

National Equity Atlas

California Jobs First:

Equity Indicators for the Redwood Coast Region

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PolicyLink

USC Dornsife
Equity Research Institute



About the National Equity Atlas

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

About This Profile

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

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Introduction

Introduction

California Jobs First

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

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

The program's [vision](#) is to:

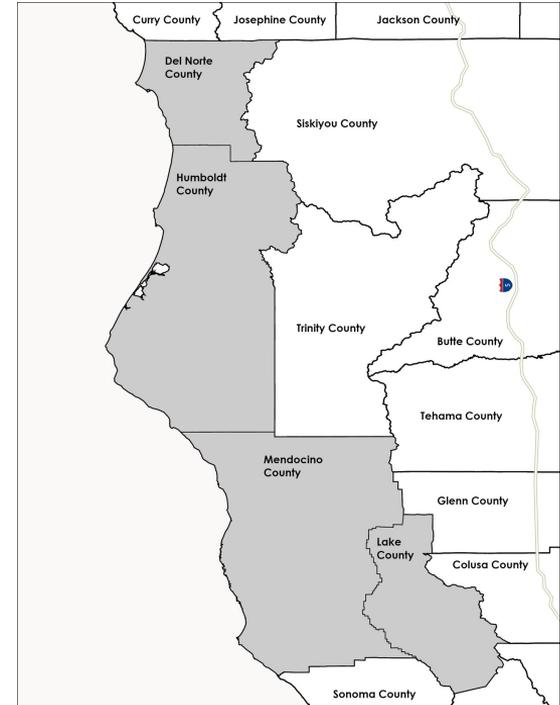
- Promote a sustainable and equitable recovery from Covid-19 that creates high-quality and accessible jobs for all Californians;
- Support the development of regional economic roadmaps for building sustainable economic growth and driving investments in industries that will thrive in a carbon-neutral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

Introduction

The Redwood Coast Region

Northern California's Redwood Coast, which consists of Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, and Lake Counties, is home to a combined 315,179 residents. Through California Jobs First, private and public sector leaders from across the region have come together to form the [Redwood Region RISE](#) (Resilient Inclusive Sustainable Economy) initiative. The collaborative developed a [proposal](#) to advance their shared goals of equity, economic growth and resilience, and sustainability in the region. The plan lays out a commitment to building capacity for stronger and more equitable economic growth, diversifying the workforce across both established and growing industry sectors, supporting workers to prepare for the jobs of the future, and increasing pathways for stakeholder and community participation in planning and decision-making.

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



Introduction

Defining an Equitable Region

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

Strong, equitable regions:

- Have **economic vitality** that supports residents to secure high-quality jobs and to produce new ideas, products, businesses, and economic activity so the well-being of the residents is sustainable.
- Are **ready for the future**, with a skilled, ready workforce and a healthy population.
- Are **places of connection**, where residents can access the essential ingredients to live healthy and productive lives in their neighborhoods, reach opportunities located throughout the region (and beyond) via transportation and technology, participate in civic processes, and productively engage with other diverse residents.

Introduction

Data Summary

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

The Redwood Coast's racial and ethnic diversity is growing.

- Nearly a third of the region's population are people of color, and 8 percent are immigrants. Large increases in populations of color — especially US-born and immigrant Latinx residents — have contributed to the region's growing diversity. The Latinx population has more than tripled since 1990, accounting for nearly all (96 percent) of the region's total population growth in the past three decades.

The region needs good jobs for all workers.

- Every worker should have access to stable, sustainable jobs that provide a living wage. However, economic insecurity is commonplace in the Redwood Coast, especially for workers of color and those with lower incomes. For example, median wages in the region have declined by 16 percent over the past four decades, and workers of color have lower wages than white workers regardless of educational attainment. Those at the lower end of the wage distribution are especially impacted, as the region has seen an increasing share of workers of color who are employed full time yet earn poverty wages. Across the region, one in 10 workers are making poverty wages in 2020, including nearly one in five Latinx workers — an increase of nearly 50 percent since 1990. Overall,



Introduction

Data Summary (*continued*)

workers of color have a working-poverty rate nearly twice that of their white counterparts, a pattern that has persisted since 1990.

- Not all workers are experiencing the same difficulties: those in the top 10 percent of wage earners have actually seen their inflation-adjusted incomes grow by 12 percent since 1980, while those in the bottom half of the wage distribution have seen their incomes drop by 12 to 16 percent over the same period. Occupational segregation has been a contributing force with workers of color overrepresented in lower-paying jobs such as agriculture (44 percent of the region's agricultural workforce), retail trade, and manufacturing of durable goods.

Addressing disparities in healthy environments of opportunity will be essential for the region.

- Many communities in the region have high levels of poverty, including some areas with poverty rates above 30 percent. And despite making up 31 percent of the region's population, people of color comprise 43 percent of residents in communities experiencing the highest levels of poverty. Compounding the effects of concentrated poverty, Black, Native American, and Latinx residents are exposed to higher levels of air pollution and disproportionately live in areas with higher environmental health risks when compared to their white counterparts.
- These systemic conditions all contribute to considerable differences in life expectancy

across racial/ethnic groups: Native American residents can expect to live seven years shorter than white residents in the Redwood Coast.

Introduction

General Discussion Questions

Inclusive Decision-Making

- Are the communities most deeply impacted by poverty and historic marginalization in your region *meaningfully engaged* in initiatives, priorities, and outcomes? How?
- Do the communities most deeply impacted by poverty and historic marginalization have any decision-making power to shape investments that can affect their future? In what way?

Targeted and Disaggregated Analysis

- What populations or communities aren't reflected in this data profile?
- Given how you plan to analyze economic vitality, connectedness, and readiness in your region, what are the most pressing inequities or disparities that you can isolate for further analysis? How will you perform this analysis to center the needs and priorities of frontline or deeply impacted communities?

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



Demographics

Demographics

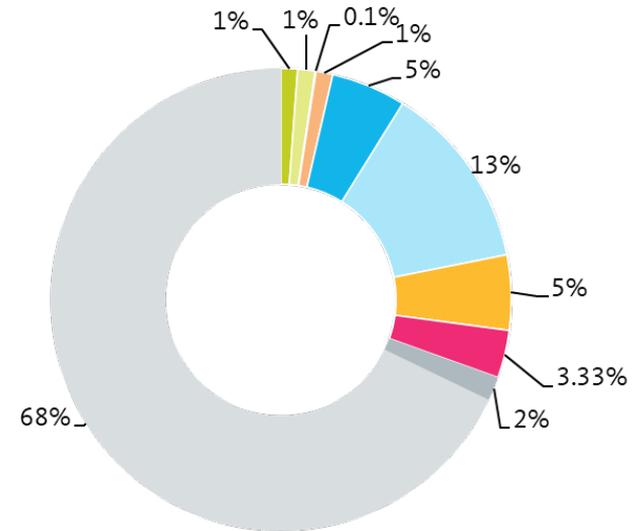
Who lives in the region and how is this changing?

Nearly a third of Redwood Coast residents are people of color.

Compared to the rest of California, the Redwood Coast has relatively moderate levels of racial/ethnic and immigrant diversity. About 32 percent of the region’s population are people of color, and 8 percent identify as immigrants. The majority of people of color are Latinx — primarily US-born — followed by US-born Black residents, who make up 5 percent of the region’s population.

Race, Ethnicity, and Nativity, 2020

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



Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 2020 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA.
Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average.

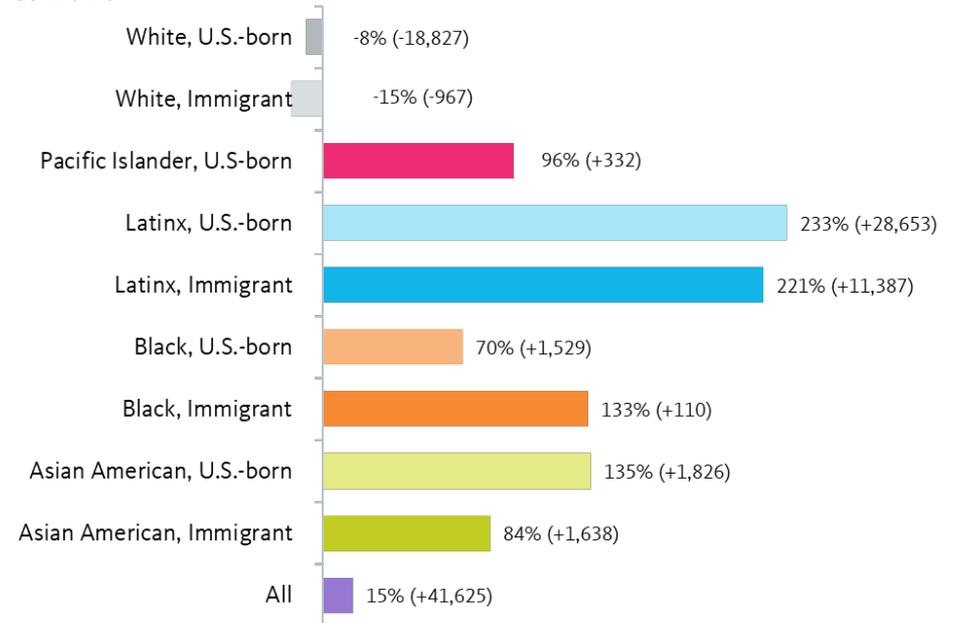
Demographics

Who lives in the region and how is this changing?

While the Redwood Coast’s overall population has grown modestly over the past 30 years, the number of Latinx residents has more than tripled since 1990.

The region has experienced significant population shifts over the last few decades, with large increases in residents of color. Since 1990, the region’s white population has declined, but Latinx, Black, Asian American, and Pacific Islander populations have all grown. Latinx residents — both immigrant and US-born — have been a large part of this boom, more than tripling in population. They account for 96 percent of the region’s total population growth since 1990. The increasing diversity of the Redwood Coast highlights the need for inclusive, equitable growth strategies, particularly for the Latinx population.

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



Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 2020 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average.

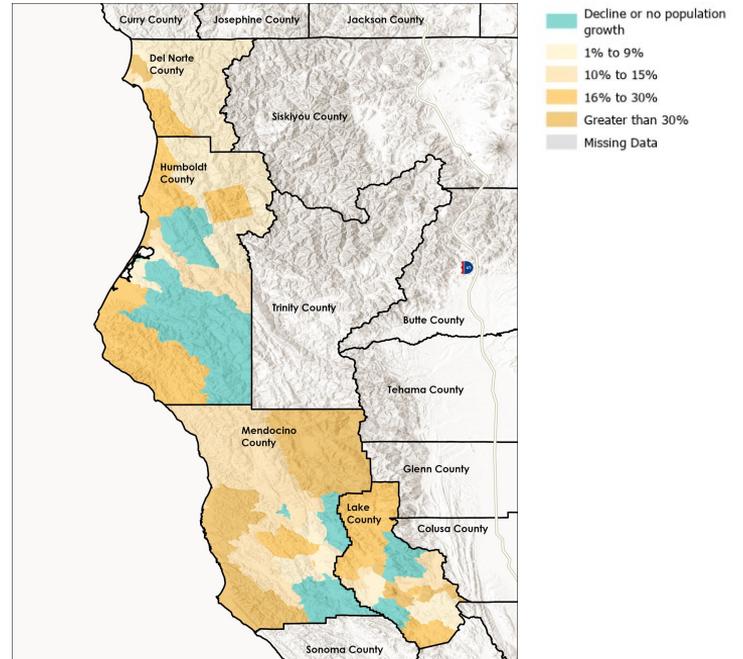
Demographics

Who lives in the region and how is this changing?

Population growth has been most substantial in the region's coastal, highway-adjacent towns.

The Redwood Coast's coastal areas in Del Norte, Humboldt, and Mendocino Counties experienced moderate levels of population growth over the past two decades. Much of this growth was in towns along highways such as the 101, but patches of growth were also seen in inland areas such as the Hoopa Valley Reservation in Humboldt County and parts of Lake County abutting Clear Lake or the border of Mendocino County.

Population Growth by Census Tract, 2000 to 2020



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

Demographics

Further Data Exploration and Discussion Questions

- What parts of the region are growing the most quickly? What has driven growth in those communities?
- Will the investments you're proposing change where people live and work?
- How will proposed investments address disinvestment and bring resources to historically underinvested areas?

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



Economic Vitality

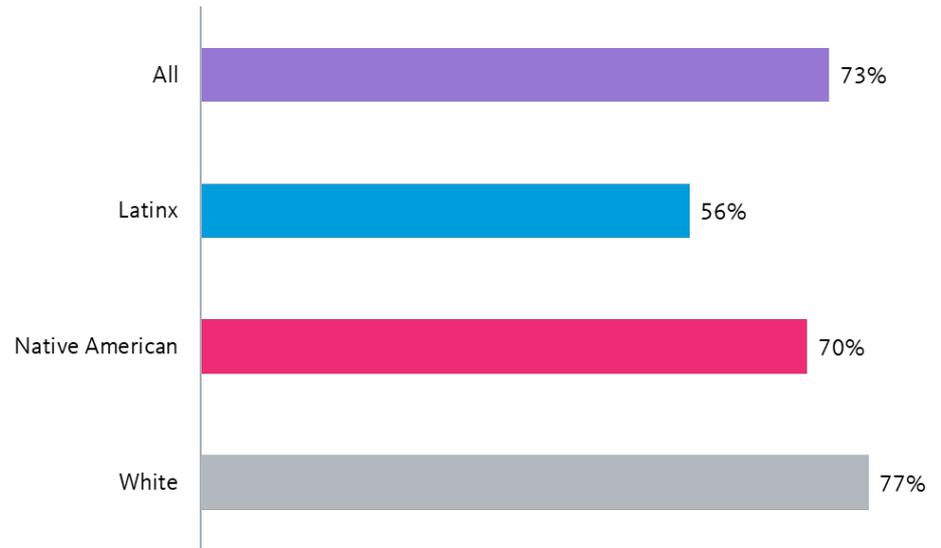
Economic Vitality

Do all workers earn a livable wage?

More than three in four white workers earn at least \$15/hour, compared to just over half of Latinx workers.

With more than 25 percent of all workers making less than \$15/hour, the Redwood Coast faces a deep degree of economic insecurity. Only 56 percent of Latinx workers earn at least \$15/hour compared to 77 percent of white workers. Given the disparate impacts of wage stagnation and suppression on people of color in the US due to shifts in the economy, policy choices at all levels of government, and occupational segregation, interventions toward economic equity must prioritize ensuring living wages for all.

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



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

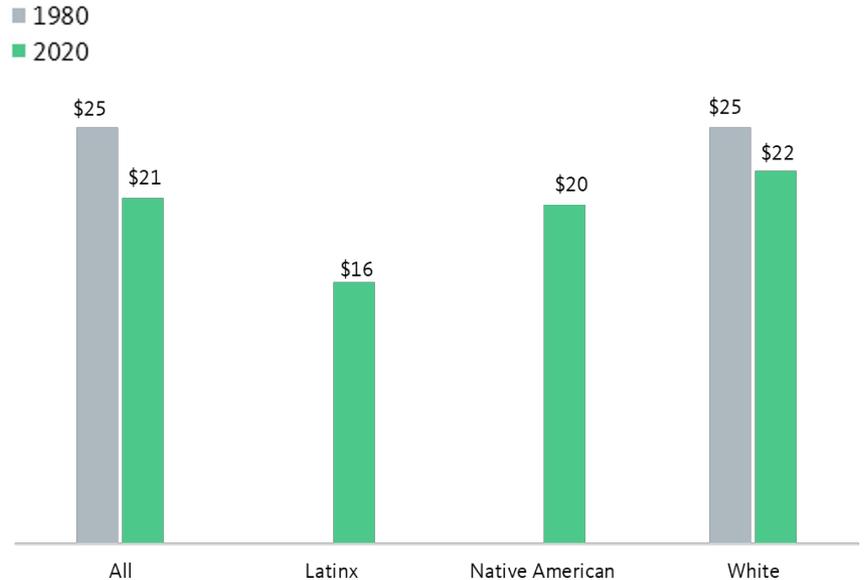
Economic Vitality

Is the median hourly wage increasing for all workers?

The region's workforce has collectively seen wages decline by 16 percent since 1980.

Since 1980, the median wage in the region has declined by 16 percent. While data limitations prevent comparisons across time for Latinx and Native American workers, the wages of white workers have decreased by 12 percent. The wage gap is particularly pronounced between Latinx and white workers: the median hourly wage for Latinx workers is only 73 percent of the median wage for white workers. As regional demographics and economics shift, so too have the earnings outlook of its residents.

Median Hourly Wage by Race/Ethnicity, 1980 to 2020



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

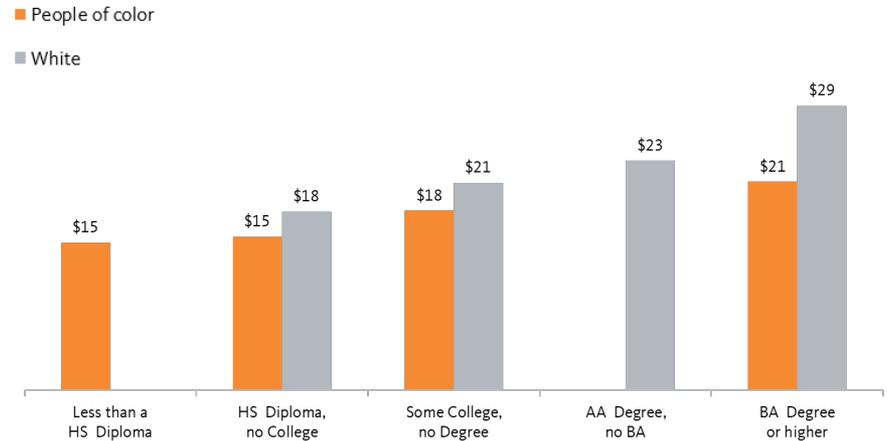
Economic Vitality

Do racial economic gaps persist across educational levels?

People of color have lower median hourly wages than their white counterparts at every education level.

Equity in higher educational attainment is both essential and insufficient to achieving racial economic inclusion. Where data are available, white workers earn the most across all educational levels, and wage gaps between workers of color and their white counterparts persist even at the highest levels of educational attainment. Among those with only high school diplomas, people of color earn 83 cents to every dollar white people earn, and for those with four-year college degrees or higher, people of color make only 72 cents to every dollar that white workers earn. Workers of color also have smaller returns from a bachelor's degree or higher compared to white workers: while bachelor's degree-holding people of color have a \$6/hour increase compared to people of color with only a high school diploma (a 40 percent increase), white people with four-year college degrees make \$11/hour more than their high school counterparts (a 61 percent increase).

Median Wage by Race/Ethnicity and Educational Attainment, 2020



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

Note: There is not enough data to display on median wages for Asian American workers with less than a high school diploma, nor Black, Native American, and Pacific Islander workers at any level of education.

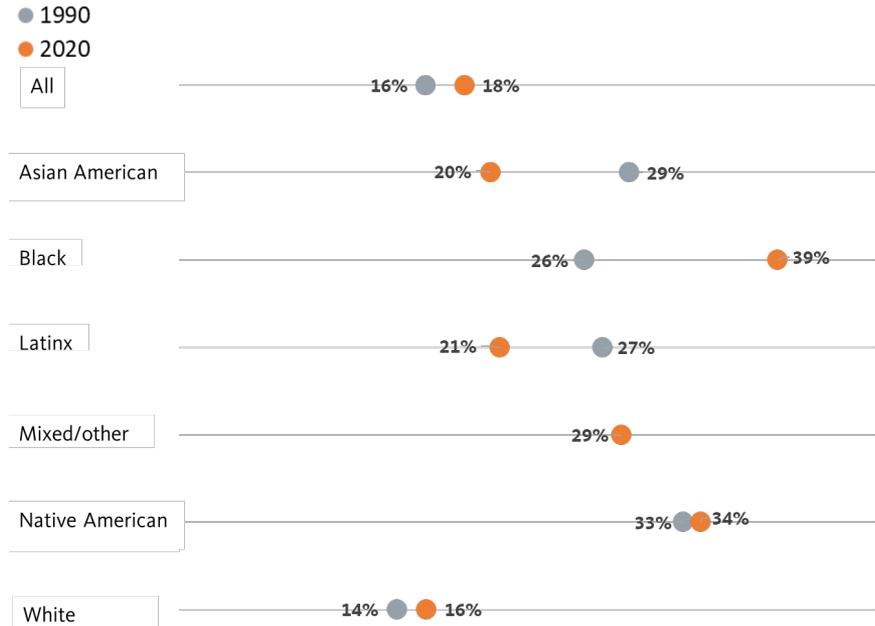
Economic Vitality

Is poverty low and decreasing?

Nearly one in five Redwood Coast residents are experiencing poverty.

Economic insecurity is growing in the Redwood Coast. Nearly 20 percent of residents are living in poverty, an increase of 13 percent since 1990. While white and Native American residents saw modest increases in poverty levels over the last three decades, the poverty rate for Black residents increased by 50 percent. Thirty-nine percent of Black residents and 34 percent of Native American residents are currently living in poverty. Poverty rates have declined for Asian American and Latinx residents to 20 percent and 21 percent, respectively. For context, the federal poverty level in 2020 was \$13,171 for an individual working adult with no children (the equivalent of \$6.33/hour working full time) and \$26,246 for a family of four with two working adults and two children. MIT's [Living Wage Calculator](#) estimates a living wage for a single adult with no children is between \$11.28 in Lake County and \$12.10 in Mendocino County, while for a family of four with two working adults and two children, the living wage is estimated to be between \$17.50 and \$17.93.

Poverty Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 1990 and 2020



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

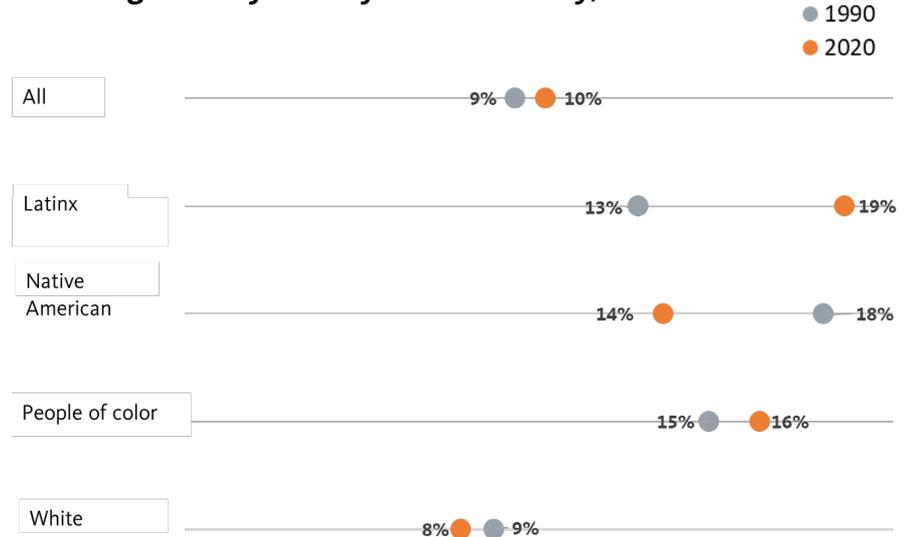
Economic Vitality

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

One in 10 Redwood Coast workers have poverty-level wages despite working full time.

There is an increasing share of workers — particularly workers of color — who are working full time yet continue to earn poverty wages. Those experiencing “working poverty,” defined as those working full time with family incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, has increased modestly: 10 percent of full-time workers are earning poverty wages, up from 9 percent in 1990. (For a family of four with two children, working-poverty earnings would equate to a total family income of less than \$52,492 in 2020.) While 9 percent of white workers are making poverty wages despite full-time work, 19 percent of Latinx workers are making similarly low wages — an increase of nearly 50 percent since 1990. Overall, workers of color have a working-poverty rate nearly twice that of their white counterparts, a pattern that has persisted since 1990. Advancing economic equity in the region will require raising the floor on low-wage work.

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



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

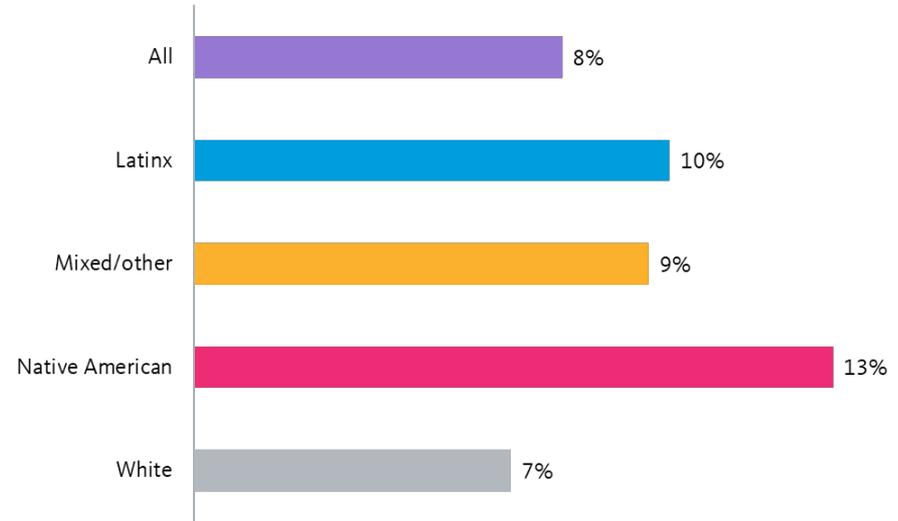
Economic Vitality

Can all residents access employment?

Unemployment rates for Native American workers are nearly twice the rate of white workers.

Unemployment in the Redwood Coast region is 8 percent, exceeding the state average of 5 percent. Regionally, the unemployment rate for Native American workers is above the state average (9 percent) and roughly 2 times the rate of unemployment for white workers, while Latinx workers and those of mixed or another race experience unemployment rates above the state and regional averages. Given the primacy of employment on the incomes of working-age people, these disparities in employment can have significant negative impacts on the livelihoods of people of color on the Redwood Coast.

Unemployment Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2020



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

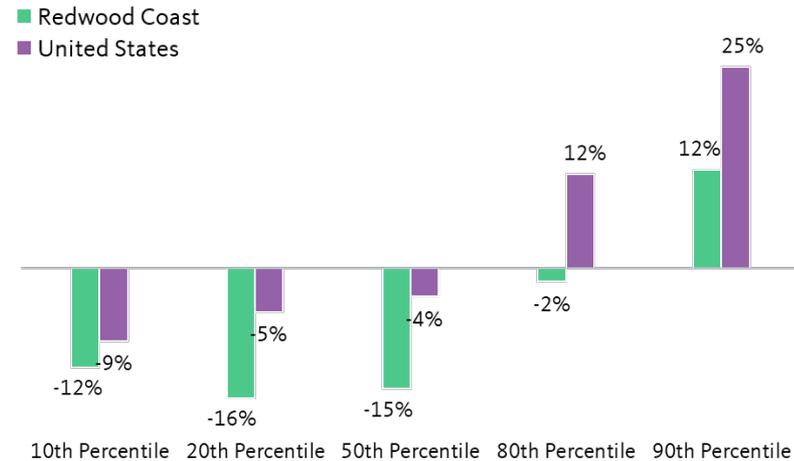
Economic Vitality

Are incomes increasing for all workers?

Growth in earnings over the last 40 years has disproportionately benefited the top 10 percent of the region's earners while declining most sharply for the bottom half of the region's workers.

Declining wages play a significant role in the Redwood Coast's increasing inequality. Wages have declined between 12 and 16 percent since 1980 for the bottom half of the region's workers, a sharper decline than national trends. Even the region's workers at the 80th percentile experienced a slight decline in income while their counterparts nationally experienced wage growth. Only workers at the very top — the 90th percentile — saw their wages grow over the last three decades.

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



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

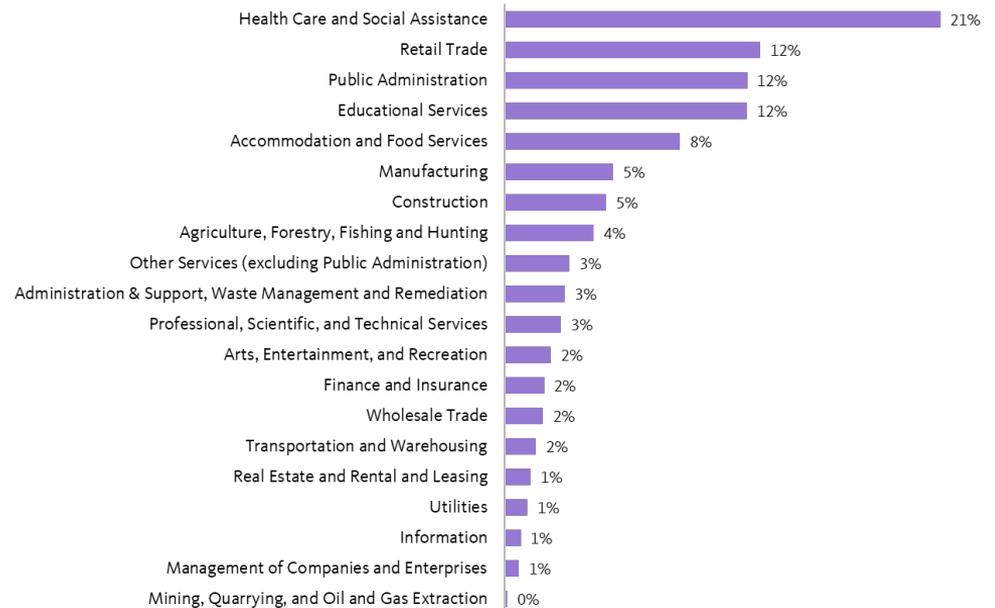
Economic Vitality

Which industries employ the most workers?

Four industries employ nearly 60 percent of workers in the Redwood Coast.

Many workers in the region are employed in “[essential](#)” industries that have faced pressure as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Health care and social assistance is the largest industry in the Redwood Coast and employs 21 percent of workers. Nearly 60 percent of workers in the region are concentrated in four industries: health care and social assistance, retail, public administration, and educational services. Given the essential nature of much of the work throughout the region, an equitable recovery demands an expansion and strengthening of labor protections and benefits for workers in these industries.

Share of Workers by Industry, 2019



Source: US Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2020).

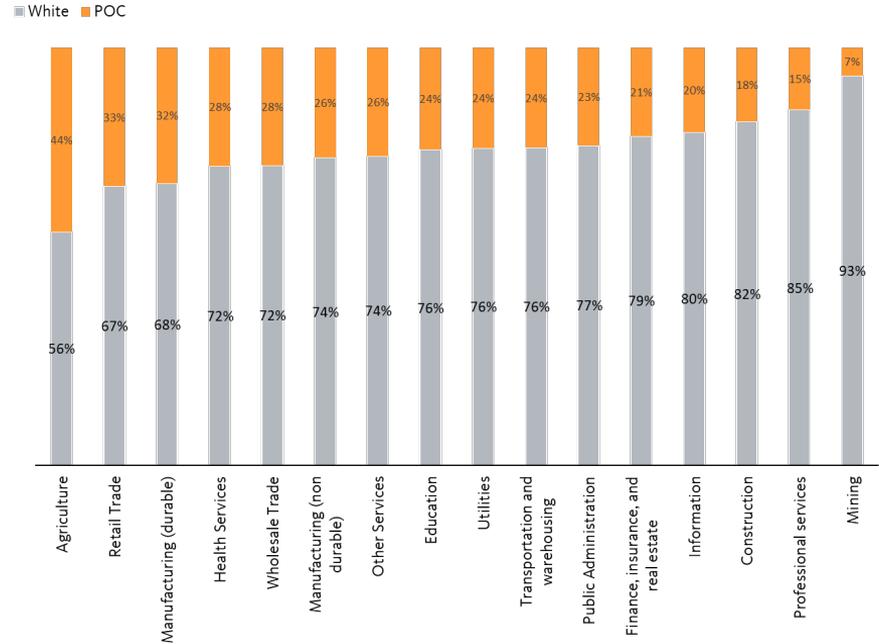
Economic Vitality

Which industries employ the most workers of color?

Workers of color are overrepresented in agriculture and underrepresented in industries with higher pay.

In the Redwood Coast region, people of color comprise a high percentage of workers in [lower-paying industries](#), such as agriculture (44 percent of workers), retail trade (32 percent), and durable manufacturing (32 percent). Meanwhile, workers of color make up much smaller shares in industries with typically higher pay, such as information (20 percent), professional services (15 percent), and finance, insurance, and real estate (21 percent). Ensuring equity in access to industries with living wages is critical to addressing racial inequities in pay across the region.

Industry by Race/Ethnicity, 2020



Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Universe includes the civilian, noninstitutional labor force ages 25 through 64 years. Note: Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average. Data for some racial/ethnic groups are excluded due to small sample size.

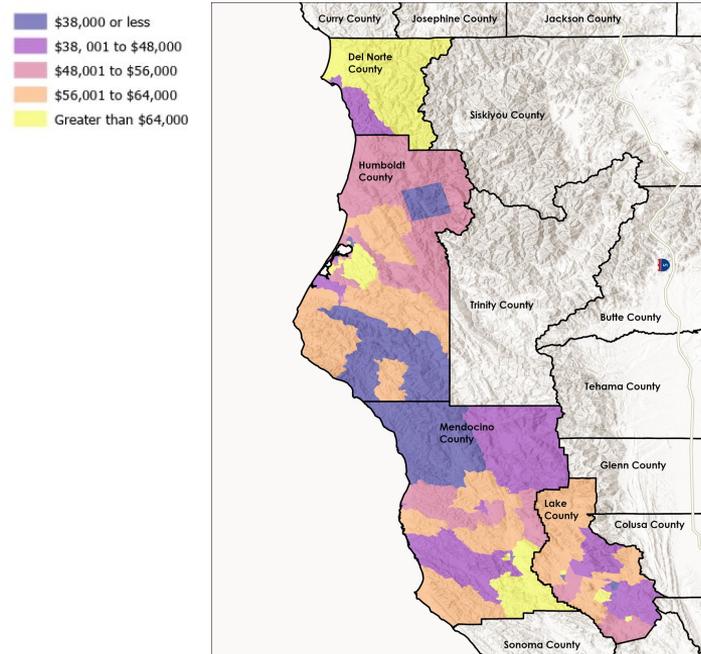
Economic Vitality

Do all workers across the region earn a living wage?

On average, household incomes greatly lag behind statewide median household income levels.

The median household incomes in most parts of the Redwood Coast lag behind the California median of \$77,652. Some areas, such as the Hoopa Valley Reservation and the tracts alongside the Humboldt-Mendocino County borders, have median household incomes less than half of the statewide average. Few areas approach the state median value: the sparsely populated inland communities of Del Norte County, the area southeast of Arcata Bay in Humboldt County, and the towns alongside Highway 101 in southern Mendocino County have household incomes greater than \$64,000.

Median Household Income by Census Tract, 2020



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

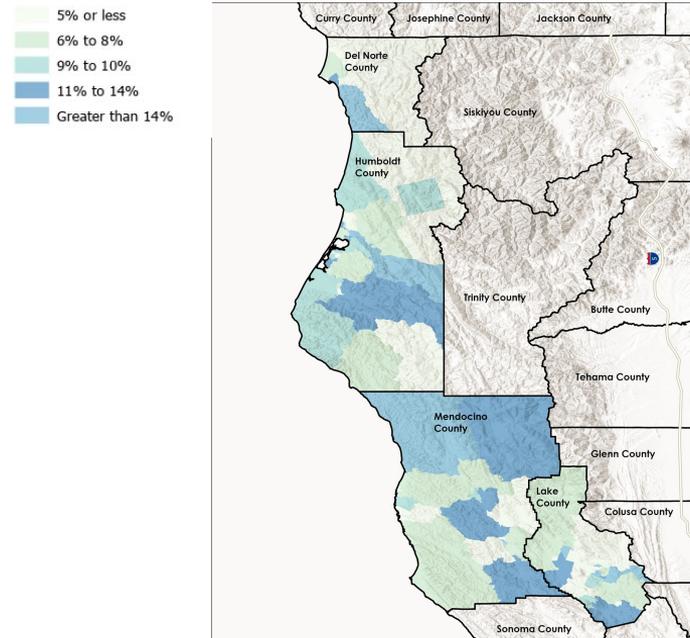
Economic Vitality

How does unemployment vary across the region?

Unemployment rates were greater in communities with higher shares of people of color.

Unemployment in the Redwood Coast averaged 8 percent in 2020, but a spatial analysis of the region reveals that some areas had more difficulties than others. The northern third, central core, and southeastern tip of Mendocino County had unemployment levels greater than the regional average, as did the Humboldt County population centers between Routes 36 and 101. A look at the racial/ethnic and spatial dynamics of unemployment suggests that this form of economic insecurity is skewed toward communities with higher shares of people of color: census tracts where the unemployment rate is greater than 14 percent are 37 percent people of color, while communities with less than 5 percent unemployment are 27 percent people of color.

Unemployment Rate by Census Tract, 2020



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

Economic Vitality

Further Data Exploration and Discussion Questions

- Where are the highest-earning jobs located? Who cannot access jobs in those locations?
- What is driving poverty in certain parts of the region?
- What investments are necessary for the Redwood Coast to address inequitable income growth?
- How should public investments be targeted to help disadvantaged communities access higher-paying jobs?
- How can public dollars compel local private organizations to improve community members' access to good jobs?

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



Connectedness

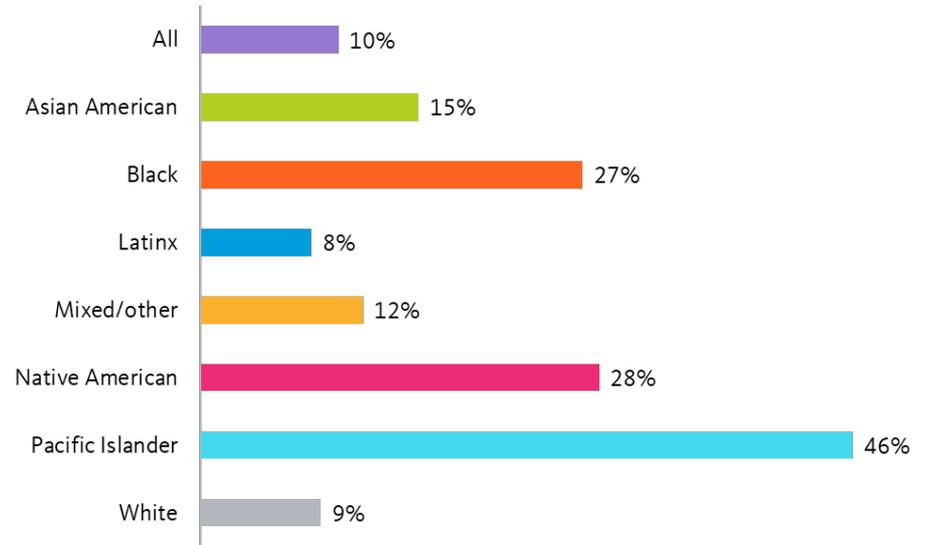
Connectedness

Do residents live in high-opportunity neighborhoods?

Pacific Islander, Native American, and Black residents are more likely to live in high-poverty neighborhoods.

In the Redwood Coast, more than a quarter of Black and Native American residents and nearly half of Pacific Islander residents live in high-poverty neighborhoods, even if they are not low income. White and Latinx residents are the least likely to live in high-poverty areas. People who live in high-poverty neighborhoods have less access to jobs, services, high-quality education, parks, safe streets, and other essential ingredients of economic and social success.

Neighborhood Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2020



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

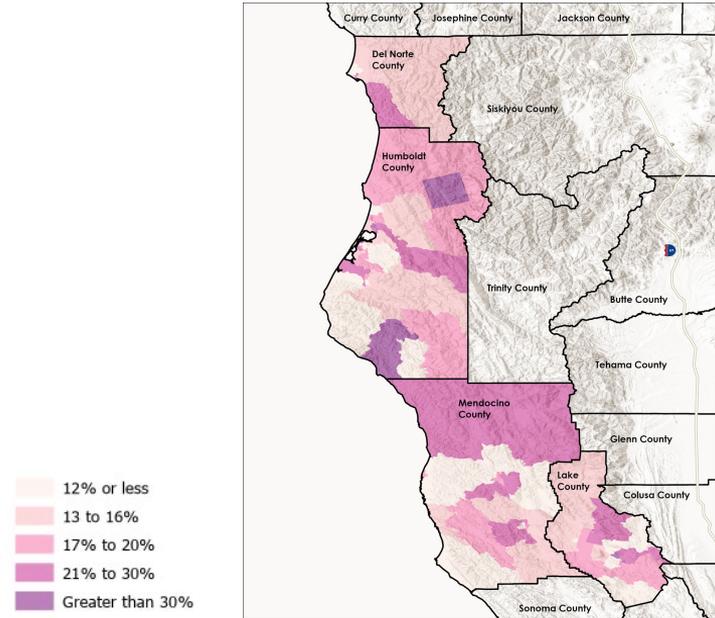
Connectedness

Which neighborhoods have the highest poverty rate?

Poverty levels are much higher in communities of color throughout the Redwood Coast region.

Many communities have large shares of people experiencing poverty, with the highest burden in the Hoopa Valley Reservation and the remote communities near the southern edge of the King Range National Conservation Area in Humboldt County. The northern edge of Mendocino County, the southwestern tip of Del Norte County, and parts of Lake County near Clear Lake also have more than 20 percent of residents experiencing poverty. Here, the racial-spatial dynamics are quite clear: in communities with greater than 30 percent poverty rate, 43 percent of residents are people of color, compared to just 24 percent of residents in communities with a poverty rate below 12 percent.

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



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

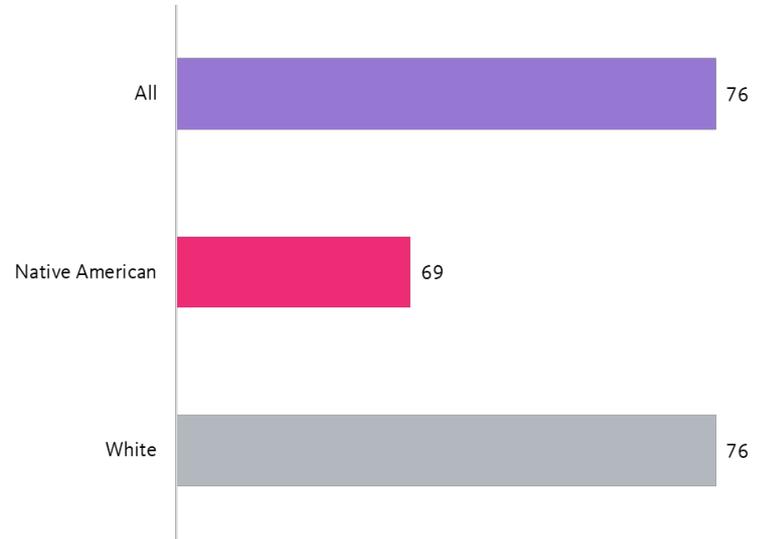
Connectedness

Are all residents able to live a full life?

There is a seven-year difference in life expectancy between Native American and white residents in the Redwood Coast.

How long a person is expected to live depends on a range of social, economic, and political factors shaped by their environment, opportunities, shelter, food access, healthcare access, and more. Systemic discrimination and differential access to opportunity have resulted in racial/ethnic gaps in life expectancy. In the Redwood Coast region, these gaps are particularly evident for Native American residents, whose life expectancy is seven years shorter than white residents and the regional average. This life expectancy gap is not only greater than the [statewide equivalent](#) (where there's only a four-year gap), but the region's life expectancies are also shorter than the state averages: in California, Native American residents have a life expectancy of 76 years and white residents have a life expectancy of 80 years.

Life Expectancy (Years) by Race/Ethnicity, 2020



Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 2016 through 2020 CDC WONDER from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average.

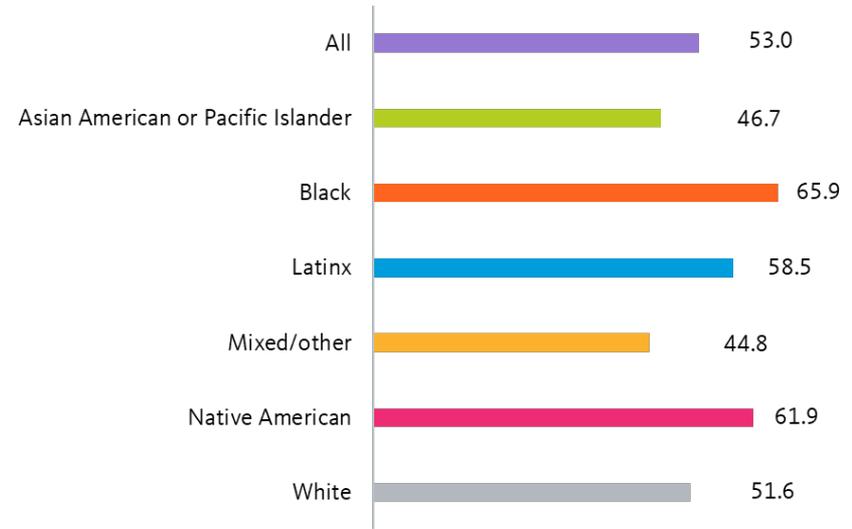
Connectedness

Do all residents have access to clean air?

Redwood Coast residents are exposed to higher levels of air pollution than half of US census tracts overall.

Residents in the Redwood Coast experience a similar level of air pollution exposure to the rest of the nation. Regionally, the typical resident lives in a census tract that is exposed to a level of air pollution higher than half (53 percent) of US census tracts. However, there are disparate experiences by race and ethnicity: the average Black resident in the Redwood Coast experiences the most air pollution exposure and lives in neighborhoods with pollution levels higher than 65 percent of census tracts nationwide. Native American and Latinx residents also experience air pollution at levels higher than the regional average.

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



Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2018 National-Scale Air Toxics Assessment (NATA); U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census Summary File 3, 2010 and 2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Summary File.

Note: Index of exposure to air toxics for cancer and noncancer risk (combined and separately). Values range from 1 (lowest risk) to 100 (highest risk) on a national scale based on the distribution across census tracts nationwide.

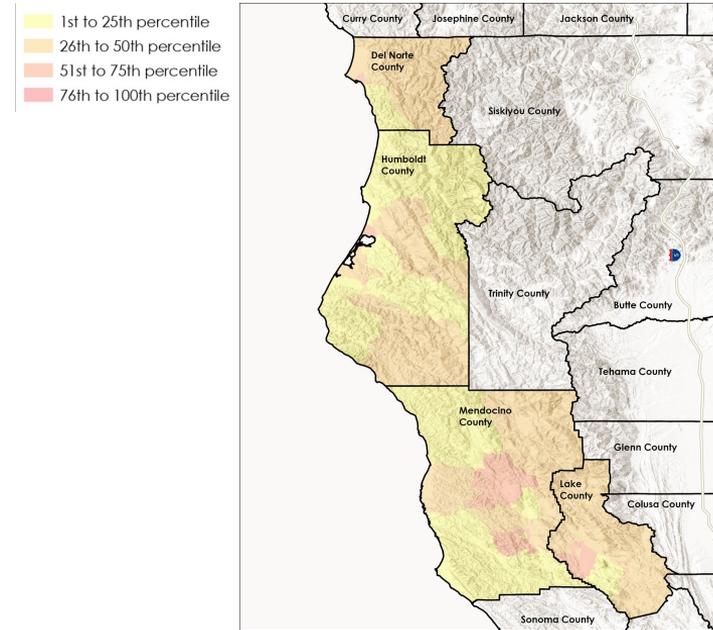
Connectedness

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

While the region has relatively low levels of pollution and environmental health burdens, people of color are more likely to live in communities with higher degrees of pollution or environmental health risks.

[CalEnviroScreen](#) (CES), a tool developed by the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) and its Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA), maps the impacts of multiple types of pollution and environmental health conditions. The CES designates any census tract scoring in the top 25th percentile of the state as a disadvantaged community; no communities in the Redwood Coast meet the disadvantaged threshold, speaking to the relative environmental well-being compared to the rest of the state. However, within the region, communities with higher CES scores have higher shares of people of color compared to those with lower CES scores: census tracts in the 51st to 75th percentile are 40 percent people of color, while tracts in the 1st to 25th percentile are only 31 percent people of color.

CalEnviroScreen (CES) Score Percentile by Census Tract, 2021



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

Connectedness

Further Data Exploration and Discussion Questions

- What is driving the gap in life expectancy in the region?
- What are the primary sources of pollution in the Redwood Coast?
- Who is experiencing the greatest burden of pollution? Who would be burdened by the polluting activity of the investments being proposed?
- How can investments advance a just transition by supporting environmental rehabilitation and new clean activity in the region?
- How can we involve the whole community in addressing these shared problems?

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

Readiness



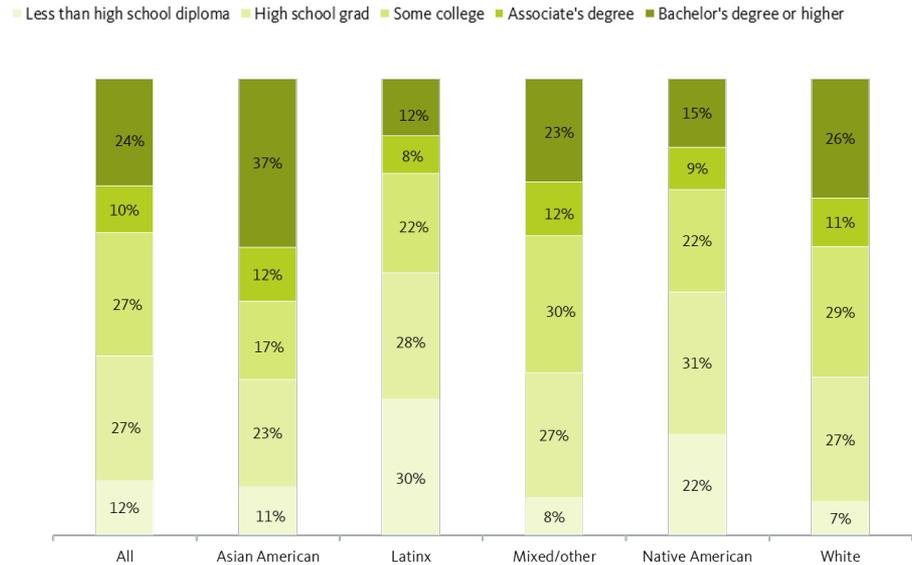
Readiness

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

Nearly one in four adults in the Redwood Coast have a bachelor's degree or higher.

Higher levels of educational attainment are often associated with increased access to economic security through better-paying jobs. Overall, nearly 25 percent of adults in the Redwood Coast have a bachelor's degree or higher, but roughly 60 percent have had some time in college. Thirty-three percent of Asian American adults and approximately 25 percent of white and those of mixed or another race have a bachelor's degree or higher. Latinx and Native American adults are least likely to have a four-year degree, at just 12 and 15 percent, respectively. To promote an inclusive and equitable economy, college education should be made more accessible for all, and the region should expand the range of workforce development strategies alongside educational attainment that support residents in securing stable, life-sustaining employment.

Educational Attainment by Race/Ethnicity, 2020



Source: National Equity Atlas analysis of 2020 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Universe includes the working-age population ages 25-64. Data for 2020 represent a 2016 through 2020 average.

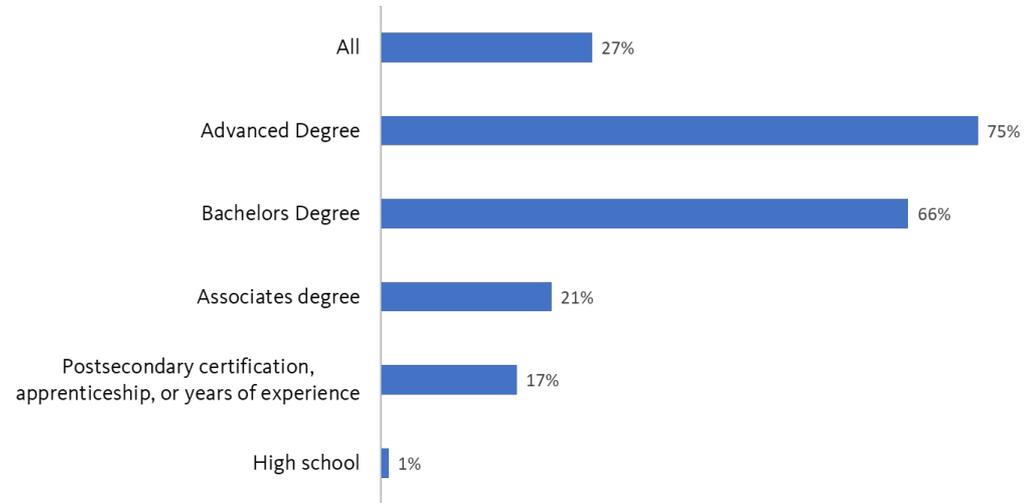
Readiness

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

Redwood Coast residents likely face significant challenges to finding “good jobs.”

There is a growing need for “good jobs” in the region, defined as stable jobs that provide family-sustaining wages and are automation-resilient. For California workers, access to good jobs is closely associated with the educational requirements of the role: only 1 percent of California workers in jobs requiring a high school diploma, and 21 percent of those in jobs requiring an associate's degree are in a good job, compared to 66 percent of workers in jobs that require a bachelor's degree or higher and 75 percent of those in jobs requiring advanced degrees. However, only 24 percent of adults in the Redwood Coast have a bachelor's degree. Furthermore, disparities in educational attainment suggest that Latinx and Native American adults, whose rates of having a bachelor's degree or higher are 12 and 15 percent, respectively, likely face greater barriers to finding good jobs. For the Redwood Coast to build an economically resilient and equitable ecosystem for all, good jobs should be available to workers across all educational levels.

Share of Workers in Good Jobs, Overall and by Educational Requirements, California, 2020



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

Note: The data displayed covers the entire state of California, as there is not enough local data to produce a statistically reliable graph.

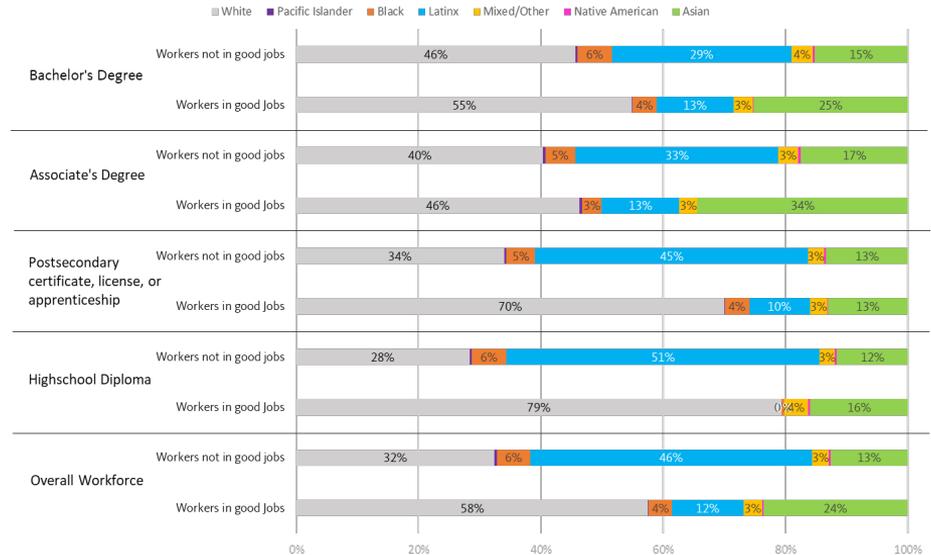
Readiness

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

Across California, workers of color are currently underrepresented in good jobs.

In California, workers of color are underrepresented in good jobs across all levels of educational requirements while white workers are overrepresented. Despite making up 38 percent of the state's workforce, white workers account for over half of the workers in good jobs. The racial disparities in good jobs are starkest for jobs that do not require a college degree: despite only making up 38 percent of the state's population and 58 percent of the working population with good jobs, white people make up 70 percent of those in good jobs that require non-degree postsecondary training and nearly 80 percent of the workers in the few good jobs that only require a high school education. All told, the Redwood Coast's racial disparities in educational attainment, the state's lack of good jobs with educational requirements less than a bachelor's degree, and the overrepresentation of white workers in those good jobs underscore the need for a layered approach to eliminate both local- and state-level barriers to these family-sustaining jobs for people of color in the region.

Distribution of Workers by Race/Ethnicity, Job Quality, and Educational Requirements, California, 2020



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

Note: The data displayed covers the entire state of California, as there is not enough local data to produce a statistically reliable graph.

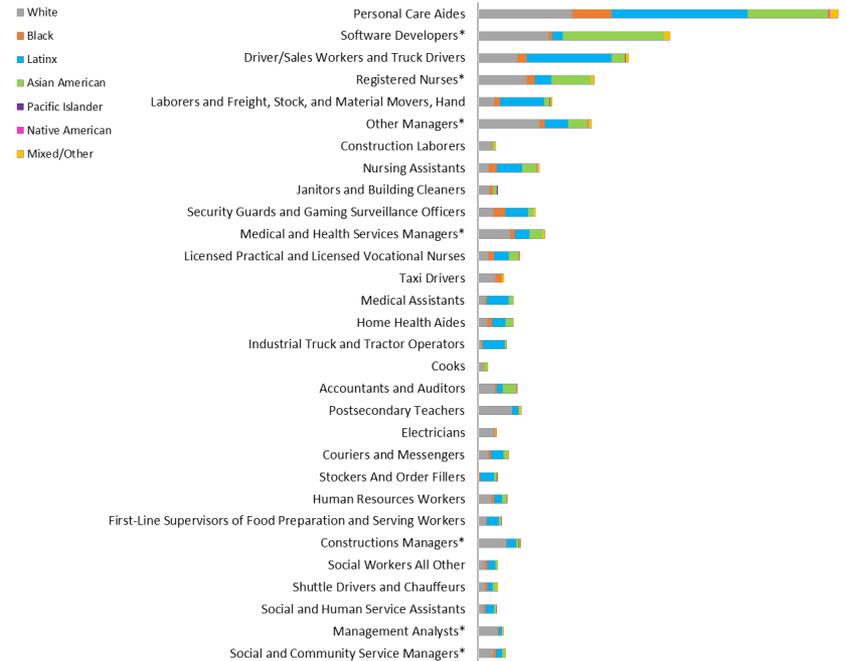
Readiness

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

Projected job growth for Latinx and Black workers is heavily concentrated in unstable, low-paying jobs vulnerable to automation.

Young people in California are [more racially diverse than prior generations](#), and they’ve added to the growing diversity of the workforce across all sectors. However, job growth projections indicate that existing racial inequities in employment will persist. White and Asian American/Pacific Islander workers account for large shares of projected job growth in “good jobs.” Meanwhile, Latinx and Black workers make up disproportionately high shares of projected jobs in sectors with low pay, long-term job insecurity, and/or poor working conditions. Given the Redwood Coast region’s rural landscape and demographic shifts (with the number of Latinx residents having tripled since 1990), projecting job growth by race/ethnicity at the regional level is difficult. Nonetheless, it stands to reason that there will continue to be a job base rife with public and service sector positions, and economic growth in the region must prioritize the quality of those jobs, as well as ensuring equal opportunities for an increasingly diverse workforce.

Occupations Projected to Add the Most Workers of Color, by Race/Ethnicity, California, 2020 to 2030



Sources: Lightcast modeling for occupational growth and 2020 5-year ACS microdata from IPUMS for demographic characteristics of occupations. Notes: Occupations marked with asterisks are classified as good jobs. The data displayed covers the entire state of California, as there is not enough local data to produce a statistically reliable graph.

Readiness

Further Data Exploration and Discussion Questions

- Is education attainment connected to employment in good jobs?
- What economic investments can be targeted to sub-regions based on the educational attainment of different communities?
- What are strategies for making all jobs good jobs?
- What are strategies to make jobs connected to your proposed investments good jobs, and address barriers to accessing those jobs?
- What strategies can prepare workers for the good jobs of the future?
- How ready is this region to transition to future environmentally sustainable industries?

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



Data and Methods

National Equity Atlas

PolicyLink

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Data and Methods

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Data and Methods

Data Source Summary and Regional Geography

Unless otherwise noted, all the data and analyses presented in this profile are the product of PolicyLink and the USC Equity Research Institute (ERI), and they reflect the Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, and Lake Counties. The specific data sources are listed in the table displayed on the right-hand side of this page.

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

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

Data and Methods

Selected Terms and General Notes

Broad Racial/Ethnic Origin

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

- “White” and “non-Hispanic White” are used to refer to all people who identify as white alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.
- “Black” and “African American” are used to refer to all people who identify as Black or African American alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.
- “Latinx” refers to all people who identify as being of Hispanic origin, regardless of racial identification.

- Asian American refers to all people who identify as Asian American alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.
- “Pacific Islander” or “Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander” refer to all people who identify as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.
- “Asian American and Pacific Islander,” “Asian or Pacific Islander,” and “API” are used to refer to all people who identify as Asian American or Pacific Islander alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.
- “Native American” and “Native American and Alaska Native” are used to refer to all people who identify as Native American or Alaskan Native alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.

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

Nativity

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

Data and Methods

Selected Terms and General Notes (*continued*)

Other Selected Terms

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

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

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

The term “communities of color” generally refers to distinct groups defined by

race/ethnicity among people of color.

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

The term “full-time workers” refers to all persons in the IPUMS microdata who reported working at least 45 or 50 weeks (depending on the year of the data) and who usually worked at least 35 hours per week during the year prior to the survey. A change in the “weeks worked” question in the 2008 American Community Survey (ACS), as compared with prior years of the ACS and the long form of the decennial census, caused a dramatic rise in the share of respondents indicating that they worked at least 50 weeks during the year prior to the survey. To make our data on full-time workers more comparable over time, we applied a slightly

different definition in 2008 and later than in earlier years: in 2008 and later, the “weeks worked” cutoff is at least 50 weeks while in 2007 and earlier it is 45 weeks. The 45-week cutoff was found to produce a national trend in the incidence of full-time work over the 2005-2010 period that was most consistent with that found using data from the March Supplement of the Current Population Survey, which did not experience a change to the relevant survey questions. For more information, visit https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/2012/demo/Gottschalck_2012FCSM_VII-B.pdf.

Data and Methods

Selected Terms and General Notes (*continued*)

General Notes on Analyses

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

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

Data and Methods

Summary Measures from IPUMS Microdata

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

Compared with the more commonly used census “summary files,” which include a limited set of summary tabulations of population and housing characteristics, the use of the microdata samples allows for the

flexibility to create more illuminating metrics of equity and inclusion. It also provides a more nuanced view of groups defined by age, race/ethnicity, and nativity for various geographies in the United States.

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

A key limitation of the IPUMS microdata is geographic detail. Each year of the data has a particular lowest level of geography associated with the individuals included, known as the

Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA) for years 1990 and later, or the County Group in 1980. PUMAs are generally drawn to contain a population of about 100,000. They also vary greatly in geographic size — from being fairly small in densely populated urban areas to very large in rural areas — often with one or more counties contained in a single PUMA.

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

Data and Methods

Good Jobs Analysis

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

Unless otherwise noted, the ACS microdata is the source of all tabulations of demographic and workforce equity metrics by race/ethnicity and nativity included in this report. In addition, unless otherwise noted, racial/ethnic groups are defined such that all groups are non-Latinx (excluding those who identify as Hispanic or Latinx), leaving all

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

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

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

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

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

Data and Methods

Additional Data Resources

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

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

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

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

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

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

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