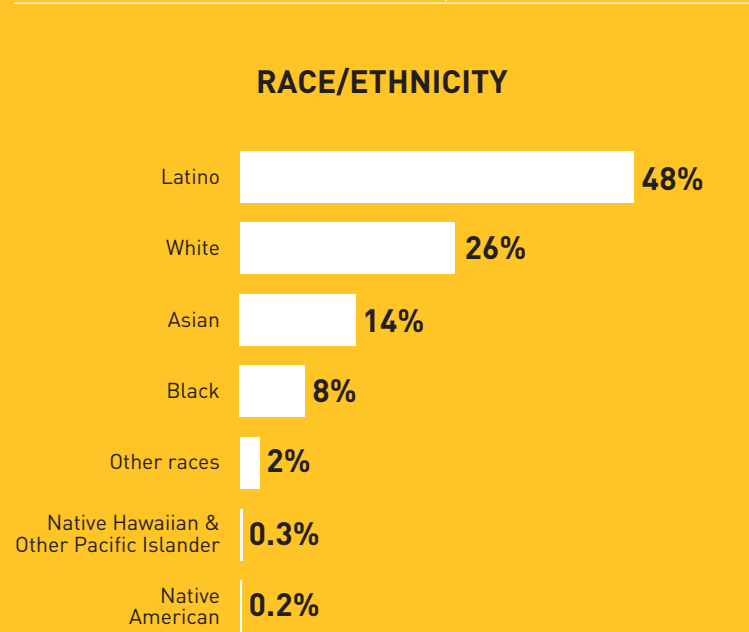
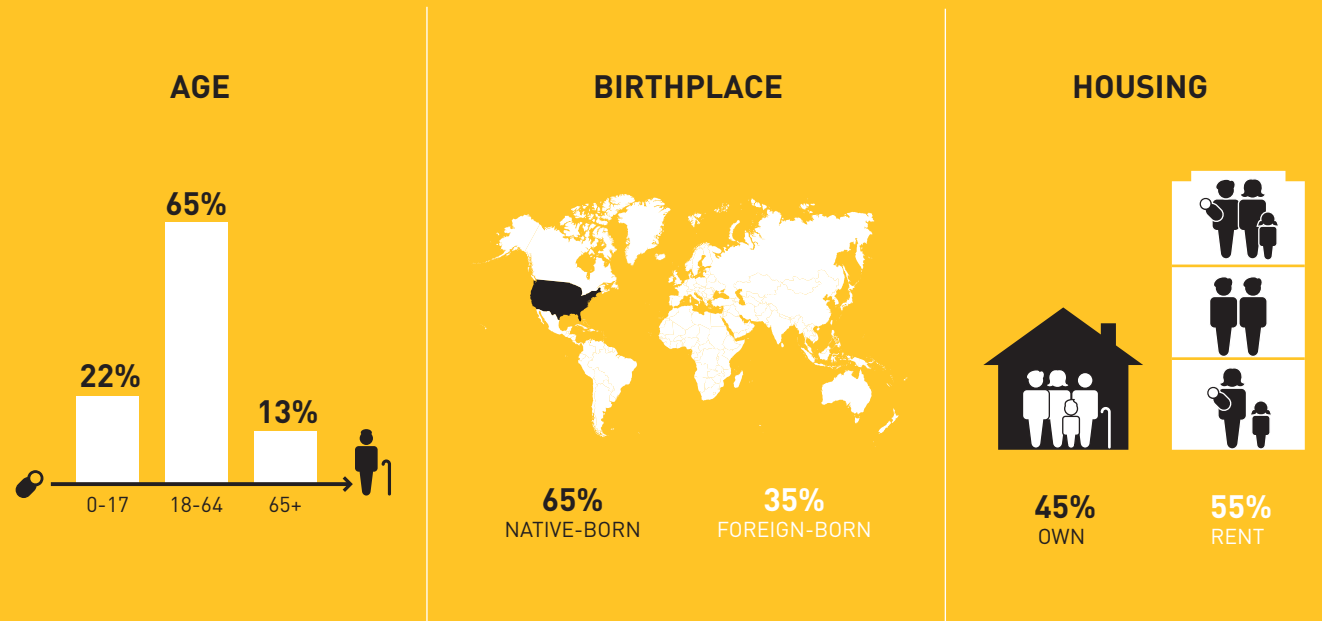
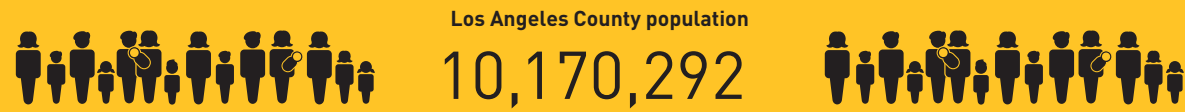


Who Are We?



Key Findings

A Portrait of Los Angeles County 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 (HD) 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, violence, and inequality. The report concludes with an ambitious goal, developed in partnership with LA County departments and agencies and a wide range of stakeholders, for improving well-being countywide and closing the well-being gaps between places and racial and ethnic groups.

This project is the result of an unprecedented collaboration of organizations working in LA County. Measure of America’s key partners were **Southern California Grantmakers and the Los Angeles County Office of Child Protection, Department of Children and Family Services, and Department of Public Health.** Fourteen foundations and the Los Angeles County Quality and Productivity Commission—Productivity Investment Fund provided funding, substantive input, logistical support, and encouragement. Over one hundred stakeholders from county and city departments, universities, nonprofit organizations, and philanthropic foundations served on the project’s advisory committees, shared data and ideas, and helped develop the concluding goal and recommendations. The involvement and dedication of these contributors throughout the life of the project will ensure that the ideas on these pages come to life in the form of data-informed policies and meaningful on-the-ground action.

HOW DOES LA COUNTY FARE ON THE AMERICAN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX?

The American Human Development Index, a supplement to the gross domestic product and other money metrics, tells the story of how ordinary people are doing. The index 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. This report is the fifth that Measure of America has produced on the state of California; previous reports include *A Portrait of Marin*, *A Portrait of Sonoma County*, and two volumes of *A Portrait of California*.

The American Human Development Index uses official government data to measure three fundamental building blocks of a life of freedom, choice, and opportunity—a long and healthy life, access to knowledge, and a decent standard of living. It combines indicators in these areas into a single number expressed on a 0-to-10 scale, allowing for well-being scores for places, racial and ethnic groups, women and men, and native- and foreign-born residents and empowering communities with a tool to identify priorities and track progress over time.

A Portrait of Los Angeles County is an exploration of how LA County residents are faring in terms of well-being and equity.

Source: US Census Bureau ACS, 2015.
Note: Numbers do not always sum to 100 due to rounding.

For this report, a ranked index has been calculated for 106 cities and unincorporated areas in LA County as well as the thirty-five 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 LA County residents.

Human Development Index

KEY FINDINGS: AMERICAN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX

- **LA County's overall HD Index score is 5.43 out of 10**, which is higher than the US value of 5.17. This average masks huge variation, however. Some places and groups of Angelenos have very high scores and enjoy the highest levels of well-being in the country, while others face challenges akin to those found in impoverished areas of Appalachia and the Mississippi Delta.
- The highest-scoring city or unincorporated area in LA County is the **City of San Marino at 9.43**, and the lowest-scoring is **Florence-Graham at 2.44**. The gaps are wider still within the City of Los Angeles.
- The American Human Development Index scores of Los Angeles County's major racial and ethnic groups vary from relatively high scores for **Asian and white Angelenos** to far lower scores for **Native American, black, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander (NHOPI), and Latino residents**. Among these groups, Asians score the highest on the HD Index (7.37), and Latinos score the lowest (4.32).
- Adding gender to this analysis, Asian women (7.43), black women (5.07), and Latina women (4.47) score higher on the HD Index than their male counterparts on the strength of better health and education outcomes; white men (6.98) and women (6.93) have similar scores; and NHOPI men (4.85) are well ahead of their female counterparts (3.70), thanks to much higher earnings. NHOPI women have the lowest score of any race/gender combination, and Asian women have the highest.
- This report also analyzes well-being for Asian subgroups. Among Asians, Indians have the highest HD Index score (9.10) and Cambodians have the lowest (5.17). Cambodians are the only Asian subgroup that scores below the countywide score of 5.43.
- There is a strong negative relationship between HD Index scores and exposure to pollution. Of the nineteen cities and unincorporated areas scoring below 4 on the HD Index, thirteen lie along the heavily polluted Interstate-710, and Latinos and blacks make up between 90 and 99 percent of the population in these places.

LA County's overall HD Index score is **5.43** out of 10, which is higher than the US value of **5.17**.


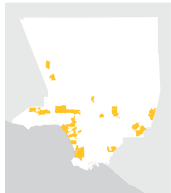
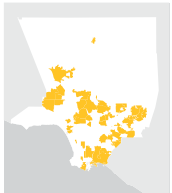
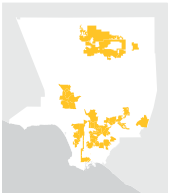



THE "FIVE LA COUNTIES"

We used the HD Index scores of LA County's communities to sort them into categories: the "Five LA Counties." This framework provides a way to compare areas of LA County with similar HD Index scores and gives a sense of the nature and extent of disparities within the county. The demarcations are as follows:

- **Glittering LA:** The nine cities, unincorporated areas, and neighborhoods that make up Glittering LA have HD Index scores above 9. They make up about 1.6 percent of the LA County population.
- **Elite Enclave LA:** These areas have HD Index scores equal to or greater than 7 and less than 9. They make up 15.9 percent of the LA County population.
- **Main Street LA:** These areas have HD Index scores equal to or greater than 5 and less than 7. They make up 30.5 percent of the population.
- **Struggling LA:** These areas have HD Index scores equal to or greater than 3 and less than 5. They make up 50.8 percent of the population.
- **Precarious LA:** These areas have HD Index scores less than 3 and make up 2.9 percent of the population.

TABLE 1 Human Development in the "Five LA Counties"

					
	Glittering LA	Elite Enclave LA	Main Street LA	Struggling LA	Precarious LA
HD Index	9 and above	7 to 8.99	5 to 6.99	3 to 4.99	below 3
Life Expectancy (years)	86.4	83.9	82.9	81.5	78.7
Less than High School (%)*	2.3	5.4	14.9	30.8	51.8
At least Bachelor's Degree (%)*	69.9	58.3	35.5	19.6	4.7
Graduate/Professional Degree (%)*	31.5	24.0	12.6	5.4	0.7
School Enrollment (%)	91.7	84.7	82.6	77.1	73.4
Median Earnings (2015 \$)	\$52,687 and up	48,347	35,773	25,469	19,060

*Percent of adults age 25 and up.

Health

If LA County were a country, it would rank eleventh in the world in longevity, with a life expectancy of **82.1 years**.



KEY FINDINGS: A LONG AND HEALTHY LIFE

- If LA County were a country, it would rank eleventh in the world in longevity, with a life expectancy of **82.1 years**. Angelenos can expect to live nearly three years longer than the average American and several months longer than the average Californian.
- **Walnut Park** has the county's longest life expectancy, a remarkable 90.5 years, while **Sun Village** has the shortest, 75.8 years. For an in-depth exploration of life expectancy in LA County by place, see our report Highway to Health: Life Expectancy in Los Angeles County.
- Among major racial and ethnic groups, the longest-lived population is Asians, with a life expectancy of **87.3 years**. **Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders** (NHOPI) have a life expectancy of 75.4 years—almost a dozen-year gap. Asian and Latino Angelenos live longer than the average LA County resident; the remaining groups have life expectancies below the county average.
- **Whites** live an average of 80.9 years—1.8 years longer than whites in the US as a whole. **Native Americans** have a life expectancy of 76.9 years, about half a decade lower than the LA County average. **Black Angelenos** have an average life expectancy of 75.6 years.
- Among Asian subgroups large enough to allow for reliable calculations, **Indian** and **Chinese** Angelenos have the longest life expectancy (88.1 years) and **Filipinos** have the shortest (85.5 years)—though the Filipino life expectancy is still 3.4 years longer than the countywide average.
- LA County **Latinos** outlive whites, on average, by three and a half years. The phenomenon of Latinos living longer than whites despite having lower education levels and incomes is referred to as the Latino Health Paradox and has been observed across the US.
- **Foreign-born LA County residents** live on average nearly six years longer than **US-born LA County residents**.
- **Women's** life expectancy is 4.9 years longer than **men's**. Women live longer than their male counterparts in every racial and ethnic group, though the size of the gap varies.

Education

KEY FINDINGS: ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE

- LA County lags behind the United States as a whole in educational attainment, in large part due to the comparatively large share of adults without a high school degree. **LA County scores 4.96 on the Education Index (compared to 5.17 for the US), and more than one in five adult Angelenos lack a high school diploma.**
- The highest-ranking community in LA County is **Westwood in the City of LA** (home to UCLA), with an Education Index score of 9.95. The lowest-ranking community, with a score of just 1.24, is **Florence-Graham**, which also ranks the lowest on the overall HD Index.
- **Asians** score the highest on the Education Index at 7.12, followed closely by **whites** at 7.02. The next-highest scores are significantly lower—4.69 for **NHOPI** and 4.64 for **blacks**. The lowest-scoring group is **Latinos** at 2.80; more than 40 percent of Latino adults over age 25 lack a high school diploma.
- Overall, **women** (5.10) tend to have higher educational attainment levels than **men** (4.82) in LA County, though this trend is flipped among Asians and NHOPI; in these groups, men edge out women.
- The **disconnected youth rate**—the share of young people ages 16–24 who are neither working nor in school—is a statistic that MOA calculates using public use microdata areas (PUMAs). There is a strong relationship between well-being in a community and the rate of young people who are connected to school or work. The overall youth disconnection rate in LA County (11.8 percent) is slightly lower than the US rate (12.3 percent). The area in LA with the lowest youth disconnection rate is **West Central/Westwood and West LA in the City of LA** (3.9 percent), and the area with the highest rate is **South Central and Watts, also in the City of LA** (23.0 percent).

LA County lags behind the United States as a whole in **educational attainment**, in large part due to the comparatively large share of adults without a high school degree.



Earnings

Median personal earnings in LA County are **\$30,654**, slightly less than the US median of **\$31,416**.



KEY FINDINGS: A DECENT STANDARD OF LIVING

- **Median personal earnings in LA County are \$30,654**, slightly less than the US median of \$31,416. The range within LA County, however, is striking—from a peak of **\$82,813 in Palos Verdes Estates** to a mere **\$16,044 in Westwood**, no doubt due to the large student population there. Median personal earnings are the wages and salaries of the person in the middle of the earnings distribution; half the population earns more than the median, and half earns less.
- **Whites** earn the most (\$47,600) in LA County among the major racial and ethnic groups; this is the only component of the index for which whites outscore **Asians** (\$38,000). **Latinos** in LA County earn the least, with median personal earnings of \$22,600. **Black Angelenos** earn \$6,500 more than blacks in the United States as a whole.
- Despite outscoring men in the overall HD Index and in both health and education, **women earn less than men in every racial and ethnic group** and tend to occupy lower-paying occupations and industries. Women continue to take on a disproportionate amount of unpaid caretaking labor, incur motherhood penalties, and experience wage discrimination.
- LA County faces a crisis of **high housing costs and a scarcity of affordable housing** for low-income residents, contributing to the largest unsheltered homeless population of any US city or county. The homelessness rate in LA County increased 23 percent between 2016 and 2017, despite a countrywide decrease.
- There is a very strong correlation between **child poverty and the proportion of workers in service-sector occupations** such as fast food workers, servers, health aides, medical assistants, hotel clerks, and maids. This relationship is far stronger than the relationship between child poverty and any of the other five major occupational categories. This is particularly troubling for child well-being since service occupations are the fastest-growing segment of the labor market.

Conclusion

SETTING A GOAL AND WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE IT

Shoring up the foundations of well-being for all county residents as well as building on the strengths and expanding the opportunities of the groups that are struggling today is key to a flourishing LA County tomorrow. The report thus concludes with an ambitious goal: to increase well-being for all county residents and narrow the gaps between groups, **resulting in a one-point increase in the HD Index, from today's 5.43 to 6.43, by 2025.**

To achieve this goal in a way that results in measurable well-being improvements for all, with a focus on the county's most vulnerable residents, the following areas are priorities:

- **HEALTH:** Addressing the social determinants of health, including economic security, through targeted efforts will extend life expectancy for all and achieve significant gains for the groups with the lowest life expectancies. **Increase average life expectancy countywide by six months**, from 82.1 years to 82.6 years, over this eight-year period and increase life expectancy for black, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, and Native American residents to 80 years.
- **EDUCATION:** Investing in parental education, quality child care, early childhood education, school integration, funding equality, and young people at risk for disconnection increases the likelihood that students will enroll in school and complete their degrees. **Increase enrollment by 10 percent** and boost adult educational attainment by 10 percent, focusing in particular on Struggling LA and Precarious LA and on Latinos countywide.
- **EARNINGS:** Increasing wages, improving workforce training and protections, and reducing the gender earnings gap will lift median personal earnings, enabling greater economic security and a chance for all Angelenos to invest in themselves and provide a safe, stable environment for the next generation. **Increasing median earnings in the county by \$8,000** (in inflation-adjusted dollars) over the eight-year period with an eye toward income equality will require a laser focus on workers whose median personal earnings are very low, namely Latinos and those in Precarious LA (\$19,000 annual median personal earnings) and Struggling LA (\$25,000).

The report concludes with an ambitious but realistic goal.

