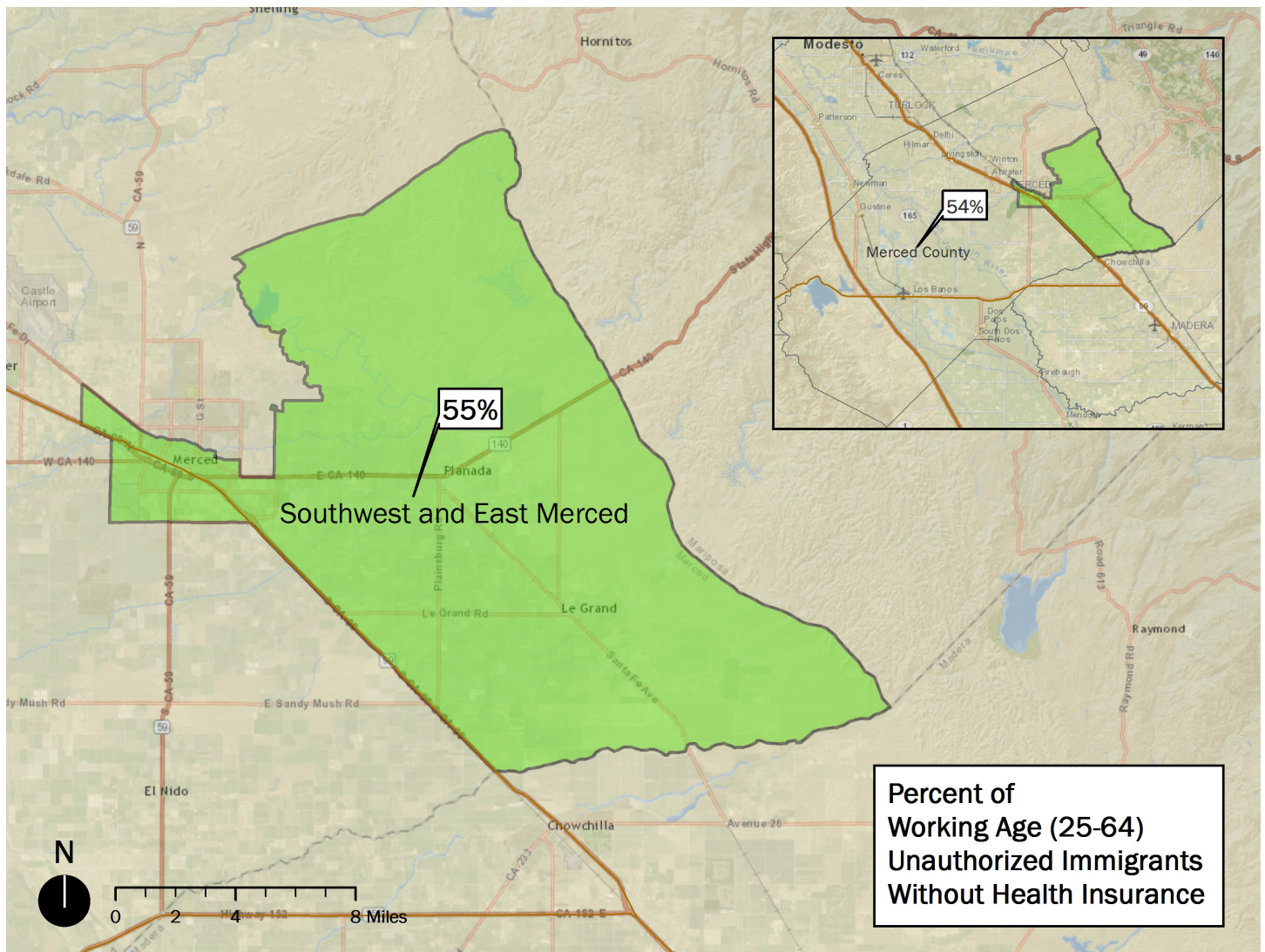


UNAUTHORIZED AND UNINSURED

SOUTHWEST AND EAST MERCED AND MERCED COUNTY

Enrico A. Marcelli and Manuel Pastor
San Diego State University and the University of Southern California



SOUTHWEST AND EAST MERCED AND MERCED COUNTY

Acknowledgements

Thanks to The California Endowment for funding this research and to Nexi Delgado, Louisa Holmes, Rhonda Ortiz, Genesis Reyes, Alejandro Sanchez-Lopez, and Jared Sanchez for their assistance in generating this fact sheet. Results were generated using 2001 and 2012 Los Angeles County Mexican Immigrant Health & Legal Status Survey (LAC-MIHLSS II & III) and 2008-2012 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample (ACS PUMS) data. We would like to thank the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA) for their assistance with designing and implementing the 2001 and 2012 LAC-MIHLSS. The strategy to generate estimates of the unauthorized is explained in detail in Enrico A. Marcelli, Manuel Pastor, and Steven P. Wallace, *Who's In? Who's Out? Immigrant Access to Health Insurance in The California Endowment's 14 Building Healthy Communities and Surrounding Counties by Legal Status*. Los Angeles, CA: USC Center for the Study of Immigrant Integration (CSII), forthcoming 2015.

Why is this fact sheet important?

Southwest and East Merced is one of 14 sites supported by The California Endowment under its Building Healthy Communities (BHC) initiative. While BHC is focused on the broad social determinants of health – including improved land use, access to healthy food, and youth development – one key challenge for many residents of the BHC communities is access to medical insurance. This is especially true for unauthorized immigrants who are explicitly excluded from the insurance exchanges and Medi-Cal insurance expansion of the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). While insurance coverage is a key issue for unauthorized immigrants, there is also evidence that maintaining a large population of uninsured residents harms others in terms of both economic and community health – thus, it matters for all Californians.

How many unauthorized immigrants live here?

We estimate that unauthorized immigrants represent 10 percent of Southwest and East Merced's estimated 61,000 residents, similar to Merced County as a whole. Furthermore, an estimated 23 percent of all children (76 percent of whom are U.S. citizens) residing in Southwest and East Merced have at least one unauthorized parent. At the same time, unauthorized immigrants are often deeply rooted in their communities – in Southwest and East Merced, about half have resided in the United States for a decade (10 years).

How do the unauthorized fare economically and socially?

The Southwest and East Merced BHC site, like the rest of the county, has high levels of poverty, with the poverty rate for unauthorized immigrants over 20 percent higher than that of the native born. Also, about 60 percent of the unauthorized who are at least five years old do not speak English well, often limiting their social and economic status. For example, the unauthorized are often working and poor – those who work full-time but toil in low-wage industries and occupations with limited chances of economic mobility and limited access to employer-based health insurance.

How does this unauthorized population compare to the surrounding county?

The unauthorized in Southwest and East Merced share many characteristics with unauthorized immigrants in the rest of the county – most notably, high poverty and very low homeownership rates compared to the native born. The ethno-racial makeup of the undocumented in the area is also mirrored at the county level; nearly all of the undocumented in both the site and county are Latino, with a small share of Asian immigrants. The similarities between the site and the county provide an opportunity to build countywide alliances among immigrant communities and build on shared experiences throughout the region.

What is the state of health insurance coverage among unauthorized immigrants in the community?

To profile the relative access to medical insurance of the unauthorized, we estimate the percentage of residents age 25-64 years old with any type of insurance (for example, employer-sponsored, Medi-Cal, military) by nativity and legal status. This age range is chosen for comparison because it is conventional – specifically, those under 25 years of age are more likely to be covered by their parents and those older than 64 qualify for Medicare. Consistent with previous studies, unauthorized immigrants have very low medical insurance coverage: only around 45 percent of this working age population is covered in Southwest and East Merced – rates far below the native born (82 percent) and similar to the average rate for unauthorized adults in the county (46 percent). The most prevalent type of medical insurance coverage is employer sponsored, but still, only 20 percent of the unauthorized have coverage through employers – a figure identical to that of the unauthorized in the county as a whole.

TOTAL POPULATION	60,911		CHILD POPULATION (< 18 YEARS OLD)	18,537	
Nativity and Legal Status			Nativity and Legal Status		
U.S.-born (U.S. Citizen)	44,753	73%	U.S.-born	17,110	92%
Foreign-born ("Immigrant")	16,158	27%	Immigrant	1,427	8%
Naturalized Immigrant (U.S. Citizen)	5,733	9%	Unauthorized Immigrant	913	5%
Authorized Immigrant (Non-U.S. Citizen)	4,416	7%	Resides with at Least One Immigrant Parent⁴	9,424	52%
Unauthorized Immigrant (Non-U.S. Citizen)	6,009	10%	of those children, share US-born	8,015	85%
Female (For Each Nativity Group)	31,470	52%	Resides with at Least One Unauthorized Immigrant Parent⁴	4,122	23%
U.S.-born	23,389	52%	of those children, share US-born	3,127	76%
Immigrant	8,081	50%	Child Poverty (Family Income < 150% of Poverty Line)⁴	8,933	50%
Naturalized Immigrant	2,892	50%	Resides with ≥ 1 U.S.-born Parent	4,151	41%
Authorized Immigrant	1,988	45%	Resides with ≥ 1 Immigrant Parent	5,339	57%
Unauthorized Immigrant	3,201	53%	Resides with ≥ 1 Naturalized Parent	1,580	40%
Ethno-Racial Group			Resides with ≥ 1 Authorized Immigrant Parent	1,936	54%
White, Non-Latino	19,997	33%	Resides with ≥ 1 Unauthorized Immigrant Parent	3,032	74%
Latino (Any Race)	32,271	53%	UNAUTHORIZED IMMIGRANT POPULATION	6,009	10%
Asian, Non-Latino	5,049	8%	Top Five Countries of Origin	5,863	98%
Black, Non-Latino	2,002	3%	Mexico	4,943	82%
Other, Non-Latino	1,592	3%	India	471	8%
Speaks English Well (Among Those Age ≥ 5 Years Old)¹	48,845	87%	Guatemala	189	3%
Immigrant	9,013	56%	Philippines	171	3%
Naturalized Immigrant	4,423	77%	El Salvador	89	1%
Authorized Immigrant	2,215	51%	Female	3,201	53%
Unauthorized Immigrant	2,375	40%	Ethno-Racial Group		
Homeownership	9,628	51%	Latino (Any Race)	5,230	87%
U.S.-born	6,642	53%	Asian, Non-Latino	600	10%
Immigrant	2,986	47%	Other (White, Black, Other Non-Latino)	179	3%
Naturalized Immigrant	1,578	62%	Age and Time in Country (Medians)		
Authorized Immigrant	1,009	50%	Age	32 yrs.	
Unauthorized Immigrant	399	22%	Age First Arrived in Country	21 yrs.	
Poverty (Family Income < 150% of Poverty Line)²	23,676	39%	Years Residing in the USA	10 yrs.	
U.S.-born	16,490	37%	Labor Force Participation (Age 18-64 Years Old)	3,611	73%
Immigrant	7,186	44%	Male Participation	2,171	95%
Naturalized Immigrant	1,678	29%	of which, share employed	1,948	90%
Authorized Immigrant	1,969	45%	of employed, share full-time	1,784	92%
Unauthorized Immigrant	3,539	59%	Female Participation	1,440	55%
INSURANCE/COVERAGE FOR WORKING AGE POPULATION (25-64)			of which, share employed	1,145	80%
Has Medical Insurance Coverage	22,245	76%	of employed, share full-time	727	63%
U.S.-born	14,906	82%	Top 5 Industries	2,339	76%
Immigrant	7,339	65%	Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	1,195	39%
Naturalized Immigrant	3,534	85%	Manufacturing	384	12%
Authorized Immigrant	2,011	65%	Business Services	312	10%
Unauthorized Immigrant	1,794	45%	Food & Recreational Services	267	9%
Has Employer-Sponsored Medical Insurance Coverage	12,794	44%	Retail Trade	181	6%
U.S.-born	8,718	48%	Top 5 Occupations	2,575	83%
Immigrant	4,076	36%	Farming, Forestry & Fishing	1,413	46%
Naturalized Immigrant	2,145	51%	Food, Health, Protective & Other Service	677	22%
Authorized Immigrant	1,133	36%	Precision, Craft & Repair	167	5%
Unauthorized Immigrant	798	20%	Executive, Administrative & Managerial	163	5%
Has Low-Income Government Insurance or Assistance (e.g., Medi-Cal)³	4,461	15%	Construction	155	5%
U.S.-born	2,519	14%	Annual Earnings among Full-Time Workers (Median)	\$18,000	
Immigrant	1,942	17%	Male	\$20,000	
Naturalized Immigrant	644	15%	Female	\$12,000	
Authorized Immigrant	538	17%	Annual Earnings among Part-Time Workers (Median)	*	
Unauthorized Immigrant	760	19%	Male	*	
			Female	*	

Notes

* indicates that the underlying number of observations is too small to make a reliable calculation of the variable in question.

¹ Virtually all U.S.-born respondents in the ACS either report speaking English very well or speak no other language but English at home.

² These are computed at the individual level using the ACS variable indicating the ratio of family income to the poverty line by family type.

³ Employer and low-income insurance coverage do not add up to total coverage which also includes private purchased insurance, veteran coverage, etc.

⁴ The denominator for these computations is the number of children residing with at least one parent.

TOTAL POPULATION	255,508		CHILD POPULATION (< 18 YEARS OLD)	80,164	
Nativity and Legal Status			Nativity and Legal Status		
U.S.-born (U.S. Citizen)	186,993	73%	U.S.-born	75,599	94%
Foreign-born ("Immigrant")	68,515	27%	Immigrant	5,015	6%
Naturalized Immigrant (U.S. Citizen)	23,817	9%	Unauthorized Immigrant	3,136	4%
Authorized Immigrant (Non-U.S. Citizen)	20,408	8%	Resides with at Least One Immigrant Parent⁴	43,011	54%
Unauthorized Immigrant (Non-U.S. Citizen)	24,290	10%	of those children, share U.S.-born	38,067	89%
Female (For Each Nativity Group)	127,438	50%	Resides with at Least One Unauthorized Immigrant Parent⁴	19,826	25%
U.S.-born	94,731	51%	of those children, share U.S.-born	16,414	83%
Immigrant	32,707	48%	Child Poverty (Family Income < 150% of Poverty Line)⁴	40,619	52%
Naturalized Immigrant	12,060	51%	Resides with ≥ 1 U.S.-born Parent	18,658	43%
Authorized Immigrant	9,234	45%	Resides with ≥ 1 Immigrant Parent	24,258	57%
Unauthorized Immigrant	11,413	47%	Resides with ≥ 1 Naturalized Parent	6,528	38%
Ethno-Racial Group			Resides with ≥ 1 Authorized Immigrant Parent	7,883	54%
White, Non-Latino	79,923	31%	Resides with ≥ 1 Unauthorized Immigrant Parent	14,235	72%
Latino (Any Race)	142,193	56%			
Asian, Non-Latino	19,109	7%	UNAUTHORIZED IMMIGRANT POPULATION	24,290	10%
Black, Non-Latino	7,852	3%	Top Five Countries of Origin	23,723	98%
Other, Non-Latino	6,431	3%	Mexico	21,450	88%
Speaks English Well (Among Those Age ≥ 5 Years Old)¹	199,809	86%	India	1,016	4%
Immigrant	36,992	54%	Philippines	502	2%
Naturalized Immigrant	17,790	75%	Guatemala	378	2%
Authorized Immigrant	9,853	48%	El Salvador	377	2%
Unauthorized Immigrant	9,349	39%	Female	11,413	47%
Homeownership	40,245	53%	Ethno-Racial Group		
U.S.-born	27,499	56%	Latino (Any Race)	22,302	92%
Immigrant	12,746	47%	Asian, Non-Latino	1,603	7%
Naturalized Immigrant	7,626	66%	Other (White, Black, Other Non-Latino)	385	2%
Authorized Immigrant	3,634	46%	Age and Time in Country (Medians)		
Unauthorized Immigrant	1,486	20%	Age	31 yrs.	
Poverty (Family Income < 150% of Poverty Line)²	100,249	39%	Age First Arrived in Country	19 yrs.	
U.S.-born	70,416	38%	Years Residing in the USA	11 yrs.	
Immigrant	29,833	44%	Labor Force Participation (Age 18-64 Years Old)	14,834	72%
Naturalized Immigrant	6,331	27%	Male Participation	10,115	93%
Authorized Immigrant	8,498	42%	of which, share employed	8,988	89%
Unauthorized Immigrant	15,004	62%	of employed, share full-time	8,315	93%
			Female Participation	4,719	48%
			of which, share employed	3,627	77%
			of employed, share full-time	2,539	70%
			Top 5 Industries	7,991	78%
			Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	5,457	43%
			Manufacturing	1,315	10%
			Construction	1,184	9%
			Retail Trade	971	8%
			Food & Recreational Services	900	7%
			Top 5 Occupatlons	10,662	85%
			Farming, Forestry & Fishing	5,529	42%
			Food, Health, Protective & Other Service	2,030	16%
			Construction	1,140	9%
			Transportation & Material Moving	1,121	9%
			Precision, Craft & Repair	1,112	9%
			Annual Earnings among Full-Time Workers (Median)	\$18,000	
			Male	\$20,000	
			Female	\$14,000	
			Annual Earnings among Part-Time Workers (Median)	\$7,500	
			Male	\$10,200	
			Female	\$7,000	
INSURANCE/COVERAGE FOR WORKING AGE POPULATION (25-64)					
Has Medical Insurance Coverage	87,641	72%			
U.S.-born	56,974	81%			
Immigrant	30,667	61%			
Naturalized Immigrant	13,685	78%			
Authorized Immigrant	8,833	58%			
Unauthorized Immigrant	8,149	46%			
Has Employer-Sponsored Medical Insurance Coverage	50,694	42%			
U.S.-born	33,847	48%			
Immigrant	16,847	33%			
Naturalized Immigrant	8,219	47%			
Authorized Immigrant	5,145	34%			
Unauthorized Immigrant	3,483	20%			
Has Low-Income Government Insurance or Assistance (e.g., Medi-Cal)³	18,278	15%			
U.S.-born	9,447	13%			
Immigrant	8,831	18%			
Naturalized Immigrant	2,538	14%			
Authorized Immigrant	2,112	14%			
Unauthorized Immigrant	4,181	24%			

Notes

- 1 Virtually all U.S.-born respondents in the ACS either report speaking English very well or speak no other language but English at home.
- 2 These are computed at the individual level using the ACS variable indicating the ratio of family income to the poverty line by family type.
- 3 Employer and low-income insurance coverage do not add up to total coverage which also includes private purchased insurance, veteran coverage, etc.
- 4 The denominator for these computations is the number of children residing with at least one parent.