College readiness and access are the first steps to college success. Access to a rigorous college preparatory curriculum is not universal and differences exist in who goes to college and where they go based on demographic characteristics, such as race/ethnicity. Homeless, foster youth, English language learners, and students with disabilities also face tremendous barriers in accessing and succeeding in college.

Moreover, the postsecondary education system’s primary focus on the traditional student’s pathway (one who matriculates from high school directly into college) limits opportunities for older adults interested in higher education to successfully complete a postsecondary credential.

The inequitable access to postsecondary education leads to significant differences in the region’s educational attainment by race/ethnicity across regions.
**Highest Educational Attainment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Statewide</th>
<th>Highest &amp; Lowest Regions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associates</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No College</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Where Do Students Go to College?**

- **Community Colleges**: 66%
- **CSUs**: 14%
- **UCs**: 7%
- **Private, Nonprofit**: 6%
- **Private, For-Profit**: 7%

**Which Adults (25+) Intend to Enroll in College?**

- **Black**: 67%
- **Latinx**: 60%
- **Native American or Alaska Native**: 53%
- **Pacific Islander**: 49%
- **Asian**: 45%
- **White**: 24%

**Which Adults (25+) Intend to Enroll in College?**

- **Male**: 65%
- **Female**: 61%
- **Black**: 64%
- **Latinx**: 61%
- **Asian**: 61%
- **Native American or Alaska Native**: 60%
- **Pacific Islander**: 61%
- **Male**: 66%
- **Female**: 65%

**Online Enrollment Rate**

- **Statewide**: 22%
- **Highest & Lowest Regions**: 10%

**What Are the Most Commonly Completed Programs at Colleges?**

**Certificates**

- Services: 28%
- Science & Mathematics: 27%
- Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences: 25%
- Business: 7%
- Other: 5%

**Associate’s Degree**

- Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences: 39%
- Science & Mathematics: 13%
- Business: 13%
- Other: 12%
- Services: 9%

**Bachelor’s Degree**

- Arts, Humanities, & Social Sciences: 25%
- Business: 18%
- Science & Mathematics: 11%
- Engineering & Computer Sciences: 10%
- Biological, Agricultural, & Environmental Sciences: 9%

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1. The percentage of college students enrolled in the fall term at colleges in the region who are enrolled exclusively in online courses. Note that these students may live in other regions, states, or countries.
Workforce participation and employment rates, which vary by race and ethnicity, are key measures that outline opportunities for economic mobility. However, employment rates don’t accurately reflect the amount of hours Californians work and may paint a more robust picture of employment than the reality. For example, residents may have a job but seek more hours, or, on the other hand, some residents may work over 41 hours a week and struggle to earn a living wage. Access to employment that pays a living wage is critical.

PROSPERITY

It is impossible to quantify prosperity, but markers like health insurance, homeownership, and economic development signify pathways to prosperity. Mechanisms that reflect stability, build wealth, promote health, and enrich culture shape a community’s ability to thrive. Similarly, wage gaps and communities without critical businesses demonstrate areas that need additional attention to create equitable outcomes.

1. The percentage of households who earn enough to support a family of 2 adults and 2 school-aged children, adjusted by county-level cost of living.
2. The community diversity rate estimates the probability that any two individuals selected at random would be of different races or ethnicities.