



## PROFILES OF CALIFORNIA'S UNEMPLOYED

The Brookings Institution, a nonprofit public policy think tank, recently released a report, “Meet the Out-Of-Work: Local Profiles of Jobless Adults and Strategies to Connect Them to Employment,” which examines the local unemployed population in more than 100 jurisdictions around the country, including 17 California cities and counties. The authors use a novel statistical analysis of U.S. Census data to divide the out-of-work population into “distinct categories that reflect some of the multi-dimensional challenges out-of-work individuals face, based on factors such as educational attainment, age, work history, disability, English language proficiency and family status.” Their approach also seeks to capture those who would like to work but haven’t actively searched for work in the last month, a segment generally not reflected in traditional unemployment measures.

Within the overall out-of-work population, the authors describe seven groups,<sup>1</sup> suggesting each has different characteristics and reasons for being out of work that could help inform intervention policy decisions. The groups vary in size and geographical distribution. An interactive data tool [here](#) allows a deeper exploration of group characteristics and geographic distributions within each locality. The table on the next page summarizes select information from the 17 jurisdictions in California included in the analysis. Additional details can be found [here](#).

The report also includes a review of possible interventions and an assessment of which may be best suited to each of the defined groups. It highlights eight workforce development approaches demonstrated through research to be effective. The recommended approaches include: bridge programs, transitional job programs, social enterprises that hire those with limited work experience, job search assistance and counseling, sector-based initiatives, two-generation programs addressing the educational needs of low-income children, apprenticeships, and the Accelerated Study in Associate Program offered by the City University of New York.

**Written by Ken Spence and Megan Lane.** The California Senate Office of Research is a nonpartisan office charged with serving the research needs of the California State Senate and assisting Senate members and committees with the development of effective public policy. The office was established by the Senate Rules Committee in 1969. For more information, please visit <http://sor.senate.ca.gov> or call (916) 651-1500.

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<sup>1</sup> (1) Young (under age 35), less educated, and diverse; (2) less educated, prime-age people (ages 25–54); (3) diverse, less educated, and entering retirement; (4) motivated and moderately educated younger people (with the highest rates of actively looking for work); (5) moderately educated older people; (6) highly educated and engaged younger people; and (7) highly educated, high-income older people.

## Jobless Adults in California\*

County	Out of Work	Share of Those Out of Work							
		Looking for Work	Limited English Proficiency	Caring for Children	Less Than High School Education	Largest Out-of-Work Group		Second Largest Out-of-Work Group	
Alameda	13.7%	31.8%	34.2%	27.6%	21.6%	Less educated, prime age	34.5%	Highly educated, high income, older	20.5%
Contra Costa	14.4%	32.3%	27.0%	30.1%	22.3%	Less educated, prime age	33.5%	Motivated, moderately educated, younger	20.5%
Fresno	20.5%	33.4%	35.4%	40.6%	38.5%	Less educated, prime age	41.9%	Young, less educated, diverse	24.9%
Kern	20.0%	30.5%	31.3%	40.6%	36.1%	Less educated, prime age	39.5%	Motivated, moderately educated, younger	19.8%
Los Angeles (Excluding City)	17.4%	29.1%	40.2%	29.9%	30.8%	Less educated, prime age	57.8%	Motivated, moderately educated, younger	17.4%
Los Angeles (City)	17.7%	31.5%	43.5%	30.0%	35.4%	Less educated, prime age	46.8%	Highly educated, engaged, younger	14.4%
Orange	14.6%	26.7%	37.9%	28.9%	27.1%	Less educated, prime age	37.9%	Moderately educated, older	20.0%
Riverside	19.6%	31.9%	27.1%	33.8%	28.8%	Less educated, prime age	41.1%	Moderately educated older people	20.1%
Sacramento	16.2%	33.9%	24.3%	30.8%	23.6%	Less educated, prime age	52.4%	Motivated, moderately educated, younger	22.7%
San Bernardino	20.2%	29.9%	29.2%	36.1%	32.3%	Less educated, prime age	33.3%	Motivated, moderately educated, younger	21.4%
San Diego	16.1%	27.5%	27.5%	29.4%	23.2%	Less educated, prime age	33.6%	Moderately educated, older	21.3%
San Francisco (City)	11.6%	37.0%	32.5%	16.0%	19.9%	Highly educated, engaged, younger	29.2%	Less educated, prime age	25.9%
San Joaquin	19.6%	32.8%	35.4%	37.7%	34.5%	Less educated, prime age	33.3%	Motivated, moderately educated, younger	21.4%
San Mateo	11.6%	30.1%	30.3%	20.6%	18.5%	Less educated, prime age	30.2%	Moderately educated, older	22.0%
Santa Clara	13.4%	32.7%	37.1%	26.8%	21.2%	Less educated, prime age	28.0%	Highly educated, engaged, younger	21.9%
Stanislaus	21.0%	40.2%	33.0%	40.5%	33.3%	Less educated, prime age	36.3%	Young, less educated, diverse	20.0%
Ventura	14.2%	33.4%	28.4%	28.2%	27.1%	Less educated, prime age	30.9%	Diverse, less educated, eyeing retirement	19.4%

\* Percentages reflect share of the 25- to 64-year-old noninstitutionalized population in each jurisdiction. Estimates based on 2013–15 American Community Survey data from the U.S. Census available from the Brookings Institution online dashboard: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/meet-the-out-of-work/>.