



BY ALISSA ANDERSON

Few California Communities Have Fully Made Up Ground Lost Due to the Great Recession

The share of Californians facing severe economic hardship remains higher than at the onset of the Great Recession, in 2007, in many communities throughout the state. Statewide, 15.3 percent of residents struggled to get by in 2015 – the most recent year for which data are available – based on the US Census Bureau’s official poverty measure. This was 2.9 percentage points higher than in 2007 (12.4 percent), when the state poverty rate fell to a recent low.¹ In addition, 21.2 percent of California children lived in poverty in 2015 – 3.9 percentage points higher than in 2007 (17.3 percent). Specifically, the latest Census figures show that:

- **Poverty remained more widespread in 2015 than at the onset of the recession in 30 out of the 40 counties for which data are available** (see Map 1 on page 2). This is especially notable given that 2015 marked the sixth year since the end of the national recession. There was no statistically significant difference in poverty rates between 2007 and 2015 in the remaining 10 counties for which data are available.
- **Three counties stand out with severely higher poverty rates.** In Kings, Madera, and Sutter counties the 2015 poverty rate was more than 8.0 percentage points higher than in 2007.
- **Another 11 counties had poverty rates that substantially exceeded 2007 levels.** These counties, which include both Inland Empire counties and several counties in the Central Valley, had 2015 poverty rates that were between 4.1 and 8.0 percentage points higher than in 2007.
- **In 16 counties, poverty rates modestly exceeded 2007 levels.** These counties had 2015 poverty rates that exceeded 2007 levels by up to 4.0 percentage points. Notably, these include counties, such as San Francisco and San Mateo, where the local job market has been booming for several years.

Also, child poverty rates in 19 counties were significantly higher than in 2007 (see Map 2 on page 3).² Specifically:

- **Six counties stand out with severely higher child poverty rates.** In Kings, Madera, Merced, and Sutter counties the 2015 child poverty rate was *more than 12.0 percentage points higher* than in 2007, and in San Bernardino and Stanislaus counties the 2015 child poverty rate was between 8.1 and 12.0 percentage points higher than in 2007.
- **Another nine counties had child poverty rates that were substantially higher than in 2007.** These counties, which include parts of the Central Valley, central coast, and southern California, had 2015 child poverty rates that were between 4.1 and 8.0 percentage points higher than in 2007.
- **In four counties, child poverty rates were modestly higher than in 2007.** Los Angeles, San Diego, San Mateo, and Sonoma counties had 2015 child poverty rates up to 4.0 percentage points higher than in 2007.

MAP 1

Poverty Rates Remain High in Many Parts of the State

Percentage Point Difference Between 2007 and 2015 Poverty Rates

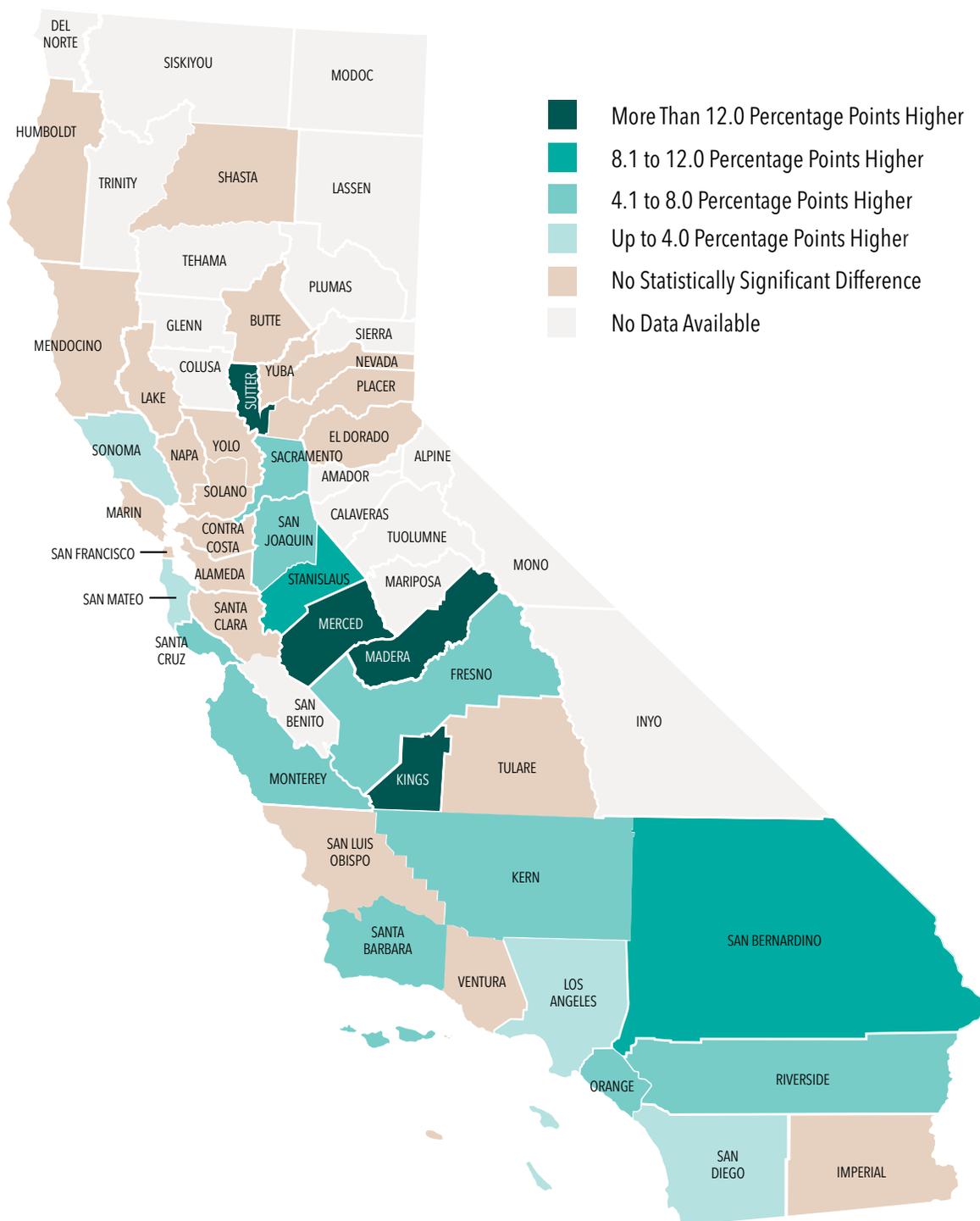


Source: Budget Center analysis of US Census Bureau, American Community Survey data

MAP 2

Child Poverty Rates Remain High in Many Parts of the State

Percentage Point Difference Between 2007 and 2015 Child Poverty Rates



Source: Budget Center analysis of US Census Bureau, American Community Survey data

In 30 Counties, the Poverty Rates in 2015 Remained Higher Than in 2007, at the Onset of the Great Recession

	Change in Poverty Rate			Poverty Rate		
	2007 to 2015	2007 to 2012	2012 to 2015	2007	2012	2015
California	2.9	4.6	-1.7	12.4%	17.0%	15.3%
Bay Area						
Alameda County	0.4	2.1	-1.7	11.0%	13.1%	11.4%
Contra Costa County	1.4	2.3	-0.9	8.9%	11.2%	10.3%
Marin County	0.7	1.5	-0.8	6.4%	7.9%	7.1%
Napa County	1.2	-0.7	1.9	9.6%	8.9%	10.8%
San Francisco County	1.8	4.5	-2.7	10.5%	15.0%	12.3%
San Mateo County	2.6	2.5	0.1	5.9%	8.4%	8.5%
Santa Clara County	-0.1	2.5	-2.6	8.3%	10.8%	8.2%
Solano County	2.5	5.0	-2.5	9.6%	14.6%	12.1%
Sonoma County	2.2	3.2	-1.0	8.9%	12.1%	11.1%
Central Coast						
Monterey County	3.7	6.8	-3.1	11.6%	18.4%	15.3%
San Luis Obispo County	3.1	1.9	1.2	11.8%	13.7%	14.9%
Santa Barbara County	3.8	4.4	-0.6	11.9%	16.3%	15.7%
Santa Cruz County	6.0	3.3	2.7	10.1%	13.4%	16.1%
Greater Sacramento						
El Dorado County	-0.3	-0.4	0.1	9.0%	8.6%	8.7%
Placer County	2.9	3.6	-0.7	6.1%	9.7%	9.0%
Sacramento County	4.8	7.5	-2.7	12.1%	19.6%	16.9%
Sutter County	8.7	10.6	-1.9	9.9%	20.5%	18.6%
Yolo County	3.6	3.3	0.3	14.7%	18.0%	18.3%
Inland Empire						
Riverside County	4.5	6.1	-1.6	11.7%	17.8%	16.2%
San Bernardino County	7.2	8.6	-1.4	11.8%	20.4%	19.0%
Los Angeles Coastal Region						
Los Angeles County	1.9	4.4	-2.5	14.7%	19.1%	16.6%
Orange County	3.8	4.0	-0.2	8.9%	12.9%	12.7%
Ventura County	1.1	3.0	-1.9	8.5%	11.5%	9.6%
Northern California						
Humboldt County	4.3	5.9	-1.6	16.7%	22.6%	21.0%
Lake County	3.9	11.1	-7.2	15.5%	26.6%	19.4%
Mendocino County	6.3	7.3	-1.0	14.9%	22.2%	21.2%
Nevada County	4.0	2.2	1.8	9.4%	11.6%	13.4%
Northern Sacramento Valley						
Butte County	5.0	5.2	-0.2	16.8%	22.0%	21.8%
Shasta County	6.8	3.8	3.0	12.8%	16.6%	19.6%
Yuba County	2.0	2.5	-0.5	21.2%	23.7%	23.2%

San Diego Region

Imperial County	3.5	1.1	2.4	21.6%	22.7%	25.1%
San Diego County	2.7	3.9	-1.2	11.1%	15.0%	13.8%

San Joaquin Valley

Fresno County	5.3	8.4	-3.1	20.0%	28.4%	25.3%
Kern County	3.8	5.7	-1.9	18.1%	23.8%	21.9%
Kings County	8.5	6.1	2.4	15.1%	21.2%	23.6%
Madera County	8.9	9.1	-0.2	14.5%	23.6%	23.4%
Merced County	7.3	4.9	2.4	19.4%	24.3%	26.7%
San Joaquin County	3.3	4.3	-1.0	14.1%	18.4%	17.4%
Stanislaus County	6.2	6.8	-0.6	13.5%	20.3%	19.7%
Tulare County	3.9	6.7	-2.8	23.7%	30.4%	27.6%

Note: Highlighting indicates changes that are statistically significant at the 90 percent confidence level. Data are not available for 18 of California's 58 counties.

Source: Budget Center analysis of US Census Bureau, American Community Survey data

In 19 Counties, the Child Poverty Rates in 2015 Remained Higher Than in 2007, at the Onset of the Great Recession

	Change in Child Poverty Rate			Child Poverty Rate		
	2007 to 2015	2007 to 2012	2012 to 2015	2007	2012	2015
California	3.9	6.5	-2.6	17.3%	23.8%	21.2%
Bay Area						
Alameda County	-0.5	3.3	-3.8	14.1%	17.4%	13.6%
Contra Costa County	1.1	2.8	-1.7	12.1%	14.9%	13.2%
Marin County	1.2	2.9	-1.7	6.2%	9.1%	7.4%
Napa County	-0.7	-3.0	2.3	13.9%	10.9%	13.2%
San Francisco County	0.3	4.2	-3.9	10.8%	15.0%	11.1%
San Mateo County	3.3	4.6	-1.3	7.0%	11.6%	10.3%
Santa Clara County	-1.7	2.4	-4.1	10.1%	12.5%	8.4%
Solano County	3.4	6.8	-3.4	13.0%	19.8%	16.4%
Sonoma County	4.0	4.3	-0.3	10.6%	14.9%	14.6%
Central Coast						
Monterey County	7.5	12.6	-5.1	15.6%	28.2%	23.1%
San Luis Obispo County	4.9	5.4	-0.5	9.7%	15.1%	14.6%
Santa Barbara County	7.5	7.0	0.5	13.5%	20.5%	21.0%
Santa Cruz County	7.2	1.6	5.6	12.4%	14.0%	19.6%
Greater Sacramento						
El Dorado County	-1.3	-3.0	1.7	13.1%	10.1%	11.8%
Placer County	3.2	7.5	-4.3	6.3%	13.8%	9.5%
Sacramento County	5.3	9.7	-4.4	17.4%	27.1%	22.7%
Sutter County	12.1	10.1	2.0	13.3%	23.4%	25.4%
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Inland Empire						
Riverside County	6.9	9.0	-2.1	15.9%	24.9%	22.8%
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Northern California						
Humboldt County	3.3	11.5	-8.2	16.5%	28.0%	19.8%
Lake County	-8.1	1.1	-9.2	30.0%	31.1%	21.9%
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Nevada County	3.1	5.2	-2.1	10.7%	15.9%	13.8%
Northern Sacramento Valley						
Butte County	1.8	7.1	-5.3	19.6%	26.7%	21.4%
Shasta County	8.0	4.1	3.9	20.0%	24.1%	28.0%
Yuba County	5.3	2.1	3.2	30.4%	32.5%	35.7%

San Diego Region

Imperial County	2.5	3.7	-1.2	29.1%	32.8%	31.6%
San Diego County	2.6	4.7	-2.1	15.1%	19.8%	17.7%

San Joaquin Valley

Fresno County	7.5	11.4	-3.9	29.4%	40.8%	36.9%
Kern County	6.8	9.0	-2.2	25.1%	34.1%	31.9%
Kings County	13.4	10.4	3.0	19.3%	29.7%	32.7%
Madera County	15.0	18.2	-3.2	19.4%	37.6%	34.4%
Merced County	12.2	10.4	1.8	26.3%	36.7%	38.5%
San Joaquin County	5.3	5.5	-0.2	18.6%	24.1%	23.9%
Stanislaus County	9.8	9.8	0.0	17.9%	27.7%	27.7%
Tulare County	3.6	8.5	-4.9	33.4%	41.9%	37.0%

Note: Highlighting indicates changes that are statistically significant at the 90 percent confidence level. Data are not available for 18 of California's 58 counties.

Source: Budget Center analysis of US Census Bureau, American Community Survey data

¹ All poverty rates reported in this *Fact Sheet* come from the 2015 American Community Survey and are based on the US Census Bureau's official poverty measure. 2015 is the most recent year for which data are available. Changes in the poverty rates reported in this *Fact Sheet* are statistically significant at the 90 percent confidence level.

² There was no statistically significant difference in child poverty rates between 2007 and 2015 in the remaining 21 counties for which data are available.