

# The Civil Rights Project



*Proyecto Derechos Civiles*

**\*\*\* NEWS RELEASE \*\*\***

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## **UCLA Report Shows Demographic Divide Intensifying in Southern California, Between Regions and Across Race**

**LOS ANGELES--**The Civil Rights Project/*Proyecto Derechos Civiles* at UCLA today released a report examining the profound demographic transformation of the Southern California region. "*Vast Changes and an Uneasy Future: Racial and Regional Inequality in Southern California*" finds the geographic divide is strongest between the coastal and inland portions of the region, with increasingly divergent fortunes accentuated by the economic shock of the Great Recession.

The two Inland Empire Counties of Riverside and San Bernardino have undergone the most dramatic demographic changes over the past decades. Most notably, in the last 40 years Riverside County's African American population increased by almost 600%.

The report also documents the intensifying generational gap in racial composition between an older non-Hispanic white population and a young minority population.

The report notes that while there were similar numbers of Hispanic and white children (ages 0-14) in 1990 across Southern California, by 2010 there was over 1.3 million more Hispanic children, a 51.5% increase.

The growth in population of young people, which the region has counted on for many years to feed its economic engine, appears to be subsiding, as birth rates across the region, and including Mexico, continue to decline. The Mexican immigration to the United States—the largest in history from a single country—has come to a near standstill.

Using data from the U.S. Census Bureau's ongoing American Community Survey, the report reveals that from its peak in 2003, the number of children

in Southern California declined by an estimated 275,000 by 2010. Meanwhile, the region's Latino youth population far outnumbers any other racial/ethnic group, and this demographic feature is at the forefront of the region's continual transformation.

"Based on age structure and fertility rates, the region's diversity is going to keep accelerating," says Graduate Student Researcher Kfir Mordechay, who wrote the report. "An equally important factor is the coming wave of retirements, mainly by white boomers, that will fuel a need for first and second-generation immigrants to help take their place in the workforce."

If we are to become a player in the future of the global economy, the report says, California needs to make sure its immigrant population has the skills necessary to compete in an increasingly global economy.

Major highlights in this report include:

- While 47.8% of the total population over 40 years of age is white in urbanized Southern CA, 30.2% of the total is Hispanic. By contrast, 25.8% of the total population under 40 is white, while 48% is Hispanic.
- Since 1970 there has been a more than two million decrease in white residents in LA County.
- Between 2000 and 2010 Orange County's white toddler population (ages 0-5) declined from 36.5% to 28.1% of the total toddler population. During the same period, the Inland Empire Counties of Riverside and San Bernardino saw their white toddler population decrease by 28%.
- Since the beginning of the Great Recession (2008), Los Angeles County's legal migration has declined more than 10%, with the sharpest declines occurring in Riverside (over 18%) and San Bernardino (over 13%).

This report focuses on the Southern California region, one of the largest areas of continuous urbanization in the world, stretching from the northern suburbs of Los Angeles County, down through large and rapidly growing communities in Orange County and San Diego, and across the northern frontier of Mexico.

The report reveals the depth and scope of the demographic shifts within our social and urban landscapes, due to international immigration, changes in birth rates, and internal migration patterns.

Author Mordechay states, "The hope is that this report will be instrumental in focusing attention on the remedies and leadership needed to meet the challenges of our evolving society, so that all groups can benefit from the opportunities available within our communities."

This study is part of a multi-dimensional analysis by the Civil Rights Project and examines the Southern California's profound inequalities, the divisions that exist along racial, ethnic, linguistic, and social class lines, and the steps necessary to equalize opportunity.

CRP Co-Director Gary Orfield commented: "We are all connected in a vast web of freeways, commerce and media, but we don't have adequate policies or even serious discussions about how we include the new majority in the region's opportunities. Either we expand our vision or we passively accept the shrinkage of our common future."

[The project's initial studies](#) on Southern California's mega-region looked at educational and economic opportunities across the region. Future research will examine housing opportunity, health care inequalities, and educational opportunities.

Find *Vast Changes and an Uneasy Future* [here](#) or at <http://tinyurl.com/prm46v9>.

#### **About the Civil Rights Project at UCLA**

Founded in 1996 by former Harvard professors [Gary Orfield](#) and Christopher Edley, Jr., The Civil Rights Project/*Proyecto Derechos Civiles* is now co-directed by Orfield and [Patricia Gándara](#), professors at UCLA. Its mission is to create a new generation of research in social science and law on the critical issues of civil rights and equal opportunity for racial and ethnic groups in the United States. It has monitored the success of American schools in equalizing opportunity and has been the authoritative source of segregation statistics. CRP has commissioned more than 400 [studies](#), published more than 15 [books](#) and issued numerous reports from authors at universities and research centers across the country. The U.S. Supreme Court, in its 2003 *Grutter v. Bollinger* decision upholding affirmative action, and in Justice Breyer's dissent (joined by three other Justices) to its 2007 *Parents Involved* decision, cited the Civil Rights Project's research.

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