
News Release

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Experts debut new research on housing demands, transportation impacts and more at demography summit

Major demographic trends, including new research findings on key patterns in generational housing choices, transportation demands and fertility rates, were the subject of discussion between some of the region's top economists and demographic experts Monday at the University of Southern California.

The 29th annual Demographic Workshop, hosted by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) and the USC Sol Price School of Public Policy, addressed the theme "Lasting Demographic Impacts after the Recovery," sharing analysis and insight on the region's shifting housing needs, transportation demands and economic revitalization in the wake of the Great Recession.

Alan Wapner, President of SCAG and Mayor pro Tem of Ontario, emphasized the importance of understanding population trends in planning for a growing region. "As our region of 19 million people rapidly expands, we will need our transportation system, housing supply and economic landscape to be ready to accommodate a population of 23 million, 24 million and beyond." It's vital, says Wapner, to utilize demographic information to anticipate those needs.

"We are in a critical time for transportation and housing planning in the region," said Hasan Ikhata, Executive Director of SCAG. "Conducting and sharing research on the forces shaping Southern California is key to the development of our Regional Transportation Plan, which provides a long-range blueprint for meeting our mobility needs and sustainability goals."

Specific topics addressed at the conference included:

- **Does transit development cause displacement?** Latest research uncovers new insights into the relationship between the development of new rail transit stations and the moving patterns of nearby households, showing that while new rail stations do slightly increase the move rate of nearby households, low- and lower-middle- income households are the least affected by these changes. And the households that do move don't go far, staying within their neighborhood or moving to a nearby one.
- **Effects of millennials and baby boomers making new housing choices** – New generation-based trends will have major consequences for transportation choices and housing needs in the region. Millennials are seeking greater stability, shaking off the supposition that they are unlikely to seek homeownership or settle in suburban areas, and baby boomers are retiring in record numbers with changing accommodation needs.

- **Housing supply has not kept pace with population and job growth** – Between 2010 and 2016, job growth in Southern California far outstripped housing development. In Los Angeles County in that time, 439,090 jobs were created, but only 100,602 housing units were permitted. During the same period, Orange County added 214,329 jobs were added, but only permitted 53,915 additional housing units. The Inland Empire added 235,612 jobs in that window of time, but permitted just 49,693 more units of housing.
- **The Regional Housing Needs Assessment** – An interactive roundtable discussion with housing policy specialists from SCAG and the California Department of Housing and Community Development discussed the upcoming cycle of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment, and the implications of new state legislation that add complexities to the program.
- **Changes and challenges for the 2020 Census** – Another roundtable discussion brought staff from the US Census Bureau to share details and answer questions about changes since the 2010 Census and the unique issues facing this Census – such as updated race and ethnicity definitions.

Other speakers included Dowell Myers, Director of the Population Dynamics Research Group at the Sol Price School; Joshua Schank, Chief Innovation Officer at the Los Angeles Metro Office of Extraordinary Innovation; Julie Lam, Director of the Los Angeles Regional Office of the U.S. Census Bureau; and Paul Taylor, Senior Fellow at Encore.org, who gave a keynote address on the question “When Will An Aging America Stop Mugging The Future?”

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About SCAG

SCAG is the nation’s largest metropolitan planning organization, representing six counties, 191 cities and more than 18 million residents. SCAG undertakes a variety of planning and policy initiatives to plan for a livable and sustainable Southern California now and in the future. For more information about SCAG’s regional efforts, please visit www.scag.ca.gov.