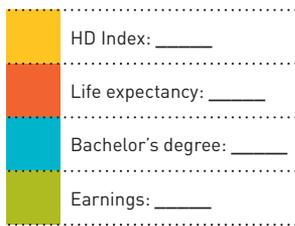
5 | The Five LAs Precarious LA

In the 2017 report, we wrote that about 3 percent of the population lived in communities that scored less than 3.0 on the HDI. Together, these five cities and unincorporated areas—Cudahy, Westmont, Lennox, East Rancho Dominguez, and Florence-Graham—plus one neighborhood in the City of Los Angeles, Southeast Los Angeles, made up what we called Precarious Los Angeles. These communities lay at the heart of the County’s urban core but were cut off from the vast majority of its resources and opportunities.

Today no city, unincorporated area, or community plan area falls below 3.0 on the HDI, a cause for optimism. Nonetheless, we have kept the Precarious LA category for three reasons. First, doing so provides historical continuity from volume to volume. Second, it is possible that a given community may score below 3.0 in the future; the decline in life expectancy that COVID-19 caused showed that progress is not inevitable. And third, certain populations—including Angelenos experiencing homelessness and those who reside in neighborhoods characterized by deep poverty and isolation from the mainstream—are living in truly precarious circumstances. Though the areas at the bottom of the well-being list now score above 3.0 in the aggregate, remember that this score is a combination of *average* life expectancies and educational outcomes and *median* earnings; roughly half the residents score less and roughly half score more. Thus, in Westmont, Willowbrook, Cudahy, Florence-Graham, Southeast LA, and other locales in Struggling LA, a significant share of the population is facing worse-than-average challenges, even compared to their neighbors. They suffer extreme material and capability deficits that dramatically circumscribe their choices and opportunities and stunt human flourishing.

In addition, something missing from our index calculations but ever present in the daily lives of people in Precarious LA, and many in Struggling

Precarious LA Stats



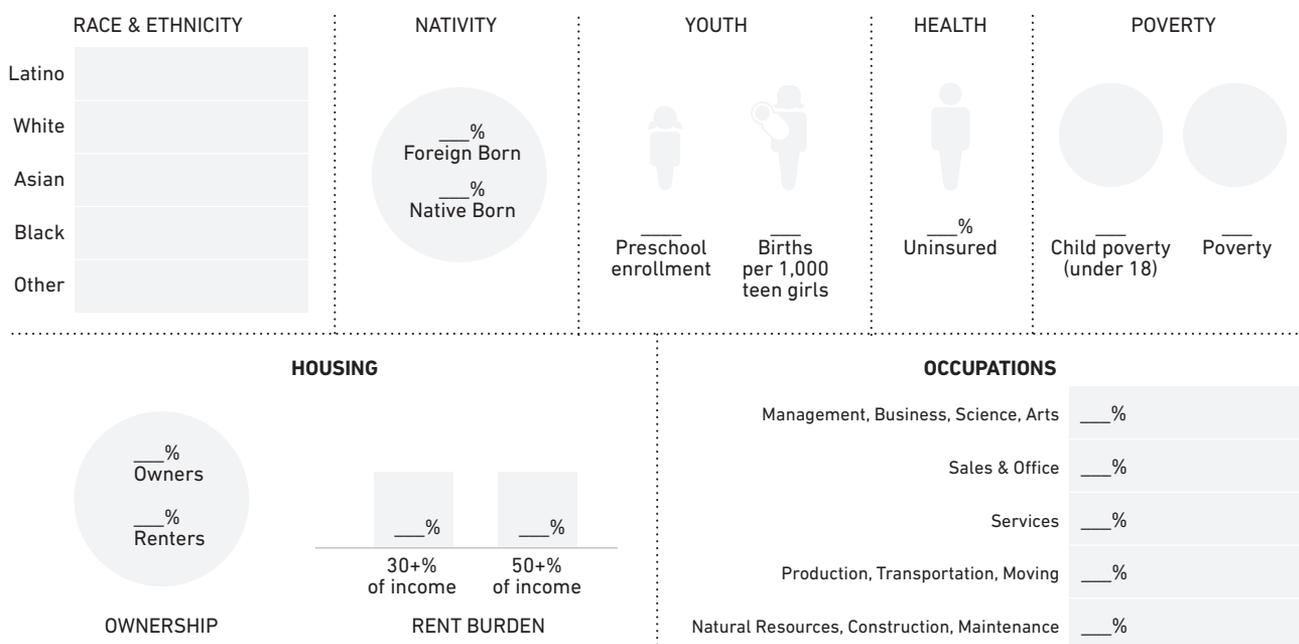
% OF LA COUNTY POPULATION



Today no city, unincorporated area, or community plan area falls below 3.0 on the HDI, a cause for optimism.

LA as well, is social exclusion. Social exclusion “is a process whereby certain individuals are born into or pushed to the margins of society and prevented from participating in social, cultural, economic, and political life.”⁵⁸ It is driven by unequal economic, political, social, and cultural processes (among them, mass incarceration) and entrenched by present-day residential segregation by race and ethnicity resulting from decades of discriminatory housing policies. Substance use disorders, homelessness, persistent and severe mental illness, incarceration, institutionalization, and belonging to disadvantaged groups are all associated with an increased risk of social exclusion.⁵⁹ Social exclusion hinders access to much of what is good and valuable in society: education, job opportunities, equality under the law, physical safety, societal respect, social capital, the ability to trust institutions, recreation and relaxation, and much more. Being marginalized, discriminated against, and looked down upon; being on the outside looking in; being confronted by a dazzling array of resources, experiences, and opportunities that other Angelenos enjoy but you cannot access: the physical and psychological tolls of social exclusion on individuals are grave. And social exclusion also harms society at large, contributing to frayed social bonds and strained public resources and services.

FIGURE 5 Precarious LA Well-Being Statistics



A Long and Healthy Life



IN THIS SECTION

Introduction

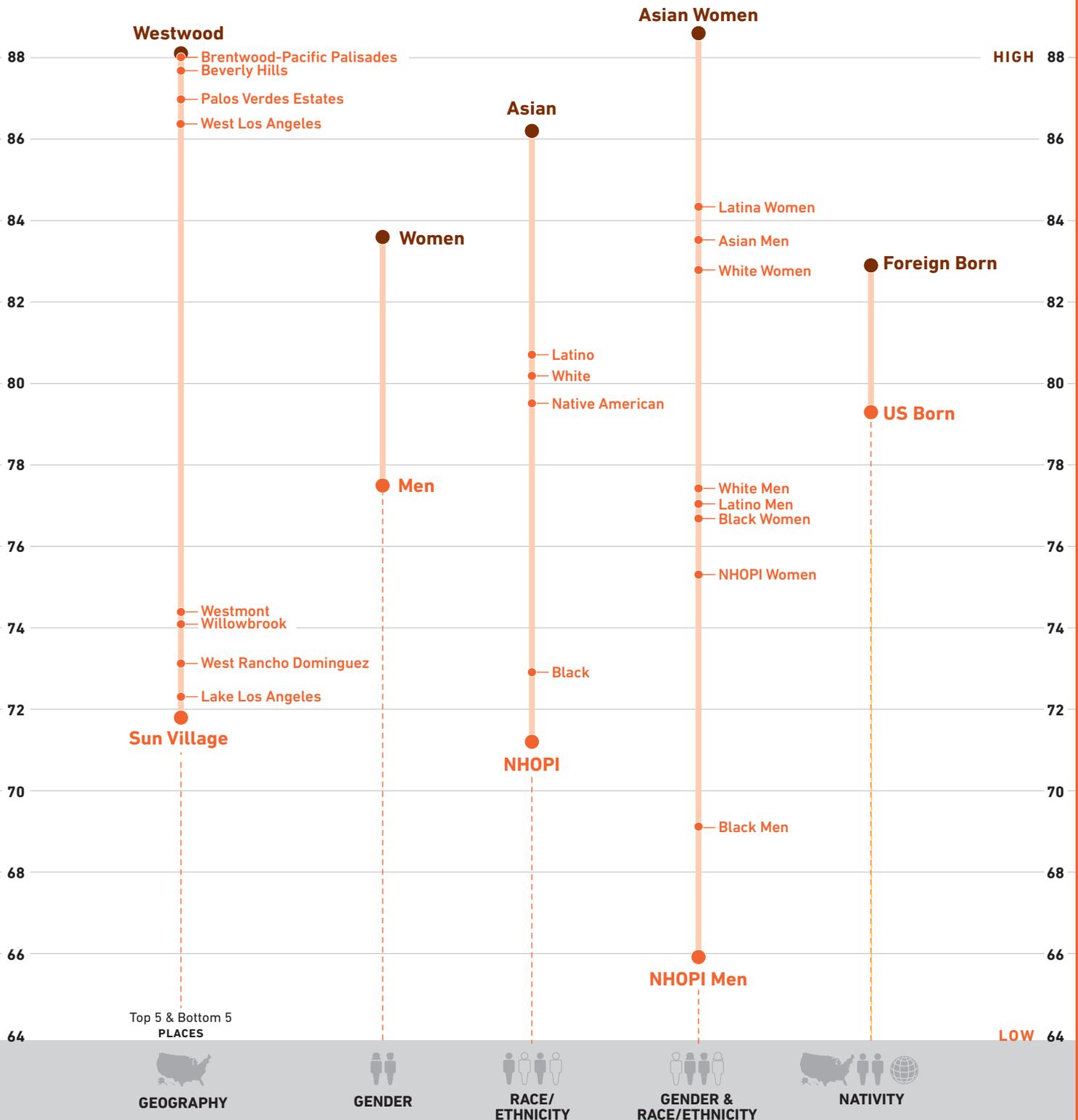
Variation by Demographic Group

Variation by Place

How Do We Stack Up?

Life Expectancy at Birth

YEARS



Introduction

Using mortality data from 2019 to 2023, we calculate that a baby born today in Los Angeles County can expect to live **80.5 years, on average**—a longer life expectancy than that of the average Californian (80.0 years) or American (78.4 years) but nonetheless 1.6 years less than a baby born in Los Angeles County between 2010 and 2014. In the 2017 report, we reported that if Los Angeles County were a country, it would rank 11th in the world in terms of longevity, but today people in nearly 50 countries can expect to outlive the average Angeleno.⁶⁰

One reason for the life expectancy decline was the COVID-19 pandemic; COVID-19 was the third-leading cause of death in LA County in 2020 and 2021 and the fourth-leading cause in 2022.⁶¹ During the peak years of the pandemic, the United States in general had higher COVID-19 mortality rates than most other affluent countries.⁶² Another is deaths due to drug overdose, particularly opioids. Though 2024 data show a 22 percent reduction in overdose deaths and a 37 percent reduction in fentanyl deaths in particular—suggesting that the County’s investments in harm reduction, overdose response, and expanded access to treatment are bearing fruit—drug overdose was the eighth-leading cause of death in Los Angeles for the period 2019–2023.⁶³ A third reason for the life expectancy decline is an increase in cardiovascular disease.⁶⁴

In the American Human Development Index, life expectancy at birth serves as a proxy for the capability to live a long and healthy life and counts as one-third of the overall index value. Being alive—avoiding premature death and the arbitrary denial of life—is quite simply our most important capability, the prerequisite for the development and exercise of all others. And being healthy—attaining the highest possible standard of physical and mental health—maximizes the likelihood that we will realize our full potential and, as a result, lead flourishing, freely chosen lives. Health is both a cause and a consequence of a person’s overall well-being. Poor health imperils human security and can profoundly limit a range of capabilities, from agency and autonomy to employment and asset-building to political participation and social inclusion. And those capabilities, in turn, affect people’s health; feeling powerless, experiencing loneliness and isolation, suffering toxic stress borne of economic insecurity or racism, living in overcrowded conditions, and being forced to contend with the risks of arbitrary detention and deportation—these challenges erode people’s physical and mental well-being.

Defined as the number of years that a baby born today can expect to live if current patterns of mortality continue throughout that baby’s life, life expectancy at birth is a widely used summary measure of population health. This measure, which captures mortality by all causes and at all ages, is a classic yardstick of population health. Life expectancy does not, of course, tell the full story of our health, and living a long life and living a *healthy* life are not synonymous. In general, though, those who manage to dodge all causes of mortality until their late eighties or nineties are

So it makes me really sad that here in America, where we're supposed to have the best doctors, the best this, the best that, the best food...and it's not the way it is.



San Fernando Valley resident

healthier (and luckier) than the average person. In addition, life expectancy at birth is an easily understood gauge of which groups are surviving to old age and which are succumbing to premature death, and this metric helps to focus attention on why these gaps exist. Knowing how long different groups of people live is vitally important for understanding what contributes to long lives, designing and delivering health services, and monitoring the impact of efforts made to improve health.

Life expectancy is calculated for this report using mortality data obtained by special agreement from the California Comprehensive Death Files of the California Department of Public Health and population data from the US Census Bureau and is a five-year rollup of data from 2019 to 2023. Rolling up, or combining, data from five years rather than using data from a single year allows us to calculate life expectancy and leading causes of death for smaller population groups, such as Asian subgroups or residents of smaller cities or unincorporated areas. Doing so also highlights the disproportionate impact COVID-19 had on different demographic groups, as these years include the peak pandemic period. These five-year estimates differ from the Los Angeles County Department of Health 2023 life expectancy estimates, which are based on mortality data from just one year, 2023.⁶⁵ Due to changes in the way the CDC and the US Census have defined racial and ethnic groups since our last report, we make change-over-time comparisons for racial and ethnic groups with care. For more information, see the Methodological Note on **PAGE 182**.

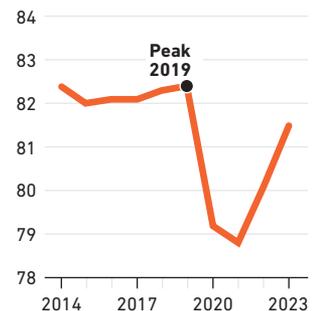
Two key concepts inform this analysis. The first is the notion of the **social determinants of health**, which the World Health Organization defines as “the circumstances in which people are born, grow up, live, work, and age, as well as the systems put in place to deal with illness. These circumstances are in turn shaped by a wider set of forces: economics, social policies, and politics”⁶⁶ (see **FIGURE 1**). Central to this approach is the idea that while doctors and medicines are critical once we fall ill or are injured, the main drivers of health disparities between groups are not found in doctors’ offices but in the conditions of people’s daily lives. Safe neighborhoods, clean air, full-service grocery stores, healthy school lunches, places to exercise safely, educational equality, and employment that offers safety, security, dignity, and agency—these things and others like them are key to keeping people healthy.

The second—and related—concept that informs this analysis is **health equity**. At its most basic level, health equity means that everyone should have an equal opportunity to live a long and healthy life. Health inequities are health differences that are avoidable and unfair and that adversely affect a socially disadvantaged group; this disadvantage can be based on race and ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, or other characteristics linked to discrimination and social exclusion. Creating equality of opportunity around health issues requires “societal action to remove obstacles such as poverty and discrimination and their consequences—including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs, education, housing, environments, and health care.”⁶⁷ In other words, health equity requires making the social determinants of health fairer and more just across groups.

Health equity means that everyone should have an equal opportunity to live a long and healthy life.

Life Expectancy in Los Angeles County Since 2014

LIFE EXPECTANCY (YEARS)



Source: Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

Examining not just life expectancy at birth but also leading causes of death for different groups of Angelenos shines a bright light on health inequities in the County. While no one can opt out of death altogether, many deaths—premature deaths in particular—are preventable. They can be delayed or avoided by policies, public investments, and community and individual actions to improve people’s living conditions; reduce their exposure to health risks, such as smoking, air pollution, and processed foods and soft drinks; and promote health-enhancing behaviors, such as using seat belts and car seats, getting regular health screenings and immunizations, engaging in physical activity, and boosting consumption of vegetables and fruits. Other activities such as participation in community groups and creative pursuits can also contribute to better health outcomes.

FIGURE 1 The Social Determinants of Health

The social determinants of health are defined as the circumstances in which people are born, grow up, live, work, and age, as well as the systems put in place to deal with illness. These circumstances are shaped by a wider set of forces: economics, social policies, and politics.



	SOCIETY	COMMUNITY	INDIVIDUAL
HELPFUL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civil Rights Equality Under the Law Responsive Government Health and Safety Regulations Public Health Campaigns Environmental Protection Laws Worker Protections Income Supports Family-Friendly Policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civic Organizations Doctors and Hospitals Neighborhood Safety Sidewalks and Bike Paths Safe, Clean Parks Good Jobs High-Quality Childcare Public Transportation Grocery Stores Social Cohesion Good Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loving, Stable Relationships Family Support Friendship Regular Exercise Good Nutrition Adequate Sleep Living Wages Safe, Affordable Housing Strong Educational Background Consistent Health-Care Provider
HARMFUL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bias and Discrimination Harmful Gender Norms Economic Downturns Environmental Disasters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Hazards Residential Segregation Poor Community-Police Relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health-Risk Behaviors Loneliness Stress Exposure to Violence

I'll tend to, like, gravitate towards, like, nicer areas to see a doctor or to get blood work. Just because I've noticed whenever I've ended up there, I've gotten better service, less wait times, and it just feels safer.

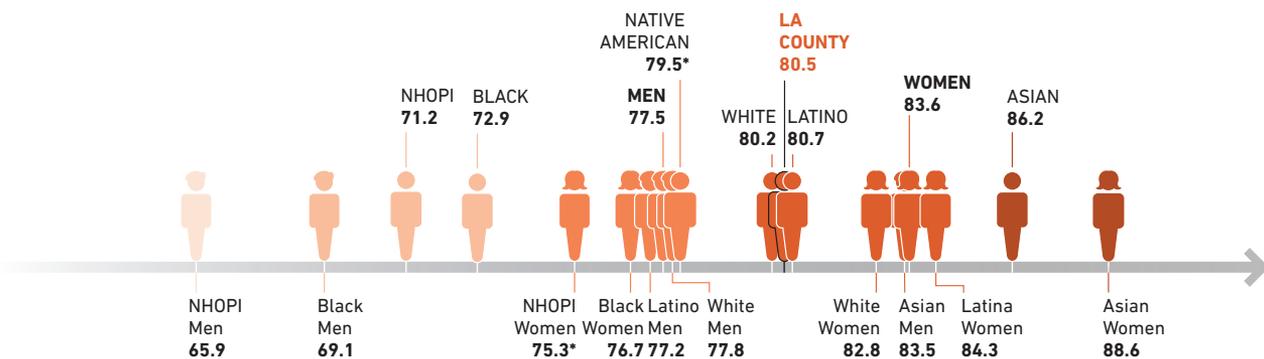


LA County young adult

Variation by Demographic Group

The life expectancy variations by race and ethnicity in Los Angeles County mirror those of the state and nation as a whole. The longest-lived population is **Asian Angelenos**, with a life expectancy of **86.2 years**. Residents who are **Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders (NHOPI)** have the shortest life expectancy, **71.2 years**—a gap of 15 years. Women overall as well as Asian and Latino Angelenos live longer than the average LA County resident; men as well as white, Native American, Black, and NHOPI Angelenos have life expectancies below the County average (see **FIGURE 2**).

FIGURE 2 Los Angeles County Life Expectancy by Gender and by Race and Ethnicity, 2019–2023



Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty.
 Source: Measure of America calculations using data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023.

Heart disease and cancer are the first- and second-leading causes of death in Los Angeles County for the 2019–2023 period, as is true in the state and country as a whole; they are also the leading causes of death for all racial and ethnic groups, though for a few groups—Asian, Latina, and NHOPI women—cancer rather than heart disease occupies the top spot. After heart disease and cancer, however, the leading causes of death differ by race and ethnicity and by gender—further evidence of health inequities and differing social determinants of health among the County’s diverse demographic groups. In addition, even when a leading cause of death is the same, one group may accumulate more risk factors or have less access to high-quality care, resulting in earlier deaths. For instance, Black and white LA residents are both more likely to die of heart disease than any other cause, but Black Angelenos with heart disease die earlier, on average, than white Angelenos with heart disease.

COVID-19 poses far less of a risk than it did in 2020, 2021, and 2022, although it continues to sicken thousands of Angelenos; in the last week of 2023, for example,

Compared to girls and women, boys and men are more likely to die by homicide, by suicide by firearm, as a result of unintentional injuries like car crashes, and due to prolonged or acute alcohol or substance use.

the County registered over 600 reported cases of COVID-19 and nearly five COVID-19-related deaths per day.⁶⁸ Looking just at single-year data, COVID-19 dropped from the third-leading cause of death in 2020 and 2021 to the fourth-leading cause in 2022, and was no longer among the 10 leading causes of death in 2023.⁶⁹ It appears as the third-leading cause of death in **BOX 1**, but keep in mind that the calculations in that table use five years' worth of mortality data (2019–2023).

Women in Los Angeles County can expect to live to 83.6 years, **men** to 77.5 years: a 6.1-year difference. The world over, women tend to live longer than men. A substantial share of this life expectancy advantage appears to be biological.⁷⁰ The fact that the size of the gender gap varies from country to country—women live more than 10 years longer than men in Russia but just three years longer in the Netherlands—and even among Los Angeles County's major racial and ethnic groups, however, suggests that social, cultural, and economic factors are also at play.⁷¹

Gender norms—which define what men and women are expected to do and be in specific social contexts—create differing patterns of health-promoting and health-risk behaviors. Risk-taking, violence, and avoidance of seeking help (in this case, in the form of health care) are ways that some boys and men learn to demonstrate masculinity.⁷² Consequently, compared to girls and women, boys and men are more likely to die by homicide, by suicide by firearm, as a result of unintentional injuries like car crashes, and due to prolonged or acute alcohol or substance use.⁷³ Boys and men are more likely to engage in violence overall, as both perpetrators and victims.⁷⁴ In addition, men are more likely to be exposed to health risks at work; some male-dominated job sectors are better paying than those in which women of similar educational background tend to work, such as construction, commercial fishing, or mining, but they are also more dangerous.⁷⁵ Women, on the other hand, are more likely to seek routine and urgent medical care and to have stronger social bonds, which offer protective health benefits.⁷⁶

All these factors in combination contribute to the life expectancy gap. They are also apparent in the leading causes of death for women and men in the County. For example, drug overdose is the eighth-leading cause of death in Los Angeles overall for the 2019–2023 period but is not among the leading causes of death for LA women nor for women of any of the County's major racial or ethnic groups. For Los Angeles men, on the other hand, drug overdose is the sixth-leading cause of death. For Black and Native American men as well as for US-born men, drug overdose is the fourth-leading cause of death; for Latino men, it is the sixth-leading cause of death; for NHOPI and white men, it is the seventh-leading cause of death.⁷⁷ Unintentional injuries, which include car crashes and workplace injuries like falls, are the ninth-leading cause of death for men, but are not in the top 10 for women in Los Angeles. Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, often caused by heavy alcohol use over many years, is the 10th-leading cause of death for male Angelenos, but not in the top 10 for women. Homicide is not a leading cause of death for Angelenos overall, but it is in the top 10 for both Black and Latino men. Nearly six in 10 homicides in LA County in 2023 were related to gang activity.⁷⁸

Women are more likely than men to die from Alzheimer’s disease. In addition, dementia, hypertension, and influenza and pneumonia are among the 10 leading causes of death for women but not for men. These gaps point to the importance of annual flu vaccines as well as screening and treatment for high blood pressure, which, for most people, is initially asymptomatic and can typically be managed by diet, exercise, and low-cost medications.

Among the County’s six major racial and ethnic groups, **Asian Angelenos** have the longest life expectancy, 86.2 years, outliving Latinos by roughly five-and-a-half years and whites by six years, on average. As discussed later, education is generally viewed as an important determinant of health, and Asian educational outcomes in Los Angeles County are well above the countywide average and a close second to white educational outcomes. Asian women have the longest life expectancy of any gender/race combination, 88.6 years, and Asian men have the longest life expectancy among LA men, 83.5 years. Although Asians had the longest life expectancy in the 2010–2014 period as well, their life expectancy fell by a little over one year between then and the 2019–2023 period.

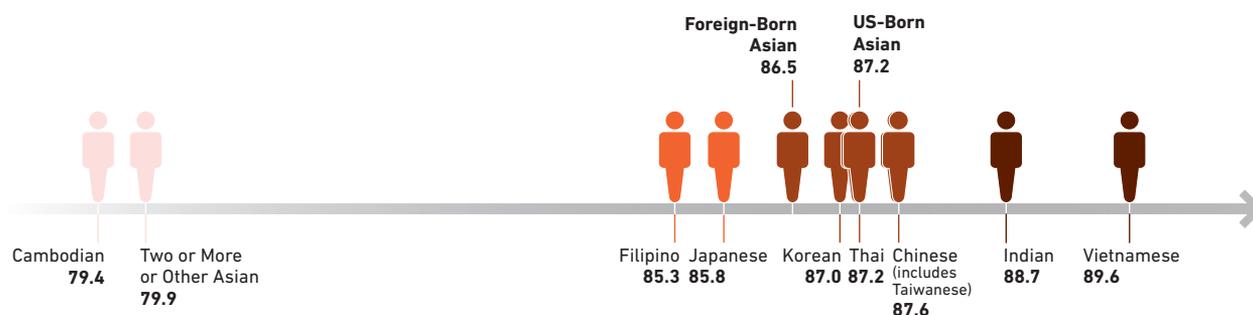
Cancer is the leading cause of death for Asian residents in general and for Asian women. Hypertension and dementia are in the top 10 for Asians but not for County residents overall, and kidney disease is the 10th-leading cause of death for Asian women.

The category of Asian Americans is far from homogeneous, however, and further disaggregating this population provides useful information. Cambodian residents have a life expectancy of 79.4 years, the shortest among Asian subgroups and less than the average Angeleno. Vietnamese residents have the longest life expectancy among Asian subgroups, 89.4 years, outliving the average Angeleno by more than nine years. US-born and foreign-born Asian residents are both long-lived, on average, though the US born have a slight advantage, 87.2 compared to 86.5 years.

Latinos have the second-highest life expectancy, 80.7 years—down 3.7 years from their 2010–2014 life expectancy of 84.4 years. Los Angeles County’s Latinos outlived whites then, on average, by three-and-a-half years, but the gap is just six months for the 2019–2023 period. The particularly sharp life expectancy decline among Latino Angelenos is also in evidence in California and in the country as a whole. For example, between 2019 and 2021, California’s Latino population lost 5.7 years of life expectancy, the result of greater exposure to, infection with, and death due to COVID-19. This was the largest life expectancy drop among the state’s major racial and ethnic groups; California’s Black population lost 3.8 years, its Asian population lost 3.0 years, and its white population lost 1.9 years. This disproportionate impact of COVID-19 stems from the concentration of Latinos in frontline occupations; their greater likelihood of living in overcrowded, often multigenerational households; barriers to accessing health care; and a greater prevalence of comorbid conditions that made COVID-19 infections more dangerous.⁷⁹

Asian Angelenos have the longest life expectancy, 86.2 years, outliving Latinos by roughly five-and-a-half years and whites by six years, on average.

FIGURE 3 Los Angeles County Life Expectancy by Asian Subgroup, 2019–2023



Note: Two or More or Other Asian for California Department of Public Health includes Laotian, Hmong, Indonesian, Malaysian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, and Other Asian.

Source: Measure of America calculations using data from the CDPH, 2019–2023.

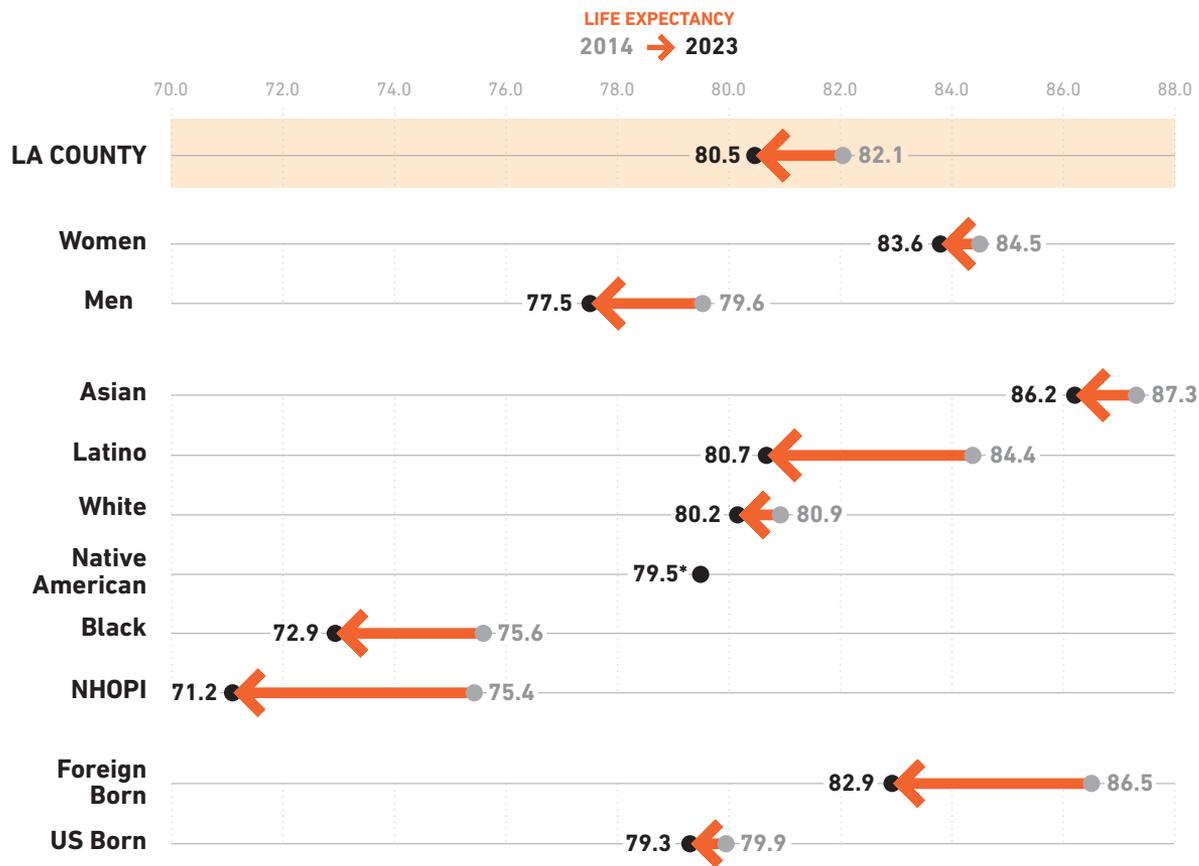
Latinos are more likely to die due to diabetes than the average Angeleno, and liver and kidney disease are among the leading causes of death for this group but not for County residents overall.

Over three-fourths of LA County Latinos trace their ancestry to Mexico, the remaining one-quarter to Central and South America and the Caribbean. Separate life expectancy estimates for these groups would be valuable for targeted health actions, but such calculations were not possible. Subgroup life expectancy calculations rely on the availability of death certificates that list the subgroup of the deceased. In many cases, only the ethnicity Latino or Hispanic is noted.

Latinos are more likely to die due to diabetes than the average Angeleno, and liver and kidney disease are among the leading causes of death for this group but not for County residents overall. For Latina women, hypertension and influenza/pneumonia are among the leading causes of death, highlighting the need for awareness-raising campaigns directed at Latina Angelenas about these risks, interventions to lower blood pressure (diet, exercise, and blood pressure medications, the majority of which are off-patent and inexpensive), and greater access to and uptake of the annual flu vaccine. Homicide is the 10th-leading cause of death for Latino men, disproportionately affecting boys ages 15 to 19 and taking a devastating toll on Latino families and communities.⁸⁰

White Angelenos can expect to live, on average, 80.2 years, down from 80.9 years in 2015. White residents saw the smallest decline in life expectancy among the County’s major racial and ethnic groups. Despite having far higher earnings and benefiting from other socioeconomic advantages, whites have shorter lives, on average, than Asians and Latinos. White women live five years longer than white men, 82.8 years compared to 77.8 years.

FIGURE 4 Life Expectancy by Gender and by Race and Ethnicity, 2014–2023



Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty.

Source: Measure of America calculations using data from the California Department of Public Health, 2010–2014 and 2019–2023.

Alzheimer’s disease is the third-leading cause of death for whites overall and for white women in LA County, after heart disease and cancer, and for both these groups, dementia is also among the leading causes of death. Alzheimer’s disease and dementia (other than Alzheimer’s, such as vascular dementia) are leading causes of death for white residents largely because age is the biggest risk factor for developing these conditions and white residents are, on average, older than other groups of Angelenos; in California, more than half the population over age 65 is white, although only one-third of Californians overall are.⁸¹ Nonetheless, Latino and Black residents have a higher risk of developing these conditions than white residents because of sharply unequal differences in the social, political, environmental, economic, and health conditions Black and Latino Angelenos experience.⁸²

BOX 1 Leading Causes of Death in LA County: Race and Ethnicity

LA COUNTY

ALL LA COUNTY 	WOMEN 	MEN 
1 Heart Disease	Heart Disease	Heart Disease
2 Cancer	Cancer	Cancer
3 COVID-19	Alzheimer's	COVID-19
4 Alzheimer's	COVID-19	Diabetes
5 Stroke	Stroke	Stroke
6 Diabetes	Diabetes	Drug Overdose
7 CLRD	CLRD	Alzheimer's
8 Drug Overdose	Dementia	CLRD
9 Unintentional Injuries	Hypertension	Unintentional Injuries
10 Flu & Pneumonia	Flu & Pneumonia	Liver Disease

ASIAN

ALL ASIAN 	WOMEN 	MEN 
1 Cancer	Cancer	Heart Disease
2 Heart Disease	Heart Disease	Cancer
3 COVID-19	Alzheimer's	COVID-19
4 Stroke	COVID-19	Stroke
5 Alzheimer's	Stroke	Diabetes
6 Diabetes	Diabetes	Alzheimer's
7 Flu & Pneumonia	Flu & Pneumonia	Flu & Pneumonia
8 Hypertension	Hypertension	CLRD
9 CLRD	Dementia	Hypertension
10 Dementia	Kidney Disease	Unintentional Injuries

BIRTHPLACE

FOREIGN BORN 	US BORN 
1 Heart Disease	Heart Disease
2 Cancer	Cancer
3 COVID-19	Alzheimer's
4 Alzheimer's	COVID-19
5 Stroke	Stroke
6 Diabetes	CLRD
7 Flu & Pneumonia	Drug Overdose
8 CLRD	Diabetes
9 Liver Disease	Unintentional Injuries
10 Hypertension	Hypertension

NATIVE AMERICAN

ALL NATIVE AMERICAN 	WOMEN 	MEN 
1 Heart Disease	Heart Disease	Heart Disease
2 Cancer	Cancer	Cancer
3 COVID-19	COVID-19	COVID-19
4 Diabetes	Alzheimer's	Drug Overdose
5 Drug Overdose	Stroke	Diabetes
6 Liver Disease	Diabetes	Liver Disease
7 Stroke	CLRD	CLRD
8 Alzheimer's	Liver Disease	Unintentional Injuries
9 CLRD	Kidney Disease	Stroke
10 Unintentional Injuries		Alzheimer's

Note: Drug overdoses and dementia were calculated using California Department of Public Health definitions. CLRD is Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases. ENMD is Other Endocrine, Nutritional, and Metabolic Diseases. Source: Measure of America calculations using data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023.

BLACK

	ALL BLACK 	WOMEN 	MEN 
1	Heart Disease	Heart Disease	Heart Disease
2	Cancer	Cancer	Cancer
3	COVID-19	Alzheimer's	COVID-19
4	Stroke	Stroke	Drug Overdose
5	Diabetes	COVID-19	Diabetes
6	Alzheimer's	Diabetes	Stroke
7	CLRD	CLRD	CLRD
8	Drug Overdose	Hypertension	Homicide
9	Hypertension	Kidney Disease	Unintentional Injuries
10	Unintentional Injuries	Flu & Pneumonia	Hypertension

LATINO

	ALL LATINO 	WOMEN 	MEN 
1	Heart Disease	Cancer	Heart Disease
2	Cancer	Heart Disease	Cancer
3	COVID-19	COVID-19	COVID-19
4	Diabetes	Alzheimer's	Diabetes
5	Stroke	Diabetes	Liver Disease
6	Alzheimer's	Stroke	Drug Overdose
7	Liver Disease	Liver Disease	Unintentional Injuries
8	Unintentional Injuries	Hypertension	Stroke
9	Drug Overdose	Kidney Disease	Alzheimer's
10	Kidney Disease	Flu & Pneumonia	Homicide

NHOPI

	ALL NHOPI 	WOMEN 	MEN 
1	Heart Disease	Cancer	Heart Disease
2	Cancer	Heart Disease	Cancer
3	COVID-19	COVID-19	COVID-19
4	Diabetes	Diabetes	Diabetes
5	Stroke	Stroke	Kidney Disease
6	Kidney Disease	Alzheimer's	Stroke
7	CLRD	CLRD	Drug Overdose
8	ENMD	Kidney Disease	CLRD
9	Alzheimer's	Hypertension	Unintentional Injuries
10	Drug Overdose	ENMD	ENMD

WHITE

	ALL WHITE 	WOMEN 	MEN 
1	Heart Disease	Heart Disease	Heart Disease
2	Cancer	Cancer	Cancer
3	Alzheimer's	Alzheimer's	COVID-19
4	CLRD	Stroke	Alzheimer's
5	COVID-19	CLRD	CLRD
6	Stroke	COVID-19	Stroke
7	Diabetes	Dementia	Drug Overdose
8	Dementia	Diabetes	Diabetes
9	Flu & Pneumonia	Hypertension	Flu & Pneumonia
10	Drug Overdose	Flu & Pneumonia	Unintentional Injuries

Although not among the leading causes of death, infant and maternal mortality, which are largely preventable, are tragic outcomes that disproportionately affect Black women and their babies and, by extension, Black families and communities.

Native Americans have a life expectancy of 79.5 years. This estimate is less reliable than others due to the small population size, which also means that we cannot calculate life expectancy separately for Native American women and men.

In terms of leading causes of death, Native Americans mirror the general LA population except that liver disease rises to the top-10 list for this group, as does kidney disease for Native American women.

Black Angelenos can expect to live an average of 72.9 years, a decline of 2.7 years since 2010–2014, when Black life expectancy was 75.6 years. Black women have a life expectancy of 76.7 years; Black men, 69.1 years—a difference of 7.6 years. Hypertension is a leading cause of death for Black Angelenos, women and men alike; nationally, Black Americans are also more likely than people of any other racial and ethnic group to develop high blood pressure.⁸³

Hypertension can cause heart disease, heart attacks, strokes, aneurysms, and damage to the brain, eyes, and kidneys. It is particularly insidious because it causes few if any symptoms even as it damages the body.⁸⁴ Risk factors include poor diet and physical inactivity; Black Angelenos disproportionately live in food deserts, where healthy foods are hard to come by, and in areas that are not safe for outdoor exercise.⁸⁵ Long-term stress is also a risk factor for high blood pressure, and individual and structural racism increase the frequency and severity of stressors to which Black people are exposed throughout their lives.⁸⁶ Chronic stressors like economic insecurity and racial profiling and traumatic events like being the victim of a crime, having an incarcerated parent, or losing a loved one to COVID-19 have cumulative negative effects, and Black people experience greater exposure to such conditions across their life course than people of other racial and ethnic groups. Stress increases blood pressure and harms the cardiovascular and other systems by constantly stimulating the fight-or-flight response and thus flooding the body with cortisol, Adrenaline, and other hormones, causing excessive wear and tear on the body. While education and affluence attenuate the impact of racism, they do not eliminate it.⁸⁷

For Black men as for Latino men, homicide is among the leading causes of death, taking a particularly high toll on young Black men. Black Angelenos are nearly 10 times as likely as white Angelenos to die by homicide.⁸⁸ Every person who dies from homicide leaves behind an average of seven to 10 bereft loved ones, research suggests, and the collective burden of grief borne by Black communities in Los Angeles is heavy.⁸⁹

Although not among the leading causes of death, infant and maternal mortality, which are largely preventable, are tragic outcomes that disproportionately affect Black women and their babies and, by extension, Black families and communities. According to data from the LA County Department of Public Health, the infant mortality rate for Black babies fell significantly between the three-year period 2006–2008 (11.7 deaths per 1,000 live births) and the 2021–2023 period (8.4 deaths per live 1,000 births), though more recent year-on-year data suggest that progress has largely stalled since 2017. Black

infants were still nearly three times as likely to die before reaching their first birthdays as Asian or white babies, and in some areas, such as the Antelope Valley, the Black infant mortality rate remained extremely high, 13.7 deaths per 1,000 live births.⁹⁰ If the 2023 Black infant mortality rate in LA County was the same as the white rate, 39 additional Black babies would have lived to see their first birthdays.

Black mothers are also considerably more likely than mothers of other racial and ethnic groups to die as a result of pregnancy; in California, the 2020–2022 pregnancy-related mortality ratio for Black women was nearly four times the ratio for white and Asian women, and three times the ratio for Latina women.⁹¹ Though more education, better access to health care, and not smoking are associated with better birth outcomes generally, their positive effects are less pronounced for Black women. For example, Black women who didn't smoke during pregnancy have preterm birth rates similar to white mothers who did smoke during pregnancy, and Black women with master's degrees have preterm birth rates similar to white women who did not graduate high school.⁹² One potential explanation for this difference is the concept of “weathering,” the idea that Black people's health declines prematurely due the cumulative effects of chronic exposure to socioeconomic disadvantage, discrimination, health risks, and trauma.⁹³

Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders have the shortest life expectancy of the six major racial and ethnic groups included in this study, 71.2 years. Though the estimate for NHOPI women is less reliable, the life expectancy data suggest that the gap between NHOPI women and men is nearly a decade. With a life expectancy of 65.9 years, NHOPI men have the shortest lives of all gender/ race combinations.

NHOPI people are often grouped together with Asians, and sometimes with Native Americans, in health and other surveys. Given the generally better health indicators of Asians than every other major racial and ethnic group, data like these for the NHOPI community alone are essential for identifying and addressing the pressing health challenges in this population.

For NHOPI Angelenos, kidney disease is a leading cause of death, as it is for Latino Angelenos. In addition, for NHOPI women and men, but for no other group of Angelenos, other endocrine, nutritional, and metabolic diseases are among the leading causes of death. This category of diseases generally includes diabetes, and diabetes represents the most common disease in this category by far. For the purposes of this analysis, however, diabetes is treated as its own separate cause of death. Other conditions that fall into this category, which for NHOPI people together constitute a leading cause of death, include endocrine disorders like thyroid conditions, malnutrition and other nutritional deficiencies, obesity, disorders of fluid and electrolyte balance, and other metabolic disorders like nonalcoholic fatty liver disease.⁹⁴

Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders have the shortest life expectancy of the six major racial and ethnic groups included in this study, 71.2 years.

Eleven percent of cisgender LGBQ adults and 21 percent of transgender and nonbinary adults had not gone to health-care providers in the past year to avoid unfair treatment based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Health Outcomes for LGBTQ Angelenos

As is the case for many other marginalized groups, LGBTQ Angelenos experience more barriers to accessing health care and have worse health outcomes than their non-LGBTQ counterparts. A 2023 study conducted by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and the Williams Institute showed that on 11 out of 16 specific health indicators, LGBTQ adults had worse outcomes than non-LGBTQ adults, even after controlling for differences in the age composition of each group. They were also more likely to have a disability: 25 percent of non-LGBTQ adults, 41 percent of LGBTQ adults, and 58 percent of transgender and nonbinary adults reported having a disability.⁹⁵

Disparities in mental health outcomes are also particularly stark. Symptoms of depression were twice as common among LGBTQ adults as non-LGBTQ adults (21 percent vs. 10 percent).⁹⁶ While only 3 percent of non-LGBTQ adults reported that they had ever attempted suicide, 11 percent of cisgender LGBQ adults and 24 percent of transgender and nonbinary adults did.⁹⁷

While these disparities in health outcomes are driven by a complex web of factors, including discrimination and harassment as well as threats and experiences of anti-LGBTQ violence, they are also directly connected to a lack of access to LGBTQ-competent health care. Nearly one-third of LGBTQ adults reported difficulty accessing the medical care they needed, compared to 23 percent of non-LGBTQ adults. These rates were even higher for LGBTQ people of color (36 percent) and LGBTQ people with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty level (43 percent).⁹⁸ One factor impacting this lack of access is poor experiences with health-care providers. Eleven percent of cisgender LGBQ adults and 21 percent of transgender and nonbinary adults had not gone to health-care providers in the past year to avoid unfair treatment based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. In a separate study, the 2023 LA County Trans & Nonbinary Survey, 29 percent of respondents reported mistreatment or being misgendered during their most recent routine medical care visit.⁹⁹

Access to gender-affirming care is a particular challenge for transgender and nonbinary Angelenos. Eighty-six percent of Trans & Nonbinary Survey respondents wanted to access some type of gender-affirming care in the 12 months prior to the survey. Of those, 44 percent reported they delayed or did not get the gender-affirming health-care services they needed.¹⁰⁰ Top reasons cited included not being able to get an appointment, insurance not covering it, it being too expensive, and transportation problems. Gender-affirming care for minors is under particular attack by the Trump administration as part of its anti-trans agenda, and as of the summer of 2025 multiple major health-care systems in LA County had closed their pediatric gender clinics or stopped providing gender-affirming surgeries.¹⁰¹ These actions contradict a wide body of research showing the positive impacts of gender-affirming care for youth and adolescents and the official policy statement of the American Academy of Pediatrics.¹⁰²

VARIATION BY NATIVITY: US-BORN AND FOREIGN-BORN RESIDENTS

Foreign-born LA County residents outlive those born in the United States by 3.6 years. In the 2010–2014 period, the life expectancy advantage of those born outside the United States was greater, 6.6 years; although life expectancy fell for both groups since then, the decline was sharper for foreign-born residents, 4.2 percent compared to 0.8 percent for US-born residents. During the COVID pandemic, immigrants had less access to health insurance and health care, were more likely to live in multigenerational households and overcrowded households, and were more likely to be frontline workers—all risk factors for COVID-19 mortality—than US-born residents.¹⁰³

In the United States, immigrants outlive US-born residents in general; they tend to eat a healthier diet, have lower obesity rates, and engage in fewer health-risk behaviors like smoking and substance use. The foreign-born advantage tends to wear off the longer a person lives in the United States as they adopt a more typical US diet, are exposed to discrimination and anti-immigrant sentiment, encounter barriers to accessing medical care, and experience stress related to such factors as economic disadvantage (in Los Angeles, median personal earnings for foreign-born residents are \$10,000 less than for US-born residents), navigate life in an unfamiliar environment, and fear immigration enforcement.¹⁰⁴

The difference in life expectancy between foreign-born and US-born residents varies considerably by racial and ethnic group. US-born Asian Angelenos outlive their foreign-born counterparts by a little over eight months, the only group in which people born in the United States live longer than those born outside the United States. Foreign-born Latinos outlive their US-born counterparts by 1.2 years, and foreign-born whites outlive US-born whites by 1.6 years. The gap among Black Angelenos is the largest by far, with the foreign born outliving the US born by 8.4 years. As discussed elsewhere in this chapter, a wealth of evidence supports the hypothesis that racism exacts a brutal toll on Black people’s health; this striking life expectancy gap between Angelenos who have accumulated a lifetime of racism’s health harms and those who spent at least some of their lives in other countries gives further support to this view.

PREMATURE DEATH AMONG SPECIFIC POPULATIONS

Because of how death data are collected and life expectancy is calculated, we are unable to provide life-expectancy-at-birth figures for population groups other than women and men, racial and ethnic groups, people born in and outside the United States, and people living in different LA communities. Several other population groups face serious threats to their ability to live long and healthy lives, however: people experiencing homelessness, living with persistent and severe mental illness, or living in poverty—as well as those with less education, who experienced adverse childhood events, or who have substance use disorders. Though we cannot calculate life expectancy at birth for these groups, ample evidence suggests that their lives are too often cut short.

Los Angeles County Life Expectancy by Nativity, 2019–2023

NATIVITY	YEARS
Foreign Born	82.9
Men	79.7
Women	85.9
US Born	79.3
Men	76.5
Women	82.2
ASIAN	
Foreign Born	86.5
US Born	87.2
BLACK	
Foreign Born	81.1
US Born	72.7
LATINO	
Foreign Born	81.5
US Born	80.3
WHITE	
Foreign Born	81.8
US Born	80.2

Source: Measure of America calculations using data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023.

The leading causes of death among people experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County have remained consistent since 2022. Overdose is still the primary cause, accounting for 45 percent of all deaths.

People experiencing homelessness. Housing is a vital social determinant of health, and the high levels of housing instability and homelessness in the County are bad for Angelenos' health. As became abundantly clear during the COVID-19 epidemic, people in precarious, overcrowded housing in Los Angeles are more likely to experience health challenges and lack access to care. According to the 2025 Homeless Count, Los Angeles County is home to 72,000 homeless individuals. Of this group, 47,000 are unsheltered every night, and these residents are much more likely than sheltered and housed Angelenos to experience negative health outcomes, such as symptoms of anxiety or depression, smoking, lack of access to care, substance use, and physical disabilities.¹⁰⁵

The mortality rate for people who are unhoused has been consistently higher than for the general population in Los Angeles. For unhoused people, the rate increased 56 percent from 2019 to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and a rise in fentanyl overdoses, and 3.5 percent from 2021 to 2023—a much smaller increase, but still a cause for concern when compared to the rate for the general population, which decreased over the same period.¹⁰⁶ According to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, in 2023, there were 2,508 deaths among people experiencing homelessness, resulting in a mortality rate of 3,326 per 100,000 people. Homeless individuals were 4.5 times more likely to die than the general population.¹⁰⁷

The leading causes of death among people experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County have remained consistent for many years.¹⁰⁸ Overdose remains the primary cause by far, accounting for 45 percent of all deaths. A large share of overdoses since 2020 have involved fentanyl, prompting increased distribution of naloxone as a key harm reduction strategy. Heart disease is the second-leading cause, responsible for 14 percent of deaths. Notably, the mortality rate from heart disease has been on the rise since 2021. Transportation-related injuries rank third, with a rate of 251 deaths per 100,000; 95 percent of these deaths are among pedestrians and cyclists. Homicide is the fourth-leading cause, though it has been declining since 2021, with 159 deaths per 100,000 in 2023. Suicide remains the fifth-leading cause of death for people who are unhoused, with consistently higher rates among young, white, and Latino individuals. Meanwhile, COVID-19 mortality has continued to decline significantly since peaking in 2021.

People living with persistent and severe mental illness. A 2023 *Lancet* study found that mental health disorders are associated with significantly shorter lives, with an average of 14.7 years of potential life lost and a life expectancy of 63.9 years across 24 countries and regions, including developed and developing countries.¹⁰⁹

Life expectancy varied by sex and diagnosis. Women with mental health disorders lived longer (68.2 years) than men (61.0 years). Substance use disorders were associated with the shortest life expectancy (57.1 years) and the greatest number of years of potential life lost (20.4 years). Schizophrenia and bipolar disorder were associated with a large lifespan reduction, between 12 and 15 years.

The study found that unnatural causes of death, particularly suicide, accounted for a significant portion of years lost, though natural causes also contributed to the longevity gap.

People living in or having grown up in poverty. Lower median household income is consistently associated with lower life expectancy. A 2022 study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that the life expectancy gap in California between the richest and poorest households reached 15.5 years in 2021. In 2019, residents of Census tracts in the lowest 1 percent of income had an average life expectancy of 75.9 years, compared to 87.4 years in the highest 1 percent. This income-based disparity in life expectancy is especially pronounced among Latino, Asian, and Black populations in California. The correlation between higher income and better health grew stronger for these populations, compared to for white residents, during the pandemic.¹¹⁰

Similarly, a 2024 study published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* found that across all racial groups in the United States, individuals with annual incomes below \$15,000 had significantly higher mortality rates than those earning \$50,000 or more. Notably, among those living in poverty, white individuals experienced higher total mortality than Black individuals. The study also found that poverty was associated with a 10-plus-year reduction in life expectancy. While individuals in poverty who maintained the healthiest lifestyle had less risk of death than high-income individuals with the unhealthiest habits, the findings underscore that a healthy lifestyle alone cannot fully offset the effects of poverty on mortality.¹¹¹ Further, living in poverty makes it exponentially more challenging to maintain the healthiest habits.

These income-based health disparities begin early in life, with children in poverty experiencing higher infant mortality and lower birthweights. These disparities worsen as children age because of an elevated risk of exposure to harmful environments, limited access to health care, and the cumulative effects of chronic conditions. Childhood poverty is linked to elevated lead levels and higher rates of asthma and obesity, which contribute to long-term health problems. Poor adult health is more strongly tied to childhood economic conditions than to adult income.¹¹²

People with less education. Americans with a college degree have significantly better outcomes across nearly all major causes of death compared to those without a degree, and the gap is widening. In 2021, life expectancy for adults with a bachelor's degree was 6.9 years longer than for those without one. Between 2019 and 2021, mortality rates rose for both groups, but the increase was substantially higher among those without a degree. Among women without a bachelor's degree, gains in life expectancy have slowed even more dramatically than among similarly educated men. Key drivers of the disparity include deaths of despair, such as suicide, alcohol-related deaths, and drug overdose, as well as cancer, where improvements have disproportionately benefited college graduates. However, the widening gap spans nearly all major causes of death.¹¹³

¿Por qué todos los que viven en una área que es de recursos altos viven más? Porque ellos tienen más oportunidades, se le da más dinero quizás a la comunidad o tienen otros recursos. ¿Por qué no se le puede dar los mismos recursos a las personas o a la comunidad que son de bajos recursos si todos trabajamos iguales, todos estudiamos iguales, hay unos que trabajan hasta más—por qué entonces no se nos puede dar el mismo recurso?



Antelope Valley resident

Translation from Spanish:

Why do all the people who live in high-resource areas live longer? It's because they have more opportunities; perhaps more money is given to their community, or they have access to other resources. Why can't the same resources be given to people or communities with low incomes? We all work equally hard, we all study equally hard, some even work harder—so why can't we be given the same resources?

I think that is one of the primary obstacles that we have is mental health. We need to have good strategies or support because it's not just us adults, it's also affecting children as well, has impacted them tremendously.



East LA resident

This educational divide in mortality became even more stark during the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly worsened existing disparities in California. Death rates rose sharply as education levels decreased. People without a high school diploma experienced the highest mortality burden, with 533 excess deaths per 100,000. Those with only a high school diploma had 466 excess deaths per 100,000, followed by 156 among those with some college, 120 for those with a bachelor's degree, and 101 for individuals with a graduate or professional degree. These inequities were evident across all demographic subgroups analyzed—including age, gender, race and ethnicity, country of birth, employment sector, and urban or rural residence. The most pronounced relative mortality gaps were among adults ages 25 to 54 and essential workers, who were 5 and 5.7 times more likely, respectively, to die if they had no college education compared to peers with at least some college education. These patterns reveal how deeply educational attainment shaped vulnerability during the pandemic, highlighting the urgent need for equity-focused public health strategies.¹¹⁴

People who had adverse childhood experiences. Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) have serious consequences for children's immediate and long-term mental and physical health. These experiences—which include parental harshness, neglect, family mental illness, divorce or separation, marital transitions, death of a parent or sibling, foster care placement, residential moves, crowded housing, welfare receipt, poverty, income decline, and severe chronic childhood illness—are widespread in California, with approximately 64 percent of adults reporting at least one ACE. A 2022 study published in *The Lancet* examined the impact of adverse childhood experiences on mortality in the United States and found a strong link between early adversity and premature death. Each additional adverse experience was associated with approximately a 10 percent higher risk of mortality, and overall exposure to more than four ACEs was linked to a 45 percent higher risk of premature mortality.¹¹⁵ The long-term health conditions linked to adverse childhood experiences place a significant financial burden on the state, \$88,000 per affected adult annually.¹¹⁶

The study identified distinct adversity patterns and found that mortality rates were highest among participants who experienced poverty and crowded housing (183 deaths per 100,000 people) and those who experienced poverty and separation from their parents (177 deaths per 100,000).¹¹⁷ Family instability or parental harshness during childhood also increased mortality rates. The shortened life expectancy among those with high exposure to ACEs is likely driven by the body's impaired ability to manage or recover from stress, compounded by long-term psychological and physical harms.

People with substance use disorders. In 2024, a striking one in four Americans ages 12 and older reported having used illicit drugs in the past year.¹¹⁸ Because drug use is not only widespread but also increasingly normalized, its very real dangers can be underestimated. These dangers include long-term health problems, dependence, accidents and injuries, and death; in fact, drug overdose has been the leading cause of accidental death in the County since 2017, killing more Angelenos than car crashes or guns.¹¹⁹

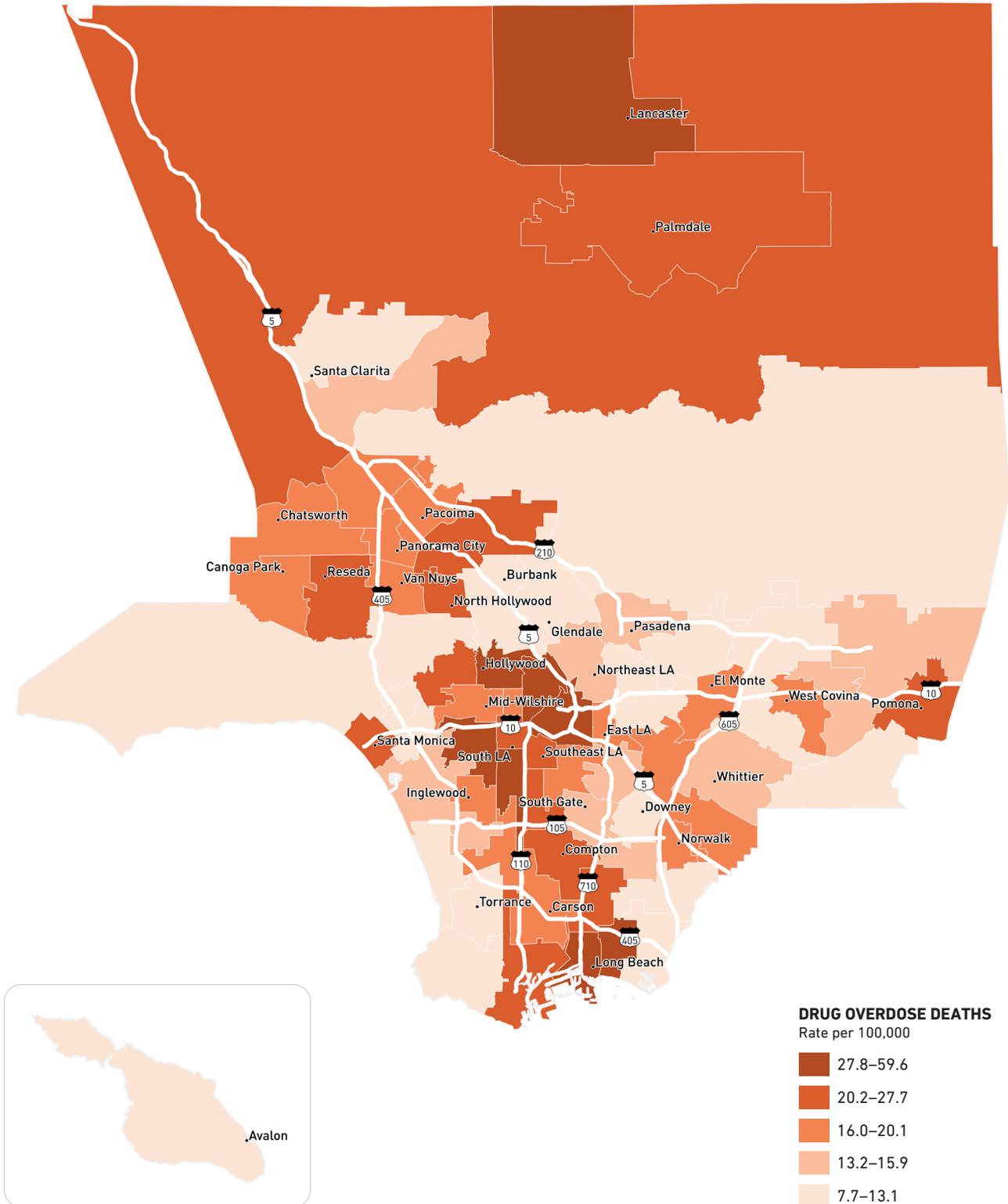
Overall, drug overdose deaths are down, a welcome development. In 2024, there were 2,438 accidental drug overdose deaths in Los Angeles County, an average of seven deaths per day; this was the lowest number recorded since 2019 and a decline of 22 percent compared with 2023.¹²⁰ Yet disparities remained. Men were four times as likely as women to die from accidental drug overdose and poisoning. Black Angelenos had the highest age-adjusted rate per 100,000 people, 65.7, more than double the white rate (30.5), 3.4 times the Latino rate (19.1), and 16 times the Asian rate (4.0). And differences were stark between low-income and affluent areas; the rate of accidental drug overdose deaths in areas where more than 30 percent of families lived below the federal poverty level was 3.6 times that found in areas where less than 10 percent of families lived below the federal poverty line.¹²¹ These stark differences play out across the County (see **MAP 1**). The Census Bureau divides Los Angeles County into 71 clusters of neighborhoods, called Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs), and drug overdose rates range from 7.7 per 100,000 in Arcadia, San Gabriel, and Temple City to 59.5 per 100,000 in LA City (East Central/Central City, Boyle Heights).

Substance use disorders, mental health conditions, and homelessness often coexist. During 2022 and 2023, over half of those seeking substance use treatment in the County reported co-occurring mental health conditions, and 39.2 percent had experienced homelessness.¹²²

Tackling the harms to individuals, families, and communities that substance use causes, particularly the disproportionate risk of death that those with substance use disorders face, requires a range of actions. The sharp differences in death rates by gender, race and ethnicity, and income level point to the need for further expansion of targeted, tailored interventions, both to expand access to behavioral health services and medication for addiction treatment and to prevent fentanyl overdose deaths by educating people about how to administer naloxone, which saves lives by reversing opioid overdoses, and making it more widely available.

Because drug use is not only widespread but also increasingly normalized, its very real dangers can be underestimated.

MAP 1 Drug Overdose Deaths by Neighborhood Cluster



Source: Measure of America calculations using data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023.

Variation by Place

Among the County's 115 cities and Census-Designated Places plus the City of Los Angeles' 34 Community Plan Areas, life expectancy in the 2019–2023 period ranged from **88.1** in Westwood to **71.8 years** in Sun Village in the Antelope Valley—a span of 16.3 years within one county (see **MAP 2**). Sun Village also had the lowest life expectancy in the 2017 version of *Portrait of LA County*, but it was four years higher then, 75.8. The places with the highest life expectancy, 85.6 years and up, are largely on the Westside and along the coast. Those with the lowest life expectancy, 76.9 years and less, are mostly in the Antelope Valley, the Gateway Cities region, and South Los Angeles.

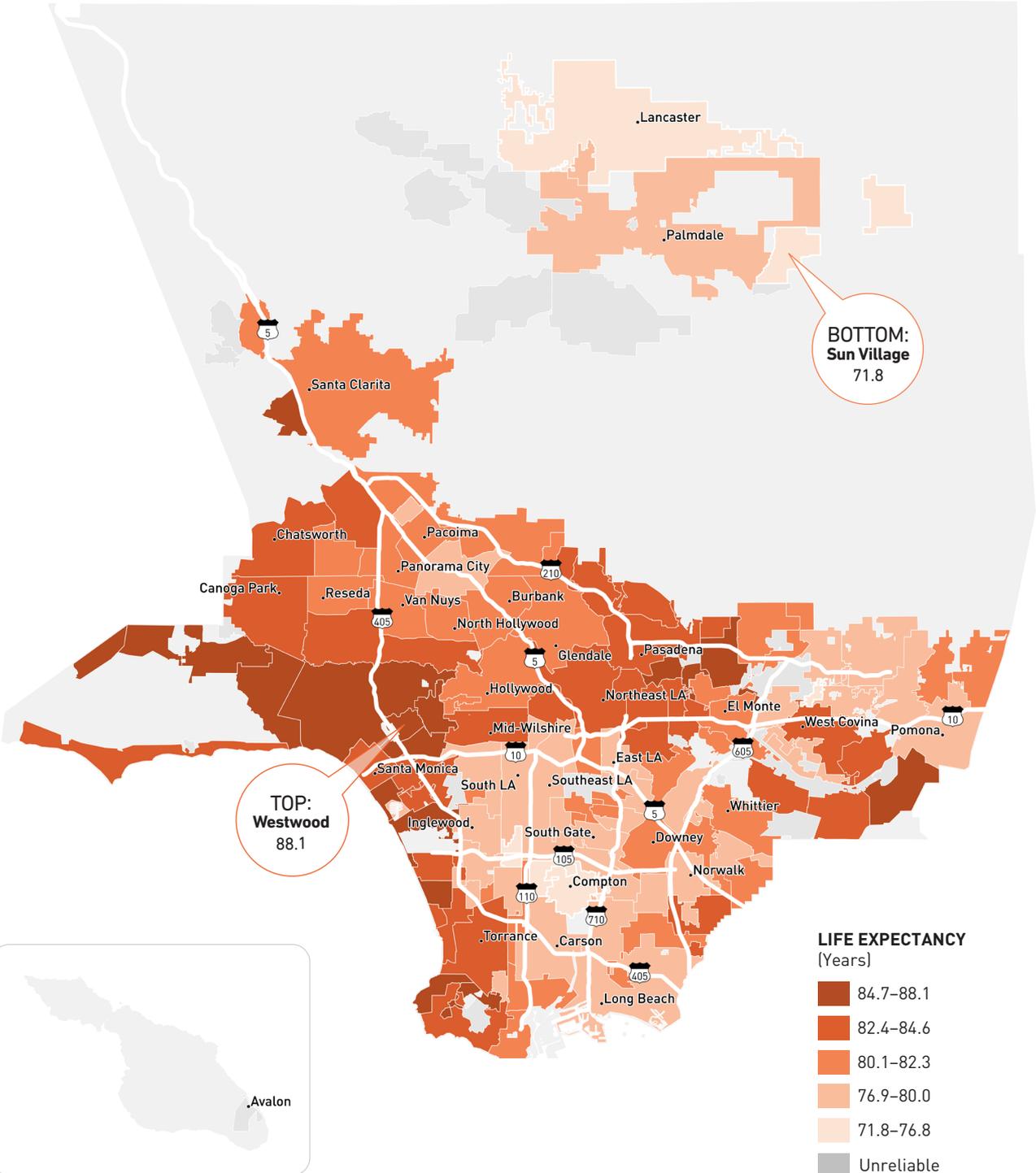
Life expectancy in the 2019–2023 period ranged from 88.1 in Westwood to 71.8 years in Sun Village in the Antelope Valley.

TABLE 1 Places with Highest and Lowest Life Expectancy at Birth in Los Angeles County, 2019–2023

HIGHEST	LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (years)	LOWEST	LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (years)
Westwood	88.1	Artesia	76.9
Brentwood - Pacific Palisades	88.0	Vincent	76.3
Beverly Hills	87.7	Compton	76.2
Palos Verdes Estates	87.0	Lancaster	75.1
West Los Angeles	86.4	West Athens	74.7
Bel Air - Beverly Crest	86.1	Westmont	74.4
Rolling Hills Estates	85.9	Willowbrook	74.1
Stevenson Ranch	85.8	West Rancho Dominguez	73.1
Topanga	85.7	Lake Los Angeles	72.3
San Marino	85.6	Sun Village	71.8

Source: Measure of America calculations using data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023.

MAP 2 Life Expectancy by Place



Source: Measure of America calculations using data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023.

TABLE 2 Life Expectancy by Place and Supervisorial District

 DISTRICT 1 Supervisor Hilda L. Solis		 DISTRICT 2 Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell		 DISTRICT 3 Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath		 DISTRICT 4 Supervisor Janice Hahn		 DISTRICT 5 Supervisor Kathryn Barger	
Diamond Bar	84.8	Westchester - Playa del Rey	85.5	Westwood	88.1	Palos Verdes Estates	87.0	Stevenson Ranch	85.8
Monterey Park	84.1	Manhattan Beach	85.4	Brentwood - Pacific Palisades	88.0	Rolling Hills Estates	85.9	San Marino	85.6
San Gabriel	84.0	Palms - Mar Vista - Del Rey	84.1	Beverly Hills	87.7	Rancho Palos Verdes	84.3	Arcadia	85.4
Silver Lake - Echo Park - Elysian Valley	83.9	Del Aire	83.6	West Los Angeles	86.4	Cerritos	83.7	East San Gabriel	84.7
Hacienda Heights	83.7	Culver City	83.5	Bel Air - Beverly Crest	86.1	Hawaiian Gardens	83.7	La Crescenta-Montrose	84.1
Walnut	83.6	Wilshire	83.3	Topanga	85.7	Torrance	82.7	La Cañada Flintridge	83.4
Rowland Heights	83.5	Redondo Beach	83.2	Westlake Village	85.1	Signal Hill	82.0	South Pasadena	83.2
Alhambra	83.4	Hermosa Beach	82.9	Calabasas	85.1	La Mirada	81.7	Altadena	82.9
Northeast Los Angeles	83.2	El Segundo	82.5	Venice	84.9	Bell	81.7	Pasadena	82.9
West Covina	82.4	View Park-Windsor Hills	81.6	Agoura Hills	84.7	Huntington Park	81.6	Sierra Madre	82.7
Rosemead	82.4	Alondra Park	81.0	Malibu	84.6	San Pedro	81.4	Claremont	82.3
Montebello	81.6	Harbor Gateway	80.9	Santa Monica	84.4	Downey	81.0	Glendale	82.0
South El Monte	81.6	West Carson	79.9	Sherman Oaks - Studio City - Toluca Lake - Cahuenga Pass	84.4	Santa Fe Springs	80.9	Temple City	82.0
La Verne	80.9	Carson	79.5	Encino - Tarzana	84.3	Walnut Park	80.8	Burbank	82.0
El Monte	80.9	Inglewood	79.1	Palms - Mar Vista - Del Rey	84.1	Maywood	80.5	Santa Clarita	82.0
Boyle Heights	80.6	Gardena	78.9	Wilshire	83.3	Whittier	80.4	Duarte	82.0
Avocado Heights	80.1	Lennox	78.8	Canoga Park - Winnetka - Woodland Hills - West Hills	82.9	Lakewood	80.3	Sunland - Tujunga - Lake View Terrace - Shadow Hills - East La Tuna Canyon	81.6
Baldwin Park	79.9	Hawthorne	78.7	Granada Hills - Knollwood	82.8	Wilmington - Harbor City	80.3	La Verne	80.9
Downtown	79.8	West Adams - Baldwin Hills - Leimert	78.6	Chatsworth - Porter Ranch	82.6	West Whittier-Los Nietos	80.0	Monrovia	80.8
Westlake	79.6	Lawndale	78.6	Sylmar	82.0	Pico Rivera	80.0	Castaic	80.3
Covina	79.4	South Los Angeles	78.2	West Hollywood	81.9	South Gate	80.0	San Dimas	79.5
West Puente Valley	79.3	Marina del Rey	77.9	Northridge	81.8	Norwalk	79.5	Quartz Hill	79.1
La Puente	79.3	Southeast Los Angeles	77.7	Hollywood	81.5	East Whittier	79.4	Glendora	79.0
Pomona	79.2	East Rancho Dominguez	77.5	Arleta - Pacoima	81.5	South Whittier	79.3	Charter Oak	79.0
Azusa	78.9	Florence-Graham	77.2	North Hollywood - Valley Village	81.3	Long Beach	79.2	Palmdale	77.4
East Los Angeles	78.5	Compton	76.2	Van Nuys - North Sherman Oaks	80.7	Commerce	79.2	Lancaster	75.1
Citrus	78.0	West Athens	74.7	Reseda - West Van Nuys	80.5	Bell Gardens	78.8	Lake Los Angeles	72.3
Valinda	78.0	Westmont	74.4	Mission Hills - Panorama City - North Hills	80.4	Cudahy	78.8	Sun Village	71.8
South San Jose Hills	77.4	Willowbrook	74.1	San Fernando	80.0	Bellflower	78.5		
Vincent	76.3	West Rancho Dominguez	73.1	Sun Valley - La Tuna Canyon	79.2	Lomita	78.1		
						Paramount	78.0		
						Lynwood	77.6		
						Artesia	76.9		

Note: Places are listed according to the Supervisorial District in which they are primarily located. When a large portion of a locale's land straddles two districts, it is included in both.
 Source: Measure of America calculations using data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023.

Access to Knowledge



Introduction

Variation by Demographic Group

Variation by Place

Education by Place: Change Over Time

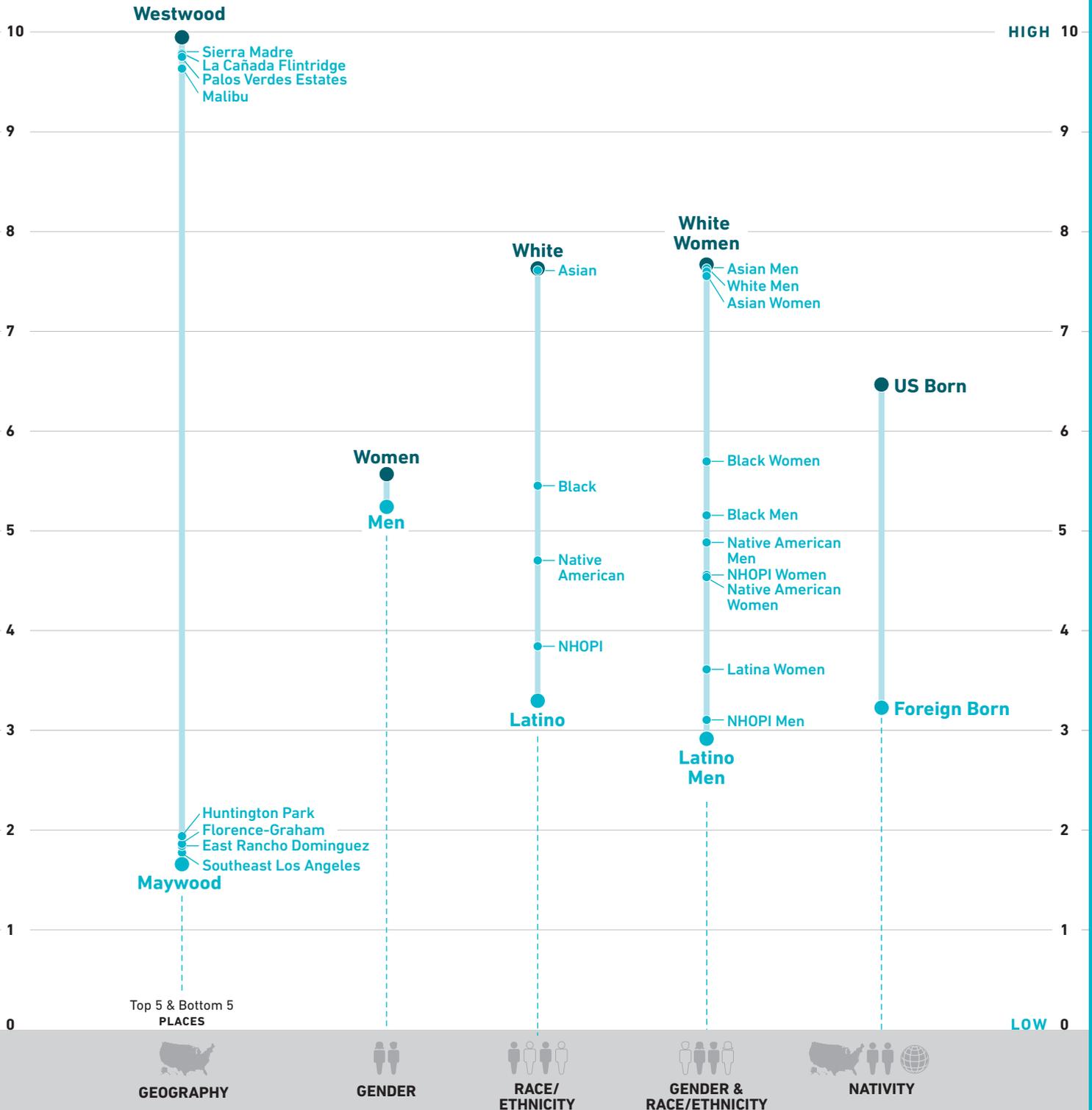
Important Issues from Birth to Young Adulthood

IN THIS SECTION

How Do We Stack Up?

Educational Attainment and School Enrollment

EDUCATION INDEX



Introduction

Todo está relacionado, tanto la educación como lo que estás ganando, la cantidad de dinero que haces por hora. Entonces también está relacionado con los años que vas a vivir o porque lo que ganas te dicta dónde vas a vivir. Los lugares que tienen más cosas que estresan a las personas que viven en esas áreas y que también afectan su salud.



Long Beach resident

Translation from Spanish:
Everything is connected, both education and what you earn, the amount of money you make per hour. It's also related to how long you're going to live, because your income dictates where you live. And some places have more stressors that affect the people living in those areas and impact their health.

Education is a means to many desirable economic ends—from better jobs to bigger paychecks. Compared to people whose education stopped at high school, those with postsecondary education earn more, are less likely to be unemployed, and are more likely to labor in occupational fields that offer better benefits and working conditions. Earnings move in lockstep with educational attainment, with bachelor's degree holders earning 66 percent more than what high school graduates earn, and those with professional degrees earning nearly one and a half times what college graduates take home.¹²³

But the benefits of education extend far beyond economic security. For society as a whole, higher levels of educational attainment are associated with less crime, lower rates of incarceration, and greater civic engagement, political participation, tolerance of difference, and support for the rights of others. For individuals, more education is associated with better health and longer lives, including a reduced risk of dementia and chronic disease, better mental health, and fewer health-risk behaviors; more stability in interpersonal relationships, higher marriage and lower divorce rates; and greater resilience and ability to adjust to change as well as more effective coping skills.¹²⁴

Even these striking results, however, do not fully account for the transformative effect that education can have on people's lives. Education is essential to people's ability to decide for themselves what to do and who to be. It is not just about mastering academic subjects or developing technical skills but also learning about oneself and one's world; as W. E. B. Du Bois argued in *The Souls of Black Folk*, the function of education "is not simply to teach bread-winning."¹²⁵ Education expands the horizons of the possible; builds confidence, agency, and self-sufficiency; confers status and dignity; and helps people envision and realize futures for themselves and for their communities that are different and better than their current circumstances.

Access to knowledge in the American Human Development Index is measured using two indicators that are combined into an Education Index. The first is **school enrollment** for the population between the ages of 3 and 24; this indicator captures everyone who is currently in school, from toddlers in preschool to 24-year-olds in college or graduate school. This age range covers not just the years of compulsory schooling but also the early years when disparities in access to knowledge are already taking shape and when interventions like high-quality preschool—which has been shown to improve the academic performance and long-term life chances of children, particularly those living in low-income families—can make a powerful difference.¹²⁶ It also encompasses the period of emerging adulthood, when young people acquire many of the capabilities needed for flourishing lives.

The second indicator is **educational degree attainment** for the population ages 25 and older. This indicator presents a snapshot of education in a place or among

a group at one point in time. It measures the share of adults with high school diplomas, four-year bachelor’s degrees, and graduate and professional degrees. (Keep in mind that this is not a measure of the current high school graduation rate. The graduation rate of today’s Los Angeles County high school students is an important indicator, but not part of this index.) The degree attainment indicator does not include career and technical education credentials or certifications; although such credentials are important gateways to many careers, uniform, comparable statistics about them are not available. The school enrollment indicator counts for one-third the weight of the Education Index, and the degree attainment indicator counts for the remaining two-thirds; these relative proportions reflect the difficulty of as well as the payoff for earning a degree as compared to simply enrolling in school. Data for both indicators come from the annual American Community Survey of the US Census Bureau.

While access to education is critical, so is the quality of that education. Unfortunately, no comparable, reliable indicators are available across the country, so none are included in the American Human Development Index. We do, however, incorporate such measures into the analysis when they exist. In addition, the indicators used to measure access to knowledge—school enrollment and degree attainment—notably measure only *access to formal education*. Using indicators of formal education as a stand-in for the broad concept of knowledge is commonplace in social science research and has many advantages (for instance, the data are collected and made available every year). But doing so leaves unmeasured and unacknowledged other valuable and important ways of knowing that allow communities to survive and flourish and that are sources of strength, resilience, pride, and identity. Access to knowledge includes not just what people learn in school but also what they learn at home and in their communities about how the world works, what is valuable, what it means to be a good person, how to overcome challenges, and how to carry out most of the practical tasks of living, to name just a few.

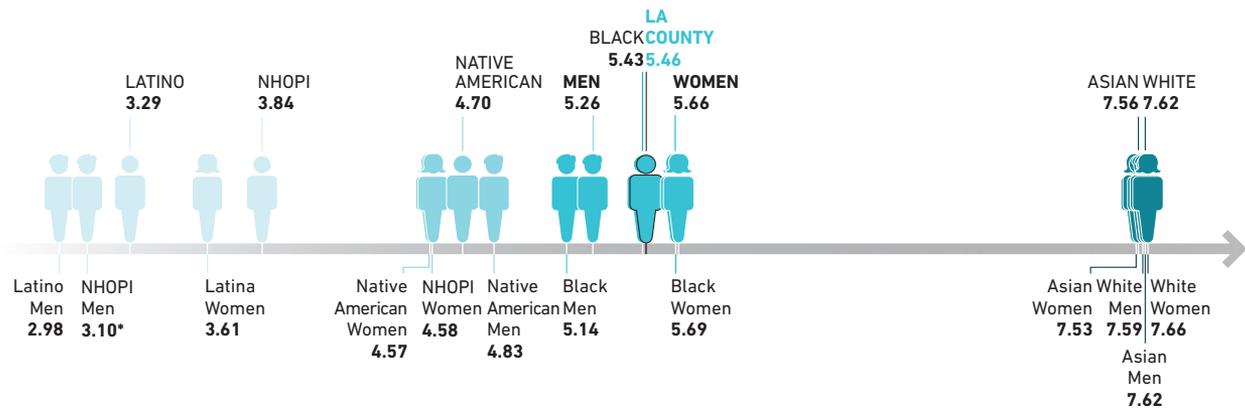
Los Angeles County made considerable progress between 2015 and 2023 in terms of education. The Education Index increased from 4.96 to 5.46, a jump of 10.1 percent. The share of adults with a bachelor’s degree rose more sharply still, from 30.9 percent to 36.6 percent, an increase of 18.4 percent. Women made quicker progress than men (a 21.9 percent increase vs. a 14.6 percent increase). Among racial and ethnic groups, the share of Latino residents with bachelor’s degrees increased a striking 43.5 percent, and the percentage of Black Angelenos with bachelor’s degrees rose 27.1 percent. Despite this progress, however, Los Angeles County still trails California as a whole on key educational indicators. For example, Los Angeles County has a larger share of adults over age 25 who lack a high school degree (18.7 percent compared to 15.1 percent in California), and slightly fewer adults hold bachelor’s and graduate degrees than is the case statewide. The countywide figures that make up the Education Index obscure huge disparities by place and race, and these disparities are the subject of this chapter.

Los Angeles County made considerable progress between 2015 and 2023 in terms of education.

Variation by Demographic Group

Women have higher Education Index scores than men, on average, in Los Angeles County, in California, and in the country as a whole. Women ages 25 and up are more likely than their male counterparts to have graduated high school and earned bachelor's and graduate degrees. Girls and young women are also slightly more likely to be enrolled in school than boys and young men.

FIGURE 1 Education Index by Gender and by Race and Ethnicity



Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty.
Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2023. Native American and NHOPI using ACS 2019–2023.

Women have higher Education Index scores than men, on average, in Los Angeles County, in California, and in the country as a whole.

Nationally and in most states, metro areas, and counties, Education Index scores for the four largest racial and ethnic groups follow the same pattern: Asian residents have the highest score, followed by white, Black, and Latino residents. This was the case in Los Angeles County in the first *A Portrait of Los Angeles County* report; **Asians** scored the highest at 7.12, followed closely by **whites** at 7.02. The next-highest scores were significantly lower—4.69 for **NHOPI** residents and 4.64 for **Black** residents. The lowest-scoring group was **Latino** Angelenos at 2.77; at that time, more than 40 percent of Latino adults over age 25 lacked a high school diploma. In 2023, white Angelenos became the highest-scoring group, though by a very small margin, and Black Angelenos also moved ahead in the rankings.

White Angelenos have the highest Education Index score, 7.62. They have the highest rate of adults who completed high school; less than 5 percent of white adults lack a high school diploma. White adults in Los Angeles are also the most likely to hold bachelor's degrees (56.4 percent) and graduate degrees (23.2 percent), roughly 20 and 10 percentage points more, respectively, than the LA County averages. White women are slightly more likely than white men to hold high school diplomas, bachelor's degrees, and graduate degrees, and are slightly less likely to be enrolled in school; they have the best Education Index of all gender/race combinations.

TABLE 1 Education Index by Gender and by Race and Ethnicity

	EDUCATION INDEX	EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				School Enrollment (% ages 3 to 24)
		Less than High School (% of adults 25+)	High School Diploma (% of adults 25+)	Bachelor's Degree (% of adults 25+)	Graduate Degree (% of adults 25+)	
LOS ANGELES COUNTY	5.46	18.7	44.7	23.0	13.6	79.3
GENDER						
Women	5.66	18.5	43.7	23.5	14.3	80.4
Men	5.26	18.9	45.8	22.4	12.9	78.2
RACE/ETHNICITY						
White	7.62	4.4	39.2	33.2	23.2	81.6
Asian	7.56	10.6	34.2	36.3	18.9	86.4
Black	5.43	8.3	58.9	19.9	12.9	76.2
Native American	4.70	15.7	63.8	13.4	7.1	80.5
NHOPI	3.84	11.9	68.8	13.9	5.4	71.0
Latino	3.29	33.9	49.6	11.4	5.1	76.9
RACE/ETHNICITY AND GENDER						
White Women	7.66	4.3	39.0	32.6	24.1	81.4
Asian Men	7.62	10.0	34.0	35.9	20.1	85.8
White Men	7.59	4.4	39.5	33.8	22.3	81.8
Asian Women	7.53	11.1	34.3	36.7	17.9	87.1
Black Women	5.69	8.3	55.9	21.0	14.8	76.6
Black Men	5.14	8.3	62.3	18.6	10.8	75.8
Native American Men	4.83	15.9	62.1	14.8	7.2*	81.2
NHOPI Women	4.58	12.3	64.5	15.4	7.8*	76.0
Native American Women	4.57	15.5	65.2	12.3	7.0*	79.6
Latina Women	3.61	33.3	48.3	12.3	6.1	78.7
NHOPI Men	3.10*	11.5	73.7	12.1		66.5
Latino Men	2.98	34.4	51.0	10.5	4.1	75.3

Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty. Blank estimates are unreliable.

Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2023. Native American and NHOPI using ACS 2019–2023.

TABLE 2 Education Index for White Angelenos by Nativity

	EDUCATION INDEX	EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				School Enrollment (% ages 3 to 24)
		Less than High School (% of adults 25+)	High School Diploma (% of adults 25+)	Bachelor's Degree (% of adults 25+)	Graduate Degree (% of adults 25+)	
LOS ANGELES COUNTY	5.46	18.7	44.7	23.0	13.6	79.3
Foreign-Born White Residents	7.22	8.8	42.2	26.2	22.8	83.1
US-Born White Residents	7.76	3.2	38.3	35.1	23.4	81.5

Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2023.

TABLE 3 Education Index for Asian Angelenos by Nativity and Subgroup

	EDUCATION INDEX	EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				School Enrollment (% ages 3 to 24)
		Less than High School (% of adults 25+)	High School Diploma (% of adults 25+)	Bachelor's Degree (% of adults 25+)	Graduate Degree (% of adults 25+)	
LOS ANGELES COUNTY	5.46	18.7	44.7	23.0	13.6	79.3
Foreign-Born Asian Residents	6.97	12.9	35.5	33.7	17.9	83.5
US-Born Asian Residents	8.63	3.2	29.9	44.9	22.0	87.3
Asian Subgroups						
Taiwanese	9.47	4.0	18.6	41.0	36.4	89.4
Indian	9.16	5.7	19.6	35.4	39.3	86.2
Japanese	7.94	2.9	40.8	39.4	16.9	87.2
Korean	7.80	7.1	35.3	39.8	17.8	86.7
Pakistani	7.79	13.6*	28.1	32.5	25.8	85.5
Two or More or Other Asian	7.34	12.4	33.8	35.1	18.7	85.7
Chinese	7.21	15.7	32.1	31.7	20.5	85.7
Filipino	7.03	4.9	38.2	46.7	10.2	81.5
Thai	6.82	12.1	38.8	33.1	16.0	83.6
Bangladeshi	6.71	16.9	35.4	26.1	21.6	82.7
Vietnamese	5.20	26.1	39.8	23.4	10.7	82.6
Cambodian	4.04	31.1	45.5	19.3	4.1	80.8

Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2023. Asian subgroups using ACS 2019–2023.

Asian Angelenos have the second-highest Education Index score in the County, 7.56. More than half of all Asian adults have at least a bachelor's degree, and nearly one in five hold a graduate degree. Their school enrollment rate, 86.4 percent, is the highest of all racial and ethnic groups. Unlike other groups, Asian men have higher rates of degree attainment than Asian women in every category; for example, 20.1 percent of Asian men have graduate degrees, compared to 17.9 percent of Asian women. Asian women have the highest rate of school enrollment of all gender/race combinations, 87.1 percent.

Asians are not a monolithic group, however. Two-thirds (64.4 percent) of the Asian population in Los Angeles were born outside of the United States. The share of foreign-born Asian residents without a high school degree is four times that of US-born Asian residents, and they are less likely to have college or graduate degrees. Significantly, however, foreign-born Asian residents nonetheless have more education than the average Angeleno and are more likely to be enrolled in school. The effects of unique historical factors are visible in educational differences among Asian subgroups as well. While most have Education Index scores higher than the County as a whole, Asian subgroups' scores range significantly.

Education-based immigration restrictions and the transfer of sociocultural norms from migrants' countries of origin may account for the comparative educational success of Asians, even those with low incomes. Immigration reform in 1965 brought a wave of Asian immigrants to the United States. Because the US immigration system privileged the well-educated (and continues to do so), immigrants from Asia tend to be highly skilled and credentialed compared to the overall populations both in the United States and in their home countries. Though many were not able to find work in their fields of expertise due to language barriers, discrimination, and other factors, opting instead to start small businesses or work in the service sector, they of course retained their educational backgrounds. This social capital (highly educated parents) combined with institutions and practices (like afterschool and weekend learning programs) position second-generation children to succeed in school. Scholars argue that more socioeconomically disadvantaged Asian subgroups, such as Cambodians, benefit from the institutions, norms, achievement mindset, and knowledge networks established by more affluent and settled Asian groups. In addition to these supports, children of Asian descent may benefit from higher expectations from teachers and positive social stereotypes with regard to academic achievement.¹²⁷

Black Angelenos rank third in terms of educational outcomes. Black adults are more likely than any group other than whites to have completed high school; 91.7 percent of Black adults hold at least a high school diploma. Slightly smaller shares of Black adults have earned college and graduate degrees than the Los Angeles County average, and Black young people have a lower enrollment rate than any group other than NHOPI residents. Black women and men are equally likely to hold

More than half of all Asian adults have at least a bachelor's degree, and nearly one in five hold a graduate degree.

TABLE 4 Education Index for Black Angelenos by Nativity

	EDUCATION INDEX	EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				School Enrollment (% ages 3 to 24)
		Less than High School (% of adults 25+)	High School Diploma (% of adults 25+)	Bachelor's Degree (% of adults 25+)	Graduate Degree (% of adults 25+)	
LOS ANGELES COUNTY	5.46	18.7	44.7	23.0	13.6	79.3
Foreign-Born Black Residents	7.45	9.6	45.3	23.7	21.4	88.4
US-Born Black Residents	5.32	8.2	60.1	19.5	12.2	75.8

Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2023.

The gap in degree attainment between white and Black, Latino, Native American, and NHOPI adults in Los Angeles is a modern-day manifestation of past discrimination as well as present-day bias and differential access to resources.

high school diplomas, but Black women earn college and graduate degrees and are enrolled in school at higher rates. A heartening finding is that the Education Index increased for Black Angelenos by 17.0 percent since the first *A Portrait of Los Angeles County* report, and the share of Black adults with at least a bachelor's degree jumped 27.1 percent. Unlike other racial and ethnic groups in Los Angeles, foreign-born Black residents have a higher education score than their US-born counterparts.

The gap in degree attainment between white and Black, Latino, Native American, and NHOPI adults in Los Angeles is a modern-day manifestation of past discrimination as well as present-day bias and differential access to resources. Social science research has time and again demonstrated a strong link between the socioeconomic status and educational attainment of parents and the academic achievements of their children.¹²⁸ The parents of today's young people of color were denied access to a range of educational, employment, and housing options, limiting their education and earnings, which in turn affected their children's educational outcomes. For example, national research shows that the Black-white gap in educational achievement is at least in part a result of the considerable Black-white gap in wealth, which has been shown to have a strong impact on educational attainment.¹²⁹ In addition to covering the costs of college itself, wealth allows parents to buy homes in better school districts that encourage college readiness, aspirations, and applications; mitigates stress that interferes with learning by helping families weather unexpected expenditures; provides a sense of security; and allows parents and children alike to plan for a future that involves higher education.

Another bright spot in educational trends is an improvement in educational enrollment for Black boys and young men. This group of young Angelenos has shown a 6.6 percent increase in school enrollment since the time of the last report, from 71.1 percent in 2015 to 75.8 percent in 2023. This is the only group for which school enrollment has significantly increased during this period, defying the

national trend of declining school enrollment post-COVID. Despite this progress, Black young people as a whole still have lower rates of school enrollment than the County average.

Continuing this progress requires addressing the underlying causes contributing to low enrollment for Black young people; in Los Angeles County, only 46 percent of Black 11th graders report feeling high levels of connectedness to their schools. This rate is the lowest among the racial and ethnic groups reported, 16 percentage points lower than for white students.¹³⁰

Moreover, Black students in Los Angeles County were suspended at rates nearly four times that of white students, 5.4 percent and 1.4 percent, respectively.¹³¹ Some attempts to reckon with these inequities were made in February 2021; the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Board of Education approved the Black Student Achievement Plan (BSAP), which redirected school funding toward programming designed to reduce educational disparities for Black Angelenos: prioritizing culturally responsive curricula and increasing counselor staffing, restorative justice teachers, and psychiatric social workers at 53 schools.¹³² Evidence from before approval of the BSAP indicates that policy changes can reduce educational disparity in Los Angeles. For example, racial disparities in suspension rates fell after the LAUSD implemented equity-driven reforms to its suspension policies.¹³³ Clearly, though, work still must be done to reduce these inequities. Despite backlash, implementation of evidence-based policies that focus on reducing educational disparities for Black students in Los Angeles needs to continue.¹³⁴

Native American Angelenos rank fourth in access to knowledge, with an Education Index score of 4.70. While Native American adults are more likely to be high school graduates than Angelenos as a whole, they are much less likely to have earned bachelor's degrees, 20.5 percent compared to 36.6 percent, and about half as likely to have earned graduate degrees. Native American children and young adults are on par with the countywide average in terms of enrollment. The differences in the Education Index between Native American men and women are small, with men scoring slightly higher than women.

Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders living in Los Angeles County rank second-to-last on education indicators. Although NHOPI adults in Los Angeles are 6.8 percentage points more likely to have high school degrees than the average County resident, only one-fifth have college degrees and just 5.4 percent have graduate degrees, well below the countywide rate. Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders ages 3 to 24 have the lowest rate of enrollment of any racial or ethnic group in Los Angeles, 71.0 percent. NHOPI women are much more likely to hold a bachelor's degree than NHOPI men, 23.2 percent compared to 14.8 percent, and the enrollment rate for NHOPI girls and young women is nearly 10 percentage points higher than the enrollment rate for boys and young men.

Latino residents have the lowest Education Index score, 3.29. More than one-third of adults ages 25 and older lack a high school diploma, and the share of

In Los Angeles County, only 46 percent of Black 11th graders report feeling high levels of connectedness to their schools, 16 percentage points lower than for white students.

TABLE 5 Education Index for Latino Angelenos by Nativity and Subgroup

	EDUCATION INDEX	EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				School Enrollment (% ages 3 to 24)
		Less than High School (% of adults 25+)	High School Diploma (% of adults 25+)	Bachelor's Degree (% of adults 25+)	Graduate Degree (% of adults 25+)	
LOS ANGELES COUNTY	5.46	18.7	44.7	23.0	13.6	79.3
Foreign-Born Latino Residents	0.42	52.0	39.3	6.1	2.6	54.3
US-Born Latino Residents	4.95	12.9	61.7	17.5	7.9	79.1
Latino Subgroups						
Central American	2.43	43.0	44.5	9.4	3.1	75.0
Mexican	3.00	35.7	50.5	9.9	3.9	76.6
Other Latino	4.31	23.2	53.2	15.9	7.7	78.1
Puerto Rican / Dominican / Cuban	5.66	13.5	48.9	24.0	13.6	78.4
South American	6.13	12.2	49.8	24.7	13.3	82.8

Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2023. Latino subgroups using ACS 2019–2023.

Latino adults with bachelor's degrees, 16.5 percent, is less than half the rate for the county as a whole, 36.6 percent. Latina women are more likely to have bachelor's degrees than Latino men, 18.4 percent and 14.6 percent, respectively.

Thirty-seven percent of the Latino population in Los Angeles were born outside of the United States, and the high rate of Latino adults who did not complete high school reflects the limited opportunities Latino immigrants faced in their countries of origin. US-born Latino adults are more likely than the average Angeleno to have graduated high school, foreign-born Latino adults much less likely. Unlike Asian immigrants, who are more likely to have graduated college than the average adult living either in their countries of origin or in the United States, immigrants from Mexico and Central America are less likely to be college graduates.¹³⁵ Just 8.7 percent of foreign-born Latino Angelenos have a bachelor's degree, compared to 36.6 percent of all Angelenos and 25.4 percent of US-born Latino Angelenos. US-born Latino young people are as likely as other Angeleno youth to be enrolled in school.

While Asian children benefit from high academic expectations as a result of positive stereotyping, Latino children are sometimes harmed by negative stereotypes about their academic achievement, as are Black children. Latino students can also face additional hurdles when it comes to language proficiency.

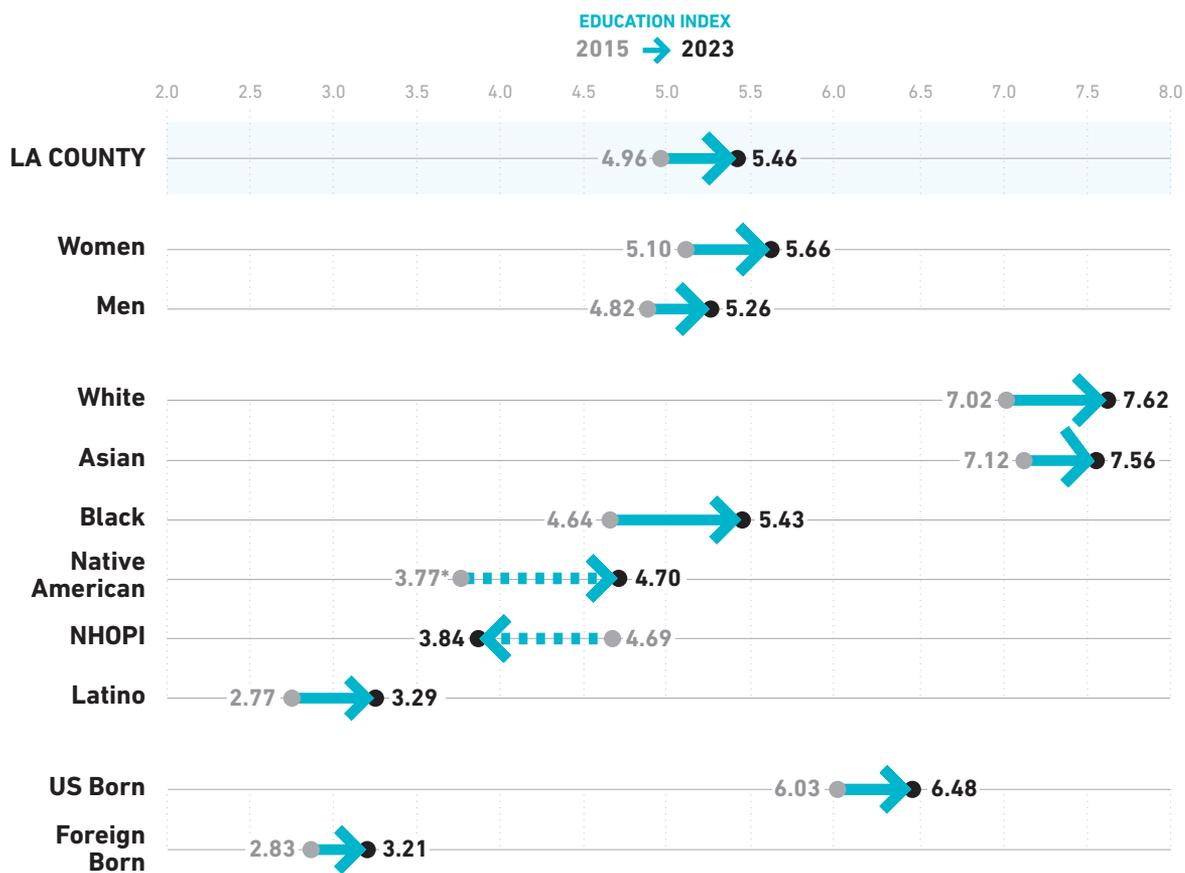
We have low education rates in my community. So even reading is hard for a lot of people.



South LA resident

In terms of educational attainment, a greater percentage of Latino adults now hold bachelor’s degrees than since the time of the last report. These gains were made with relative gender parity; there has been an 36.4 percent increase for Latino men and an 48.4 percent increase for Latina women since 2015. Across the board, Latino and Latina Angelenos have shown significant increases in higher educational degree attainment.

FIGURE 2 Education Index by Gender and by Race and Ethnicity, 2015–2023



Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty. Dotted lines mean change over time is not statistically significant.
 Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2015 and 2023.
 Native American and NHOPI using ACS 2011–2015 and 2019–2023.

LGB and trans students experienced greater social-emotional distress and had more trouble focusing on schoolwork than straight and cisgender students.

Educational Outcomes for LGBTQ Angelenos

LGBTQ adults have higher levels of educational attainment overall than LA County residents ages 25 and older. Almost one-quarter (24 percent) of LGBTQ adults over the age of 25 have a high school degree, GED, or less formal education; 26 percent have completed some college or an associate degree; 28 percent have a four-year college degree; and 22 percent have a graduate degree.¹³⁶ Despite higher levels of education, however, LGBTQ Angelenos disproportionately struggle economically. For example, unemployment is higher among LGBTQ adults (16 percent) than non-LGBTQ adults (11 percent).¹³⁷ A series of focus groups with 55 transgender, nonbinary, and intersex adults who live, work, or receive services in the City of Los Angeles provides a stark illustration of this challenge: only one in 10 participants reported a personal income of \$50,000 or greater, even though more than a quarter of participants had a bachelor's degree or higher level of education.¹³⁸

Data are not available on school enrollment rates of LGBTQ Angelenos overall. But based on responses to the California Healthy Kids Survey in 2021–2023, about 2 percent of 11th graders in participating public school districts in LA County are transgender and about 13 percent are lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB).¹³⁹ In terms of their experiences in school, LGB and trans students felt less safe at school and experienced more harassment than straight and cisgender students. Over half of trans 11th graders (56 percent) reported being harassed or bullied at school at least once in the past year, compared to 37 percent of LGB 11th graders, 20 percent of cisgender 11th graders, and 16 percent of straight 11th graders.¹⁴⁰ Similarly, nearly one-quarter of trans 11th graders (24 percent) had been afraid of being beat up at school at least once in the past year, compared to 15 percent of LGB 11th graders, 8 percent of cisgender 11th graders, and 7 percent of straight 11th graders.¹⁴¹

Additionally, LGB and trans students experienced greater social-emotional distress and had more trouble focusing on schoolwork. On average, over half of trans 11th graders (52 percent) and the same percentage of LGB 11th graders reported that a set of statements about social-emotional distress were very much true or pretty much true over the past month, compared to 31 percent of cisgender 11th graders and 26 percent of straight 11th graders. Statements included, “I had a hard time relaxing,” “I felt sad and down,” and “I was easily irritated.” Likewise, two-thirds of trans 11th graders (67 percent) strongly agreed or agreed that it is hard to stay focused when doing schoolwork, compared to 61 percent of LGB 11th graders, 43 percent of cisgender 11th graders, and 40 percent of straight 11th graders.¹⁴² While we cannot draw a causal conclusion based on these data, educational research is clear that students do better in school when they feel safe. LGBTQ students are no exception.

Variation by Place

The 129 cities and Census-Designated Places in the County and 34 Community Plan Areas in the City of Los Angeles for which there were sufficient data to calculate the Education Index have some of the highest scores in the country as well as some of the lowest. At the top of the scale, as was the case in 2015, is Westwood, the City of Los Angeles neighborhood home to the University of California, Los Angeles. The presence of a large student body accounts for both the area’s top education score and its low earnings. Maywood, a city in southeast Los Angeles, has the county’s lowest Education Index score, 1.67.

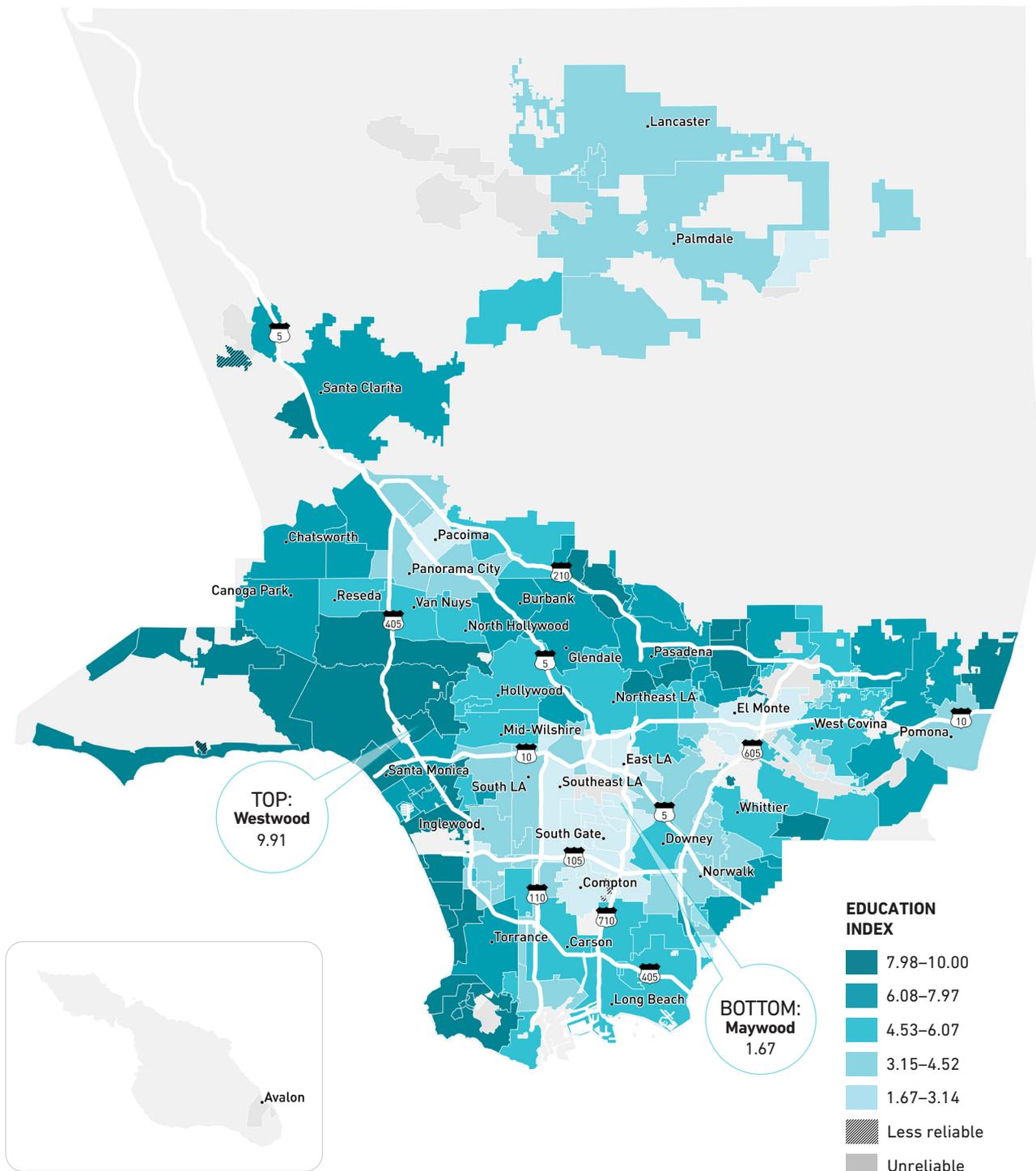
Los Angeles County has some of the highest and lowest Education Index scores in the country.

TABLE 6 Highest-Scoring Places / Lowest-Scoring Places

HIGHEST	EDUCATION INDEX	LOWEST	EDUCATION INDEX
Westwood	9.91	Arleta-Pacoima	2.39
Sierra Madre	9.76	Compton	2.30
La Cañada Flintridge	9.75	South El Monte	2.23
Palos Verdes Estates	9.72	Lennox	2.20
Malibu	9.63	Cudahy	1.94
Brentwood-Pacific Palisades	9.61	Huntington Park	1.91
Rolling Hills Estates	9.58	Florence-Graham	1.85
Hidden Hills	9.52	East Rancho Dominguez	1.82 *
Beverly Hills	9.49	Southeast Los Angeles	1.78
Manhattan Beach	9.40	Maywood	1.67

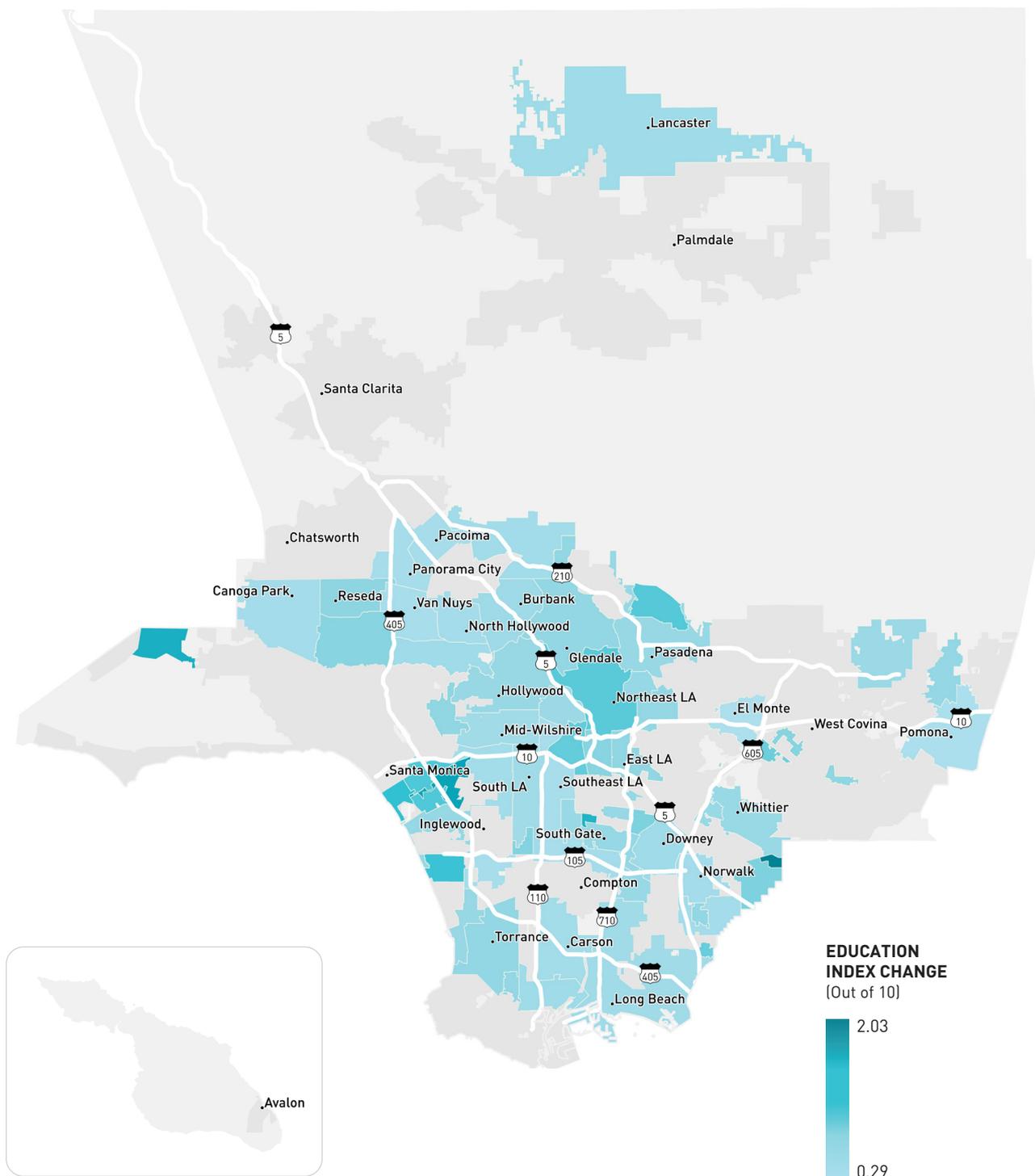
Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty.
 Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

MAP 1 Education Index by Place



Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

MAP 2 Education Index Change Over Time, 2015–2023



Note: Areas in grey indicate no statistically significant change over time.
 Source: Measure of America calculations using data from the US Census Bureau ACS, 2011–2015 and 2019–2023.

EDUCATION BY PLACE: CHANGE OVER TIME

The Education Index for Los Angeles County rose half a point from 2015 to 2023—4.96 to 5.46. Nine places across the County saw their Education Index score increase by more than 1 point from 2015 to 2023: East Whittier, Culver City, Agoura Hills, Walnut Park, Venice, El Segundo, Palms-Mar Vista-Del Rey, Altadena, and Northeast Los Angeles.

East Whittier experienced the greatest increase in Education Index: 4.44 to 6.46—a spike of 2.02 points—due to striking improvements in degree attainment. The share of residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher nearly doubled, from 17.4 percent to 34.6 percent, and the share with a graduate degree nearly tripled, from 5.2 percent to 14.1 percent.

Culver City saw a large upswing in the Education Index, from 7.38 to 8.83. The share of residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher grew from 53.4 percent to 64.9 percent, as did the share of residents with a graduate degree, 22.7 percent to 30.9 percent. School enrollment for those ages 3 to 24 years rose from 82.3 percent to 87.5 percent.

The Education Index in **Agoura Hills** rose from 7.68 to 9.01. This increase was driven primarily by the share of residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher—a 30 percent increase from 51.3 percent to 66.5 percent.

Although **Walnut Park** had one of the lowest Educational Index scores in 2015, it saw the greatest relative change by 2023—1.63 to 2.93, an 80 percent increase. This change was driven by improvements in both attainment and enrollment. The share of residents without a high school diploma dropped below 50 percent, the share with at least a bachelor’s degree rose to nearly 10 percent, and the rate of school enrollment rose from 75.4 percent to 83.3 percent.

Venice saw significant improvement as well, from 6.66 to 7.82 on the Education Index, due to gains in degree attainment. The share of residents without a high school diploma shrank from 6.2 percent to 4.1 percent, while the share of residents with at least a bachelor’s degree rose from 62.3 percent to 71.7 percent.

El Segundo similarly improved its Education Index score by 1.14 points—from 7.02 to 8.16—due to gains in degree attainment. The share of residents without a high school diploma dropped 64 percent, from 4.4 percent to 1.6 percent. The share of residents with at least a bachelor’s degree increased 27 percent, from 49.3 percent to 62.5 percent.

Palms-Mar Vista-Del Rey enjoyed a notable increase in its Education Index score, from 6.35 to 7.40. The share of adults without a high school diploma dropped over 3 percentage points, from 10.9 percent to 7.8 percent. The share of adults with a bachelor’s degree or higher increased from 52.6 percent to 63.2 percent.

The Education Index in **Altadena** increased just over one point, 6.75 to 7.78. The share of residents without a high school diploma dropped below 10 percent, while the share of residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher rose above 50 percent.

The Education Index in **Northeast Los Angeles** went from 4.27 to 5.29. The share of residents here without a high school diploma declined from 30.9 percent to 21.9 percent. The share of residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher increased from 25.4 percent to 36.5 percent.

Notably, no communities in Los Angeles County saw a statistically significant decrease in their Education Index scores between 2015 and 2023.

IMPORTANT ISSUES FROM BIRTH TO YOUNG ADULTHOOD

Early childcare and education. High-quality, comprehensive, and affordable early childcare and education programs are essential for parents in Los Angeles—these programs enable parents to work and support their families. They are also essential for the littlest Angelenos; high-quality programs not only keep babies, toddlers, and preschoolers safe from harm while their parents work; they also provide the kind of enriching, developmentally appropriate environments and responsive interactions with warm, sensitive adults that small children need to flourish. Research shows that high-quality, center-based early care and education programs help the youngest children develop better language and social-emotional skills—such as emotional regulation and executive function—and are associated with improved kindergarten readiness, better K–12 academic performance, a reduced risk of special education placement or grade repetition, higher high-school graduation rates, and a host of positive outcomes in adulthood.¹⁴³ The positive effects of a high-quality program—one in which, for instance, lead teachers have bachelor’s degrees, the child-teacher ratio is low, and staff participate in ongoing professional development activities—are particularly pronounced for children living in poverty. Unfortunately, too few families have access to the type of high-quality programs shown to optimize social and emotional development. In fact, just affording childcare at all is a huge challenge for many families.

The cost of childcare, especially for children from birth to age 5, has become increasingly burdensome, taking up an ever-larger share of families’ budgets. **In nearly all of California, childcare has surpassed housing as the top expense for households.** In Los Angeles, the cost of childcare for a family with one preschool-age child and one school-age child was nearly 20 percent greater than their housing costs. Childcare’s costs are growing at a faster rate, too: between 2014 and 2021, the percentage increase in childcare costs outpaced the increase in housing costs by 12 points.¹⁴⁴ Infant care, specifically, is so unaffordable in California that it costs 150 percent more annually than a year of in-state tuition at a four-year public college.¹⁴⁵ The price of tuition for one infant and one preschool-age child in a child care center is around \$13,400 and \$11,700, respectively—for the average Angeleno earning \$44,600 a year, that’s a total of 56 percent of their income.¹⁴⁶

In California, federal funds that subsidize childcare programs have almost doubled, and state funds have tripled over the last decade. Substantial increases in funding occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic years, when large infusions of funding were made to support vulnerable populations.¹⁴⁷ Despite the growth in funding, the county still has too few seats—that is, subsidized childcare opportunities; in addition, these programs are not accessible to all children. Among all licensed programs, early care and education seats are available for only 24 percent of children up to age 12 whose parents are working.¹⁴⁸ The shortage is still more pronounced for subsidized programs. The enrollment gap is particularly large for the youngest Angelenos. In Los Angeles County, only eight percent of eligible infants and toddlers have spots in publicly subsidized early childcare and education

I think times have changed where people feel there [are] barriers to access to resources. I think one of the main barriers is childcare. You know, being able to attend a meeting, attend a training, or take your child with you in hopes that there’s [a] childcare provider at the training.



Antelope Valley resident

programs.¹⁴⁹ Critical priorities in this area need to be increasing funding, expanding the number of early care and education seats to meet the needs of all eligible children, and ensuring that early care and education programs are of sufficiently high quality to meet the developmental needs of the youngest Angelenos.

Threats to K–12 education. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect K–12 education in Los Angeles County. Learning loss—fueled by low enrollment, chronic absenteeism, and strains on mental health—became prevalent as schools turned to remote learning in 2020. Although conditions have improved since the height of the pandemic, learning loss is still a critical issue, as students remain about half a year behind where their predecessors were in 2019.¹⁵⁰ According to the Education Recovery Scorecard, which tracks learning loss nationwide, California has seen greater improvement than most states from 2019 to 2024; still, the average California student remains 31 percent of a grade equivalent below 2019 levels in math and 40 percent of a grade equivalent in reading.¹⁵¹

Chronic absenteeism, defined as missing at least 10 percent of school days, is a major contributor to learning loss and has surged in the pandemic’s wake. In Los Angeles County, chronic absenteeism jumped from 13.8 percent in the 2018–2019 school year to 20.5 percent in 2024–2025—meaning one in five students were chronically absent in 2024.¹⁵² This rate is slightly higher than that of California as a whole, which rose from 12.1 percent to 19.4 percent over the same period.¹⁵³ Still more troubling is the exacerbation of racial gaps. Black, Latino, Native American, and Pacific Islander students saw greater increases in chronic absenteeism over the past five years than white and Asian students did, widening the already existing gaps between these groups. In 2024–2025, about one in seven white students in Los Angeles were chronically absent; for Black students, it was an alarming one in three.¹⁵⁴

Young people’s struggles with mental health have contributed to increased absenteeism and learning loss as well; the number of students reporting feeling sad or hopeless grew tremendously with the onset of the pandemic.¹⁵⁵ And as the LA fires at the start of 2025 showed, climate disasters are a rising concern in the conversation on learning loss, hitting disadvantaged students the hardest.¹⁵⁶ Getting young people back to pre-pandemic levels of achievement is no easy task, but early evidence suggests that efforts like tutoring by trained teachers during and after school hours, summer school, and intensive focus on reducing absenteeism can help.¹⁵⁷

Shrinking budgets driven by decreased enrollment are another emerging threat to schools. State and local funding in most California school districts is allocated based on average daily attendance in the district.¹⁵⁸ Many of the County’s school districts have been dealing with declining enrollment rates and consistently high chronic absenteeism—over the last two decades, the LAUSD’s enrollment has declined by more than 40 percent and the Long Beach USD’s enrollment has

También hablamos de que necesitamos representantes en las escuelas que guíen a nuestros hijos hacia tener una mejor educación, que incluso los lleguen a visitar en sus propias casas para poder animarlos a seguir adelante en su educación.



East LA resident

Translation from Spanish:

We also talked about the need for representatives in schools who can guide our children toward a better education, and who would even visit them in their homes to encourage them to continue their studies.

In Los Angeles County, 11.9 percent of young people are out of school and out of work: 133,900 young people.

decreased by 1.5 to 2 percent per year; for Glendale Unified, enrollment shrunk in nine of the last ten years leading up to the pandemic.¹⁵⁹ Despite these declines in enrollment, many of the overhead costs associated with running schools, such as utilities and custodial expenses, are not lessened by a decrease in the number of students attending. As such, the declining enrollment in these districts has costly consequences. These declines, particularly in the LAUSD, are largely driven by lower birth rates, slowed immigration to the County, and a rise in out-migration from the County due to the high cost of living.¹⁶⁰ As discussed earlier, rates of chronic absenteeism across the County shot up during the pandemic.¹⁶¹

Broken down by demographic group, the greatest percentage decline in enrollment over the last 10 years was among Native Americans and Pacific Islanders, 51 percent and 48 percent decreases, respectively (4,900 students total). The highest decrease in number was among the Latino student population, which had a drop of nearly 170,000 students over the same period (a 17 percent decrease). The Asian student population experienced the least change, an 11 percent decrease. Ultimately, all racial and ethnic groups, aside from students of two or more races, saw a steady decline in enrollment over the past ten years. In the LAUSD, the largest decline was centered in Board District 1—Crenshaw, West Adams, and Westmont—which lost about 34 percent of its student population since 2015. In general, lower-achieving schools throughout the LAUSD have experienced greater declines proportionally to their student population.¹⁶²

As schools across the County works to confront these enrollment and budgetary challenges, attention needs to be given to equity and ensuring that the needs of students who are already facing barriers to attendance and enrollment are resourced appropriately. For instance, during the 2023–2024 school year, the LAUSD homeless student population had increased by 26 percent from the previous year. This amounts to 17,245 homeless students in the district, almost 70 percent of whom were chronically absent.¹⁶³ **If schools with low levels of student enrollment were to consolidate, those students who are already struggling to regularly show up to class at a nearby school may face still greater obstacles if they have to travel to another neighborhood to attend school.**

Housing stability. A particular challenge to ensuring that students in Los Angeles can learn and thrive is the unstable living situations of many families in the region. The high cost of housing means that many households move frequently or live in conditions not conducive to learning. Over 60,000 K–12 students in Los Angeles County were living in shelters, in motels or hotels, on the streets, or in temporary “doubled-up” living situations during the 2023–2024 school year, and these students are much more likely than other students—even those with similar sociodemographic characteristics—to experience lower academic and attendance outcomes.¹⁶⁴

Youth disconnection. Emerging adulthood is a time when people begin to develop many of the capabilities that are required for living flourishing and freely chosen

TABLE 7 Youth Disconnection by Neighborhood Cluster in LA County

	%	#		%	#
LA County	11.9	133,900	Burbank	11.7	1,200
LA: West Los Angeles, Century City, Palms	3.4	500	Torrance	11.8	1,200
LA: West Central/Westwood, West Los Angeles	3.6	1,000	Norwalk	12.0	1,500
Diamond Bar, La Habra Heights, Rowland Heights	5.4	500	LA: North Central/Granada Hills, Sylmar	12.1	1,900
Long Beach (East)*	5.6*	700	LA: North Central/Mission Hills, Panorama City	12.2	2,200
Palos Verdes Peninsula	6.1	600	LA: Canoga Park, Winnetka, Woodland Hills	12.2	2,400
Glendora, Claremont, San Dimas, La Verne	6.2	1,300	LA: Sherman Oaks, Studio City, Beverly Crest	12.4	1,000
Santa Clarita (South)	6.6	900	West Covina	12.5	1,600
LA: Northwest/Chatsworth, Porter Ranch	6.7	1,400	Downey	12.5	1,700
LA: Central/USC, Exposition Park	6.9	1,900	Palmdale	12.6	2,900
Long Beach (Central), Signal Hill	7.4	1,100	LA: Van Nuys & North Sherman Oaks	12.9	2,300
Marina del Rey, Westchester, Culver City	7.5	1,200	LA: South/San Pedro	13.1	2,700
Calabasas, Agoura Hills, Malibu, Westlake Village*	7.7*	1,200	LA: Arleta, Pacoima, San Fernando	13.3	2,500
Arcadia, San Gabriel, Temple City	8.5	1,400	LA: East Central/Hollywood	13.4	2,100
Redondo, Manhattan, Hermosa Beach	8.6	900	LA: Central/Koreatown	13.4	1,700
Pasadena	9.4	1,100	East Los Angeles	13.5	2,200
Baldwin Park, Azusa, Duarte, Irwindale	9.5	2,300	Inglewood	13.5	1,700
Alhambra, South Pasadena	9.5	900	Carson	13.6	1,700
Monterey Park, Rosemead	9.5	1,200	Bell Gardens, Bell, Maywood, Cudahy, Commerce	13.7	2,500
Santa Clarita (North)	9.6	1,300	LA: Central/Hancock Park, Mid-Wilshire	14.1	1,800
Santa Monica*	9.8*	700	Long Beach (North)	14.8	2,800
West Hollywood & Beverly Hills*	9.8*	600	Hawthorne	15.1	1,900
LA: Sunland, Sun Valley, Tujunga	10.0	1,400	Gardena, Lawndale, West Athens	15.5	2,800
LA: Northwest/Encino, Tarzana	10.0	1,600	LA: Southeast/East Vernon	15.6	3,000
La Mirada, Santa Fe Springs	10.0	1,800	South Gate, Lynwood	15.6	3,300
LA: Northeast/North Hollywood, Valley Village	10.1	1,400	LA: East Central/Silver Lake, Echo Park, Westlake	15.8	3,100
Lakewood, Cerritos, Artesia, Hawaiian Gardens	10.1	1,600	El Monte, South El Monte	16.0	2,500
Glendale	10.4	1,900	LA: South Central/Watts	16.2	3,600
Bellflower, Paramount	10.4	1,700	LA: Central/West Adams, Baldwin Hills	16.5	2,800
San Gabriel Valley	10.6	900	LA: South Central/Westmont	16.9	3,800
LA: Mount Washington, Highland, Glassell Park	10.9	2,100	LA: East Central/Central City, Boyle Heights	17.4	4,100
Pico Rivera, Montebello	11.0	1,600	Compton, West Rancho Dominguez	17.7	3,400
Pomona	11.1	2,200	Castaic	17.9	2,100
La Puente, Industry	11.2	1,400	Huntington Park, Florence-Graham, Walnut Park	18.2	3,300
Covina, Walnut	11.4	1,500	Long Beach (Southwest, Port)	19.3	2,200
Whittier, Hacienda Heights	11.6	2,200	Lancaster	20.8	4,500

YOUTH DISCONNECTION 3.4%–8.4% 8.5%–10.8% 10.9%–12.8% 12.9%–15.4% 15.5%–20.8%

Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty.

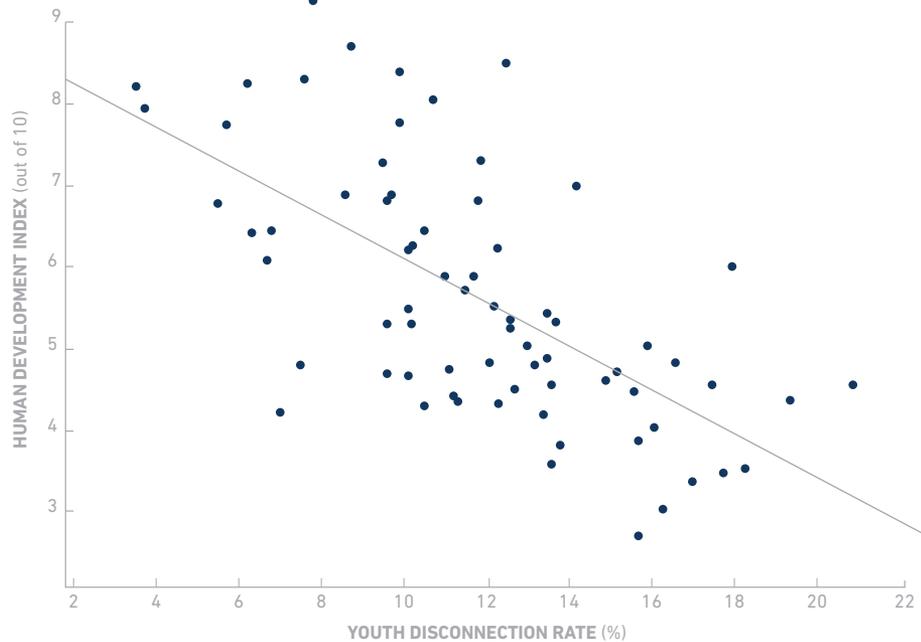
Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

Most of our kids graduate from high school, but they are not prepared to even hold the simplest jobs. So we need better schools, we need more access to resources, even better management of those resources.



Antelope Valley resident

FIGURE 3 Youth Disconnection by Neighborhood Cluster in LA County



Source: HDI: Life expectancy; Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education, earnings, and youth disconnection: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

lives. Disconnected youth are young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who are neither working nor in school; organizations that work with this group often use the term “opportunity youth.” Youth disconnection is a bellwether for community well-being as a whole, reflecting the opportunities and choices made available to a community’s young people. In Los Angeles County, 11.9 percent of young people are out of school and out of work: 133,900 young people.

Youth disconnection and human development are closely linked; connection to school or work during these formative years is associated with improved outcomes in health, employment, and earnings. By the time young people reach their 30s, those who worked or were in school throughout their teens and early 20s earn \$38,400 more per year and are 45 percent more likely to own a home, 42 percent more likely to be employed, and 52 percent more likely to report excellent or good health than those who had been disconnected from the critical anchors of school and work during these years.¹⁶⁵ Measure of America analysis shows that **Los Angeles neighborhood clusters that have higher HDI scores tend to have lower disconnection rates for their young people.**¹⁶⁶

Rates of youth disconnection vary widely by geography; **there is a 17-percentage-point difference between the neighborhood clusters in Los Angeles with the highest and lowest rates of disconnection.** Within the County, the highest rate of disconnection

is found in Lancaster, where one in five young people—4,500 of them—are not in school or work. High disconnection rates are found throughout the Antelope Valley broadly; another cluster for high disconnection rates is found in South Central Los Angeles. In West Los Angeles, Century City, and Palms, though, just over 3 percent of young people are disconnected: 500 total. **This chasm reveals just how significant the neighborhood where a child is born is for the opportunities that young person is afforded.**

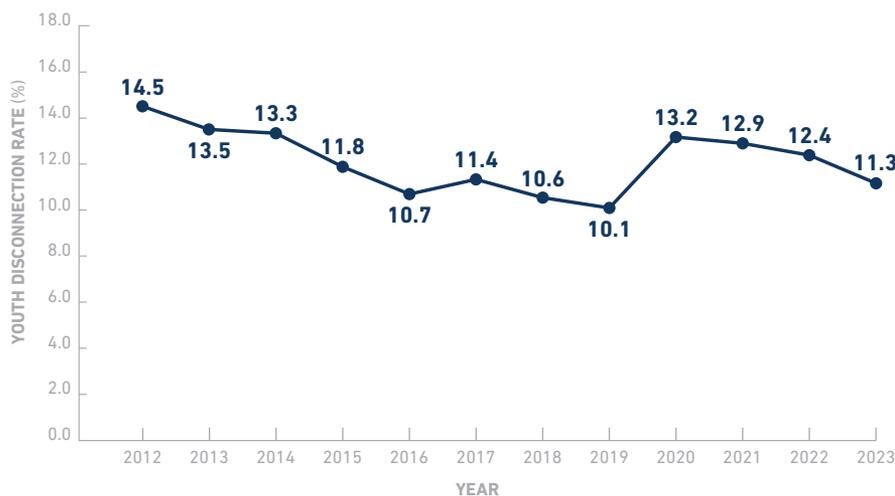
Disconnection is not a spontaneous occurrence; it is years in the making, stemming from deep structural issues, long-standing inequities, and a paucity of educational and employment opportunities available to young people in certain groups and areas.

Disconnection rates also vary widely by gender, race and ethnicity, and other demographic characteristics. Young people face different obstacles to connection, and understanding the disparities in disconnection that can be found in Los Angeles is crucial. **Different groups of disconnected young people**—for instance, young women and young men, Black young people and white young people—**face different challenges.** In crafting solutions to youth disconnection, a one-size-fits-all solution that does not take into account issues like race and gender biases in hiring could lead to improvements that not all youth share equally.

In Los Angeles, young men have slightly higher rates of disconnection than young women, 12.9 and 10.8 percent, respectively. Young women who are mothers, though, are three times more likely to be disconnected than young women who are not mothers. The disconnection rate for young mothers in Los Angeles is 32.1 percent—burdensome childcare costs can be a significant barrier for young mothers' ability to work or attend school.

In terms of race and ethnicity, the disconnection rate for Black young adults is

FIGURE 4 LA County Youth Disconnection Rate, 2012–2023



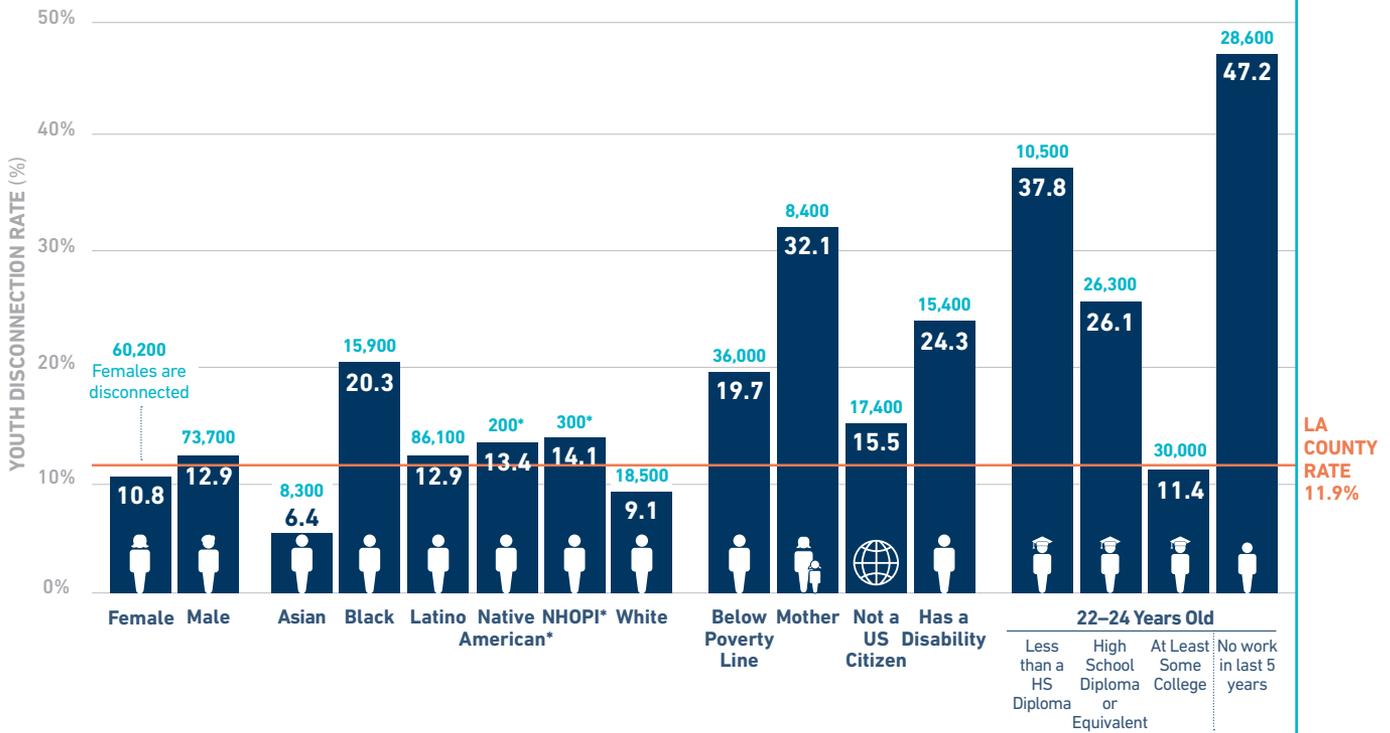
Note: These rates were calculated using a single year's data for the county as a whole. The other rates in this section were calculated using five years worth of data due to the smaller population size of sub-county places and demographic groups. Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey via IPUMS, 2012–2023.

There may be a barrier such as transportation. The distance out here in the Antelope Valley from let's say Lake LA to a library in Palmdale where there's book reading. It's very difficult, it's very difficult for a parent to make that long drive. Some don't have transportation at all. Some think twice about that expensive gas. Some think twice because they want to have their car last a little longer.



Antelope Valley resident

FIGURE 5 Who Is Disconnected in LA County?



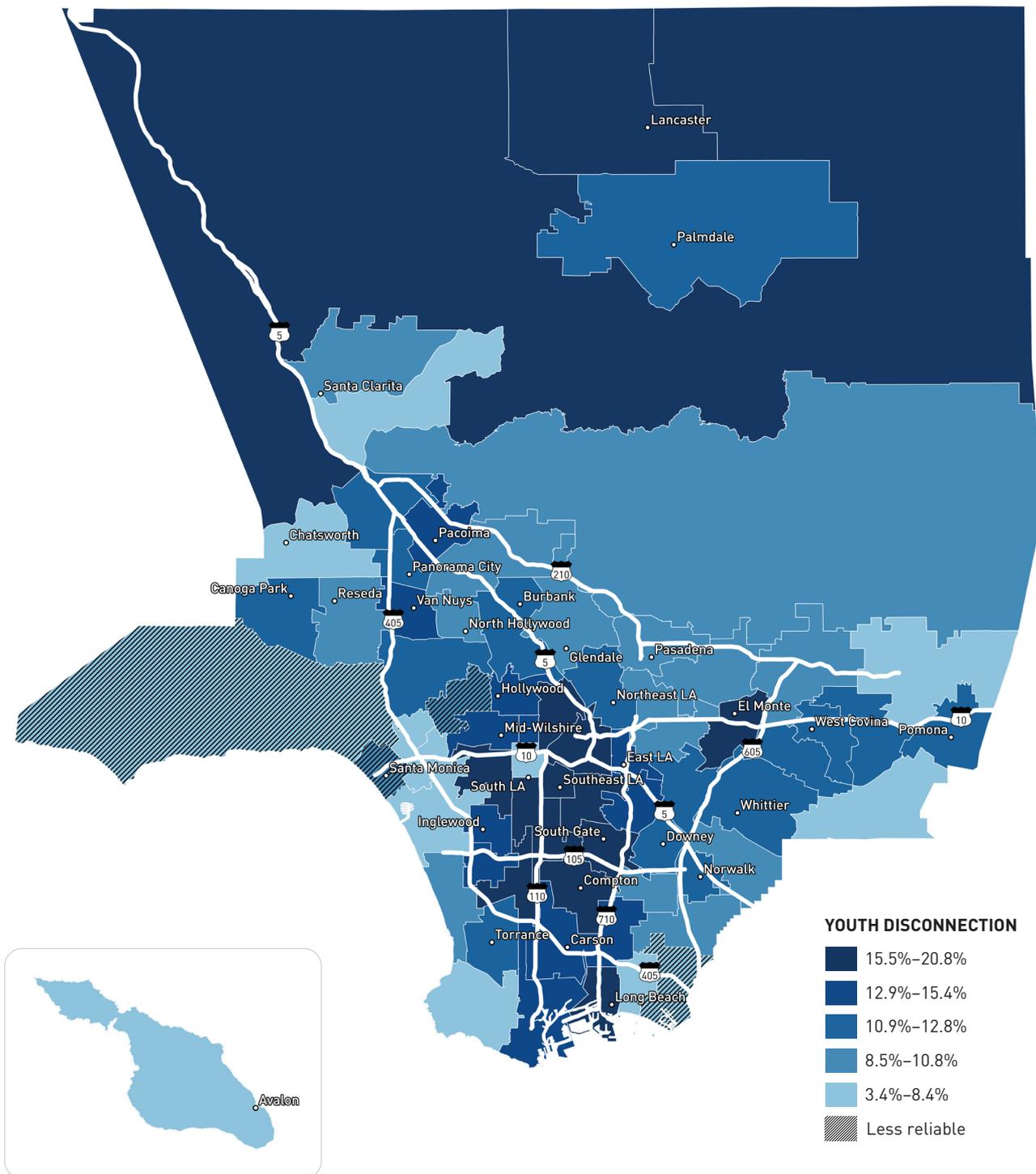
Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty.
 Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

Living in poverty increases the likelihood that a young person will be disconnected.

much higher than other groups in the region, 20.3 percent. Despite making up only 7 percent of the overall youth population, Black young adults comprise nearly 12 percent of disconnected youth. The disconnection rates for Latino, Native American, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander young people are similar: 12.9, 13.4, and 14.1 percent, respectively. For white young people, the disconnection rate is slightly lower, 9.1 percent. The lowest disconnection rate among the racial and ethnic groups is for Asian young people, who have a rate of 6.4 percent. In Los Angeles County, as in the United States overall, living in poverty increases the likelihood that a young person will be disconnected. The disconnection rate for young people living in households below the poverty line is 19.7 percent, nearly eight percentage points higher than the rate of disconnection in all of Los Angeles County. Young people who are not US citizens face additional barriers to education and employment; the disconnection rate for this group is 15.5 percent. Young people living with a disability may have their own specific challenges to connection: one in four, or 24.3 percent, of young people who have a disability are disconnected.

The impact of having a lower level of educational attainment on disconnection becomes clear when looking at the outcomes of young people ages 22 to 24, by which time many if not most young adults have finished their formal schooling.

MAP 3 Youth Disconnection by Place



Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

More than one in three 22- to 24-year-olds without a high school diploma (37.8 percent) are disconnected. One in four with just a high school diploma or equivalent (26.1 percent) are disconnected. For 22- to 24-year-olds who have completed at least some college coursework, just 11.4 percent are disconnected. For those in this age group who have never worked or haven't worked in the last five years, the disconnection rate is an astounding 47.2 percent. This group makes up more than 21 percent of the opportunity youth population in Los Angeles County, despite being only 5 percent of the overall youth population.

TABLE 8 Education Index by Supervisorial District



DISTRICT 1
Supervisor
Hilda L. Solis



DISTRICT 2
Supervisor
Holly J. Mitchell



DISTRICT 3
Supervisor
Lindsey P. Horvath



DISTRICT 4
Supervisor
Janice Hahn



DISTRICT 5
Supervisor
Kathryn Barger

Walnut	7.63	Manhattan Beach	9.40	Pepperdine University	10.00*	Palos Verdes Estates	9.72	Sierra Madre	9.76
Diamond Bar	7.61	Hermosa Beach	9.26	Westwood	9.91	Rolling Hills Estates	9.58	La Cañada Flintridge	9.75
La Verne	7.00	Westchester - Playa del Rey	9.03	Malibu	9.63	Rancho Palos Verdes	9.32	South Pasadena	9.37
Silver Lake - Echo Park - Elysian Valley	6.12	Culver City	8.83	Brentwood - Pacific Palisades	9.61	Rose Hills	8.09	San Marino	9.31
Alhambra	5.91	Redondo Beach	8.58	Hidden Hills	9.52	La Habra Heights	7.98	Claremont	9.07
Rowland Heights	5.81	El Segundo	8.16	Beverly Hills	9.49	Cerritos	7.77	San Pasqual	9.02
Hacienda Heights	5.71	Palms - Mar Vista - Del Rey	7.40	Bel Air - Beverly Crest	9.20	Torrance	7.72	Stevenson Ranch	8.18
San Gabriel	5.33	View Park-Windsor Hills	7.32	Topanga	9.08	East Whittier	6.46	Sherman Oaks - Studio City - Toluca Lake - Cahuenga Pass	8.17
Monterey Park	5.31	Marina del Rey	6.67	Agoura Hills	9.01	La Mirada	6.37	La Crescenta- Montrose	8.17
Northeast Los Angeles	5.29	West Carson	5.95	Westlake Village	9.00	Signal Hill	6.04	Arcadia	7.99
West Covina	5.14	Ladera Heights	5.86	Calabasas	8.98	Lomita	5.98	Altadena	7.78
Azusa	4.77	Wilshire	5.67	Encino - Tarzana	8.40	Whittier	5.44	Pasadena	7.46
Covina	4.76	Del Aire	5.47	Santa Monica	8.39	Artesia	5.34	East Pasadena	7.09
Avocado Heights	4.67	Carson	4.89	Sherman Oaks - Studio City - Toluca Lake - Cahuenga Pass	8.17	San Pedro	5.28	La Verne	7.00
South San Gabriel	4.53	Gardena	4.83	West Los Angeles	7.87	Lakewood	5.26	North El Monte	6.96
Downtown	4.28	West Adams - Baldwin Hills - Leimert	4.31	Venice	7.82	Long Beach	5.24	San Dimas	6.66
Montebello	4.01	Hawthorne	4.24	Palms - Mar Vista - Del Rey	7.40	Downey	4.72	Glendora	6.59
West Puente Valley	3.72	Inglewood	3.99	Chatsworth - Porter Ranch	6.55	Bellflower	4.22	Mayflower Village	6.57
Rosemead	3.70	Harbor Gateway	3.98	Northridge	6.46	West Whittier - Los Nietos	4.17	Glendale	6.56
Pomona	3.70	West Athens	3.80	Canoga Park - Winnetka - Woodland Hills - West Hills	6.11	Norwalk	4.03	Monrovia	6.54
Citrus	3.59	Lawndale	3.72	Granada Hills - Knollwood	6.08	South Whittier	3.97	Temple City	6.46
Vincent	3.38	West Rancho Dominguez	3.49	Hollywood	5.82	Santa Fe Springs	3.66	East San Gabriel	6.46
Valinda	3.30	South Los Angeles	3.33	West Hollywood	5.78	Pico Rivera	3.51	Burbank	6.43
Baldwin Park	2.96	Westmont	3.22	Wilshire	5.67	Wilmington - Harbor City	3.41	Castaic	6.18
El Monte	2.94	Alondra Park	3.15	Reseda - West Van Nuys	5.02	Commerce	3.18	Santa Clarita	6.09
Westlake	2.93	Willowbrook	2.78	North Hollywood - Valley Village	4.95	Paramount	3.06	Hollywood	5.82
La Puente	2.84	Compton	2.30	Van Nuys - North Sherman Oaks	4.74	Walnut Park	2.93	Agua Dulce	5.54
South San Jose Hills	2.72	Lennox	2.20	Sylmar	3.78	Hawaiian Gardens	2.85	South Monrovia Island	5.35
Boyle Heights	2.52	Florence-Graham	1.85	Mission Hills - Panorama City - North Hills	3.56	South Gate	2.75	Charter Oak	5.03
East Los Angeles	2.43	East Rancho Dominguez	1.82*	Sun Valley - La Tuna Canyon	3.53	Lynwood	2.51	Sunland - Tujunga - Lake View Terrace - Shadow Hills - East La Tuna Canyon	5.03
South El Monte	2.23	Southeast Los Angeles	1.78	San Fernando	3.24	Bell Gardens	2.46	Duarte	4.98
				Arleta - Pacoima	2.39	Bell	2.45	North Hollywood - Valley Village	4.95
						Cudahy	1.94	Val Verde	4.79*
						Huntington Park	1.91	Acton	4.47
						Maywood	1.67	Lancaster	4.29
								Quartz Hill	4.11
								Palmdale	3.90
								Lake Los Angeles	3.79
								Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon	3.53
								Sun Village	2.58

Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty. Places are listed according to the Supervisorial District in which they are primarily located. When a large portion of a locale's land straddles two districts, it is included in both.
Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

A Decent Standard of Living



IN THIS SECTION

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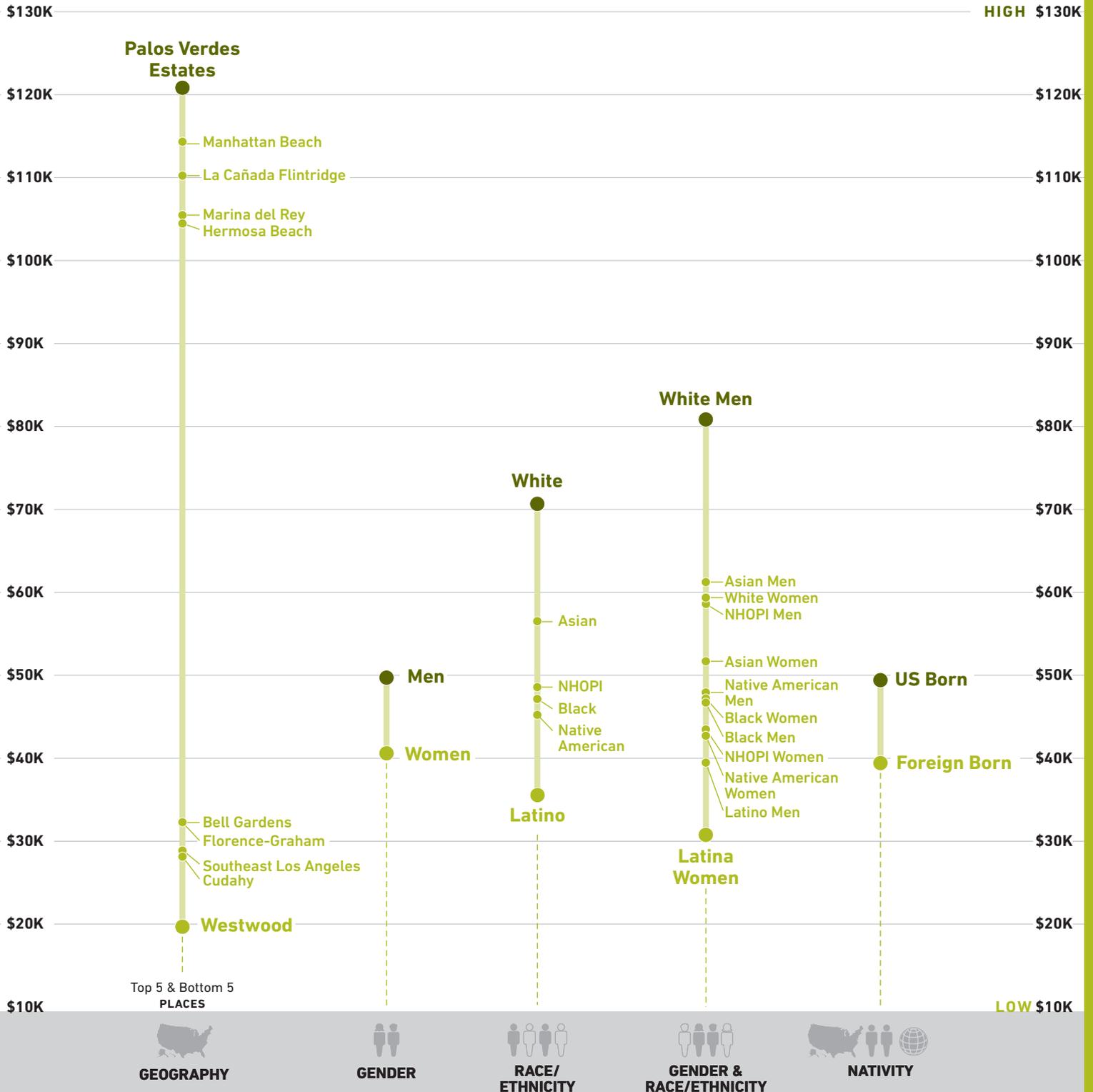
Variation by Place

Median Personal Earnings by Place: Change Over Time

How Do We Stack Up?

Median Personal Earnings: Workers Age 16 and Older

DOLLARS



Introduction

Money alone can be a misleading gauge of well-being; that idea is central to the human development approach. A good life is built on much more: physical health, safety and security, love and friendship, freedom to practice one's faith (or no faith), equality before the law, being treated with dignity and respect, and having a say in the decisions that affect us, to name just a handful.¹⁶⁷ But while money isn't everything, it's not nothing either: adequate financial resources are a critical ingredient for a freely chosen and thriving life, for expanded choices and opportunities, and for protecting and safeguarding the foundations of human well-being.

Individuals at the bottom of the earnings scale face strong headwinds as they try to build better lives for themselves and their families. They must weigh constant trade-offs among necessities—pay the LADWP bill to keep the lights on or lend your mom money to cover her rent, replace the car's cracked windshield or fill a child's new eyeglass prescription. Those with low earnings are often one illness, one childcare snafu, or one quarrel with a supervisor away from losing a job; perhaps a breakup, a bounced check, or a rent hike away from becoming homeless. People living in poverty are at heightened vulnerability to shocks of all sorts, from small-scale but potentially ruinous mishaps like a fender-bender that makes getting to work on time impossible to large-scale events like environmental disasters and pandemics that wipe out parts of the economy. Of course, as the Palisades Fire tragically reminds us, high incomes can't protect us from everything—Pacific Palisades, near the top of the 2023 earnings scale, was all but destroyed by the January 2025 wildfire—but material resources are nonetheless a key ingredient to human flourishing and human security.

Adequate material resources are particularly critical for children, and cumulative effects matter, both in terms of multiple years of living in poverty and multiple deprivations experienced at once (e.g., overcrowding along with exposure to lead, poor nutrition, excessive noise, and high levels of family discord, compared to living in a crowded home but receiving responsive caregiving, appropriate stimulation, and adequate nutrition). While responsive parenting can mitigate its effects, poverty has long been recognized as a potent threat to child development and the successful transition to adulthood. Poverty adversely affects physical health, cognitive ability, school performance, behavioral and emotional health, and teen outcomes like childbearing, contact with the criminal justice system, and youth disconnection.¹⁶⁸ Life itself is at stake: in urban areas, children in the poorest 20 percent of households are twice as likely to die before their first birthdays as children in the richest 20 percent, and poor children are more likely to die than affluent children at every age.¹⁶⁹ In young adulthood, fewer than one in five persistently poor children are consistently connected to work or school and are no longer poor by their late 20s.¹⁷⁰

The proxy for a decent standard of living in the American Human Development Index is median personal earnings: the wages and salaries of all workers ages 16

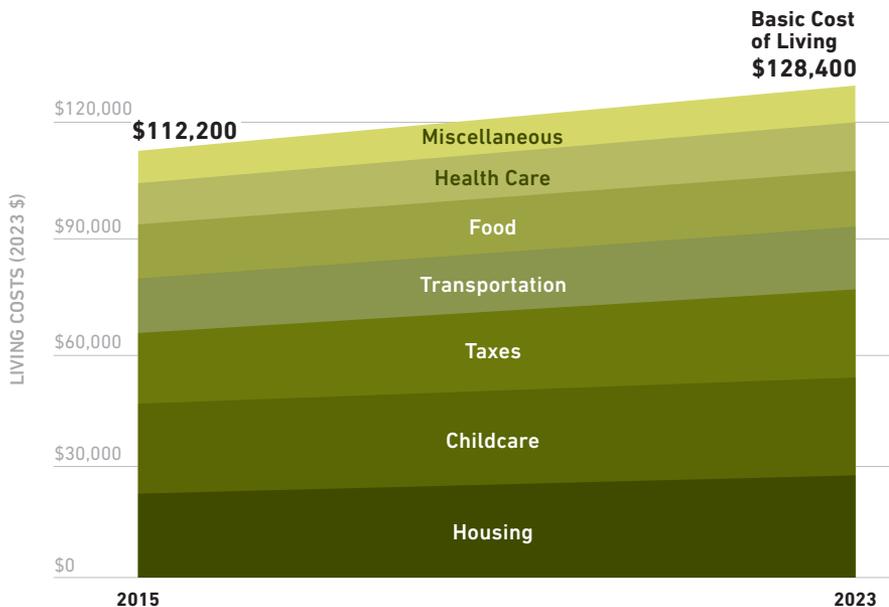
Those with low earnings are often one illness, one childcare snafu, or one quarrel with a supervisor away from losing a job; perhaps a breakup, a bounced check, or a rent hike away from becoming homeless.

and up. The data come from the 2023 American Community Survey of the US Census Bureau. Median personal earnings reflect the resources of the ordinary worker, the person at the midpoint of the County wage distribution; half of all Los Angeles County workers make more, half make less. Average (rather than median) earnings can be misleading in situations of high inequality like Los Angeles County; the presence of a small percentage of the population taking home enormous sums will pull the average far above what the vast majority are actually earning. Using median *personal* earnings also allows us to report the wages of salaries of individuals rather than the combined earnings of everyone within a household, which is critical for understanding the relative command that women and men have over economic resources, a distinction that is lost when using household earnings.

Cost of Living

The typical worker in Los Angeles County earns about \$44,600, \$3,500 less than the California median of \$48,100. Median personal earnings have risen since the publication of *A Portrait of Los Angeles County 2017*; earnings rose \$5,100 from the 2015 median of \$39,500 (this figure is adjusted for inflation and presented in 2023 dollars). Despite this real growth in wages, however, many Angelenos keenly feel the burden of Los Angeles' high cost of living. In a recent UCLA survey, they listed the high

FIGURE 1 Basic Living Costs Have Risen Sharply Since 2015



Note: The United Way's Real Cost Measure estimates the minimum required expenses for each budget category. The costs presented here reflect the estimated annual expenses for a household with two adults, one infant, and one pre-school-age child. All values adjusted to 2023 \$.
 Source: United Ways of California The Real Cost Measure, 2015 and 2023.

One issue is the price of rent going up and up and wages aren't. I think everybody's kind of dealing with that. Even in my community, a lot of people are having to move because they can't afford where they've been staying at for years. So, yeah, that's one thing I noticed.



LGBTQ Angeleno

cost of living as the primary issue affecting their quality of life.¹⁷¹ In our in-person and virtual data walks, high living costs were a concern cited by nearly all participants.

The United Ways of California's Real Cost Measure is an estimate of necessary annual living expenses for different types of families in Los Angeles County; it clearly shows how much Angelenos need to achieve a decent standard of living. The ballooning costs of bare-bones necessities, from housing and childcare to food and transportation, have essentially cancelled out the increase in earnings in Los Angeles County.

For a family with two adults, one infant, and one pre-school-age child, the cost-of-living measure increased by over 14 percent from 2015 to 2023 when adjusted for inflation. This hypothetical family would need to earn an additional \$16,200 annually to afford their basic expenses. During that same period, median household income in Los Angeles County increased by just \$10,600. In other words, the gap between what families earn and what they need has increased by over \$5,000.¹⁷²

The median personal earnings figures in this chapter may strike readers as low. Perhaps people are used to seeing household income figures, which we used in the previous paragraph. Household income includes not only the earnings of all workers in a household (for instance, both workers in a married or cohabitating couple, or the earnings of a single parent and her child) but also all other sources of income, such as stock dividends, rental income, alimony and child support, and business income. Another reason median personal earnings may seem low is that they include the earnings of part-time as well as full-time workers. While some workers prefer to work part-time, others work part-time because their employers don't give them as many hours as they would like, they work in the gig economy and cannot assemble a full-time schedule, they cannot find full-time affordable childcare, or they have responsibilities like caring for a disabled family member that make full-time work impossible. In Los Angeles County, roughly one in four workers (23.7 percent) work part-time.

On the other hand, the median earnings figures may strike readers as impossibly low because earnings for some groups of Angelenos are actually just that: impossibly low, especially given the real costs of living in Los Angeles.

Wealth

Neither earnings nor income includes wealth. Wealth (or net worth) is the total value of everything a person owns—a house or other real estate, stocks, businesses, retirement savings, and more—minus anything he or she owes, including debts like unpaid mortgage principal. Disparities in wealth eclipse disparities in income or earnings, in Los Angeles County and across the United States. Unfortunately, wealth is extremely hard to measure; first, the values of assets like stocks and real estate are constantly changing; second, the very wealthiest are likely to be missed in random sampling and often don't participate in surveys; and third, very few surveys provide reliable wealth data about small geographic areas or racial and ethnic groups. For all these reasons, wealth cannot be incorporated into the American Human Development Index.

I think they need to make the pay higher. Put it at \$20 an hour for fast food. I think they need to get also that amount to workers that are working in factories and so forth. You know, not give them \$15 an hour because the rent is so ridiculous. How can you live off of that?



San Fernando Valley resident

Nonetheless, wealth is a critical human development issue. Wealth provides essential economic security today and expanded opportunities tomorrow. In the short term, wealth can mitigate the effects of shocks—from societal catastrophes, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2025 wildfires, to personal disasters like a death in the family or a mental health crisis. Over the long term, homeownership has been the chief means by which working- and middle-class people build wealth, and a paid-off house was long the bedrock of economic security after retirement. Homeownership is also a cushion against income volatility and a way to access credit to pay for large expenses. Wealth allows parents to invest in their children's futures by buying houses and apartments in areas with good schools, saving and paying for college, and offering help with a first car or mortgage, setting their children on a path to financial independence.

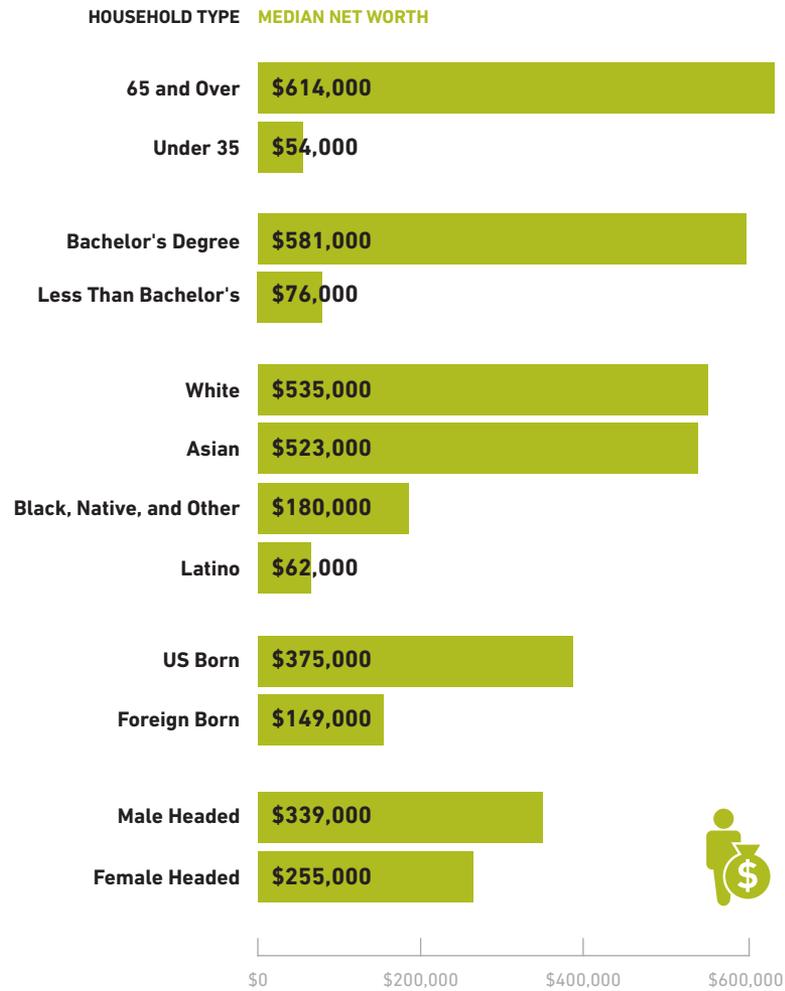
The median household in California has a net worth of \$288,000, about 60 percent higher than the national average of \$180,000, but this high median masks vast disparities among household types.¹⁷³ Median net worth among households headed by men is about \$84,000 more than those headed by women; the gap grows even wider between US-born and foreign-born households: \$226,000, and between households in which someone has a bachelor's degree or higher and those without: \$505,100.¹⁷⁴

The gap in median net worth between older and younger households in California is incredibly wide at \$560,000.¹⁷⁵ This gap, combined with rising housing costs, means that homeownership has become less common among younger generations. In fact, homeownership has declined across all age groups, though the greatest decline has been among people ages 25 to 35.¹⁷⁶

White households have the highest median net worth compared to other racial and ethnic groups, \$535,000, followed closely by Asian households with \$523,000.¹⁷⁷ A large gap separates these two groups from the other racial and ethnic groups. Black, Native American, and Other households have median net worth of \$180,000, and Latino households have \$62,000 (estimates could not be reliably calculated for Black, Native American, NHOPI, or other racial and ethnic groups individually; about two-thirds of households in this combined group are Black).¹⁷⁸ Historically, Asian, Black, Latino, and Native families were systematically excluded from buying home and property, accessing loans and credit, obtaining well-paying jobs, and benefitting from other crucial means of building wealth, which has led to massive racial wealth gaps today.¹⁷⁹

The ballooning costs of bare-bones necessities, from housing and childcare to food and transportation, have outpaced the increase in earnings in Los Angeles County.

FIGURE 2 Median Net Worth by Household Type in California



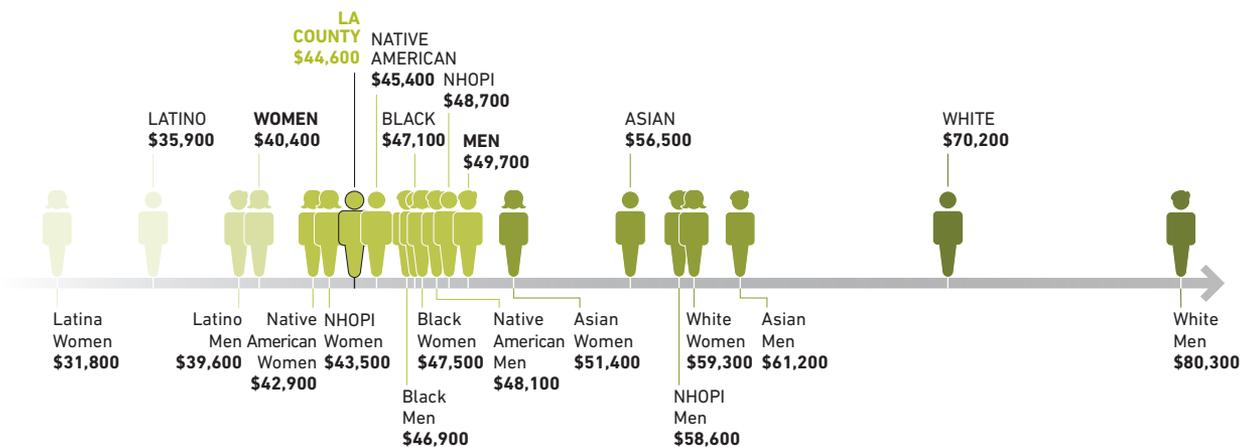
Note: Black, Native, and Other includes Black, Native American, NHOPI, and all other households. Black households make up two-thirds of this group.

Source: Public Policy Institute of California analysis of 2022 Survey on Income and Program Participation.

Variation by Demographic Group

Earnings vary dramatically between racial and ethnic groups, and even more dramatically when gender is taken into account. Latino Angelenos earn slightly over half of what their white counterparts make, \$35,900 and \$70,200, respectively. Adding gender to the mix shows that white men earn the most by a strikingly large margin, \$80,300, and that Latina women earn the least, \$31,800.

FIGURE 3 Median Personal Earnings by Gender and by Race and Ethnicity



Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2023. Native American and NHOPI data using 2019–2023.

As in California and the United States as a whole, **men earn more than women**, \$49,700 compared to \$40,400, respectively. Men from every racial and ethnic group earn more than their female counterparts, with the exception of Black Angelenos: Black women earn more than Black men by approximately \$600 per year. Rather than narrowing over recent years, the gender earnings gap grew from \$7,500 in 2015 to \$9,300 in 2023.

Women earn less than men for a variety of reasons rooted in socialization, cultural norms, and stereotypes around gender as well as outright wage discrimination.¹⁸⁰ Girls and boys are often encouraged to study different subjects in high school and college, with boys more likely to pursue courses of study that prepare them for careers in well-compensated fields like engineering.¹⁸¹ As adults, women disproportionately shoulder responsibilities for domestic tasks and caretaking. Though men today spend more time, on average, cooking, cleaning, and caretaking than their fathers did, women in the United States still

White men earn the most by a strikingly large margin, \$80,300, and Latina women earn the least, \$31,800.

And as a single mom, I say that because I continue to raise my daughter to be a independent thinking woman. And she is. I mean, she's in school, she has her own business, she works two jobs, and it just seems like everything that we do, we're never going to be on top.



San Fernando Valley resident

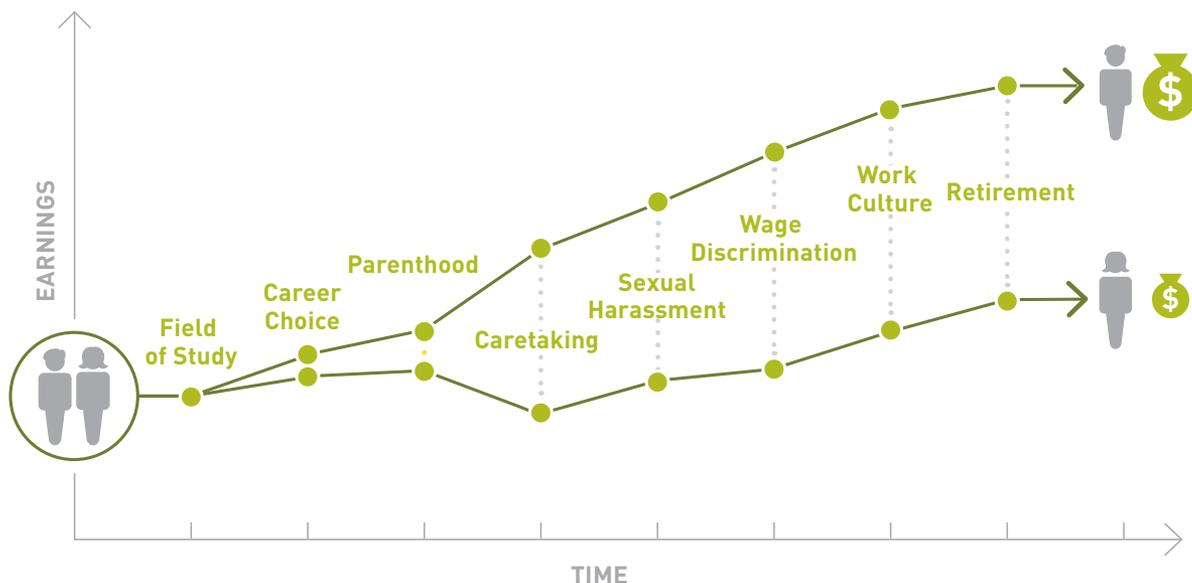
spend 1.5 hours more per day on unpaid labor than men do, the equivalent of a full day's work each week.¹⁸² Roughly one in three young mothers ages 16 to 24 in Los Angeles are neither working nor in school, three times the rate of teen girls and young women overall; these young mothers face financial precarity, now and in the future. Research shows that employers regard mothers and fathers differently from one another and from nonparents when it comes to pay; women experience a "motherhood penalty" and men reap a "fatherhood bonus" when they have children.¹⁸³ A woman's salary declines 4 percent, on average, for each child she has, whereas a man's salary increases 6 percent for each child.¹⁸⁴ Moreover, wage discrimination continues to be a factor. Even when working in the same occupational category, and even in female-dominated occupations like nursing, men tend to earn more than women.¹⁸⁵

Some of the gender earnings gaps, especially from different racial and ethnic groups, can be explained by variations in the types of jobs that members of each group tend to hold.

Industry Segregation by Race and Gender

A quality job that allows for a decent standard of living is a fundamental ingredient of a flourishing life. Unfortunately, jobs that typically command higher salaries are not distributed evenly by gender or by race and ethnicity across Los Angeles County. **FIGURE 5** shows, for full-time workers in Los Angeles County, the relationship between industrial sectors, earnings in these sectors, and the share of each sector's workforce that is non-white. Looking at **FIGURE 5**, a clear pattern

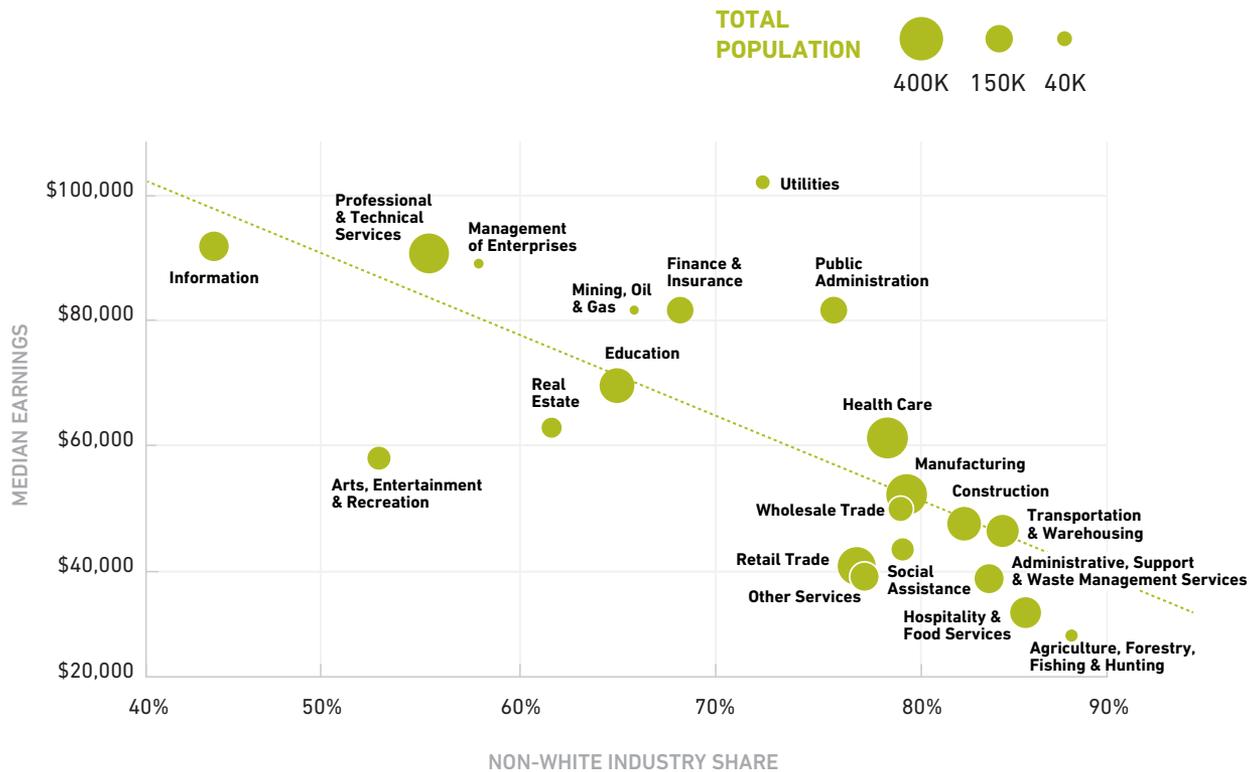
FIGURE 4 Key Factors Behind the Gender Earnings Gap



emerges: industries with higher earnings tend to be disproportionately white. For example, the information industry, with typical earnings in the \$90,000 range, is about 57 percent white—more than double the County share of white residents. Conversely, the bottom righthand corner of the graph shows that non-white workers are concentrated in lower-paying industries like hospitality and food services, where earnings are around \$30,000 and non-white workers make up about 85 percent of the workforce.

One notable outlier is public administration, which includes federal, state, and local government employees. This relatively high-paying industry has a share of white workers that is on par with the County as a whole. The field is also gender balanced: 49 percent of its employees are women and 51 percent are men.¹⁸⁶ Government jobs—which offer good pay, benefits, stability, and often union representation, and tend to have more antidiscrimination protections than private sector jobs—have long offered Black and Latino families a pathway to the middle class.

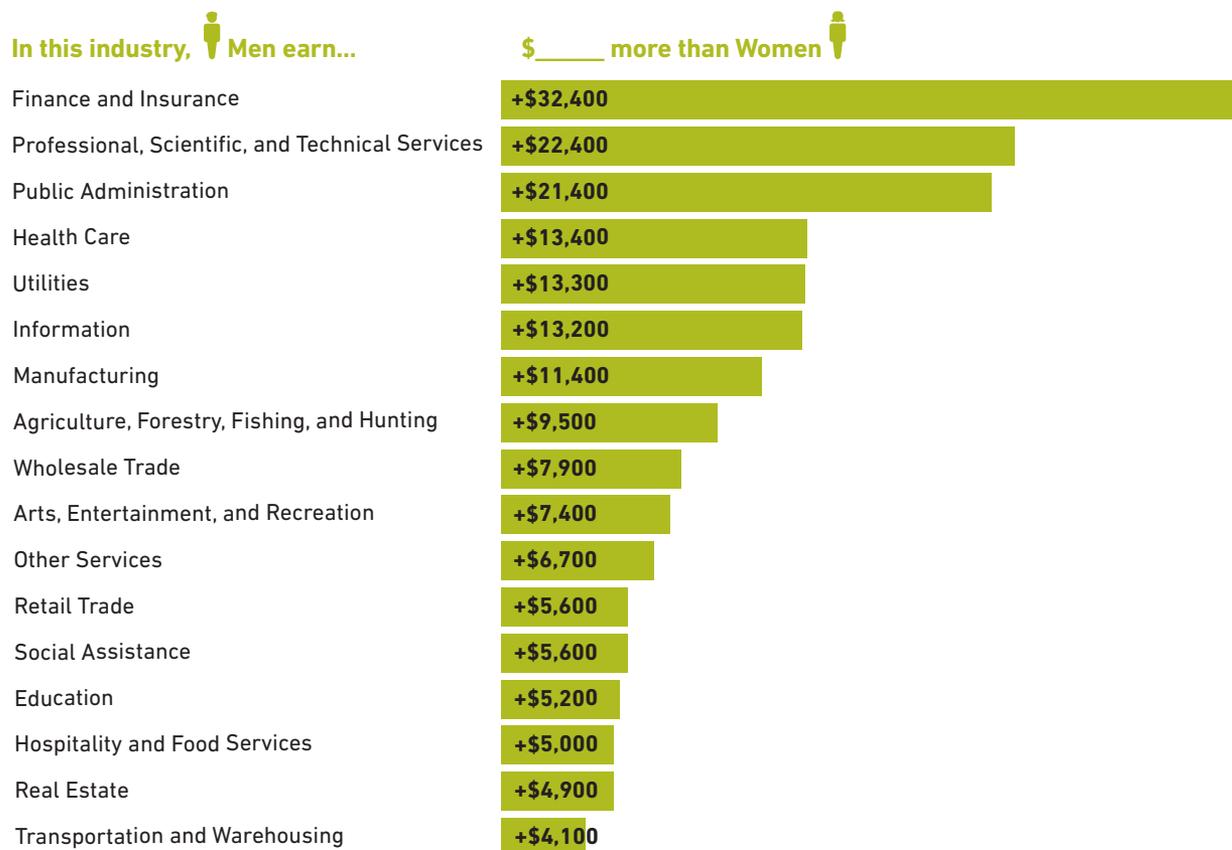
FIGURE 5 Non-White Employment Is Concentrated in Lower-Paying Industries



Note: Median earnings calculated for full-time workers.

Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

FIGURE 6 In Most Industries, Men Earn Significantly More Than Women



Note: Median earnings calculated for full-time workers. Industries that did not have reliable disparities include: Mining, Oil, and Gas; Construction; Management of Enterprises; Administrative, Support and Waste Management Services. This could be a result of small numbers of women working in these industries producing unreliable estimates or greater parity in earnings.

Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

Within each industry, though, earnings vary significantly by gender. In all but a handful of industry sectors, men earn significantly more than women. Although the public administration sector employs roughly equal numbers of women and men, it has the third-highest earnings disparity: men earn, on average, \$21,400 more than women. The largest gender gap in earnings is found in the finance and insurance industry, where men earn \$102,000 while their female colleagues earn \$70,000, an astounding \$32,000 more each year, nearly half again as much.

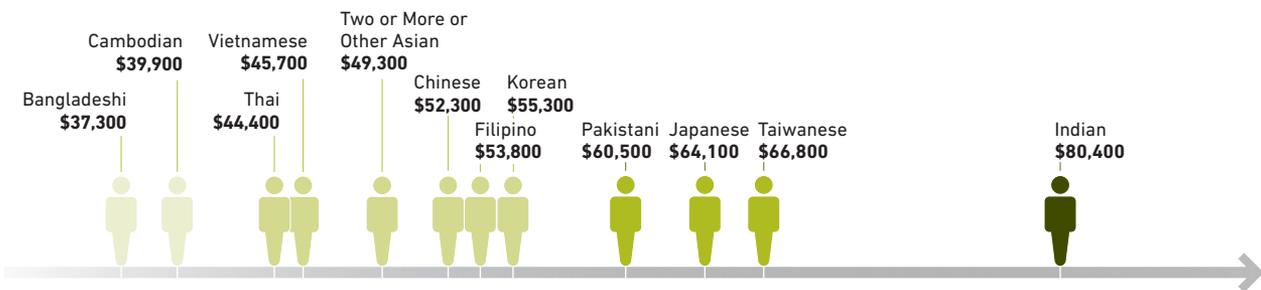
Finding and creating employment pathways to quality, high-paying jobs for all Angelenos, regardless of race and gender, is critical to improving well-being. Creating those pathways is not a cure-all, though—within each industry, special attention needs to be given to closing gendered wage gaps and ensuring that opportunity for advancement is available to all.

FIGURE 7 Median Personal Earnings for Asian Angelenos by Nativity



Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2023.

FIGURE 8 Median Personal Earnings by Asian Subgroup



Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

White Angelenos have median earnings of \$70,200, well above the countywide earnings figure. The earnings gap between white men and women is the largest among the racial and ethnic groups: \$21,000. White men earn \$19,100 more than the second-highest earners, Asian men. White women, on the other hand, have earnings closer to those of Asian and NHOPI men, at \$59,300. White workers’ earnings increased 14.3 percent between 2015 and 2023.

Asian workers’ earnings are the second highest among the major racial and ethnic groups in Los Angeles County: \$56,500. But Asian Angelenos have much lower earnings than would be predicted by their high levels of education, nearly the same as that of white Angelenos. Often, this gap exists because immigrants who completed higher education in Asia are unable to obtain a high-wage job in the United States due to licensing requirements, immigration status, English proficiency, discrimination in promotion, or simply a lower value placed on foreign educational credentials.¹⁸⁷ US-born Asian Angelenos earn \$10,300 more than their foreign-born counterparts. Asian men earn \$61,200; Asian women, nearly \$10,000 less, at \$51,400. Between 2015 and 2023, Asian workers’ earnings increased 15.3 percent.

Asian Angelenos have much lower earnings than would be predicted by their high levels of education.

Creo que eso debe de cambiar porque necesitamos darles un mejor futuro a nuestras hijas, a nuestras nietas. Mi deseo sería que esto cambiara y que ellas en algún momento, si no mis hijas, pero mis nietas, pudieran tener esa oportunidad de ganar lo mismo que los hombres.



Long Beach resident

Translation from Spanish:

I believe that needs to change because we need to give our daughters, our granddaughters, a better future. My wish is that this would change and that they, at some point—if not my daughters, then my granddaughters—could have the opportunity to earn the same as men.

Earnings vary a great deal among Asian subgroups. Angelenos who trace their heritage to India earn the most, \$80,400, by a very large margin. Bangladeshi Angelenos earn the least, \$37,300, despite relatively strong educational outcomes.

NHOPI Angelenos have median personal earnings of \$48,700, above the countywide median. NHOPI men earn \$58,600, compared to \$43,500 for NHOPI women, a difference of \$15,100 and the second-largest gender earnings gap.

Black Angelenos' median earnings are \$47,100. The earnings gap between Black men and women is the smallest of these groups—in fact, women earn \$600 more than men, a situation that Measure of America has not encountered in other places. The smaller wage gap between Black women and men is due largely to the comparatively low earnings of Black men relative to men of other racial and ethnic groups.

In another noteworthy departure from other racial and ethnic groups, foreign-born Black residents earn more than their US-born counterparts, \$51,100 compared to \$46,600. In all other groups, the US born have an earnings advantage. Earnings for Black workers rose 12.7 percent between 2015 and 2023, on par with the countywide increase.

Native American workers have median personal earnings of \$45,400, slightly above the countywide median. Native American men earn \$48,100, compared to \$42,900 for Native American women, a difference of \$5,200 and the second-smallest gender earnings gap.

Latino Angelenos earn the least among the major racial and ethnic groups in Los Angeles, \$35,900. Latina women, as mentioned earlier, earn the least of all gender/race combinations, \$31,800, and Latino men have lower wages than men of all other groups, at \$39,600. A heartening finding is that earnings increased more for Latinos between 2015 and 2023 than for any other group, 23.4 percent.

One reason for the sharp disparities in earnings between racial and ethnic groups is access to education, as discussed in the Education Index chapter. Discrimination and bias are another.

A third reason, related to the others as well as to gender norms as discussed earlier, is occupational segregation. The Census Bureau designates five major occupational categories: (1) management, business, science, and arts; (2) service; (3) sales and office; (4) natural resources, construction, and maintenance; and (5) production, transportation, and material moving. Different groups of Angelenos are disproportionately likely to work in these sectors, which have markedly different pay scales.

FIGURE 9 Gender Earnings Gap by Race and Ethnicity

	 Women	 Men	 Pay Gap	 Pay ratio For every dollar men earn, women earn:
White	\$59,300	\$80,300	\$21,000	\$0.74
Asian	\$51,400	\$61,200	\$9,800	\$0.84
NHOPI	\$43,500	\$58,600	\$15,100	\$0.74
Black	\$47,500	\$46,900	-\$600	\$1.01
Native American	\$42,900	\$48,100	\$5,200	\$0.89
Latino	\$31,800	\$39,600	\$7,800	\$0.80

Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

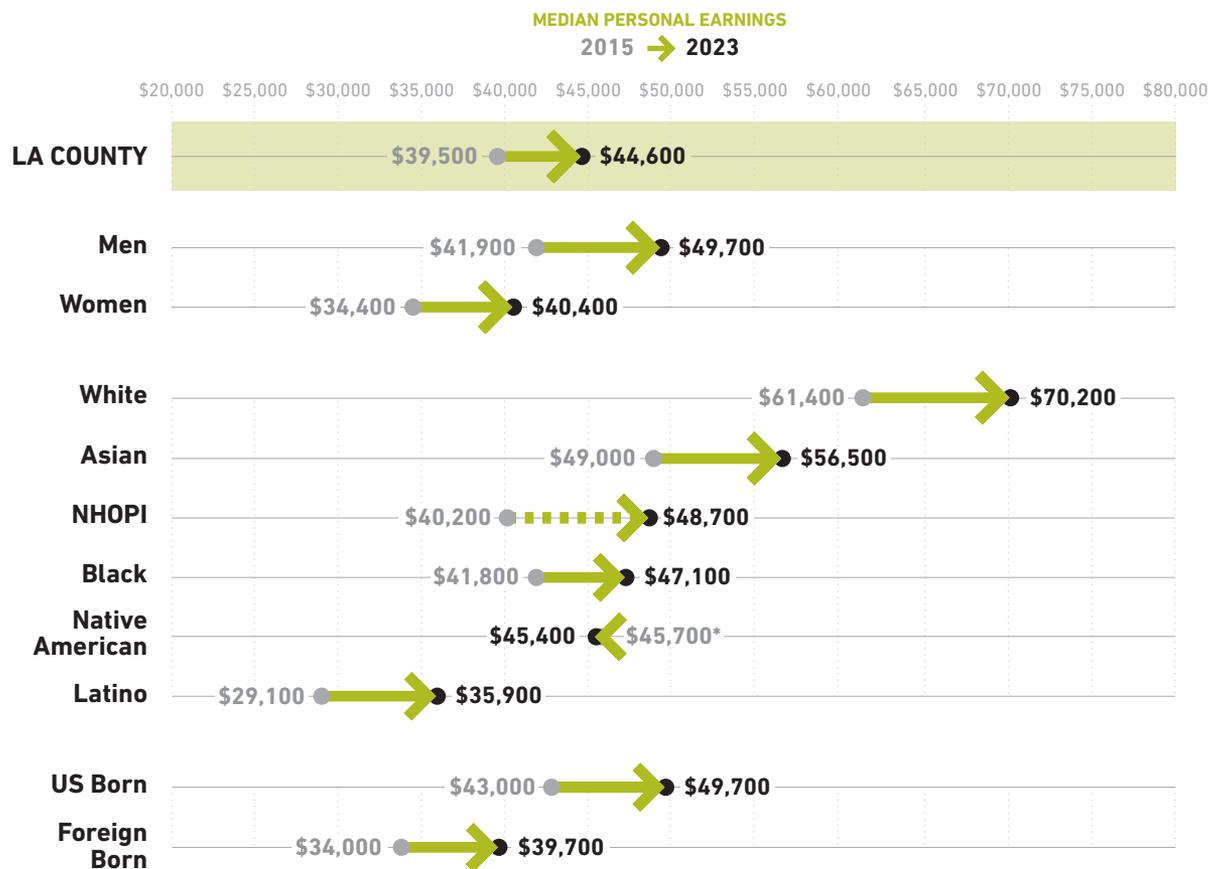
Economic Challenges for LGBTQ Angelenos

High costs of living affect Angelenos across the County, and LGBTQ residents are no exception. According to a 2023 study conducted by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and the Williams Institute, economic stability is the biggest source of worry for LGBTQ Angelenos and the primary issue they would like elected officials to address.¹⁸⁸ The 2023 LA County Trans & Nonbinary Survey found similar results; cost of living was the top issue for respondents, with 59 percent reporting it a serious problem.¹⁸⁹ While the share of LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ people living below 200 percent of the federal poverty line is similar (35 and 33 percent, respectively), trans and nonbinary Angelenos are experiencing substantial and disproportionate economic challenges.¹⁹⁰ The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and Williams Institute study showed that 47 percent of transgender and nonbinary adults were living below 200 percent of the federal poverty line.¹⁹¹

Trans and nonbinary Angelenos experience significant difficulties getting and keeping jobs due to discrimination and harassment. While 9 percent of cisgender LGBQ respondents reported that they had not been hired for a job in LA County due to their sexual orientation or gender identity, 24 percent of trans and nonbinary respondents said they had experienced this.¹⁹² In a series of focus groups with trans and gender-nonconforming Angelenos about housing in LA County, participants explained that visibility as a trans or gender-nonconforming person is a significant barrier to employment. Many participants stated they can only obtain low-wage jobs such as retail, food service, and other blue-collar employment. The majority of participants reported being denied jobs outright, attributing it to being visibly trans or gender-nonconforming. Employment discrimination was the number-one factor participants identified as eroding their economic independence and threatening

Trans and nonbinary Angelenos face a variety of challenges getting and keeping jobs due to discrimination and harassment.

FIGURE 10 Median Personal Earnings by Gender and by Race and Ethnicity, 2015–2023



Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty. Dotted lines mean change over time is not statistically significant.

Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2015 and 2023. Native American and NHOPI using ACS 2011–2015 and 2019–2023.

housing stability.¹⁹³ In a different series of focus groups, participants also noted that one of the substantial barriers to employment is obtaining identity documents that match their gender identity and expression.¹⁹⁴

Trans and nonbinary Angelenos also encounter disproportionate workplace harassment and violence, which leads to employment instability. Over one-quarter of Trans & Nonbinary Survey respondents (26 percent) reported being verbally harassed or physically attacked, or experiencing unwanted sexual contact at work in the last 12 months because they were trans or nonbinary.¹⁹⁵

Housing is a particular challenge for LGBTQ Angelenos. Six in 10 LGBTQ adults (61 percent) spend 30 percent or more of their income on housing, compared to 53 percent of non-LGBTQ adults.¹⁹⁶ Among respondents to the Trans & Nonbinary Survey, this figure is 74 percent.¹⁹⁷ In focus groups with trans and nonbinary

Angelenos about housing, participants shared many experiences of discrimination from landlords, property managers, and other residents, which contributed to early departure from homes, rejection of housing applications, and a general lack of safety.¹⁹⁸

These challenges mean that LGBTQ Angelenos are disproportionately likely to be homeless. LGBTQ adults were nearly twice as likely to have been homeless in the past five years as straight adults (11 percent vs. 6 percent).¹⁹⁹ Twenty-five percent of Trans & Nonbinary Survey respondents were currently experiencing homelessness, and an additional 24 percent had previously experienced homelessness in LA County.²⁰⁰ LGBTQ residents, especially those who are trans or nonbinary, struggle to find available and welcoming temporary housing, such as shelters or supportive housing programs, due to narrow eligibility requirements and discrimination.²⁰¹

I've seen housing with so many obstacles. The waiting process is about eight months just to know a yes or a no. It's a lot of documentation and barriers. And I also experienced that, you know, the people were selecting certain profile[s] of the people that they [would] be assisting.



LGBTQ Angeleno

Variation by Place

The top-earning places in Los Angeles County are found on the outer edges of the County, hugging the Pacific coast and ensconced in the foothills. In Palos Verdes Estates, the typical worker earns \$120,200, more than 2.5 times the Los Angeles County median.

The places where Angelenos earn the least, on the other hand, are largely found at the center of the County, with the exception of Westwood, where the presence of UCLA students depresses median earnings (students who work tend to work many fewer hours than the typical worker and thus earn comparatively little).

What I would think is that people with higher income have more mobility to move to spaces where they can reshape and redefine what their neighborhoods and communities look like. Many times people that live in lower-income communities, it's a struggle around land use and redevelopment and advocating for the things that communities want and need. Like, there tends to be less political influence and so people are confined to where they are able to find affordable housing and supported resources.



Department of Mental Health stakeholder

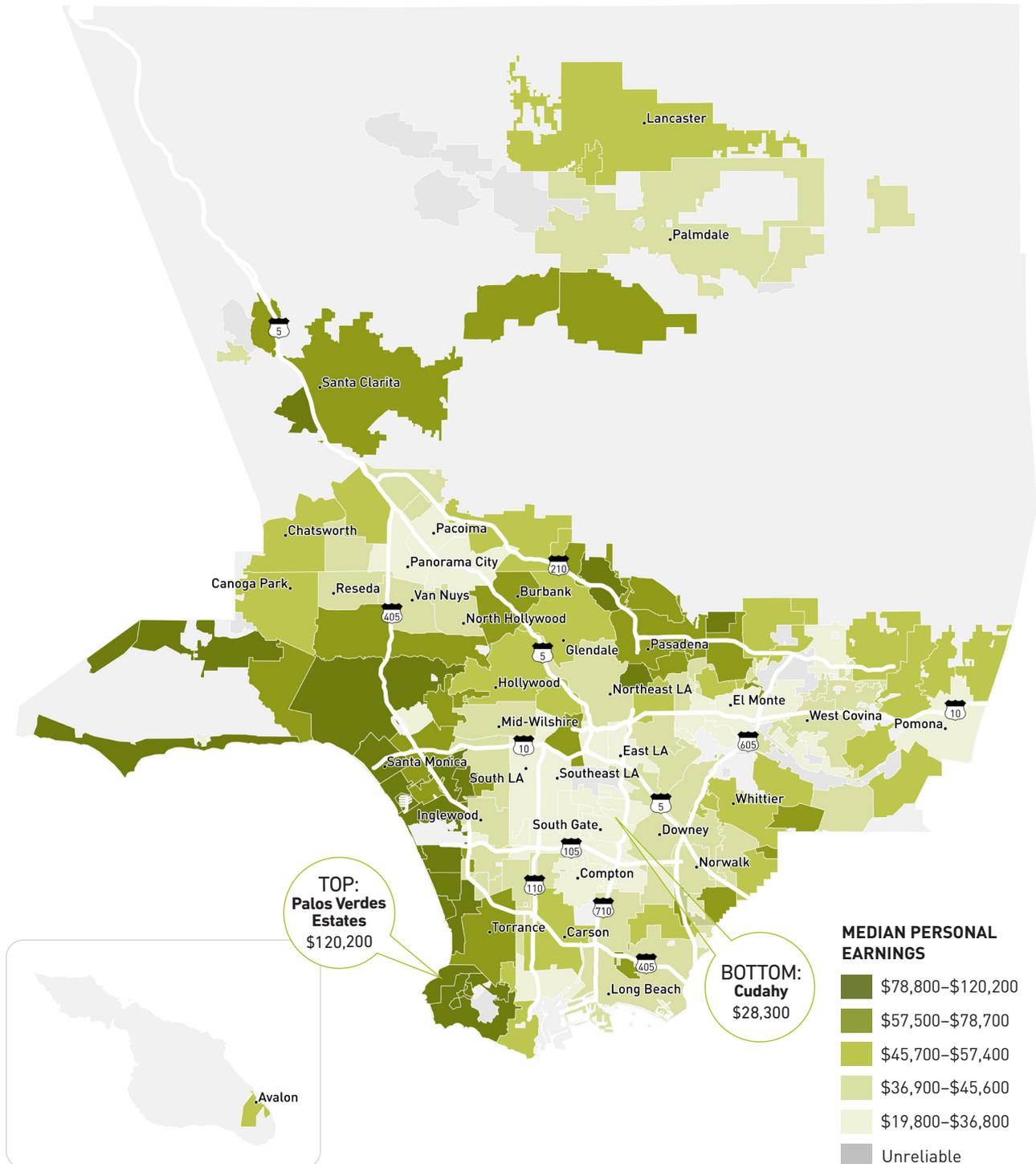
TABLE 1 Highest-Earning Places / Lowest-Earning Places

HIGHEST	MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS (\$)	LOWEST	MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS (\$)
Palos Verdes Estates	120,200	South Los Angeles	31,800
Manhattan Beach	114,200	Lennox	31,500
La Cañada Flintridge	110,200	Huntington Park	31,000
Marina del Rey	105,400	Maywood	30,700
Hermosa Beach	104,400	Boyle Heights	30,600
Brentwood-Pacific Palisades	103,500	Florence-Graham	30,200
Bel Air - Beverly Crest	98,000	Bell Gardens	30,200
Rancho Palos Verdes	95,000	Southeast Los Angeles	29,000
Calabasas	89,800	Cudahy	28,300
Agoura Hills	89,400	Westwood	19,800

Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

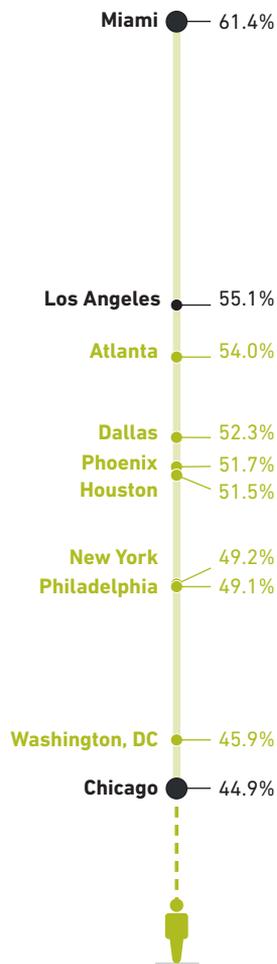
Map note: The lowest-earning place is Westwood, home of UCLA, with median personal earnings of \$19,800. Since these earnings are low mainly because such a large share of the population is students, and students are more likely than others in the labor force to work relatively few hours, we have not highlighted Westwood as the lowest-earning place on this map. For the same reason, the presence of UCLA and the resulting preponderance of students and faculty, Westwood is also the place with the highest Education Index score.

MAP 1 Median Personal Earnings by Place



Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

**Rent Burdened
Population in the 10 Most
Populous US Metro Areas**



Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2023.

Housing: A Foundation of Well-Being

Safe, stable, and secure housing is crucial when it comes to well-being. Where you live determines the jobs you can get, the schools your children attend, the access you have to countless resources, and even the air you breathe. Most of the country’s largest metro areas, including Los Angeles, have faced rising challenges to housing affordability.

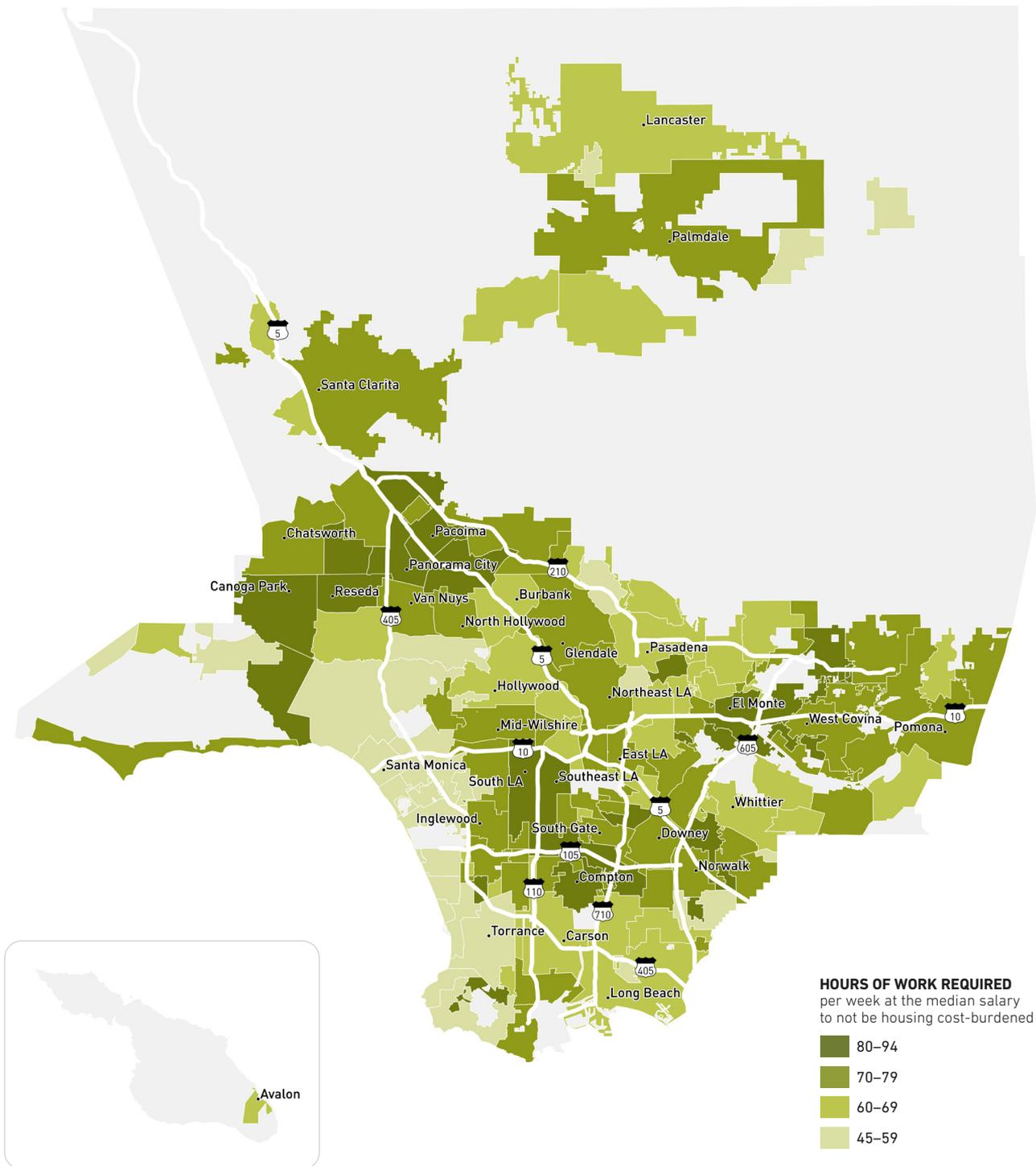
The standard of living in Los Angeles County has been threatened over recent years due to rising housing costs. Home prices and apartment rental costs have risen dramatically since the 2017 report, far outpacing growth in household incomes. Despite LA’s image as offering a suburban ideal of single-family homes, the homeownership rate in the County overall today stands at 45 percent.²⁰² In the United States, the median home value is four times the median income; in Los Angeles County, it is 10 times greater. Black households are least likely to own their homes (at 31 percent in 2023, more than 20 percentage points lower than white and Asian/Pacific Islander households), and they saw the steepest declines in homeownership among race and ethnic groups from 2010 to 2023.²⁰³

Low-income renters face particular challenges paying for housing: minimum-wage workers in California as a whole have to work nearly 100 hours a week to afford the average one-bedroom apartment.²⁰⁴ In Los Angeles County, nearly four in 10 renter households have annual incomes below \$50,000, 90 percent of these households are rent burdened (spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing), and 70 percent are *severely* rent burdened (spend more than 50 percent of income on housing). Los Angeles has the second-highest rent burden rate among the country’s 10 most populous metro areas—higher than all except Miami (see **SIDEBAR**). Rent burden has declined over the past decade for Latino households but remains highest for Black households, and older renters (over 62 years of age) are increasingly vulnerable: two-thirds were rent burdened in 2023.²⁰⁵

Households burdened by housing cost—whether they are paying rent or a mortgage—are often forced to make difficult choices to make ends meet, such as cutting back on food, clothing, transportation, or seeing a doctor.²⁰⁶ With housing costs rising faster than wages, more renters and homeowners than ever must spend less on necessities or risk eviction. Housing cost burden affects Angelenos across the County, even in wealthier neighborhoods. In fact, across all LA County neighborhoods, a resident earning the median salary for that neighborhood would need to work over 40 hours a week to afford monthly median housing costs without being housing cost-burdened (see **MAP 2**). In 31 neighborhoods, a median-salary earner would need to work more than 80 hours a week, double the standard workweek.

While Los Angeles has rolled back pandemic-era policies that froze rent hikes, one bright spot for tenant protections has been improvements to eviction proceedings. Both the County and the City of Los Angeles introduced tenant-right-to-counsel ordinances; the County’s took effect in January 2025, and the City’s in August.²⁰⁷ Research has shown that tenants are 4.4 times as likely to keep their apartments when given legal representation.²⁰⁸ Still, simply being threatened with eviction and dealing with higher

MAP 2 Hours of Work Required Per Week at the Median Salary to Not Be Housing Cost-Burdened



Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

The problem is not the homeless people in and of themselves, but like, what is it in our systems that are continuing to create conditions that people don't have homes or enough money, you know, for basic needs? And that folks are really pushed to the streets for many different reasons, but, you know, trauma and affordability and all those other things.



Long Beach resident

rents can be taxing and even increase the risk of death.²⁰⁹ Mitigating the root causes of widespread rent burden, so that fewer residents are left to grapple with the threat of eviction in the first place, must be a priority.

The high cost of housing is the primary driver of high levels of homelessness in Los Angeles County, which is present throughout the County and had grown substantially since 2017 before declining slightly over the past two years. According to the most recent homeless count, the most common cause of new homelessness is economic hardship, followed by weakened social networks and disabling health conditions.²¹⁰ With more than 70,000 people without a home every night, two-thirds of them unsheltered, and the cost of housing increasing faster than incomes, homelessness remains a major challenge for Los Angeles County.

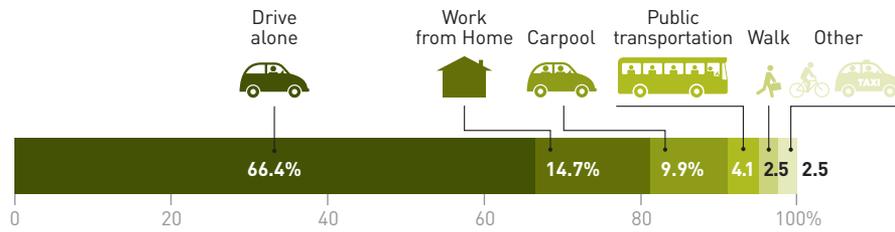
A vital strategy for addressing housing instability and high costs is increasing the supply of housing, especially housing that is affordable for low-income residents. Los Angeles County has seen a steady decline in housing development since the postwar boom in the 1950s—when there were 70,000 new housing units per year, compared to less than 15,000 units on average in the 2010s. With increased policy attention to boosting the housing supply, development has accelerated in recent years, with 150,000 new units since 2018, including over 28,000 in 2024. Even these increases are not enough to meet the need, however. As part of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment process, Los Angeles County jurisdictions were found to need over 800,000 new housing units from 2021 to 2029; through 2024, fewer than 100,000 units had been developed, and over 85 percent of those were for above-moderate-income households.²¹¹

Commuting in Los Angeles

With an average commute time of just under 31 minutes, **the typical Angeleno spends over 33 workdays commuting to work each year.**²¹² In Los Angeles County, the vast majority of residents (66.4 percent) drive by themselves to work. A smaller share, about one in 10, carpool with others. Those who drive to work may spend time idling in traffic—Los Angeles is ranked third in the United States for traffic congestion, and eighth in the world. **Drivers in Los Angeles lose an average of 88 hours a year due to traffic congestion, 11 full days of work.**²¹³

Even in the post-pandemic world, **working from home remains a common “commute” type**, with 14.7 percent of Angelenos not having to leave their house to begin their workday. Small shares of Angelenos either take public transportation or walk to their jobs, 4.1 and 2.5 percent, respectively.

FIGURE 11 How We Commute to Work in LA County



Note: "Other" category includes taxis and biking.

Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2023.

You know what I'm curious about? I'm curious about if we can have a transportation system. Like how it would change if we had the same transportation system as LA and we had our buses coming every 15 minutes instead of 30 minutes to an hour or skipping routes, because that's usually what my experience was when I would try to take the bus, it was like it never came in, like Lancaster, because they're so behind. And so I would want to see what difference that one area would make. What kind of change would come if we were able to have that, to have a better transportation system?



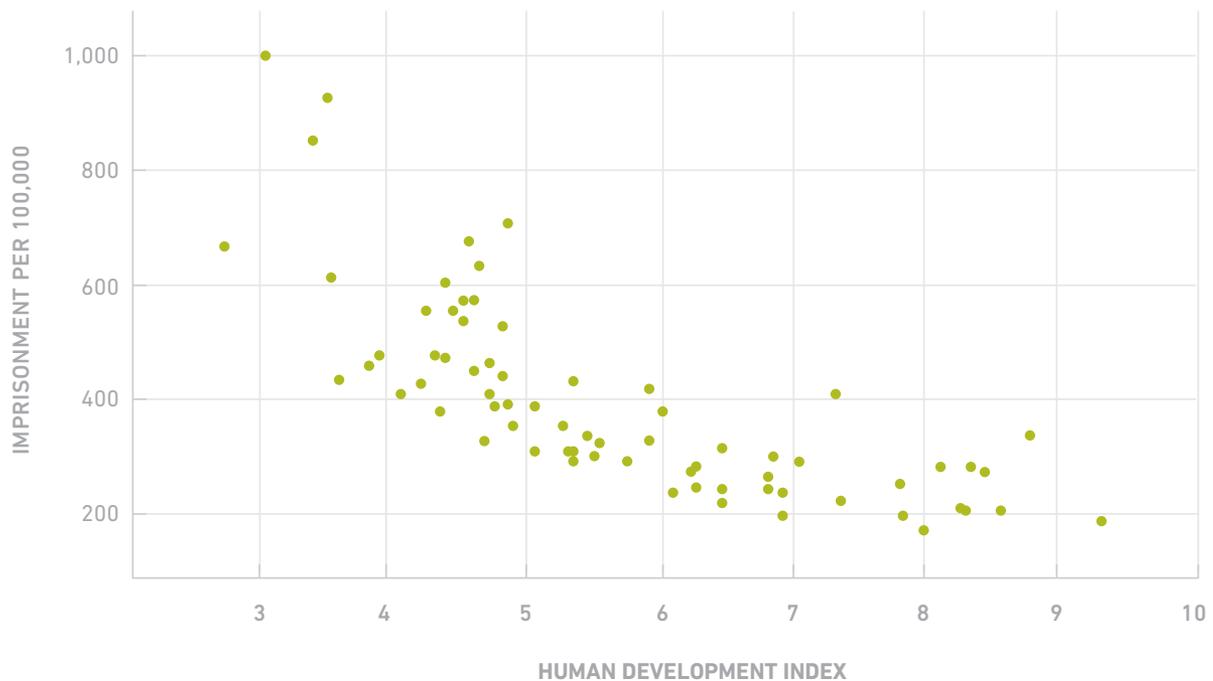
Antelope Valley resident

Incarceration

Los Angeles County has one of the higher incarceration rates among California's counties and the largest total number of residents in prison.²¹⁴ It operates the largest jail system in the country—and one of the largest in the world. Nonetheless, its facilities remain overcrowded.²¹⁵ The rate of County residents who are incarcerated in state prisons is 402 per 100,000—this rate more than doubles when considering residents ages 15–64 who are incarcerated in either state or local facilities.²¹⁶ LA County imprisons a larger share of its population than authoritarian regimes in China, Russia, and Iran.²¹⁷

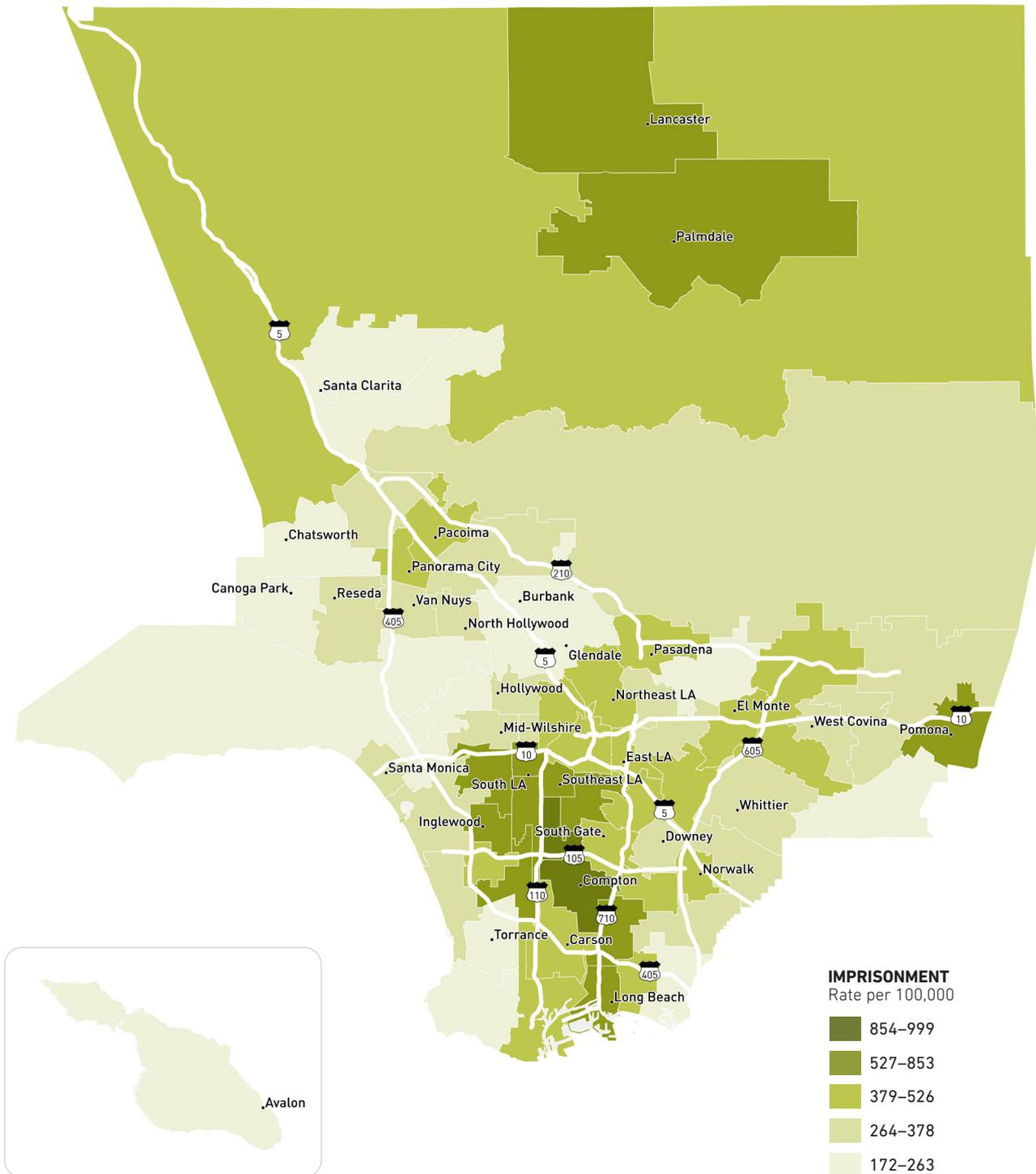
The countywide figures mask stark differences across Los Angeles neighborhoods. In parts of South Los Angeles, for instance, imprisonment rates are nearly twice the County average; around West Los Angeles, many imprisonment rates fall closer to half the average. These disparities track closely with well-being. Measure of America analysis shows a strong negative relationship between neighborhood HDI scores and imprisonment—neighborhoods with higher HDI scores generally have lower rates of imprisonment, while those on the lower end of the HDI tend to have higher rates of imprisonment. Racial and ethnic disparities are significant as

FIGURE 12 Imprisonment Rate by Neighborhood Cluster



Source: HDI: Measure of America calculations using data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023, and US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023. Imprisonment: Prison Policy Initiative calculations using US Census Bureau redistricting data, 2020.

MAP 3 Imprisonment Rate by Neighborhood Cluster



Source: Prison Policy Initiative calculations using US Census Bureau redistricting data, 2020.

well. Latino and Black residents make up a majority of the incarcerated population in Los Angeles, and Black residents are arrested and incarcerated at a higher rate than any other racial or ethnic group.²¹⁸

LA County also houses one of the largest juvenile justice systems in the country, one that has faced repeated criticism for systemic failures in care, education, and safety.²¹⁹ Justice-involved youth in Los Angeles experience high rates of both suspension and chronic absenteeism coupled with low graduation rates, all of which can contribute to long-term disconnection from educational and occupational pathways.²²⁰ In the critical years of emerging adulthood, it is important that prevention and diversion efforts are prioritized.

Spending time in prison or jail, as either a young person or an adult, can have devastating, and lasting, effects on mental and physical health, access to opportunities, and overall well-being—not only for incarcerated individuals, but also for their families and communities. Many experience trauma while behind bars, and, upon reentry, often face discrimination in hiring and housing for having a criminal record—making it harder to secure stable employment and greatly increasing the risk of homelessness.²²¹

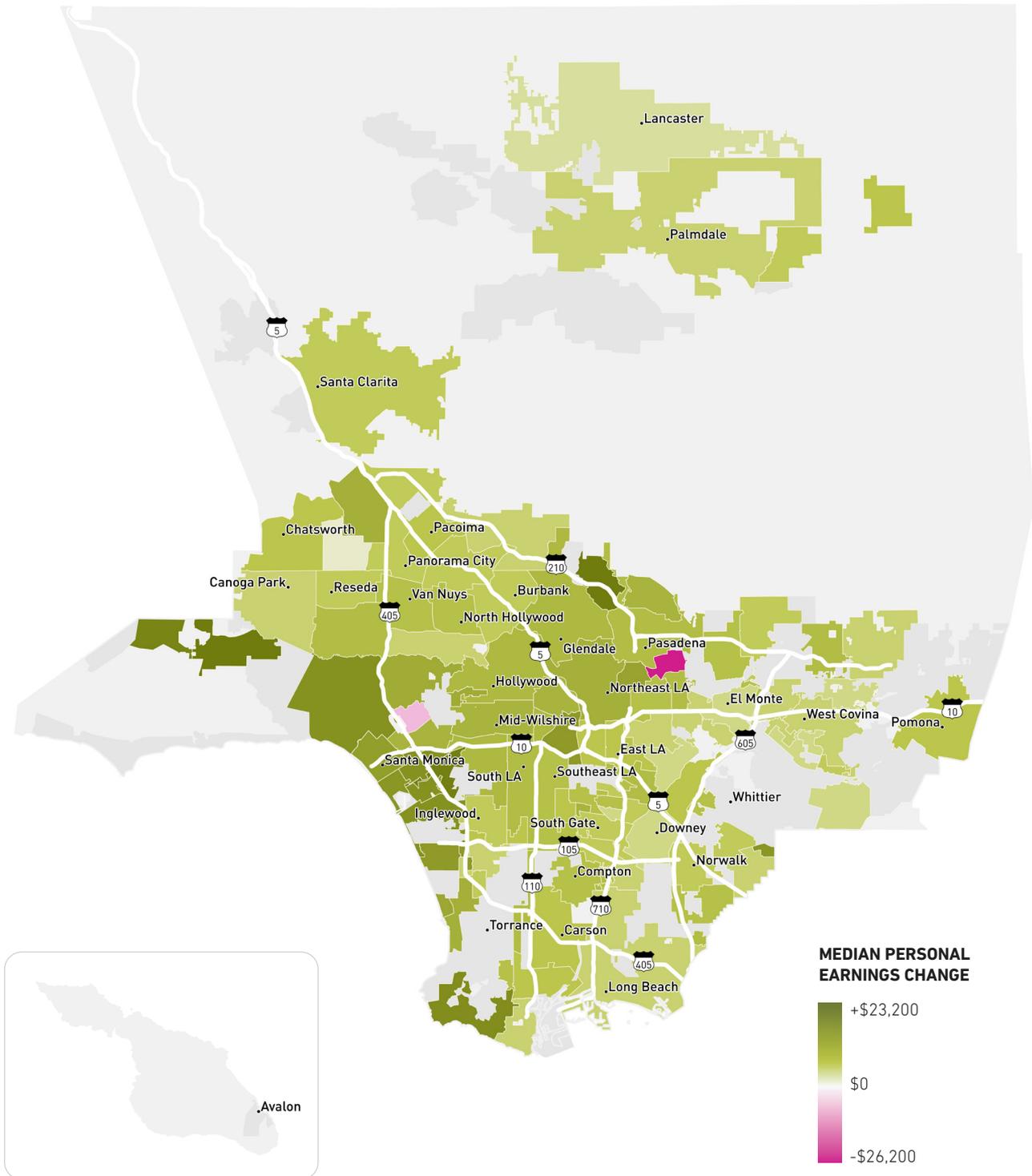
California has undergone major criminal justice reform over the past decade: prioritizing rehabilitation and preventative treatment over punishment has contributed to declining incarceration rates in the state and County. California's Proposition 36, which passed in late 2024, however, has raised concerns over the law's harsher penalties and potential to increase the incarcerated population.²²² Ultimately, it is more important than ever that Los Angeles County expand efforts to prevent and divert people from entering the carceral system; strengthen care for individuals before, during, and after incarceration; and ensure that reentering residents have access to resources and services that can best support their long-term stability and well-being.

MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS BY PLACE: CHANGE OVER TIME

Four places across Los Angeles County saw their median personal earnings increase by more than \$20,000, accounting for inflation, from 2015 to 2023: **Calabasas, La Cañada Flintridge, Culver City, and Agoura Hills**. These four places already had earnings well above the County average in 2015 and now all but Culver City are among the ten highest-earning places. Calabasas experienced the greatest increase in earnings of any place: \$66,600 to \$89,800, an increase of \$23,200. Earnings in La Cañada Flintridge rose by a similar amount—from \$87,100 to \$110,200. Culver City had the third-highest increase in earnings, a \$22,800 jump from \$64,800 to \$87,600. Agoura Hills saw a similar increase: \$67,600 to \$89,400.

Two communities in Los Angeles County saw their median personal earnings significantly decrease from 2015 to 2023: San Marino and Westwood. **San Marino** saw a sharp drop in earnings, \$26,200, though their earnings remain relatively high—\$100,600 in 2015 to \$74,400 in 2023. This impacted the neighborhood's HDI

MAP 4 Median Personal Earnings Change Over Time, 2015–2023



Note: Areas in grey indicate no statistically significant change over time.
 Source: Measure of America calculations using data from the US Census Bureau ACS, 2011–2015 and 2019–2023.

score, which went from 9.43 to 8.82. Disaggregating median earnings by gender reveals an unusually large chasm: men in San Marino typically earn \$109,400 annually while women earn \$57,600. **Westwood** experienced a slight decrease of \$900 from 2015 to 2023, though their earnings remained relatively low—\$20,700 to \$19,800. Westwood is home to UCLA; their high student population means far fewer residents are earning full-time salaries relative to other neighborhoods.

TABLE 2 Median Personal Earnings by Place and Supervisorial District



DISTRICT 1
Supervisor
Hilda L. Solis



DISTRICT 2
Supervisor
Holly J. Mitchell



DISTRICT 3
Supervisor
Lindsey P. Horvath



DISTRICT 4
Supervisor
Janice Hahn



DISTRICT 5
Supervisor
Kathryn Barger

Downtown	\$59,700	Manhattan Beach	\$114,200	Brentwood - Pacific Palisades	\$103,500	Palos Verdes Estates	\$120,200	La Cañada Flintridge	\$110,200
La Verne	56,200	Marina del Rey	105,400	Bel Air - Beverly Crest	98,000	Rancho Palos Verdes	95,000	Sierra Madre	83,200
Diamond Bar	55,200	Hermosa Beach	104,400	Calabasas	89,800	Rolling Hills Estates	78,800	Stevenson Ranch	80,800
Walnut	54,600	Redondo Beach	88,700	Agoura Hills	89,400	La Habra Heights	65,700	South Pasadena	79,600
Silver Lake - Echo Park - Elysian Valley	51,400	Culver City	87,600	Venice	85,600	Cerritos	63,100	San Marino	74,400
Alhambra	47,800	El Segundo	83,400	Malibu	83,400	Torrance	62,800	San Pasqual	73,800
Hacienda Heights	47,200	Westchester - Playa del Rey	80,300	Westlake Village	83,200	Signal Hill	61,200	Sherman Oaks - Studio City - Toluca Lake - Calhuenaga Pass	71,400
West Covina	45,200	Ladera Heights	79,500	Santa Monica	82,500	East Whittier	59,300	La Crescenta-Montrose	66,100
Covina	45,100	Palms - Mar Vista - Del Rey	66,600	West Los Angeles	74,300	Lakewood	55,200	Castaic	65,300
Monterey Park	43,600	Del Aire	66,500	Beverly Hills	71,700	La Mirada	51,300	Agua Dulce	65,100
Northeast Los Angeles	43,500	View Park-Windsor Hills	65,000	Sherman Oaks - Studio City - Toluca Lake - Calhuenaga Pass	71,400	Avalon	48,800	Altadena	62,600
San Gabriel	42,900	West Carson	48,000	Topanga	70,300	Lomita	48,800	Arcadia	60,700
Rowland Heights	42,300	Carson	45,700	West Hollywood	69,500	Whittier	47,400	Pasadena	59,600
Avocado Heights	40,200	Wilshire	44,800	Palms - Mar Vista - Del Rey	66,600	San Pedro	46,400	East Pasadena	57,800
West Puente Valley	38,300	West Adams - Baldwin Hills - Leimert	40,700	Encino - Tarzana	62,700	West Whittier-Los Nietos	45,800	Burbank	57,600
Montebello	37,900	West Rancho Dominguez	40,400	Granada Hills - Knollwood	55,300	Long Beach	44,700	Acton	57,600
Vincent	37,600	Alondra Park	40,400	Chatsworth - Porter Ranch	54,800	South Whittier	43,800	Santa Clarita	57,500
Citrus	36,900	Gardena	39,800	Hollywood	50,400	Downey	43,400	La Verne	56,200
Azusa	36,300	Hawthorne	38,600	Canoga Park - Winnetka - Woodland Hills - West Hills	48,700	Santa Fe Springs	42,400	Quartz Hill	54,900
La Puente	36,200	Harbor Gateway	38,200	Wilshire	44,800	Norwalk	42,100	Glendora	52,200
Valinda	35,600	Lawndale	37,100	North Hollywood - Valley Village	42,800	Pico Rivera	41,500	San Dimas	51,700
Pomona	35,300	Inglewood	37,000	Northridge	41,100	Commerce	38,600	Monrovia	51,200
Rosemead	35,100	East Rancho Dominguez	35,100	Reseda - West Van Nuys	40,900	Bellflower	38,500	North El Monte	51,000
South San Gabriel	34,800	West Athens	35,000	Van Nuys - North Sherman Oaks	40,500	Artesia	37,400	Hollywood	50,400
Baldwin Park	34,800	Compton	35,000	Sylmar	40,300	Hawaiian Gardens	36,500	Glendale	50,000
South San Jose Hills	33,200	Willowbrook	34,400	San Fernando	38,300	Walnut Park	35,300	Claremont	49,800
East Los Angeles	32,700	Westmont	32,600	Sun Valley - La Tuna Canyon	35,000	Paramount	35,000	Temple City	48,800
South El Monte	32,700	South Los Angeles	31,800	Arleta - Pacoima	34,400	South Gate	34,500	Lancaster	46,500
El Monte	32,200	Lennox	31,500	Mission Hills - Panorama City - North Hills	34,300	Wilmington - Harbor City	34,300	Sunland - Tujunga - Lake View Terrace - Shadow Hills - East La Tuna Canyon	46,000
Westlake	31,800	Florence-Graham	30,200	Westwood	19,800	Lynwood	32,800	Duarte	45,700
Boyle Heights	30,600	Southeast Los Angeles	29,000			Bell	32,100	East San Gabriel	44,700
						Huntington Park	31,000	Sun Village	43,800
						Maywood	30,700	North Hollywood - Valley Village	42,800
						Bell Gardens	30,200	Mayflower Village	42,500
						Cudahy	28,300	Charter Oak	42,400
								Val Verde	41,300
								Lake Los Angeles	41,200
								Palmdale	40,500
								South Monrovia Island	36,300
								Sun Valley - La Tuna Canyon	35,000

Note: Places are listed according to the Supervisorial District in which they are primarily located. When a large portion of a locale's land straddles two districts, it is included in both. Pepperdine University, which has median personal earnings of \$5,400, is not included here because its low earnings are chiefly due to its population being almost entirely students.

Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019-2023.

Agenda for Action



The data presented in this report provide a clear picture of the people and communities that face the greatest obstacles to a life of freedom and opportunity. These data also provide a roadmap for raising well-being for all and closing the gaps between different groups and places in LA County. Below are three cross-cutting imperatives to inform policymaking and programming across sectors as well as nine recommendations for action to improve well-being and access to opportunity in Los Angeles. *The Portrait of Los Angeles County 2026* Advisory Committees developed this agenda, which was informed by a series of community conversations held in the summer of 2025 and put to paper by the Measure of America team.

Cross-Cutting Imperatives

Address Disparities in Well-Being among Angelenos

All Angelenos deserve the chance to imagine and realize their vision of a good life. Today, access to the resources and opportunities required not just to survive but to thrive is far too dependent on a person's gender, racial and ethnic background, immigration status, sexual orientation, disability status, housing circumstances, and zip code.

Increasing the countywide HDI score, closing gaps in well-being between women and men as well as between Angelenos from different racial and ethnic groups, and ensuring that vulnerable populations can fully participate in the County's economic, social, cultural, and political life require investment in targeted policies and programs designed to improve the health, education, and living standards of demographic groups that are falling behind. Specific priorities include addressing the following well-being gaps:

- **The substantial life expectancy gaps** between Black and NHOPI Angelenos, whose life expectancy is less than 73 years, and Asian, Latino, and white Angelenos, who can expect to live more than 80 years;
- **The disproportionate health challenges** that shorten the lives of Angelenos who are homeless or housing insecure, living in poverty, have had adverse childhood experiences, or are grappling with mental illness or substance use disorders;
- **The low earnings among Latinos**, particularly Latina women, who earn the least—just 40 percent of what white men earn—and who are concentrated in the lowest-paying economic sectors;
- **The earnings gap between women and men**, which has grown over the last eight years and now tops \$9,000;
- **The need to expand educational opportunities for Latino Angelenos;** and
- **The striking rates of youth disconnection among Black young people.**

Throughout history, we see Latinos are the most exposed to less pay in their work areas and with less opportunity. Also with the language barrier...and lack of education and lack of opportunities as well. Especially because we are immigrants and we come to work, to have a better life, looking for a better lifestyle. But since we don't have that higher level of education, that's why we are less paid than other groups.



South LA resident

PRIORITIZE PLACES WHERE THE WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IS AT RISK

The place where you are born and grow up should not determine your life chances: how long you live, the caliber of your education, the career paths open to you, the way you are treated by public officials, the quality of services like policing and transportation in your community, and your ability to participate meaningfully in the decisions that affect your life. Too often, however, place remains tightly linked to our ability to flourish. Los Angeles County is home to neighborhoods whose residents have the tools they need to live healthy, productive, freely chosen lives—a reality reflected in their communities' high scores on the American Human Development Index. The County is also home to neighborhoods in which people face many obstacles to discovering, developing, and deploying their unique gifts and talents, and where necessity too often demands that human flourishing take a backseat to human survival.

A key benefit of the American Human Development Index is that it allows for the clear identification of communities facing interlocking impediments to human flourishing. The challenges that communities with low scores on the index face are well beyond what any single institution—whether a school, a health clinic, or a city or county agency—can meaningfully address on their own. Rather, they require a whole-of-government response centered around investing in people, building on local strengths and assets, and learning from the communities that made the greatest well-being strides since 2017. Care should be taken that investments do not fuel community displacement but rather improve the lives of long-time residents. The County as well as philanthropic and other nonprofit organizations will make the biggest difference in improving people's lives by targeting their investments in places that fall into Struggling LA, which score between 3.0 and 4.99 on the index—particularly the 23 locales that score less than 4.0.

IMPLEMENT PREVENTION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Preventing problems before they develop saves money, averts human suffering, strengthens communities, and allows for the realization of human potential; in all aspects of life, it is both more humane and more pragmatic to keep bad things from happening in the first place than to wait for predictable problems with costly solutions to take root. Prevention means prioritizing strategies that head off future health, education, and employment challenges, from immunizations and health screenings to high-quality early childhood care and education to programs that engage and support young people in their transition to adulthood. Prevention efforts are vital in other areas as well, from keeping people in their homes to prevent homelessness to diverting young people away from the carceral system to preventing future wildfires by changing where and how we build. Los Angeles County has focused in recent years on increasing attention to and investments in prevention. The Board of Supervisors has passed a series of motions to increase the County's capacity to orient services toward prevention, and teams working on issues such as homelessness and child and family well-being are investing in prevention and promotion efforts as well.

What needs to change is to capture things before they happen. We need to be ready. Not get ready, but we need to be ready preparing for these things. We have a lot of foster children who once they turn 18, they will have nowhere to go. They are all over in the community. We got homeless. It's getting more and more tents and people sleeping on the street. We need to help the people.



Antelope Valley resident

Recommendations for Action

ADDRESS PREMATURE MORTALITY

Health equity means that everyone has an equal opportunity to live a long and healthy life. That a NHOPI baby born today can expect to live some nine fewer years, and a Black baby seven fewer years, than the average baby born today in Los Angeles County shows how far our society must travel before health equity is a reality. Increasing life expectancy for all requires education and investment aimed at improving the conditions of people's daily lives and tackling both the leading underlying causes of premature death (smoking, poor diet, lack of exercise, and excessive drinking) and the chronic health conditions like heart disease, cancer, and diabetes they contribute to. Closing racial and gender gaps in life expectancy demands additional attention to the chronic diseases, illnesses, and injuries that disproportionately affect specific groups of Angelenos—such as infant and maternal mortality, low birth weight, homicide, drug overdose, and hypertension among Black communities; diabetes and other metabolic conditions among NHOPI residents; and drug overdose and unintentional injuries among LA County men. Groups that face elevated risk of premature death from a variety of causes—such as people experiencing homelessness, severe mental illness, or addiction—require compassionate, tailored interventions to help them stay safe and well.

IMPROVE ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

Mental health and substance use challenges are widespread, affecting communities and families countywide; most Angelenos know at least one person grappling with a behavioral health issue. Everyone in Los Angeles County deserves high-quality, effective mental health and substance use treatment. Expanding services, addressing stigma, and normalizing asking for help allows affected Angelenos to live healthier lives, strengthens families, and supports individuals to thrive personally, in relationships, as parents, and in work and school. Mental health and substance use problems have become more pervasive and severe in recent years, particularly among young people, threatening individual, family, and community well-being and stability.

The Behavioral Health Transformation (BHT) process currently underway in Los Angeles County educates Angelenos about when to get help and provides timely, high-quality, and comprehensive behavioral health services.²²³ By expanding the full continuum of care, investing in the provider workforce, enabling data-driven cross-sector collaboration, and putting into place culturally competent outreach strategies and services—particularly for vulnerable populations—BHT aims to reduce barriers, normalize help-seeking, and improve the quality of services.

Having been Black a long time in America, I just felt extremely sad at the life expectancy of Black males still. I used to call them the endangered species, and I see that they are still an endangered species. My own son died at age 43. He had serious mental illness.



Department of Mental Health stakeholder

INVEST IN HIGH-QUALITY EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN FROM BIRTH TO AGE FIVE

Access to affordable, nurturing, high-quality early care and education advances three critical ends: it supports the social, emotional, and cognitive development of the littlest Angelenos, laying the foundation for flourishing adulthoods; it allows parents to work or go to school, secure in the knowledge that their children are safe and well cared for; and it saves public dollars. In fact, high-quality early care and education are arguably the best investments a society can make in children, delivering an annual return of 14 percent per child by improving their long-term outcomes in health, education, employment, and justice involvement while also increasing maternal educational attainment and employment.²²⁴

It is critical to expand policy and programmatic efforts to ensure all children from birth to age five experience high-quality, developmentally appropriate care and education across settings, including family, friend, and neighbor care, family childcare homes, centers, and schools offering transitional kindergarten. An important component of expanding access is improving workforce training and boosting pay; those who do the critical work of caring for our youngest children—largely women of color—are among the most poorly paid members of the labor force. Parental engagement is also a critical part of a cohesive early-learning system that empowers children, strengthens families, and benefits communities across Los Angeles. When every family has access to affordable, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate care—whether in homes, centers, or schools—children thrive socially, emotionally, and cognitively.

HELP YOUNG PEOPLE SUCCESSFULLY TRANSITION TO THRIVING ADULTHOODS

All young people share basic developmental needs that are essential for them to thrive, flourish, and fulfill their potential. These needs include safe ways to explore the world, take healthy risks, and try new things; real-life situations that allow young people to develop decision-making and emotional-regulation abilities; opportunities to develop a sense of meaning and purpose by contributing to the world around them; positive ways to earn respect and social status; and warmth and support from caring adults.²²⁵ For many young people, experiences and interactions that meet these needs take place in the context of school or work. Those who are neither working nor in school—disconnected or opportunity youth—have far fewer of these important opportunities. Combined with structural issues like poverty, racism, sexism, and residential segregation, youth disconnection cuts too many young people off from rewarding pathways to adulthood. Ensuring that all our young adults have positive life experiences, ways to contribute to the world around them, and the loving support that everyone needs to thrive benefits all of us.

A critical priority is helping all our young people successfully move from high school to postsecondary education, training, or apprenticeships that lead to high-wage jobs, with a particular focus on supporting young people who

I love *First 5* because [of] the idea to have education, early education, that's what it's all about, education. And if we all make the effort to drive that, focus that into those kids, the youth, the people in the early stage, to have knowledge about how to live healthy, mentally, physically and economically...I think that should be a priority for us as parents and as a community.



South LA resident

are aging out of foster care, who are otherwise involved with the child welfare system, and who are justice-involved. This assistance should include support for housing and transportation, food, and physical and mental health care; more economically secure families typically provide their young adult children with this type of support, but doing so is too often an unmanageable strain for low-income Angelenos—and not available at all to young people who are on their own. Supporting young people with education, training, and community connections helps them build successful, independent lives as adults, strengthening families and communities for the future.

EXPAND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND SECURITY

The high cost of living and economic inequality are both major impediments to well-being in Los Angeles County. Expanding economic opportunity and security strengthens LA County by giving all residents a fair chance to achieve stability, contribute to vibrant local economies, and provide for their families and communities.

As shown in the Standard of Living chapter, wages and salaries vary greatly by place and demographic group across Los Angeles County, with communities in South and Southeast LA, women, and Latino, Native American, and Black residents having particularly low earnings. The disparities in wealth, which for most homeowners are closely tied to the value of their houses, are larger still. Policies and programs aimed at boosting wages and providing low-income families with assistance to make ends meet (e.g., guaranteed income programs, several of which have been piloted in Los Angeles County) can help narrow income gaps, and programs to increase homeownership and small business ownership among underrepresented groups can address wealth inequality. Equally important to increasing income and wealth are interventions to address LA County’s high cost of living, particularly when it comes to necessities like housing, childcare, and transportation, whose costs have skyrocketed in recent years.

KEEP PEOPLE HOUSED AND INCREASE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Housing is a fulcrum of opportunity, determining to a large degree how safe we feel walking outside, where our children go to school, what jobs we can easily access, and even the quality of the air we breathe. Housing insecurity is extraordinarily stressful; it can prompt frequent moves that take a toll on families and push people into overcrowded living situations, substandard housing that exposes residents to hazards like air pollution and pests, and unsafe neighborhoods. Ensuring access to affordable, secure housing reduces homelessness, strengthens neighborhoods, and supports long-term well-being. High housing costs put the security of too many Angelenos at risk and make it harder for individuals and families to stay healthy, employed, and connected to community.

Porque también nosotros si tuviéramos las oportunidades de más acceso a trabajo, a capacitaciones, entrenamientos, nos educaríamos, nos prepararíamos, estuviéramos en una situación con ingresos más altos en los hogares.



East LA resident

Translation from Spanish:
Because if we also had more opportunities for access to jobs, training, and education, we would educate ourselves, we would prepare ourselves, and we would be in a situation with higher household incomes.

យើងខ្លាចក្នុងការ
ចេញទៅខាងក្រៅ
ឬស្វែងរកទៅធ្វើការ
ទោះបីជាយើងជាជន
អន្តោប្រវេសន៍
ស្របច្បាប់ក៏ដោយ។
យើងធ្វើការស្នើសុំដោយ
ការគោរពចំពោះ
ដំណោះស្រាយដ៏
យុត្តិធម៌ចំពោះបញ្ហា
នេះ។ ក្នុងនាមយើង
ជាជនអន្តោប្រវេសន៍
ខ្មែរដែលរស់នៅ
សហរដ្ឋអាមេរិក
ឥឡូវនេះយើង
ធ្វើដំណើរ និងរស់នៅ
ដោយភាពភ័យខ្លាច...
ជនអន្តោប្រវេសន៍
គ្រប់រូប ទោះមាន
ឯកសារ ឬអត់ក៏ដោយ
ក៏មានការភ័យខ្លាច
ដូចគ្នា។



Long Beach resident

Translation from Khmer:
*We are afraid to go
outside or even to
work, despite being
legal immigrants. We
respectfully ask for a
fair solution to this issue.
As Khmer immigrants
living in America, we now
travel and live with fear...
Every immigrant, whether
documented or not,
shares the same fears.*

Los Angeles has had high levels of homelessness and housing affordability problems for decades, but in recent years there has been heightened policy attention to addressing this foundational component of well-being. The number of new housing units in LA County has picked up over the past decade with increased land use and financial incentives, but many of these units were built with higher-income households in mind. LA County jurisdictions need to plan for more new housing units, especially affordable ones, to meet regional goals by 2029. New development should support—rather than displace—current residents. A positive outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic was increased attention to protections for tenants (who make up 55 percent of County households) and creative use of existing buildings, such as hotels, for housing. Even as more people transition from homelessness into housing, protections and supports that prevent people from losing their housing in the first place are increasingly important. In all of these interventions, special attention should be paid to people and communities who have had particular challenges in accessing or sustaining housing, such as Black and Latino households, survivors of domestic violence, undocumented Angelenos, and youth transitioning out of the child welfare system.

SUPPORT THREATENED COMMUNITIES

The human security framework holds that people have the right to live free from fear; that is far from the reality of too many Angelenos today. Supporting communities at heightened risk of preventable harm helps them avoid and recover from violence and trauma, build stability, pursue their goals, and strengthen their families, neighborhoods, and Los Angeles as a whole.

Recent policy changes and enforcement actions, particularly at the federal level, have put many Angelenos—particularly immigrants, LGBTQ residents, and unsheltered people—under increasing threats to their freedom, health, and livelihoods. In the face of these federal policies and actions, both local policy actions and community-driven assistance can provide legal, economic, health, and social support—as well as solace and solidarity—for threatened people and communities. With heightened enforcement actions, immigrants and their families need legal and financial help as they navigate often chaotic processes. With threats from the federal government to services like gender-affirming care, LGBTQ people require assistance and advocacy around health care access and legal protections. Recent court rulings and federal actions have allowed local governments to restrict the rights of unsheltered people. Community groups and local governments in LA County should prioritize the security of these residents while working to connect them with housing. For all Angelenos living under these threats to their security, mental health care can reduce the toll of violence and trauma.

DECREASE JUSTICE INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT COMMUNITY REENTRY

Helping people avoid unnecessary jail or court involvement and supporting those returning to their communities as they take steps to rebuild their lives with housing, jobs, and services strengthens families and gives LA County residents the chance to build stable, healthy lives while reducing the likelihood of returning to the carceral system.

Los Angeles should build on recent local government and community efforts to reduce overreliance on incarceration, exemplified in the County priority “Care First, Jails Last.” Stakeholders should expand efforts to prevent and divert people from entering the carceral system and provide support to residents reentering communities to promote safety and well-being, focusing on populations (Black and Latino men) and neighborhoods (South LA, East LA, and the Antelope Valley) that are overrepresented in the system. With approximately 40 percent of people in LA County jails experiencing mental health challenges, there is a need for behavioral health care before, during, and after interaction with the carceral system. Young people interacting with the justice system are particularly vulnerable and should be prioritized for prevention and diversion.

DISASTER RECOVERY AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

Ensuring an equitable recovery from the January 2025 wildfires and preventing future climate disasters are vital for communities countywide and for the region as a whole. Helping Angelenos from Altadena, Pacific Palisades, and other fire-affected communities continue to rebuild their lives, avoid further exposure to hazards and toxins, and get the help they need to deal with the trauma, loss, and grief they carry must be a top priority, second only to protecting others from the same harrowing experiences in years to come.

Local government agencies and philanthropic and community organizations should ensure the equitable distribution of support and recovery services for people affected by the devastating January 2025 wildfires. Financing and processes for remediation and rebuilding are vital for home and business owners to return to their communities if they choose, and these efforts need to be inclusive of people who rented or worked in the fire areas and whose lives were affected. In addition to financial assistance, those affected will continue to need social and emotional support to address trauma and disruption to their lives. Community-driven survivors’ networks can provide support to residents and play a vital role in advocating for equitable recovery processes. Building on lessons from the 2025 fires, LA County stakeholders need to conduct regional preparedness and climate resilience planning, both to prevent future climate disasters and to prepare for recovery when disasters do happen.

So my understanding of why things are the way they are out here in the Antelope Valley, for one, there's distance. I feel like we are not getting enough resources. There's a culture of racism, sexism, even ageism, and that affects us. There's also a bit of a policing culture which puts everyone on edge. So that's an issue. So there's the sheriff, there's the police, there's the prisons and jails out here.



Antelope Valley resident

American Human Development Indicators

The following indicator tables were prepared using the latest available official government data. All data are standardized in order to ensure comparability.

To download Excel files for the indicators, go to:
www.measureofamerica.org/los-angeles-2026

Los Angeles County HDI by Gender and by Race and Ethnicity

RANK	HDI	LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (years)	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL (% of adults 25+)	AT LEAST BACHELOR'S DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (% ages 3 to 24)	MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS (\$)	HEALTH INDEX	EDUCATION INDEX	INCOME INDEX
California	5.82	80.0	15.1	37.6	14.8	78.8	48,100	5.83	5.66	5.96
Los Angeles County	5.64	80.5	18.7	36.6	13.6	79.3	44,600	6.05	5.46	5.42
GENDER										
1 Women	5.91	83.6	18.5	37.8	14.3	80.4	40,400	7.33	5.66	4.74
2 Men	5.40	77.5	18.9	35.3	12.9	78.2	49,700	4.77	5.26	6.18
RACE/ETHNICITY										
1 Asian	7.68	86.2	10.6	55.2	18.9	86.4	56,500	8.42	7.56	7.06
2 White	7.37	80.2	4.4	56.4	23.2	81.6	70,200	5.91	7.62	8.57
3 Native American	5.30*	79.5*	15.7	20.5	7.1	80.5	45,400	5.64*	4.70	5.55
4 Black	4.70	72.9	8.3	32.8	12.9	76.2	47,100	2.88	5.43	5.80
5 Latino	4.45	80.7	33.9	16.5	5.1	76.9	35,900	6.15	3.29	3.92
6 NHOPI	4.01	71.2	11.9	19.3	5.4	71.0	48,700	2.16	3.84	6.03
Two or More or Other			5.7	53.1	20.4	86.0	55,000		7.72	6.88
GENDER AND RACE/ETHNICITY										
1 Asian Women	7.79	88.6	11.1	54.6	17.9	87.1	51,400	9.42	7.53	6.41
2 Asian Men	7.51	83.5	10.0	56.0	20.1	85.8	61,200	7.28	7.62	7.62
3 White Women	7.35	82.8	4.3	56.7	24.1	81.4	59,300	7.00	7.66	7.40
4 White Men	7.33	77.8	4.4	56.1	22.3	81.8	80,300	4.90	7.59	9.50
5 Black Women	5.33	76.7	8.3	35.8	14.8	76.6	47,500	4.45	5.69	5.86
6 Latina Women	4.77	84.3	33.3	18.4	6.1	78.7	31,800	7.61	3.61	3.08
7 NHOPI Women	4.56*	75.3*	12.3	23.2	7.8*	76.0	43,500	3.86*	4.58	5.25
8 Latino Men	4.09	77.2	34.4	14.6	4.1	75.3	39,600	4.69	2.98	4.60
9 Black Men	4.07	69.1	8.3	29.4	10.8	75.8	46,900	1.30	5.14	5.77
10 NHOPI Men	3.47*	65.9	11.5	14.8		66.5	58,600	0.00	3.10*	7.32
Native American Men			15.9	22.0	7.2*	81.2	48,100		4.83	5.95
Native American Women			15.5	19.3	7.0*	79.6	42,900		4.57	5.16
Two or More or Other Men			5.2	50.6	20.2	85.3	60,500		7.55	7.54
Two or More or Other Women			6.1	55.5	20.6	86.8	49,800		7.89	6.19

Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty.
 Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2023. Native American and NHOPI data using ACS 2019–2023.

Five Los Angeles Counties

FIVE LOS ANGELES COUNTIES	HDI	LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (years)	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL (% of adults 25+)	AT LEAST BACHELOR'S DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (% ages 3 to 24)	MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS (\$)	HEALTH INDEX	EDUCATION INDEX	INCOME INDEX
1 Glittering LA	9.00+	86.8	2.0	76.1	37.4	90.1	99,200	8.66	9.54	10.00
2 Elite Enclave LA	7 to 8.99	84.1	5.3	62.2	25.9	84.0	70,400	7.55	8.19	8.59
3 Main Street LA	5 to 6.99	81.7	14.8	39.1	13.2	79.0	47,000	6.52	5.69	5.79
4 Struggling LA	3 to 4.99	78.9	32.3	17.1	4.9	76.0	35,200	5.38	3.29	3.78
5 Precarious LA										

Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

HDI by 115 Cities and Unincorporated Areas

RANK	HDI	LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (years)	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL (% of adults 25+)	AT LEAST BACHELOR'S DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (% ages 3 to 24)	MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS (\$)	HEALTH INDEX	EDUCATION INDEX	INCOME INDEX
California	5.82	80.0	15.1	37.6	14.8	78.8	48,100	5.83	5.66	5.96
Los Angeles County	5.64	80.5	18.7	36.6	13.6	79.3	44,600	6.05	5.46	5.42
1 Palos Verdes Estates	9.49	87.0	2.3**	78.5	39.3	92.0	120,200	8.75	9.72	10.00
2 Manhattan Beach	9.16	85.4	1.2**	79.0	37.3	88.7	114,200	8.08	9.40	10.00
3 Beverly Hills	9.09	87.7	3.3	69.4	34.8	89.6	71,700	9.05	9.49	8.72
4 Rolling Hills Estates	9.07	85.9	2.4**	72.2	31.5	90.6	78,800	8.27	9.58	9.37
5 Malibu	9.04	84.6	1.5**	71.6	33.1	91.1	83,400	7.74	9.63	9.76
6 La Cañada Flintridge	9.00	83.4	2.4*	75.5	38.5	92.4	110,200	7.25	9.75	10.00
7 Calabasas	8.98	85.1	1.8**	71.3	33.9	84.3	89,800	7.97	8.98	10.00
8 Rancho Palos Verdes	8.98	84.3	1.9	69.1	33.5	87.8	95,000	7.64	9.32	10.00
9 Agoura Hills	8.93	84.7	3.3**	66.5	27.8	88.8	89,400	7.77	9.01	10.00
10 Westlake Village	8.91	85.1	3.1**	66.4	25.6	89.7	83,200	7.97	9.00	9.75
11 San Marino	8.82	85.6	3.6**	80.2	42.6	87.7	74,400	8.17	9.31	8.98
12 Sierra Madre	8.82	82.7	2.0**	65.4	34.9	93.3	83,200	6.95	9.76	9.75
13 Hermosa Beach	8.77	82.9	1.5**	76.5	31.5	87.3	104,400	7.03	9.26	10.00
14 Culver City	8.71	83.5	6.1	64.9	30.9	87.5	87,600	7.30	8.83	10.00
15 South Pasadena	8.66	83.2	2.9	72.7	33.7	88.4	79,600	7.17	9.37	9.44
16 Stevenson Ranch	8.65	85.8	3.7*	54.1	20.2	89.7	80,800	8.24	8.18	9.55
17 Topanga	8.62	85.7	2.5**	61.6	33.4	88.9	70,300	8.20	9.08	8.58
18 Santa Monica	8.59	84.4	5.2	68.9	29.4	81.3	82,500	7.68	8.39	9.69
19 Redondo Beach	8.58	83.2	3.2	66.4	24.6	85.8	88,700	7.16	8.58	10.00
20 El Segundo	8.27	82.5	1.6**	62.5	23.7	82.8	83,400	6.89	8.16	9.77
21 La Crescenta-Montrose	7.95	84.1	4.2	56.5	23.4	87.2	66,100	7.53	8.17	8.15
22 Arcadia	7.88	85.4	6.8	57.8	22.7	86.2	60,700	8.08	7.99	7.56
23 Cerritos	7.65	83.7	6.2	57.1	21.8	84.3	63,100	7.36	7.77	7.83
24 Altadena	7.54	82.9	7.2	52.7	25.7	85.1	62,600	7.05	7.78	7.78
25 Torrance	7.49	82.7	5.1	53.0	18.8	86.7	62,800	6.94	7.72	7.80
26 Diamond Bar	7.45	84.8	7.2	52.7	18.4	86.7	55,200	7.83	7.61	6.91
27 Claremont	7.35	82.3	5.1	59.3	30.9	92.2	49,800	6.79	9.07	6.20
28 Pasadena	7.31	82.9	9.9	56.0	26.0	81.3	59,600	7.03	7.46	7.43
29 View Park-Windsor Hills	7.28	81.6	3.7**	60.4	26.0	74.9	65,000	6.49	7.32	8.03
30 Walnut	7.26	83.6	6.1	55.3	18.1	85.4	54,600	7.31	7.63	6.82

Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a moderate degree of uncertainty; estimates with two asterisks have a higher degree of uncertainty.

Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

RANK	HDI	LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (years)	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL (% of adults 25+)	AT LEAST BACHELOR'S DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (% ages 3 to 24)	MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS (\$)	HEALTH INDEX	EDUCATION INDEX	INCOME INDEX
31	7.21	77.9	0.9**	76.7	27.6		105,400	4.97	6.67	10.00
32	7.00	83.6	17.3	40.3	12.7	77.4	66,500	7.34	5.47	8.19
33	6.97	81.9	4.8	62.9	22.0	52.4	69,500	6.62	5.78	8.50
34	6.78	82.0	12.1	38.0	13.7	81.6	61,200	6.67	6.04	7.62
35	6.76	82.0	7.7	46.0	15.1	79.2	57,600	6.65	6.43	7.20
36	6.75	80.9	6.7	41.4	16.5	86.3	56,200	6.22	7.00	7.03
37	6.74	80.3	6.9	41.4	12.0	79.8	65,300	5.96	6.18	8.07
38	6.65	82.0	8.7	39.3	12.8	80.4	57,500	6.67	6.09	7.18
39	6.56	84.7	13.8	44.3	15.8	82.8	44,700	7.78	6.46	5.44
40	6.48	79.4	8.6	34.6	14.1	85.8	59,300	5.57	6.46	7.39
41	6.48	82.0	11.0	45.5	16.8	81.6	50,000	6.67	6.56	6.22
42	6.44	81.7	8.8	39.7	13.9	82.7	51,300	6.56	6.37	6.39
43	6.40	82.0	12.6	42.5	15.4	83.3	48,800	6.68	6.46	6.05
44	6.35	83.4	16.4	39.3	13.4	81.7	47,800	7.24	5.91	5.90
45	6.35	80.8	9.8	43.8	17.2	81.4	51,200	6.15	6.54	6.38
46	6.30	83.7	12.6	36.1	12.0	80.1	47,200	7.38	5.71	5.82
47	6.24	79.5	7.2	40.3	17.0	83.3	51,700	5.62	6.66	6.45
48	6.17	79.0	6.3	39.3	15.5	83.2	52,200	5.41	6.59	6.52
49	6.05	84.1	20.5	34.9	10.0	81.1	43,600	7.56	5.31	5.27
50	6.05	83.5	14.5	36.3	10.2	82.7	42,300	7.28	5.81	5.06
51	6.03	80.3	9.6	32.6	10.4	76.3	55,200	5.94	5.26	6.91
52	5.99	84.0	21.0	34.7	10.4	81.3	42,900	7.49	5.33	5.15
53	5.89	79.9	12.5	36.6	9.7	83.4	48,000	5.79	5.95	5.93
54	5.83	82.4	14.6	29.8	8.5	79.6	45,200	6.82	5.14	5.52
55	5.76	80.4	11.0	29.2	10.7	80.3	47,400	6.01	5.44	5.85
56	5.75	82.0	14.2	33.1	10.9	75.0	45,700	6.68	4.98	5.60
57	5.69	78.1	12.5	38.1	12.0	81.9	48,800	5.05	5.98	6.05
58	5.48	81.0	20.7	37.8	13.3	77.2	41,800	6.25	5.21	4.98
59	5.48	79.1	12.6	19.3	6.5*	73.6	54,900	5.47	4.11	6.87
60	5.40	79.2	18.4	34.8	12.6	78.1	44,700	5.50	5.24	5.45
61	5.39	81.0	18.7	25.6	7.8	79.3	43,400	6.23	4.72	5.23
62	5.36	79.5	16.5	29.1	7.9	78.5	45,700	5.61	4.89	5.59
63	5.28	79.4	12.0	27.4	8.4	75.5	45,100	5.57	4.76	5.51
64	5.21	80.0	23.7	16.0	3.8	82.3	45,800	5.84	4.17	5.61
65	5.18	79.0	12.4	32.1	8.5*	76.3	42,400	5.43	5.03	5.08
66	5.08	80.1	24.7	23.8	6.9	82.9	40,200	5.87	4.67	4.70
67	4.99	80.9	20.7	23.4	6.9	70.7	42,400	6.23	3.66	5.07
68	4.95	78.9	18.8	28.0	7.9	79.4	39,800	5.38	4.83	4.63
69	4.94	81.6	25.5	22.0	6.7	77.3	37,900	6.51	4.01	4.29
70	4.94	79.3	17.7	17.7	5.8	75.7	43,800	5.55	3.97	5.29
71	4.89	79.5	22.7	21.3	5.5	77.1	42,100	5.63	4.03	5.02
72	4.76	83.7	32.0	16.8	4.7*	71.5	36,500	7.39	2.85	4.03
73	4.76	80.0	27.8	15.8	3.8	77.4	41,500	5.84	3.51	4.93
74	4.76	82.4	33.8	21.9	4.4	79.0	35,100	6.82	3.70	3.77
75	4.71	81.0	26.6	27.5	8.5*	65.4	40,400	6.25	3.15	4.74
76	4.71	78.9	19.8	26.9	9.5	79.0	36,300	5.38	4.77	4.00
77	4.70	76.9	22.8	31.8	8.7	84.5	37,400	4.54	5.34	4.21
78	4.66	78.7	21.7	25.0	7.9	75.9	38,600	5.31	4.24	4.42
79	4.61	78.5	21.7	20.1	5.5	79.1	38,500	5.21	4.22	4.40
80	4.61	75.1	18.0	20.1	7.4	77.3	46,500	3.81	4.29	5.72

Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a moderate degree of uncertainty; estimates with two asterisks have a higher degree of uncertainty.
 Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

HDI by 115 Cities and Unincorporated Areas

RANK	HDI	LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (years)	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL (% of adults 25+)	AT LEAST BACHELOR'S DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (% ages 3 to 24)	MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS (\$)	HEALTH INDEX	EDUCATION INDEX	INCOME INDEX	
81	West Puente Valley	4.54	79.3	28.6	14.7	3.3	80.7	38,300	5.53	3.72	4.37
82	Inglewood	4.52	79.1	22.7	24.2	7.8	74.2	37,000	5.44	3.99	4.13
83	San Fernando	4.48	80.0	35.4	16.1	5.1	77.3	38,300	5.83	3.24	4.38
84	Palmdale	4.47	77.4	23.0	16.6	5.2	78.2	40,500	4.75	3.90	4.76
85	Lawndale	4.38	78.6	26.2	21.9	6.4	74.8	37,100	5.25	3.72	4.16
86	Commerce	4.37	79.2	34.3	11.4	1.9**	79.9	38,600	5.51	3.18	4.43
87	Pomona	4.34	79.2	25.8	19.5	5.8	75.8	35,300	5.52	3.70	3.81
88	Walnut Park	4.30	80.8	46.2	9.8	2.3*	83.3	35,300	6.17	2.93	3.80
89	Citrus	4.23	78.0	24.7	15.6	4.5*	76.4	36,900	4.99	3.59	4.11
90	Baldwin Park	4.16	79.9	31.7	14.3	2.9	74.5	34,800	5.80	2.96	3.71
91	El Monte	4.11	80.9	35.8	14.7	3.2	75.9	32,200	6.22	2.94	3.16
92	La Puente	4.11	79.3	34.1	12.5	2.8	75.3	36,200	5.53	2.84	3.97
93	South Gate	4.08	80.0	40.9	11.5	2.1	78.3	34,500	5.84	2.75	3.65
94	Bell	4.05	81.7	42.5	8.7	1.1*	77.7	32,100	6.56	2.45	3.15
95	Valinda	4.05	78.0	29.5	16.0	3.8	75.9	35,600	4.99	3.30	3.86
96	South El Monte	4.00	81.6	44.3	10.2	2.6	74.8	32,700	6.50	2.23	3.28
97	Vincent	3.97	76.3	23.9	21.7	7.7	69.6	37,600	4.28	3.38	4.24
98	Paramount	3.94	78.0	34.1	13.1	3.4	77.0	35,000	5.01	3.06	3.75
99	Huntington Park	3.77	81.6	46.6	8.7	2.1	73.4	31,000	6.50	1.91	2.91
100	Lake Los Angeles	3.76	72.3	27.7	11.8	3.1*	82.4	41,200	2.64	3.79	4.87
101	West Athens	3.72	74.7	15.5	22.1	9.2*	69.1	35,000	3.63	3.80	3.75
102	West Rancho Dominguez	3.72	73.1	27.2	15.2	5.7	76.2	40,400	2.94	3.49	4.74
103	East Los Angeles	3.63	78.5	45.0	10.6	3.0	76.8	32,700	5.20	2.43	3.26
104	South San Jose Hills	3.62	77.4	34.4	12.2	2.1*	74.7	33,200	4.76	2.72	3.39
105	Lynwood	3.55	77.6	41.7	10.4	2.6	76.4	32,800	4.84	2.51	3.30
106	Maywood	3.52	80.5	51.8	8.2	2.3**	73.4	30,700	6.06	1.67	2.84
107	Bell Gardens	3.51	78.8	47.1	6.9	1.1**	80.7	30,200	5.34	2.46	2.72
108	Lennox	3.51	78.8	45.8	11.9	2.3*	74.5	31,500	5.33	2.20	3.00
109	East Rancho Dominguez	3.46*	77.5	47.3	7.4	1.8**	73.6	35,100	4.81	1.82*	3.76
110	Sun Village	3.44	71.8	31.2	7.9*	1.9**	73.8	43,800	2.44	2.58	5.30
111	Compton	3.42	76.2	35.6	10.9	3.3	70.8	35,000	4.24	2.30	3.74
112	Westmont	3.32	74.4	29.1	12.7	4.1	76.3	32,600	3.49	3.22	3.26
113	Willowbrook	3.26	74.1	39.4	13.3	2.6*	76.8	34,400	3.37	2.78	3.63
114	Cudahy	3.18	78.8	46.1	6.2	0.7**	75.3	28,300	5.33	1.94	2.28
115	Florence-Graham	3.08	77.2	52.1	7.5	1.6	76.2	30,200	4.67	1.85	2.73

Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a moderate degree of uncertainty; estimates with two asterisks have a higher degree of uncertainty.

Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

HDI by 34 City of LA Community Plan Areas

RANK	HDI	LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (years)	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL (% of adults 25+)	AT LEAST BACHELOR'S DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (% ages 3 to 24)	MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS (\$)	HEALTH INDEX	EDUCATION INDEX	INCOME INDEX
City of Los Angeles	5.48	81.0	20.7	37.8	13.3	77.2	41,800	6.25	5.21	4.98
1 Brentwood-Pacific Palisades	9.58	88.0	1.1**	80.4	39.2	90.9	103,500	9.15	9.61	10.00
2 Bel Air-Beverly Crest	9.20	86.1	3.7*	73.7	39.5	86.7	98,000	8.39	9.20	10.00
3 Westchester-Playa del Rey	8.88	85.5	2.3	69.9	28.5	86.6	80,300	8.11	9.03	9.50
4 Venice	8.55	84.9	4.1	71.7	27.3	74.5	85,600	7.87	7.82	9.94
5 West Los Angeles	8.44	86.4	4.8	71.2	32.0	73.4	74,300	8.48	7.87	8.96
6 Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass	8.17	84.4	2.2	65.6	24.6	81.4	71,400	7.65	8.17	8.68
7 Encino-Tarzana	7.93	84.3	5.4	59.6	26.5	87.1	62,700	7.61	8.40	7.79
8 Palms-Mar Vista-Del Rey	7.72	84.1	7.8	63.2	24.4	77.2	66,600	7.55	7.40	8.20
9 Chatsworth-Porter Ranch	6.77	82.6	10.6	43.6	16.4	82.4	54,800	6.92	6.55	6.85
10 Granada Hills-Knollwood	6.67	82.8	11.1	36.8	12.0	82.9	55,300	7.01	6.08	6.91
11 Silver Lake-Echo Park-Elysian Valley	6.66	83.9	13.7	53.9	17.8	73.9	51,400	7.45	6.12	6.41
12 Canoga Park-Winnetka-Woodland Hills-West Hills	6.39	82.9	12.7	43.3	15.8	79.2	48,700	7.03	6.11	6.03
13 Westwood	6.37	88.1	3.8*	74.6	38.3	94.1	19,800	9.20	9.91	0.00
14 Hollywood	6.18	81.5	11.5	53.5	16.7	70.4	50,400	6.44	5.82	6.27
15 Wilshire	6.11	83.3	16.5	48.1	16.2	73.9	44,800	7.20	5.67	5.46
16 Northridge	5.97	81.8	12.6	42.5	13.0	84.5	41,100	6.59	6.46	4.86
17 Northeast Los Angeles	5.90	83.2	21.9	36.5	12.6	79.5	43,500	7.16	5.29	5.26
18 Downtown	5.83	79.8	16.3	45.9	16.7	56.7	59,700	5.76	4.28	7.44
19 San Pedro	5.80	81.4	15.0	32.2	11.5	78.7	46,400	6.42	5.28	5.69
20 Sunland-Tujunga-Lake View Terrace-Shadow Hills-East La Tuna Canyon	5.73	81.6	16.2	27.7	9.4	79.8	46,000	6.52	5.03	5.64
21 North Hollywood-Valley Village	5.49	81.3	15.3	40.3	10.1	72.3	42,800	6.38	4.95	5.14
22 Reseda-West Van Nuys	5.29	80.5	21.0	30.9	10.3	80.0	40,900	6.03	5.02	4.83
23 Van Nuys-North Sherman Oaks	5.20	80.7	20.5	34.8	10.4	75.0	40,500	6.11	4.74	4.76
24 Sylmar	5.06	82.0	28.8	19.5	5.1	78.3	40,300	6.68	3.78	4.72
25 Harbor Gateway	4.84	80.9	22.3	26.6	6.8	73.2	38,200	6.21	3.98	4.35
26 West Adams-Baldwin Hills-Leimert	4.79	78.6	20.2	30.1	10.6	72.4	40,700	5.26	4.31	4.79
27 Mission Hills-Panorama City-North Hills	4.38	80.4	28.6	21.1	4.6	75.4	34,300	5.99	3.56	3.60
28 Wilmington-Harbor City	4.32	80.3	31.3	16.9	5.2	76.8	34,300	5.96	3.41	3.60
29 Sun Valley-La Tuna Canyon	4.27	79.2	31.0	19.1	5.5	76.8	35,000	5.52	3.53	3.75
30 Arleta-Pacoima	4.16	81.5	42.1	10.5	2.5	75.4	34,400	6.45	2.39	3.63
31 Westlake	3.89	79.6	38.3	24.4	7.1	70.5	31,800	5.67	2.93	3.09
32 South Los Angeles	3.82	78.2	35.0	16.5	5.5	77.7	31,800	5.07	3.33	3.07
33 Boyle Heights	3.80	80.6	45.4	13.0	2.8	76.9	30,600	6.07	2.52	2.82
34 Southeast Los Angeles	3.03	77.7	49.9	7.2	1.7	74.5	29,000	4.87	1.78	2.45

Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a moderate degree of uncertainty; estimates with two asterisks have a higher degree of uncertainty.
 Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

Los Angeles County HDI by Nativity

RANK	HDI	LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (years)	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL (% of adults 25+)	AT LEAST BACHELOR'S DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (% ages 3 to 24)	MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS (\$)	HEALTH INDEX	EDUCATION INDEX	INCOME INDEX
California	5.82	80.0	15.1	37.6	14.8	78.8	48,100	5.83	5.66	5.96
Los Angeles County	5.64	80.5	18.7	36.6	13.6	79.3	44,600	6.05	5.46	5.42
NATIVITY										
1 US Born	6.06	79.3	7.4	43.3	16.0	80.5	49,700	5.53	6.48	6.18
2 Foreign Born	4.95	82.9	33.3	28.0	10.4	68.0	39,700	7.04	3.21	4.61
GENDER AND NATIVITY										
1 US-Born Women	6.24	82.2	7.1	45.2	17.5	81.2	43,700	6.73	6.71	5.29
2 US-Born Men	5.72	76.5	7.7	41.4	14.6	79.8	52,300	4.38	6.25	6.53
3 Foreign-Born Women	5.21	85.9	32.7	28.6	10.3	73.1	34,200	8.30	3.74	3.59
4 Foreign-Born Men	4.52	79.7	34.0	27.3	10.6	63.5	42,500	5.73	2.73	5.09
RACE/ETHNICITY AND NATIVITY										
1 US-Born Asian Residents	8.41	87.2	3.2	66.9	22.0	87.3	62,400	8.85	8.63	7.75
2 US-Born White Residents	7.44	80.2	3.2	58.5	23.4	81.5	71,100	5.90	7.76	8.65
3 Foreign-Born Asian Residents	7.34	86.5	12.9	51.6	17.9	83.5	52,100	8.56	6.97	6.50
4 Foreign-Born White Residents	7.17	81.8	8.8	49.0	22.8	83.1	61,900	6.59	7.22	7.70
5 Foreign-Born Black Residents	6.71	81.1	9.6	45.1	21.4	88.4	51,100	6.30	7.45	6.37
6 US-Born Latino Residents	5.10	80.3	12.9	25.4	7.9	79.1	38,400	5.97	4.95	4.39
7 US-Born Black Residents	4.62	72.7	8.2	31.7	12.2	75.8	46,600	2.80	5.32	5.73
8 Foreign-Born Latino Residents	3.44	81.5	52.0	8.7	2.6	54.3	33,600	6.45	0.42	3.46
Foreign-Born Two or More or Other Residents			12.5	48.6	20.2	78.7	51,800		6.50	6.46
US-Born Two or More or Other Residents			3.8	54.3	20.4	86.3	55,700		7.88	6.96

Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2023.

HDI by Asian Subgroup

RANK	HDI	LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH (years)	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL (% of adults 25+)	AT LEAST BACHELOR'S DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (% ages 3 to 24)	MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS (\$)	HEALTH INDEX	EDUCATION INDEX	INCOME INDEX
Los Angeles County	5.64	80.5	18.7	36.6	13.6	79.3	44,600	6.05	5.46	5.42
Los Angeles County Asians	7.68	86.2	10.6	55.2	18.9	86.4	56,500	8.42	7.56	7.06
1 Indian	9.38	88.7	5.7	74.7	39.3	86.2	80,400	9.46	9.16	9.51
2 Taiwanese	8.90	87.6	4.0	77.4	36.4	89.4	66,800	9.00	9.47	8.23
3 Japanese	8.04	85.8	2.9	56.3	16.9	87.2	64,100	8.24	7.94	7.94
4 Korean	7.82	87.0	7.1	57.6	17.8	86.7	55,300	8.75	7.80	6.92
5 Chinese	7.58	87.6	15.7	52.2	20.5	85.7	52,300	9.00	7.21	6.53
6 Filipino	7.26	85.3	4.9	56.9	10.2	81.5	53,800	8.03	7.03	6.72
7 Thai	7.01	87.2	12.1	49.1	16.0	83.6	44,400	8.81	6.82	5.39
8 Vietnamese	6.87	89.6	26.1	34.1	10.7	82.6	45,700	9.82	5.20	5.59
9 Two or More or Other Asian	6.42	79.9	12.4	53.8	18.7	85.7	49,300	5.79	7.34	6.12
10 Cambodian	4.76	79.4	31.1	23.4	4.1	80.8	39,900	5.58	4.04	4.66
Bangladeshi			16.9	47.7	21.6	82.7	37,300		6.71	4.19
Pakistani			13.6*	58.3	25.8	85.5	60,500		7.79	7.54

Note: Estimates with an asterisk have a higher degree of uncertainty.

Source: Life expectancy: Measure of America calculations using mortality data from the California Department of Public Health, 2019–2023. Education and earnings: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

Human Development Indicators by Latino Subgroup

RANK	LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL (% of adults 25+)	AT LEAST BACHELOR'S DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (% of adults 25+)	SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (% ages 3 to 24)	MEDIAN PERSONAL EARNINGS (\$)	EDUCATION INDEX	INCOME INDEX
Los Angeles County	18.7	36.6	13.6	79.3	44,600	5.46	5.42
Los Angeles County Latinos	33.9	16.5	5.1	76.9	35,900	3.29	3.92
Central American	43.0	12.5	3.1	75.0	32,900	2.43	3.31
Mexican	35.7	13.8	3.9	76.6	35,100	3.00	3.76
Other Latino	23.2	23.6	7.7	78.1	35,400	4.31	3.82
Puerto Rican/Dominican/Cuban	13.5	37.6	13.6	78.4	48,800	5.66	6.05
South American	12.2	38.0	13.3	82.8	42,900	6.13	5.16

Source: Measure of America calculations using US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2019–2023.

Methodological Note

Human Development

Human development is about what people can do and be. It is formally defined as the process of improving people's well-being and expanding their freedoms and opportunities. The human development approach emphasizes the everyday experiences of ordinary people, encompassing the range of factors that shape their opportunities and enable them to live lives of value and choice. People with high levels of human development can invest in themselves and their families and live to their full potential; those without find many doors shut and many choices and opportunities out of reach.

The human development concept was developed by the late economist Mahbub ul Haq. In his work at the World Bank in the 1970s, and later as minister of finance in his own country of Pakistan, Dr. Haq argued that existing measures of human progress failed to account for the true purpose of development—to improve people's lives. In particular, he believed that the commonly used measure of gross domestic product failed to adequately measure well-being. Working with Nobel laureate Amartya Sen and other gifted economists, Dr. Haq published the first Human Development Report, commissioned by the United Nations Development Programme, in 1990.

The American Human Development Index

The human development approach is extremely broad, encompassing the wide range of economic, social, political, psychological, environmental, and cultural factors that expand or restrict people's opportunities and freedoms. But the American Human Development (HD) Index is comparatively narrow, a composite measure that combines a limited number of indicators into a single number. The HDI is an easily understood numerical measure that reflects what most people believe are the very basic ingredients of human well-being: health, education, and income. The value of the HDI varies between 0 and 10, with a score close to 0 indicating a greater distance from the maximum possible that can be achieved on the aggregate factors that make up the index.

Data Sources

Most residents of Los Angeles County live in one of 88 incorporated cities, ranging in population size from around 3.9 million residents in the City of LA to about 200 inhabitants in Vernon City. Together these cities account for 91 percent of the county's total population. The vast majority of the remaining roughly 935,000 residents live in 54 Census-Designated Places in unincorporated areas of the County.

The analysis in this report includes life expectancy estimates for 115 cities and unincorporated Census-Designated Places. The remaining cities and unincorporated places are not included in the analysis due to their small population sizes and the resulting lack of data necessary for reliable life expectancy estimates. Together, the included cities and unincorporated places account for 98 percent of the County's total population.

There is further breakdown of the City of LA into the 34 residential Community Plan Areas (CPAs), designated by the City of LA Department of City Planning. Two CPAs could not be included in this analysis due to very small population sizes: Los Angeles International Airport and the Port of Los Angeles.

The American Human Development Index for Los Angeles County was calculated using two main datasets: mortality data from the California Department of Public Health and education, earnings, and population data from the US Census Bureau. The American Community Survey (ACS), a product of the US Census Bureau, is an ongoing survey that collects data from a representative percentage of the population every year using standard sampling methods. For some of the data in these report, ACS data were obtained through IPUMS USA and IPUMS NHGIS, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org, with sincere thanks. The specific indicators calculated using these sources are listed in the online appendices, linked below.

For places with large populations, such as Los Angeles County, the Census Bureau publishes one-year estimates; hence all figures for the total population

of Los Angeles County in this report are calculated using one-year data from 2023, the most recent survey available at the time of writing. For smaller populations within the County, such as Native American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHOPI), Asian and Latino subgroups, and less populous places such as incorporated cities in Los Angeles County and Community Plan Areas, one-year estimates are often either unreliable due to small population sizes or simply not available. Therefore, multiyear 2019–2023 ACS estimates are used for smaller populations and less populous geographical areas. Please see the source notes below all tables in *A Portrait of Los Angeles County 2026* for the exact year or years of data presented.

Los Angeles County boasts one of the largest immigrant populations in the United States. The ACS contains responses from both documented and undocumented individuals but does not require respondents to indicate their immigration status. Nevertheless, undocumented immigrants are harder to accurately count than documented immigrants for various reasons. They are less likely to speak English, they may be reluctant to disclose information to strangers, and they are more likely to live in temporary housing. Estimating the size of the undocumented population is challenging, and there are many different approaches to this calculation. The USC Equity Research Institute's *State of Immigrants in Los Angeles County 2024* report estimates that in Los Angeles County, the undocumented population comprises about 23 percent of the total County foreign-born population, or approximately 809,500 people. This is not to say that over 800,000 people are missing from the analysis contained in this report, but rather that a small percentage may be undercounted. Therefore, as with any data drawn from surveys, there is some degree of sampling and non-sampling error inherent in data from the Census Bureau's annual ACS. Not all differences between estimates for two places or groups may reflect a true difference between those places or groups. Comparisons between similar values on any indicator should be made with caution since these differences may not be statistically significant.



HEALTH: A long and healthy life is measured using life expectancy at birth.

Life expectancy at birth was calculated by Measure of America using data from the California Department of Public Health, California Comprehensive Master Death File from 2019–2023 and population data from the US Census Bureau from 2019–2023. Population data for Census Designated Places are custom tabulations obtained from the American Community Survey prepared by special arrangement with the US Census Bureau for this report. Data for Community Plan Areas relied on custom tabulations at the Census Tract level from the US Census Bureau as well as interpolation with 2020 Decennial Census data.

Deaths were matched to Census-Designated Places, Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs), and LA Community Plan Areas using decedent residence latitude and longitude information included in the California Comprehensive Master Death File. Between 4 and 5 percent of deaths statewide have no latitude or longitude information. Life expectancy was calculated using abridged life tables utilizing the Chiang methodology. These abridged life tables aggregate death numerators and population denominators into age groups, rather than using single year of age as in complete life tables. The groups aggregate into ages under 1, 1–4, 5–9, 10–14...80–84, and 85 and older. The upper age band is capped at 85 and over.

Age-specific mortality rates are used within the life table to calculate the probability of a death event at each age interval. These probabilities are then applied to a hypothetical population cohort of newborns (e_0). Life expectancy at birth in a geographic area can be defined as an estimate of the average number of years a newborn baby would live if they experienced the particular area's age-specific mortality rates for that time period throughout their life.

These geographic regions were selected after consultations with local LA community groups, local agencies, and project stakeholders. Geographic areas with fewer than 40,000 person-years over the 2019–2023 period were deemed too small to accurately

calculate a life expectancy estimate. The 95 percent confidence interval is used because it is the most widely accepted and is comparable to international standards.



EDUCATION: Access to education is measured using two indicators:

net school enrollment for the population ages 3 to 24 and degree attainment for the population ages 25 and older (based on the proportions of the adult population that have earned at least a high school diploma, at least a bachelor's degree, and a graduate or professional degree). All educational attainment and enrollment figures come from Measure of America analysis of data from the US Census Bureau ACS. Single-year 2023 ACS estimates were used for countywide HDI calculations except those for Native American, NHOPI, Asian subgroups, and Latino subgroups, which utilize multiyear 2019–2023 estimates. Multiyear 2019–2023 ACS estimates were used for HDI calculations for all subcounty geographies.



INCOME: A decent standard of living is measured using the median personal earnings of all workers ages 16 and older.

Median personal earnings data come from the US Census Bureau ACS. Single-year 2023 ACS estimates were used for countywide HDI calculations except those for Native American, NHOPI, Asian subgroups, and Latino subgroups, which utilize multiyear 2019–2023 estimates. Multiyear 2019–2023 ACS estimates were used for HDI calculations for all subcounty geographies.

Calculating the American Human Development Index

The first step in calculating the HDI is to calculate a subindex for each of the three dimensions separately. This is done in order to transform indicators on different scales—years, dollars, etc.—into a common scale from 0 to 10. In order to calculate these indices—the health, education, and income indices—minimum

and maximum values (goalposts) must be chosen for each underlying indicator. Performance in each dimension is expressed as a value between 0 and 10 by applying the following general formula:

FORMULA
 Dimension Index = $\frac{\text{actual value} - \text{minimum value}}{\text{maximum value} - \text{minimum value}} \times 10$

Since all three components range from 0 to 10, the HDI, in which all three indices are weighted equally, also varies from 0 to 10, with 10 representing the highest level of human development.

The goalposts were determined based on the range of the indicator observed in all possible groupings in the United States, taking into account possible increases and decreases for years to come. The goalposts for the four principal indicators that make up the American Human Development Index are shown in the table below. To ensure that the HDI is comparable over time, the health and education indicator goalposts do not change from year to year while the income goalposts are only adjusted for inflation using the R-CPI-U-RS from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Because earnings data and the earnings goalposts are presented in dollars of the same year, these goalposts reflect a constant amount of purchasing power regardless of the year, making Income Index results comparable over time. In rare cases where an estimate for a population group or geographic area falls above or below the set goalpost for that indicator, a maximum value of 10 or a minimum value of 0 is imputed for the purposes of calculating the HDI.

INDICATOR	Maximum value	Minimum value
Life expectancy at birth	90 years	66 years
Educational attainment score	2.0	0.5
Combined net enrollment ratio	95%	60%
Median personal earnings*	\$86,283	\$20,394

*Earnings goalposts were originally set at \$13,000 and \$55,000 in 2005 dollars.

EXAMPLE

Calculating the HDI for Los Angeles County

HEALTH Index
 Life expectancy at birth for Los Angeles County is 80.5 years. The Health Index is then:

$$\text{Health Index} = \frac{80.52 - 66}{90 - 66} \times 10 = 6.05$$

EDUCATION Index
 In 2023, 81.27 percent of Los Angeles County's residents ages 25 years and older had at least a high school diploma, 36.59 percent had at least a bachelor's degree, and 13.58 percent had a graduate or professional degree. Therefore, the Educational Attainment Score is $0.8127 + 0.3659 + 0.1358 = 1.314$. The Educational Attainment Index is then:

$$\text{Educational Attainment Index} = \frac{1.314 - 0.5}{2.0 - 0.5} \times 10 = 5.43$$

School enrollment (net enrollment ratio) was 79.29 percent, so the Enrollment Index is:

$$\text{Enrollment Index} = \frac{79.29 - 60}{95 - 60} \times 10 = 5.51$$

The Educational Attainment Index and the Enrollment Index are then combined to obtain the Education Index. The Education Index gives a 2/3 weight to the Educational Attainment Index and a 1/3 weight to the Enrollment Index to reflect the relative ease of enrolling students in school as compared with the relative difficulty of completing a meaningful course of education (signified by the attainment of degrees):

$$\text{Education Index} = \frac{2}{3} 5.43 + \frac{1}{3} 5.51 = 5.46$$

INCOME Index

Median personal earnings for the typical worker in Los Angeles County in 2023 were \$44,553. The Income Index is then:

$$\text{Income Index} = \frac{\log(44,553) - \log(20,394)}{\log(86,283) - \log(20,394)} \times 0 = 5.42$$

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT Index

Once these indices have been calculated, the HDI is obtained by taking the average of the three indices:

$$\text{HD Index} = \frac{6.05 + 5.46 + 5.42}{3} = 5.64$$

Geographic and Population Groups Used in This Report

WITHIN LA COUNTY

The “Five Los Angeles Counties” framing is a way to compare different areas within Los Angeles County that share similar HDI scores. For *A Portrait of LA County*, Measure of America sorted the geographic units for which HDI scores have been calculated into one of the Five LA Counties using the following thresholds:

- **Glittering Los Angeles:**
HDI scores equal to or greater than 9.00
- **Elite Enclave Los Angeles:**
HDI scores equal to or greater than 7.00 and less than 9.00
- **Main Street Los Angeles:**
HDI scores equal to or greater than 5.00 and less than 7.00
- **Struggling Los Angeles:**
HDI scores equal to or greater than 3.00 and less than 5.00
- **Precarious Los Angeles:**
HDI scores less than 3.00

The Five LA Counties are also presented as five separate units of analysis in order to permit some exploration of the broad demographic and socioeconomic disparities between people living in communities with different human development outcomes. For this analysis, Measure of America aggregated cities, Census-Designated Places, and Community Plan Areas based on their average HDI scores to identify Glittering, Elite Enclave, Main Street, Struggling, and Precarious Los Angeles. As mentioned in the text, no geographies had an HDI score in the Precarious Los Angeles range. For the City of Los Angeles, constituent CPAs were used instead of one large City geography. The Five LA Counties represent the average score for that geography; there will always be individuals who are doing better or worse than the HDI score for that geography—no place is homogeneous.

Incorporated cities and other Census-Designated Places correspond to city boundaries for the 88 incorporated cities in Los Angeles County, of which the City of Los Angeles is the largest. Unincorporated areas and other settlements within Los Angeles County comprise the remaining 54 Census-Designated Places. Population sizes for these units vary greatly, from around 200 in Vernon to nearly four million in the City of Los Angeles. Due to small population sizes and data irregularities in some of these places, HDI calculations are presented for 115 incorporated cities and other places in Los Angeles County, which together account for approximately 98 percent of the population of the County.

Public Use Microdata Areas or PUMAs are substate geographic units designated by the US Census Bureau. PUMAs have populations of at least 100,000 and generally less than 200,000. Los Angeles has a total of 71 PUMAs. PUMAs used in this report were delineated for the 2020 Census and were named by the California State Census Data Center.

Racial and ethnic groups in this report are based on definitions established by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and used by the US Census Bureau and other government entities. Since 1997 the OMB has recognized five racial groups and two ethnic categories. The racial groups are Native American, Asian, Black, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, and white. The ethnic categories are Latino and not Latino. People of Latino ethnicity may be of any race. In this report, these racial groups include only non-Latino members of these groups who self-identify with that race group alone and no other. Census data also include some detail on the specific ancestries of the resident population. Detailed race and ancestry data were used to identify members of the largest Asian subgroups and some Latino/Hispanic subgroups in Los Angeles County for the purposes of this report.

Drug Overdose Deaths

This report includes a map and brief discussion of drug overdose differences by geography in Los Angeles County. The methodology echoes that of the California Community Burden of Disease Engine Version P3.0, which counts death to “accidental poisonings by drugs” codes (X40–X44) and “substance use disorder codes” (F11–F16, F18, F19).

Accounting for Cost-of-Living Differences

Cost of living varies across Los Angeles, California, and the country. Any comparisons with other cities or national data in terms of food, shelter, and clothing, therefore, must take this into account. There is currently no suitable nationwide measure, official or not, of the cost of living that could be used as a basis for adjusting for differences across regions. The Consumer Price Index (CPI), calculated by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, helps in understanding changes in the purchasing power of the dollar over time. The CPI is sometimes mistaken for a cost-of-living index, but in fact it is best used as a measure of the change in the cost of a set of goods and services over time in a given place. Additionally, cost-of-living variations within compact regions, such as states or cities or between neighborhoods in the same urban area, are often more pronounced than variations between states and regions. Further, while costs vary across the nation, they are often higher in areas with more community assets that are conducive to higher levels of well-being. For example, neighborhoods with higher housing costs are often places with higher-quality public services such as schools, recreation facilities, and transport systems and safer and cleaner neighborhoods. Thus, to adjust for cost of living would be to explain away some of the factors that the HDI is measuring.

For More Information

Additional detail is available in the Methodological Appendix, available on our report webpage: www.measureofamerica.org/los-angeles-2026.

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Who Are We?

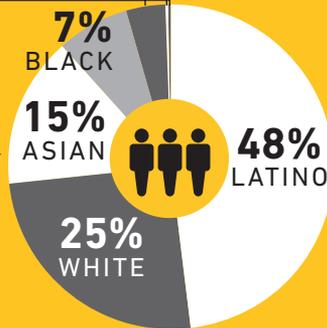
Los Angeles County Population



4%
2 OR MORE OR
OTHER RACES

0.2%
NATIVE AMERICAN

0.2%
NHOPI



9%
LGBTQ
=
665,000
LGBTQ
ADULTS

12%
HAVE A
DISABILITY

ASIAN SUBGROUPS



LATINO SUBGROUPS



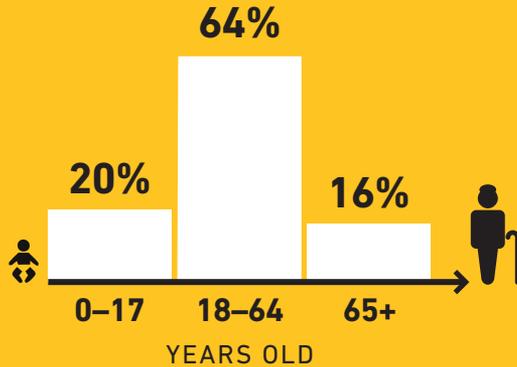
66%
US-BORN

34%
FOREIGN
BORN

Hello!
How are you?
24%
LIMITED ENGLISH
PROFICIENCY

52%
OF CHILDREN
HAVE AT LEAST ONE
IMMIGRANT PARENT

DEMOGRAPHICS



CALIFORNIANS LIVING WITH

A SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESS **1 IN 20**

A SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER **1 IN 10**

4 PER 1,000 IMPRISONED

EMPLOYMENT



HOUSING



POVERTY & YOUTH WELL-BEING



A PORTRAIT OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY 2026

While many measures tell us how the **County's economy** is doing, *A Portrait of Los Angeles County* tells us how **ordinary people** are doing.

A Portrait of Los Angeles County 2026 is an exploration of how LA County residents are faring. It examines well-being and access to opportunity using the human development framework and index, presenting **American Human Development Index** scores for LA County places and demographic groups and exploring a range of critical issues, including health, education, living standards, environmental justice, housing, homelessness, child well-being, and behavioral health.

The report concludes with a set of recommendations, developed in partnership with LA County departments and agencies and a wide range of civil society stakeholders, for improving well-being countywide and closing the gaps between places, women and men, and racial and ethnic groups.

MADE POSSIBLE THANKS TO THE SUPPORT OF:



For data tables and interactive maps, visit:
www.measureofamerica.org

ABOUT HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Human development is about the real freedom ordinary people have to decide who to be, what to do, and how to live. We measure this idea using the American Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI, a gauge of well-being and access to opportunity, combines data on three basic building blocks of a good life—a long and healthy life, access to knowledge, and a decent standard of living—into a single number that falls on a scale between 0 and 10.

COMMUNITY DATA WALKS

Working with First 5 LA and other partner organizations, we held community conversations about the report's findings with Los Angeles residents across the County. To hear the voices of Angelenos as they share their challenges and visions for a better future, visit:
www.measureofamerica.org/los-angeles-2026



Measure of America is a nonpartisan project of the Social Science Research Council. It creates easy-to-use yet methodologically sound tools for understanding well-being and opportunity in America and stimulates fact-based dialogue about these issues. Through hard copy and online reports, interactive maps, and custom-built dashboards, Measure of America works closely with partners to breathe life into numbers, using data to identify areas of need, pinpoint levers for change, and track progress over time.

ABOUT THE DESIGN

HUMANTIFIC is an internationally recognized SenseMaking for ChangeMaking firm located in New York and Madrid. www.humantific.com