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This project was heavily informed by the work ERI completed for the California 100 Initiative, which was released on April 25, 2022. We also want to acknowledge the additional ERI team members who contributed to that project: Adriana Valencia Wences, Dalia Gonzalez, Lexie Abrahamian, Rebecca Smith, and Shannon Camacho.

Thank you to the California Community Foundation for their support of this project and to the CCF Council on Immigrant Integration for their ongoing guidance.
Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the area now called Los Angeles County is on the traditional homelands of the Chumash, Tataviam, Serrano, Cahuilla, Juaneño, Luiseño and Tongva Peoples. We pay our respects to the traditional caretakers of the land, the Tongva Nation, their ancestors, elders, and relations past, present, and forthcoming.

We encourage everyone to consider the many impacts—past and present—of colonization, genocide, slavery, violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us here today. Indigenous people continue to reside in and around what we now call Los Angeles County—the county that is currently home to the largest population of Native people in the United States. We recognize this land acknowledgment is limited and requires us to engage in an ongoing process of learning and accountability.

For more information and resources on Native American/Indigenous organizing, please visit the California Native Vote Project, the Los Angeles City/County Native American Commission, Sacred Places Institute for Indigenous Peoples, UCLA American Indian Studies Center, and United American Indian Involvement.
Introduction
Introduction

Los Angeles has just commemorated the 30th anniversary of the L.A. Civil Unrest—a week that laid bare economic inequalities in L.A., the racist nature of policing in our communities, and the exclusion of low-income communities of color from prosperity. Out of these ashes rose a robust set of community organizing institutions. This social justice infrastructure has changed what is possible, especially for BIPOC Angelenos.

Today, we are at what we hope is the tail end of the throes of a pandemic that have highlighted the inequalities that have persisted—and that we chronicled in last year's report by the same name. Immigrants have been concentrated in essential yet high risk occupations, as well as in occupations that were shut down and subject to economic disruption.

Overcrowded housing is endemic, leading to the spread of disease. Many families remain on the other side of the digital divide, leading to the alienation of families and challenges for students.

Just as 30 years ago, we stand in a moment in which disparities have been highlighted and contradictions heightened. The path ahead will require a commitment to equity and bold decisions about how we will reshape L.A. Putting immigrant inclusion and racial justice at the center of our work will be an important part of that process—and, so, that is the focus of this year's State of Immigrants in Los Angeles report.
This is our third consecutive year taking an in-depth look into the state of immigrants in L.A. County. While the data has not changed dramatically, it is important that we review each year to examine how immigrants are faring, how we are responding to obstacles and issues as they arise, and how we can continue to move forward together to strive for immigrant integration, inclusion, and justice.

As in previous years, we offer a demographic profile of L.A. County’s 3.6 million immigrants.\(^1\) We note some shifts in immigration, notably a declining number of people settling in the region; at the same time, the area is likely to see increases in refugees. We explore the economic barriers to integration and mobility that continue to hinder communities of color and immigrants. In particular, we see immigrant women playing an important role in the labor force yet experiencing unequal returns. We assess how the pandemic, inflation, and racial injustice continue to impact undocumented immigrants and their families, many of whom face various types of barriers. Along the way, we also highlight a few initiatives to promote immigrant inclusion.

We conclude by highlighting future trends and key takeaways to consider. We stress that it is critical to build on the work of the movements of the past few decades to secure a more just region for immigrants and for all Angelenos – and that will require placing the effort for immigrant integration and inclusion within the larger fight for racial justice.

\(^1\) USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average. See Methodology slide at the end.
Why place immigrant inclusion within the larger fight for racial justice?

- Anti-immigrant sentiment is driven by racial anxiety.
- The systems used to oppress immigrants are the same systems used against residents who are Black, Indigenous, and from other communities of color.
- Economic mobility for immigrants does not mean hopscotching other groups, but changing structures to promote justice and opportunity that uplifts us all.
Setting the stage
**Undocumented Immigrant:** The term ‘undocumented immigrant’ refers to anyone residing in any given country without legal documentation. It includes people who entered the U.S. without inspection and proper permission from the government, and those who entered with a legal visa that is no longer valid. It also includes Temporary Protected Status (TPS) holders and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients, although we occasionally separate out these groups in the analysis.

**Lawful Permanent Resident (LPRs):** A ‘lawful permanent resident’ is a non-citizen who has been granted authorization to live and work in the United States on a permanent basis. Please note that for the purposes of certain calculations in this report, ‘lawful permanent resident’ may also include those with non-permanent temporary visas such as H1-B and F1 visas.

**Naturalized Citizen:** The term ‘naturalized citizen’ or ‘naturalized’ refers to immigrants who have become U.S. citizens through the process of naturalization.
In previous reports, we have defined *immigrant integration* as:

- Economic mobility for,
- Civic participation by, and
- Warmth of welcome for immigrants.

The advantage of this definition is clear: it is objective, measurable, and two-way.

But another term is coming into fashion, one that highlights the role of immigrants in building power to determine their own destiny *and* stresses the ways in which advancing the interests of immigrants is deeply intertwined with broader struggles for racial and economic justice.

In this report, we look at three aspects of the landscape for *immigrant inclusion*:

- Immigrant realities,
- Immigrant voices, and
- Immigrant futures.
Immigrant Realities
Immigrant Realities

Over 1 in 3 Angelenos in the county are immigrants.

Population by Status, Los Angeles County, 2019

Immigrant Realities

More than 2 in 3 Asian American Angelenos in the county are immigrants, followed by about 2 in 5 Latinos.

Nativity and Immigration Status by Race/Ethnicity, Los Angeles County, 2019

Among the immigrant population from Honduras and Guatemala, a large share are undocumented.

### Status of Immigrant Population by Top 12 Birthplaces, Los Angeles County, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Naturalized Citizen</th>
<th>LPR</th>
<th>Undocumented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Immigrant Realities

In the county, 20 percent of Black residents are part of the immigrant community - either as foreign-born themselves, or as part of the second generation.

Share of Black Residents Who Are Either Immigrants or Second-Generation US-born Children of Immigrants, California and Los Angeles County, 2021

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of data from the 2017 through 2021 March Supplement of the Current Population Survey from IPUMS USA. Note: Data represent a 2017 through 2021 average. For this calculation, "Black" refers to all people identifying as Black alone or in combination with another race, including those who identify as Hispanic Black.
Immigrant Realities

Black immigrants in L.A. County hail from all over the globe, though the top three sending countries are Nigeria, Belize, and Ethiopia.

Main Countries & Regions of Origins for Black Immigrants in Los Angeles County, 2015-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ancestry</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Share of Black Immigrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>12,409</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belize</td>
<td>9,801</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>6,759</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>5,650</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>4,306</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of West Africa</td>
<td>6,837</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of East Africa</td>
<td>5,912</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of Africa</td>
<td>2,756</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of Central America</td>
<td>3,946</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of Caribbean</td>
<td>6,659</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>2,021</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>3,198</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of world</td>
<td>3,862</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>74,116</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Immigrant Realities

L.A. County is home to many migrants from distinct Indigenous communities throughout Mexico and Central America.

People Served through CIELO’s Undocu-Indigenous Fund by Indigenous Community, Los Angeles County, May 2020

- Indigenous/Zapotec: 74%
- Indigenous/Akateko: 12%
- Indigenous/Chinanteco: 3%
- Indigenous/Totonaca: 3%
- Indigenous/Quiche: 3%
- Mixe/Zapotec: 6%
- Indigenous/Mixe: 3%

Immigrant Realities

Of the over 1.2 million LGBT immigrants in the U.S., nearly 23 percent are undocumented. There are vast differences in racial composition among undocumented (see note) and documented LGBT immigrants.

Race/ethnicity for undocumented LGBT immigrants, U.S., 2017

- Latino: 76%
- AAPI: 13%
- White: 7%
- Black: 3%
- Other: 1%

Race/ethnicity for documented (see note) LGBT immigrants, U.S., 2017

- Latino: 39%
- AAPI: 32%
- White: 20%
- Black: 6%
- Other: 3%

Source: LGBT Adult Immigrants in the United States, UCLA School of Law Williams Institute, February 2021, https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Adult-LGBT-Immigrants-Feb-2021.pdf. Note: The Williams Institute report defined “documented” as all immigrants who are not “undocumented” including but not limited to those who are naturalized and LPRs.
Immigrant Realities

Our immigrant population is long-settled: Over 4 in 5 L.A. County immigrants have been in the U.S. for over a decade.

Recency of Arrival for Immigrants by Race/Ethnicity, Los Angeles County, 2019

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Data represent a 2015-2019 average. Note: The breakdown for Black immigrants here only includes those who identify as non-Hispanic Black. It also does not include those who identify as Mixed race. Additionally, the sample size for Pacific Islanders is small: About 228 cases in total and fewer than 50 cases in some sub-categories. Data also available on the California Immigrant Data Portal, [https://immigrantdataca.org/indicators/recency-of-arrival/#?breakdown=3](https://immigrantdataca.org/indicators/recency-of-arrival/#?breakdown=3).
Immigrant Realities

This is also true of our undocumented residents: About 70 percent of undocumented Angelenos have been in the U.S. for more than a decade.

Recency of Arrival for Immigrants by Status, Los Angeles County, 2019

About 70% of undocumented Angelenos have been in the U.S. for more than a decade

Immigrant Realities

A greater share of undocumented immigrants are in their prime working age, as compared to the U.S.-born population.

Age by Nativity and Immigration Status, Los Angeles County, 2019

Immigrant Realities

Mixed-status families are common—about 18 percent of Angelenos are either undocumented themselves or live with a family member who is.

Immigration Status and Family Effects, Los Angeles County, 2019

Immigrant Realities

Over 30 percent of Latino children live with at least one parent who is undocumented.

Percent of Children (under 18) Living with Undocumented Parent(s) by Race/Ethnicity, Los Angeles County, 2019

Both immigrant and U.S.-born women are more likely to work in part-time positions than their male counterparts.

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: Universe includes the civilian noninstitutionalized population ages 25 to 64 who worked during the year prior to the survey. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Immigrant Realities

Both immigrant men and women earn significantly lower median hourly wages than their U.S.-born counterparts.

Median Hourly Wage by Nativity and Gender, Los Angeles County, 2019

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: Universe includes full-time civilian noninstitutionalized wage and salary workers ages 25-64. Values were then adjusted for inflation to reflect 2019 dollars. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
### Immigrant Realities

**Industries like construction, manufacturing, agriculture, and wholesale trade rely heavily on immigrant labor—over 50 percent of workers in each industry are immigrants.**

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**Workers by Industry and Status, Los Angeles County, 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Undocumented</th>
<th>LPR</th>
<th>Naturalized Citizen</th>
<th>US-born</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and Warehousing</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment, Hospitality, and Food Services</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and Management Services</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational, Health, Social Services</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance, Insurance, Real Estate</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information and Communications</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA and the 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation. Note: Universe includes the employed civilian non-institutional population age 16 or older. See Pastor, Le, and Scoggins (2021) for details on estimates of the undocumented and lawful resident population. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Immigrant Realities

Immigrant women make up large shares of workers in occupations burdened during the pandemic including, healthcare support, cleaning and maintenance, and personal care and services.

General Occupation Categories by Nativity and Gender, Los Angeles County, 2019

Immigrant Realities

Immigrant women make up large shares of workers in occupations burdened during the pandemic including, healthcare support, cleaning and maintenance, and personal care and services.

General Occupation Categories by Nativity and Gender, Los Angeles County, 2019

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: Universe includes the employed civilian noninstitutional population age 16 or older. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Immigrant Realities

Among undocumented full-time workers in the county, 68 percent make less than $15/hour.

Full-time Workers Earning Less than $15 an hour by Nativity and Status, Los Angeles County, 2019

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA and the 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation. Note: Universe includes full-time civilian noninstitutionalized wage and salary workers ages 25-64. Values were then adjusted for inflation to reflect 2019 dollars. See Pastor, Le, and Scoggins (2021) for details on estimates of the undocumented and lawful resident population. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Immigrant Realities

The median hourly wage for undocumented immigrants ($12) is half the median hourly wage of their U.S.-born counterparts ($24).

Median Hourly Wage by Nativity and Immigration Status, Los Angeles County, 2019

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA and the 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation. Note: Universe includes full-time civilian noninstitutionalized wage and salary workers ages 25-64. Values were then adjusted for inflation to reflect 2019 dollars. See Pastor, Le, and Scoggins (2021) for details on estimates of the undocumented and lawful resident population. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Immigrant Realities

Latino immigrants have the lowest median wage of all Angelenos at $14/hour, followed by Pacific Islander immigrants and U.S.-born Latinos at $19/hour.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Nativity</th>
<th>Median Hourly Wage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>$21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.-born</td>
<td>$24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant</td>
<td>$17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, U.S.-born</td>
<td>$32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, immigrant</td>
<td>$31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, U.S.-born</td>
<td>$22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, immigrant</td>
<td>$24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino, U.S.-born</td>
<td>$19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino, immigrant</td>
<td>$14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American, U.S.-born</td>
<td>$29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American, immigrant</td>
<td>$24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander, U.S.-born</td>
<td>$20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander, immigrant</td>
<td>$19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>$24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed/other, U.S.-born</td>
<td>$27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed/other, immigrant</td>
<td>$29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: Universe includes full-time civilian noninstitutionalized wage and salary workers ages 25-64. Values were then adjusted for inflation to reflect 2019 dollars. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Immigrant Realities

U.S.-born Black and immigrant Latino households face the greatest barriers to equal income—earning $45,200 and $47,000, respectively.

Median Household Income by Race/Ethnicity and Nativity, Los Angeles County, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Median Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White, U.S.-born</td>
<td>$88,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, immigrant</td>
<td>$64,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, U.S.-born</td>
<td>$45,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, immigrant</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino, U.S.-born</td>
<td>$65,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino, immigrant</td>
<td>$47,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American, U.S.-born</td>
<td>$94,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American, immigrant</td>
<td>$70,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander, U.S.-born</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander, immigrant</td>
<td>$57,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>$54,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed/other, U.S.-born</td>
<td>$76,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed/other, immigrant</td>
<td>$65,800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

L.A. County Median $65,000

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: Universe includes all households (no group quarters). Values were then adjusted for inflation to reflect 2019 dollars. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Immigrant Realities

Disaggregated Asian American data shows that although they make the highest average income, median income varies widely.

Median Household Income for Top 10 Asian American Immigrant Groups, Los Angeles County, 2019

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: Universe includes all immigrant households (no group quarters). Values were then adjusted for inflation to reflect 2019 dollars. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Immigrant Realities

Barriers to educational attainment persist for immigrants—about 34 percent of immigrants have less than a high school degree, a rate that increases to almost 60 percent for undocumented Angelenos.

Educational Attainment by Nativity and Immigration Status, Los Angeles County, 2019

Immigrant Realities

Educational attainment rates are higher among white, Black, Mixed/other, and Asian American immigrant adults.

Educational Attainment among Immigrants by Race/Ethnicity, Los Angeles County, 2019

Disaggregating data can reveal disparities in educational attainment for Asian American and Pacific Islander immigrant adults.

Immigrant Realities

Even as wages increase with education, disparities persist as median hourly wages for LPRs and undocumented immigrants remain lower than their U.S.-born and naturalized citizen counterparts.

Median Hourly Wage by Nativity, Immigration Status and Educational Attainment, Los Angeles County, 2019

Immigrant Realities

While wage gaps exist across all levels of educational attainment, the median hourly wages of women are significantly lower at higher levels of education.

Median Hourly Wage by Educational Attainment, Nativity, and Gender, Los Angeles County, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>Immigrant Female</th>
<th>U.S.-born Female</th>
<th>Immigrant Male</th>
<th>U.S.-born Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school degree</td>
<td>$11</td>
<td>$13</td>
<td>$15</td>
<td>$35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school degree or equivalent</td>
<td>$13</td>
<td>$16</td>
<td>$18</td>
<td>$36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college or AA</td>
<td>$18</td>
<td>$19</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>$31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>$27</td>
<td>$28</td>
<td>$34</td>
<td>$44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher than bachelor's degree</td>
<td>$35</td>
<td>$36</td>
<td>$47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Data represent a 2015-2019 average Note: Universe includes civilian non-institutional full-time wage and salary workers ages 25 through 64. Values are in 2019 dollars.
Immigrant Realities

About 61 percent of undocumented immigrants experience economic insecurity (live below 200% of federal poverty level), a rate much higher than the county average of 35 percent.

Percent below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level by Nativity and Immigration Status, Los Angeles County, 2019


Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: Universe includes all persons not in group quarters. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Immigrant Realities

Immigrant workers countywide face higher rates of “working poverty,” compared to U.S.-born workers. Over 1 in 3 undocumented immigrant workers are employed full-time, yet still face economic insecurity.

Working Poverty by Nativity and Immigration Status, Los Angeles County, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.-born</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naturalized citizen</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPR</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undocumented</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Working poverty is defined as full-time workers whose family income is below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA and the 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation. Note: Universe includes the civilian non-institutional population ages 25-64 not living in group quarters who worked at all during the year prior to the survey. See Pastor, Le, and Scoggins (2021) for details on estimates of the undocumented and lawful resident population. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Immigrant Realities

Latino immigrants have the highest rate of working poverty at 27 percent.

**Working Poverty Rate by Race/Ethnicity and Nativity, Los Angeles County, 2019**

- White, U.S.-born: 4%
- White, immigrant: 6%
- Black, U.S.-born: 9%
- Black, immigrant: 10%
- Latino, U.S.-born: 12%
- Latino, immigrant: 27%
- Asian American, U.S.-born: 4%
- Asian American, immigrant: 9%
- Pacific Islander: 14%
- Mixed/other, U.S.-born: 5%
- Mixed/other, immigrant: 9%

Source: Working poverty is defined as full-time workers whose family income is below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: Universe includes the civilian non-institutional population ages 25-64 not living in group quarters who worked at all during the year prior to the survey. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Immigrant Realities

Immigrants in L.A. County are more likely to be self-employed than their U.S.-born counterparts.

Self-employment Rate by Race/Ethnicity and Nativity, Los Angeles County, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Self-Employment Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, U.S.-born</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, immigrant</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, U.S.-born</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black, immigrant</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino, U.S.-born</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino, immigrant</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American, U.S.-born</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American, immigrant</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander, U.S.-born</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander, immigrant</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed/other, U.S.-born</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed/other, immigrant</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: Universe includes the employed civilian population age 16 or older. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
## Immigrant Realities

Homeownership rates among immigrants tend to increase over time, sometimes surpassing those of the U.S.-born population.

### Homeownership Rate by Nativity, Recency of Arrival, and Age Group, Los Angeles County, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>U.S.-born</th>
<th>Immigrated more than 30 years ago</th>
<th>Immigrated 21-30 years ago</th>
<th>Immigrated 11-20 years ago</th>
<th>Immigrated ten years ago or less</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 to 45</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 64</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and older</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: Universe includes all households (no group quarters). Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Homeownership rates are highest among naturalized citizens and LPRs, as immigration status can impact homeownership opportunities.

Homeownership Rate for Immigrant-Headed Households by Immigration Status and Recency of Arrival, Los Angeles County, 2019

- Immigrated more than 30 years ago
- Immigrated 21-30 years ago
- Immigrated 11-20 years ago
- Immigrated ten years ago or less

Immigrant Realities

While a higher share of immigrant-headed households experience poverty, that share has been decreasing in recent years.

Percent of Households Below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level by Nativity of Householder, Los Angeles County, 2017-2020

Immigrant Realities

Immigrant Angelenos consistently make considerably less than U.S.-born residents but again there have been some relative improvements.

Median Personal Income During Previous Calendar Year, Los Angeles County

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of the Annual Social and Economic Supplement of the Current Population Survey from IPUMS USA. Note: Universe includes the civilian noninstitutionalized labor force age 16 or older. Estimates are rounded and in 2020 dollars, adjusted for inflation using the CPI-U for all urban consumers for the Los Angeles MSA from the California Department of Finance.
Immigrant Realities

Of those in poverty in 2020—the start of COVID—immigrant households in poverty saw their per capita family income drop, while the U.S-born saw it rise.

Per Capita Family Income for People Below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level by Nativity of Family Head, Los Angeles County, 2017-2020

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of the Annual Social and Economic Supplement of the Current Population Survey from IPUMS USA. Note: Universe includes all primary family members within households. Estimates are rounded and in 2020 dollars, adjusted for inflation using the CPI-U for all urban consumers for the Los Angeles MSA from the California Department of Finance. Note: Please note that the vertical axis starts at $5,000.
Through the pandemic, immigrant families have been less likely to earn at least $75,000 per year—less than the calculated living wage for L.A. county—when compared to their U.S.-born counterparts.

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of the basic monthly Current Population Survey from IPUMS USA. Note: Universe includes all primary families of civilian-headed households. Primary families are defined as the family of the householder in each household. Earnings reflect the 12 months prior to the survey and are in contemporaneous dollars (i.e. not adjusted for inflation). Data include allocated values. The "living wage" in Los Angeles County for a family with two adults and one child is about $81,000 according to the MIT Living Wage Calculator, available at: https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/06037. $75,000 is the closest approximation available in this data. Families can be of any size.
Immigrant Realities

As COVID shutdowns hit our economy, larger shares of U.S.-born workers were able to work and earn at home compared to immigrant workers.

Worked at Home/Remotely (During Past Four Weeks) Due to Pandemic, Los Angeles County, January 2020 through February 2022

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of the basic monthly Current Population Survey from IPUMS USA. Note: Universe includes the employed civilian noninstitutionalized population age 16 or older. May 2020 is the first time COVID-specific question results became available from this survey.
**Immigrant Realities**

**COVID brought mental health to the forefront, for some more than others. For example, of UC students with immigrant parents, undocumented students were more impacted than their peers.**

**Share of UC Students with Immigrant Parents whose mental health was affected “a great deal” by COVID-19, 2020**

![Bar chart showing mental health impact by student type.](chart)

- **Undocumented students:** 29%
- **Students with undocumented parents:** 23%
- **Students with lawfully present immigrant parents:** 21%

Immigrant Voices
Immigrant Voices

The Council on Immigrant Integration / Immigrant Integration Taskforce

Two bodies initiated by the California Community Foundation, to address the needs of immigrants across the County:

- **Council on Immigrant Integration**
  Approximately 30 stakeholders from business, labor, community-based organizations, local government, funders, and other sectors convened by CCF and USC ERI. The goals are to achieve a common understanding of the diversity of immigrants and the complex roles and realities they face throughout L.A. County to ensure their and the region’s continued social and economic well-being.

- **Immigrant Integration Taskforce**
  More than 90 immigrant rights groups, faith-based groups, direct service providers, and advocacy organizations throughout the region strategize to ensure immigrant justice through policy development, campaigns, and coordination efforts to improve immigrant inclusion in L.A. The Taskforce has played a key role in the implementation of critical countywide initiatives.
Immigrant Voices

Nearly half a million Latino immigrants are eligible to naturalize in L.A. County.

Eligible-to-Naturalize Adults by Race/Ethnicity, Los Angeles County, 2019

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: Eligible-to-naturalize adults are those noncitizen adults who are estimated to be eligible to naturalize but have not yet done so.
Immigrant Voices

Latino immigrants have the lowest naturalization rate at 60 percent.

Naturalization Rate for Eligible-to-Naturalize Adults by Race/Ethnicity, Los Angeles County, 2019

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: The naturalization rate is calculated as the ratio of naturalized adults to the sum of naturalized and eligible-to-naturalize adults. Eligible-to-naturalize adults are noncitizen adults who are estimated to be eligible to naturalize but have not yet done so. It’s important to note that Pacific Islanders may have one of the lowest naturalization rate due to some being from territories where they are legally able to come to U.S. to work and may be given some benefits but not citizenship.
Immigrant Voices

About 40 percent of households headed by an undocumented Angeleno are linguistically isolated.

Linguistically Isolated Households by Nativity and Status, Los Angeles County, 2019

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA and the 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation. Note: Universe includes all households. A household is considered to be linguistically isolated when no member age 14 years or older speaks only English or speaks English at least “very well.” See Pastor, Le, and Scoggins (2021) for details on estimates of the undocumented and LPR population. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Immigrant Voices

1 in 3 Asian American, immigrant-headed households are linguistically isolated, the highest proportion among racial groups.

Linguistically Isolated Immigrant Households by Race/Ethnicity, Los Angeles County, 2019

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA and the 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation. Note: Universe includes all immigrant householders. A household is considered to be linguistically isolated when no member age 14 years or older speaks only English or speaks English at least “very well.” See Pastor, Le, and Scoggins (2021) for details on estimates of the undocumented and LPR population. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Immigrant Voices

In L.A. County, about 36 percent of immigrant children have limited English-speaking proficiency, compared to about 7 percent of U.S.-born children.

Share of Children with Limited English-Speaking Proficiency by Nativity, Los Angeles County, 2019

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: Universe includes all children ages 5 through 17. Limited English speaking ability is defined as speaking English less than “very well.” Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Originating from the Immigrant Integration Taskforce, the IRLA Campaign seeks to:

- Influence the design, implementation, and operationalization of programs and services;
- Strengthen and grow the power building capacity and leadership of the immigrant rights movement; and
- Secure equitable and robust L.A. County budget investment in immigrants.

Currently, IRLA is working to urge the L.A. County Board of Supervisors to use American Rescue Plan (ARP) dollars to focus on access for, outreach to, and investment in immigrants.

For more, see [www.immigrantsarela.com](http://www.immigrantsarela.com).

Steering Committee includes:

- Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA)
- Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-LA)
- Council of Mexican Federations in North America (COFEM)
- Pilipino Workers Center (PWC)
- The TransLatin@ Coalition
- Inclusive Action for the City

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Immigrant Voices

Half of all undocumented immigrants in L.A. County are digitally disconnected, nearly double the rate of the U.S. born.

Percent of Individuals Digitally Divided by Immigration Status, Los Angeles County, 2019

- US-born: 28%
- Naturalized citizen: 31%
- LPR: 36%
- Undocumented: 50%

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA and the 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation. Note: Universe includes all people in households (no group quarters). Digitally divided is defined as lacking high-speed internet or a computer at home. See Pastor, Le, and Scoggins (2021) for details on estimates of the undocumented population. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Immigrant Voices

A larger proportion of K-12 students from immigrant households lack access to computers and high-speed internet at home, compared to students from non-immigrant households.

Percent of Digitally Disconnected K-12 Students by Immigrant Household Type, Los Angeles County, 2019

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average. Note: Digitally divided is defined as lacking high-speed internet or a computer at home, or both; a digitally connected household has both.
Immigrant Voices

About 40 percent of undocumented immigrants in L.A. County do not have health insurance.

Share of Population without Health Insurance by Nativity and Immigration Status, Los Angeles County, 2019

Immigrant Voices

About 75 percent of undocumented Angelenos ages 65 and older lack health insurance, the highest share by age and status.

Share of Population without Health Insurance by Nativity/Immigration Status and Age, Los Angeles County, 2019

The LAJF, a public-private partnership was established in 2017 to provide better and equitable access to legal counsel for Angelenos in removal proceedings. Since its inception, grantees have conducted a minimum of 2,248 legal screenings and accepted a minimum of 748 cases for representation.

Initially set to expire in 2020, immigrant rights advocates highlighted the need for the program's continuation. As a result, a new framework was developed to expand the program and address some of the challenges of the LAJF pilot phase, such as improving access to the fund for immigrants with criminal histories. With much advocacy, in May 2021, the L.A. County Board of Supervisors adopted this new comprehensive program. In May 2022, the City of Los Angeles also approved a motion to fund some of the pillars of the new LAJF framework as well.

Immigrant Futures
As we look forward in L.A. County, we identified six major drivers that will shape immigrant inclusion towards embrace and openness or towards xenophobia and exclusion. These are based on our work for the California 100 Initiative that looks at the pathways and policies that would deliver different outcomes for the state over the next 100 years.

Those six drivers are:

- Global Crises
- White Supremacy & Nativism
- Demographics
- Economic Inequality
- Housing
- Federal-local dynamics

Displacement from climate disasters, state-violence, war, and social strife continue to impact regions all over the world and force migration to places like our county. At the same time, L.A. County continues to face some of its own climate crises.

Angelenos must find a way to both embrace newcomers and address these global challenges, in order to protect residents and the most vulnerable.
Immigrant Futures

Among long-settled immigrants in L.A. County, half hail from Mexico or El Salvador. The share of immigrants from Mexico has decreased substantially while the share of immigrants from China has increased.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Birth Countries for those who Migrated More than 30 Years Ago, 2019</th>
<th>Percentage of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>507,849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>101,674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>74,405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>56,352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>44,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>44,594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>37,163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>35,185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>29,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other Countries</td>
<td>288,126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Birth Countries for those who Migrated Less than 10 Years Ago, 2019</th>
<th>Percentage of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>124,868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>91,471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>54,902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>52,649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>41,505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea</td>
<td>29,675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>29,499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>28,645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armenia</td>
<td>18,039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other Countries</td>
<td>215,564</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Demographics

Aging immigrants will leave the workforce and require greater assistance in accessing social services. A significant share of our immigrant senior population currently lives in poverty and without strong economic mobility policies, their children may struggle to support them, as well.

Additionally, many immigrants will participate in caring for baby boomers as they age. What is less cared for: the protections, benefits, and salaries of these workers.
Demographic projections statewide show that communities of color are aging faster than the white population.

Median Age Projections by Major Racial Groups, California, 2010-2060

Demographic projections countywide also reflect that communities of color are aging faster in the region than the white population.

Immigrant Futures

Those seniors with the least secure immigration status are the most likely to face poverty. Nearly 2 in 5 undocumented seniors live in poverty.

Percent of Adults 65 Years and Older Living Below 150% of the Federal Poverty Line by Immigration, Los Angeles County, 2019

To protect immigrant Angelenos, we cannot permit white supremacy and nativism to take root in the region.

Often thought of as xenophobic speech, hate crimes, shootings, and deportation, in our county, the forms are more subtle: increased criminalization, a lack of housing protections, uneven protection of workers, etc.

The actively inclusive nature of the region may be strongly impacted by the next mayor of the county’s largest city: Los Angeles.
Immigrant Futures

More than half of hate crimes in the county have been motivated by a bias against race, ethnicity, or ancestry.

Percent of hate crimes reported by most serious bias type, Los Angeles County, 2002-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bias Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race/ethnicity/ancestry</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual orientation</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender nonconformity</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: California Department of Justice, OpenJustice, Hate Crimes, Criminal Justice Statistics Center (CJSC) Hate Crime database (HATE), [openjustice.doj.ca.gov](http://openjustice.doj.ca.gov); U.S. Census Bureau, Intercensal Population Estimates and Vintage Population Estimates. Note: Due to limited data sources, we include data from CJSC’s Hate Crime database. There are, however, methodological issues with hate crime data reported by law enforcement agencies (based on likelihood of undercounting, lack of reporting, excluding some types of harassment, etc.). For more see Rachel Kuo and Matthew Bui, 2021, “Against carceral data collection in response to anti-Asian violences,” Big Data & Society January-June:1-6.
To create a Los Angeles for all immigrants we must do more to protect workers from exploitation and dangerous work conditions—regardless of immigration status—as well as improve compensation and benefits.

Economic transformations may continue to exacerbate inequality in the region, and will pose a threat to everyone's economic wellbeing. The future of Los Angeles will be shaped by our ability to close the wage, income, and wealth gap.
Immigrant Futures

Among full-time workers making less than $15/hour, nearly 60 percent are immigrants—about 25 percent of these workers are undocumented immigrants.

Full-time Worker Hourly Wages by Nativity and Status, Los Angeles County, 2019

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA and the 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation. Note: Universe includes full-time civilian noninstitutionalized wage and salary workers ages 25-64. Values were then adjusted for inflation to reflect 2019 dollars. See Pastor, Le, and Scoggins (2021) for details on estimates of the undocumented and lawful resident population. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Housing

L.A. County’s housing crisis has become untenable for many residents, and this is especially true for immigrant Angelenos.

Among our immigrant community, undocumented Angelenos are particularly burdened by homeownership and rent due to legal barriers in accessing relief.

Housing costs and insecurity are destabilizing and displacing L.A.’s residents, especially its immigrants. This crisis may drive future immigrants away from the region.
Immigrant Futures

Over half of U.S.-born and about 60 percent of immigrant renters experience rent burden—the same is true for nearly 70 percent of undocumented immigrants.

Rent Burden by Nativity and Status, Los Angeles County, 2019

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA and the 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation. Note: Universe includes renter-occupied households with cash rent (excludes group quarters). Rent burden is defined as spending more than 30 percent of income on rent and utilities and severely rent burden as spending more than 50 percent. See Pastor, Le, and Scoggins (2021) for details on estimates of the undocumented and lawful resident population. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Immigrant Futures

Immigrants and U.S.-born Black populations experience the highest rate of rent burden countywide.

Rent Burden by Severity, Race/Ethnicity, and Nativity, Los Angeles County, 2019

Rent Burdened
Severely Rent Burdened

Source: USC Equity Research Institute analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA. Note: Universe includes renter-occupied households with cash rent (excludes group quarters). Rent burden is defined as spending more than 30 percent of income on rent and utilities and severely rent burden as spending more than 50 percent. Data represent a 2015 through 2019 average.
Although local residents can develop strategies to better support immigrant Angelenos, this does not supersede state level policies and federal legislation.

In pursuit of immigrant integration policies at the state level, L.A. County stakeholders must contend with places that are promoting immigrant exclusion. There will be political battles with other states and other localities in the state.

Angelenos would do well to also assess the local geography of immigrant integration in the county. While main cities may be more welcoming (in word and deed), suburbs and rural areas likely need support to be more open to immigrant inclusion.
Looking Forward

"Los Angeles Basin", by Anthony Kernich, licensed under CC BY 2.0
Los Angeles’ time to lead is now.

L.A. County has the opportunity to take the lead in investing in and prioritizing immigrants and their families across issues—from closing the digital divide, to creating affordable housing opportunities, to ensuring children have equitable access to education. In doing so, other regions, the state, and the country may follow, just as they have done so in the past.

We should embrace and connect anti-racism and immigrant inclusion.

So much of the current “othering” of immigrants is based on pre-existing anti-Black and anti-indigenous sentiments. We will not make progress unless we center that dynamic—and we want to hold up a goal that is not about integrating into a highly unequal society but rather about creating a region of inclusion where multiple communities have voice and connections.

We also need to tackle our underlying economic inequality.

While the data places immigrants often at (or sharing) the bottom of the economic hierarchy, inequality is limiting potential and damaging our overall prosperity. We need to create pathways of mobility but we also need to recognize that our modern economy generates service jobs—such as in the care economy—where we need to lift our standards.
Looking Forward

Conclusion

We need to recognize that our immigrant population is changing.

The crises of climate and violence is resulting in more formal refugees—or people with all the conditions but without the official distinction of “refugee.” We need to shore up services and resources for refugees from all over the globe – Afghans, Ukrainians, Haitians, Central Americans, and others—and address the particular needs of each community.

Because of this, our narrative needs to change as well.

Immigrant advocates have often stressed economic contributions. While important, we need to root the warmth of welcome in a value system that associates worth not just with work and wages but with human dignity. We also need to remind the public that our new challenge is not too many immigrants but rather too few in a state with shrinking population.

When we win, we must insure implementation.

We need to celebrate gains like the renewal of the LA Justice fund – but we need to couple that with efforts to insure equitable implementation of policies across the county and state. Making sure that American Rescue Plan dollars and funds from the state budget surplus reach immigrant families will require both metrics and organizing to monitor implementation.
Looking Forward

Conclusion

We should anticipate backlash and prepare.

It is easy to think that progress will always be forward. We need to anticipate backlash – particularly if there is an economic downturn – and prepare. To help, we need to better track hate crimes and hate rhetoric, and we need long-term civic efforts to build ties between communities on issues of common concern.

We need to invest in immigrant leadership.

While we need all leaders to step up for immigrant families, immigrants can and should speak for themselves. To do this, we improve efforts at naturalization and provide more avenues of civic engagement for undocumented Angelenos. Leadership training that is about inclusion and intersections would help all that happen.

We should match our rhetoric with material action.

In Los Angeles and California, we are proud of our pro-immigrant tone. But immigrants – like others – are moving to places with less friendly attitudes but more affordable housing. We need to strategies that center full inclusion, that materially improve lives, and that restore the hope for a better future. We must match our welcoming rhetoric with a welcoming reality.
Methodology

This analysis heavily relies on USC ERI analysis of 2019 5-year American Community Survey microdata from IPUMS USA and the 2014 Survey of Income and Program Participation, unless otherwise noted. Specifics on methodologies can be found in our prior works:


Appendix

Current Initiatives at the California Community Foundation impacting immigrant communities

**Sustaining the Immigrant Rights Movement (SIM)** – analyzing the wellbeing and sustainability of the movement to find ways philanthropy can best support the sector

**Ready to Rise** - A community-based model of intervention focused on prevention and treatment to decrease the number of Black and Brown youths (including immigrants) incarcerated and improve overall outcomes. This is a public-private partnership between the CCF, Liberty Hill Foundation and the Los Angeles County Probation Department designed to expand opportunities and resources for programs that provide youth development and enrichment services focused on diversion and prevention versus ineffective punitive measures.

**Los Angeles Scholars Investment Fund** - a partnership between the California Community Foundation (CCF) and the College Futures Foundation to increase college access and success in L.A. County.
Consortium for English Learner Success - is a regional collective championing what we know about good policies, programs, and practices for Dual Language (DLL) and English Learners (ELs). The Consortium is composed of nearly 100 civil rights, policy, research, philanthropic, educator and community-based organizations working to strengthen the prosperity of California and Los Angeles County by advocating for an educational system that fully supports the needs and embraces the assets of DLL and EL students.

Benefits Access for Immigrants and Essential Workers Los Angeles (BAILA) – This Network is a budding collaboration between benefits enrollers, legal services providers, promotores, community outreach groups, and community clinics to educate and enroll people in CalFresh and Medi-Cal, and screen and link people to other economic assistance programs, including cash aid, disability benefits, and tax assistance. Specific targeting to immigrant families and essential workers who underutilize benefits and resources to which they are entitled due to fears of public charge and other stigmas and knowledge gaps about receiving public benefits.

Enroll LA - a comprehensive LA County-wide initiative that seeks to ensure eligible families and individuals access CalFresh and other public benefits they are eligible to receive, including both the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit (CTC).
**Immigrant Health Access Task Force** - convenes 100+ organizations (health plans, hospitals, clinics, educational institutions, immigrant advocates, faith-based organizations and other nonprofits) from the immigration rights and health justice movements to hear updates on matters including but not limited to health access and coverage for immigrants, public benefits, immigration law and policy and policy and advocacy supportive of immigrants' health.

**Housing & Economic Opportunity** – CCF’s Economic Opportunity portfolio invests in systems change efforts that advance the stability and advancement of the most vulnerable Angelenos. This strategy supports entrepreneurs, small businesses, and low-wage workers through private lending, sector capacity building, and wealth creation efforts.

**Regional Recovery Hubs** - To mitigate the ongoing devastation in low-income, immigrant, Black and brown communities, the Regional Recovery Hubs strengthen place-based coordination and community-based nonprofit infrastructure in six regions in LA County: San Fernando, Antelope Valley, Southeast LA, South LA, Long Beach each, and the San Gabriel Valley.

**LA n Sync** - LA n Sync connects visionary leaders from the academic, governmental, nonprofit, business, and philanthropic sectors to leverage the talent and resources of Los Angeles County to support L.A. organizations applying for funding, spur innovation and attract federal and state dollars to address the critical needs of the region.