



Journal of Applied Sciences

ISSN 1812-5654

science
alert

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Review Article

Outstanding and Awareness Projects for the Homeless People in California: Hope for the World's Homeless

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Abstract

The United States of America is a federal state with a population of more than 340 million and around 89,000 national, state and local government units provide services to this population. The federal state is the central government and benefits the entire country, states and local communities from the services left to it by the constitution. The 50 states or federated states in the country are the basic administrative units. Each state, together with the local government structure it has established, is responsible for providing services to the people living within its borders. During the review study, information has been provided about the work of the "Institute of Local Governments" aimed at local homeless people in California, especially within the scope of the 'Metropolitan Management Area' studies in California and the distribution of funds allocated to this issue under California law. The activities and projects carried out in the context of the needs defined as belonging, privacy, supportive environment atmosphere, rehabilitation and socialization for homeless people in California will be exemplified in the research. California has been identified as a study area since it is one of the cities where the homelessness problem is experienced intensively. Homelessness is an international problem facing every major urban center in the world.

Key words: American federal government, local governments in the federal system, states, California county local government units, California Institute of Local Governments, homeless

Citation: Aki, Ö., 2024. Outstanding and awareness projects for the homeless people in California: Hope for the world's homeless. J. Appl. Sci., 24: 16-25.

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Competing Interest: The author has declared that no competing interest exists.

Data Availability: All relevant data are within the paper and its supporting information files.

INTRODUCTION

The United States, consisting of 50 states and a federal district, is governed by a Federal Republic. It is one of the first states in the world to establish the USA political system with a written constitution. The USA is a federal state with a population of around 340 million and local government units provide services to this population¹. It is also the country with the oldest constitution still in force in the world with its constitution adopted and proclaimed on May 25, 1787². The USA constitution consists of seven main articles³. Each article, which is divided into sections within itself, has generally been made about 20 "Amendments" to the present day and these corrections have been considered articles of the constitution.

The legal system is based on the Constitution of June 21, 1788. The objectives are given in the first introductory section of the Constitution. National unity, the establishment of justice, domestic peace and national peace, the common defense against international threats and the development of social welfare are among the main goals of the constitution. Legislative, executive and judicial are defined in the first three articles and sections and paragraphs related to the subject are included. The other three articles also make the arrangements required by the federal structure of the state. In the last article, it includes the regulation related to the adoption of the constitution. The Constitution of 1787 had the characteristic of being a harsh constitution in terms of form⁴.

The state is obliged to recognize the basic institutional norms of each autonomous region and the laws it creates and protect them as part of its primary regulation. The USA Constitution has a guiding and regulatory feature that is far from details. In this respect, it is different from the constitutions of other countries. The head of state is elected by the people every four years, senators every 6 years and members of the House of Representatives are elected by the people through elections held every 2 years. The United States of America is a federal union consisting of 50 states. Headquarters of the national government, Washington D.C.C. (District of Colombia). The Constitution establishes the outlines of the structure of the national government indicates its activities with its powers.

The Constitution of 1787 is the most basic indicator of American independence. It is based on the principle of equality of the forces and dynamics that make up the state. "The application of the separation of powers under equal conditions" is the most basic condition of the constitution.

The same arrangement was put in place with the elected president and the parliament and an equally important judicial power was put in front of them⁵. Since the president and the parliament are elected by popular vote, they theoretically have equal power. In such a way that they do not interfere with each other, task sharing has been made.

The largest units in America after the states are local government units⁶. These units have differed from each other from state to state in terms of number and type over time. For this reason, in later times, the states have given more autonomy to local governments, especially municipalities. Therefore, the control of states over local governments has decreased and local governments have gained the opportunity to make more decisions, determine their local policies and shape their organizational structures to implement these policies more effectively.

All states have Autonomous Constitutions (Bill of Rights) made by their parliaments, but state constitutions can in no way contradict the federal constitution and the national integrity of the United States⁷. Each state which has its constitution and powers, is also responsible for other affairs. The state system has given local governments the authority to make their local constitutions (home rule charter). Each state is divided into cities, towns, districts and villages in terms of administration. Each state has its own elected government.

There have been changes over time in the number of local governments in America. In particular, the number of district local governments, town local governments and school district local government units decreased while the number of municipal governments and special-purpose local government units increased.

METHODS

At the beginning of the review study process on "California Institute of Local Governments and Studies for Local Homeless People in California", a temporary outline of what to do was prepared. For the subject planned to be done by descriptive method, a scan of the field summer was performed and it was determined what kind of scientific knowledge existed about the subject before. The review was structured on these knowledge accumulations and the known and unknown dimensions of the subject were determined. It has been decided which size will be investigated. Research and publications were conducted on the subject within the scope of California Local Governments in America, existing

information was obtained by using the library, as well as the website of the California Institute of Local Governments. The information obtained was evaluated from a critical point of view and reported with appropriate comments and bibliography.

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN THE AMERICAN FEDERAL SYSTEM

In America, the government is the government of the people, therefore the government is established by the people. Members of congress, the president, state officials and those who run towns and cities are elected by the people. Judges are also directly elected by the people or appointed by elected officials.

States: There are a total of 50 states in the United States. The states constitute the most important organ of the American administrative structure and the second most important point of the federal organization. The states, which are independent from the point of view of internal affairs, are in a structure with a "state" characteristic peculiar to them, unlike the federal state⁸. For this reason, they have their autonomous constitutions. State constitutions must comply with the federal constitution and must comply with the national integrity of the United States of America⁹.

At the beginning of each state, the president, that is, the governor, who is the most competent person in the state who has come to work by-election, is the official. In addition, the states have bicameral parliaments and supreme courts other than Nebraska¹⁰. Senior cadres in the provinces are also, for example, State Ministers, Prosecutors, Police Chiefs, Financial Auditors, etc., who come to office by election. State assemblies not only carry out their legislative duties but also deal with the determination of state budgets.

State administrations have a duty responsibility in all matters of public concern. Education, health, business life, security, etc. the subjects are among the broad fields of study of state administrations. If the state budget is insufficient during these studies, they enter into a cooperation with the federal government, which they call "Cooperative Federalism". This review of California Local Governments has also shown that in the United States, states have a feature that mostly conducts their activities with their local governments. In the United States, local governments include a quadruple institutional structure as County, Municipal Governments (Municipality, City, Borough), Town Governments (Township) and Special Purpose Governments (Districts).

County: County means that "County Local Government Units" are the largest local government units after the states. The populations that counties serve also differ by state, because some states are more populous. Among the organs of the Counties, there are County Councils, elected and appointed officials, as well as Specialized Councils or Commissions¹¹. The County Council is the decision-making body, it has more than one employee, but this number differs according to the state population ratio. The decisions taken by the members of the assembly in the counties where they are elected to office are like the law and they have both legislative and executive duties. There are also some tasks in the form of establishing social facilities¹².

Many specialists are working within the scope of the districts' areas of responsibility. Of these, "Elected Officials" are those who have assumed judicial and administrative duties. Sheriff, Judicial Editor-in-Chief and Forensic Medicine Officials are among the judicial officials¹³. State attorney, health director, social security director, agriculture director, etc. the duties are among the "Assigned Deceptors". Experts working on issues requiring special expertise, on the other hand, form "Specialized Councils and Commissions". As a result, Counties are the largest local administrative unit of the states within their borders and play an active role in the execution of some services on behalf of the member state, acting as its extension¹⁴.

Municipal governments (municipality, city, borough):

Municipal Governments are the most important tier of states coming after Counties, the most functional within the scope of local governments and the services are seen firsthand. They are mostly established to meet the locally based needs of small settlements with dense populations. The powers and areas of autonomy of Municipal Governments are quite wide. As long as they do not engage in any activities that would violate national integrity, all the activities of municipalities are excluded from judicial supervision¹⁵.

Written permits (charters), which enable municipalities to acquire legal personality, are official documents indicating the purpose, rights and powers of the local unit to be established, the privileges it has and the form of administration. The rights and powers of municipalities can be listed as taxation and borrowing authority; health, security and etiquette protection and development authority; expropriation right for certain purposes; business of certain public institutions and the authority to enforce laws¹⁶.

Municipal governments formed by the decisions of the states are established with "Administrative Permits" called

“Charters”. When they are established, their areas of duty are also determined and they are organized as “Council System with Mayor, Council System with Professional Manager and City Commission System”.

Town governments (Township): In terms of hierarchy, there are legal bodies of the Town Administrations that come after the municipalities. The number of Town Governments in the United States is decreasing day by day. There are the most town administrations in the New England State¹⁷. The functioning of town governments is quite democratic because registered voters in the town participate in meetings called “Town Meetings” and jointly make decisions about the town in a democratic manner. The Sheriff, judge and prosecutor in charge in town are among the officers who are constantly on duty and they also establish a board of trustees during the decision-making stages¹⁸.

Townships differ greatly functionally from states within the federal structure of the USA. Despite this, if we generalize; we can count rural qualified works such as construction and maintenance of local roads, management of primary schools and assistance to the poor, library, water, sewerage and garbage disposal as the tasks of these local government units¹⁹.

Special purpose district administration (special districts): Special purpose district administrations can be established for many reasons, such as water, sewerage, urbanization and transportation of the district. They take their place in the last place in the ranking of local governments. The most common in the entire country is “School Administrations (School Districts)”. The way of operation of the organization is limited to the field it is related to and depends directly on state supervision. After fulfilling their goals and the services they have targeted, their tasks are terminated by Counties.

Special-purpose district administrations are usually created on the demands of the people. This request is based on declarations of will regarding the functions and duties of the administration to be established and the written requests of a certain number of voters²⁰. The decision-making bodies of special-purpose district administrations are the assemblies. Members of the assembly also take office by election and have the authority to make decisions only on issues falling within the scope of their duties, otherwise, they cannot act independently.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT CALIFORNIA

California is the third largest state in the United States, with a population²¹. The capital is Sacramento. California with

another well-known name the Golden State, was founded in 1848 with the discovery of a gold mine in Coloma (Sacramento) in the 19th century. It is a province that experienced one of the “Gold Rush” periods experienced in various places in the USA and Canada during the century and received significant immigration during this period, which lasted until the end of the century. The population of the state has reached from 92 thousand people in 1850 to 380 thousand people in 1860²². While such a rapid increase in the population brings with it various problems, one of the biggest of these problems, the problem of homelessness, is facing us. There are 482 cities and 58 states in California.

In terms of surface area in America, Alaska ranks first with approximately 1 million 800 thousand km², Texas ranks second with approximately 700 thousand km² and California ranks third with approximately 424 thousand km². According to the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, California’s population is larger than 34 countries in the world. It is also the most populated state in the country. In other words, one in eight people in America lives in California. It is predicted that the population will exceed 50 million in 2050 (Fig.1).

In the state, which consists of 58 counties and 478 cities, where more than 12% of the total population of the USA lives, the most populated region is Los Angeles with a population of approximately 10.2 million. Orange and San Diego are the next largest regions with a population of approximately 3 million. On a city basis, Los Angeles is the most populous city in the Los Angeles region with a population of approximately 4 million.

State of California, Stanford, UCLA, etc. It stands out in terms of education quality with its world-class universities. The 6 of the 20 best-known engineering schools in the country are in California. Rather than focusing solely on industry, as in some other states, California has developed a highly diversified, complex economy. Rather than replacing traditional sectors with new ones, new sectors added to the economy have further expanded and diversified the economy²³. While agriculture and mining constitute the traditional sectors of the state, the aviation and film industry, which developed since the early 20th century and the computer technologies and electronics that developed later, also took their place in the California economy²⁴.

The years of World War II were a period in which the state’s manufacturing industry base was strengthened, as it gained an important workforce source through immigration and was a period in which technologies for the defense industry were developed. The defense industry continued to be an important part of the economy during the Cold War²⁵.

Film producers who emerged at the beginning of the 20th century had to escape from some restrictions in

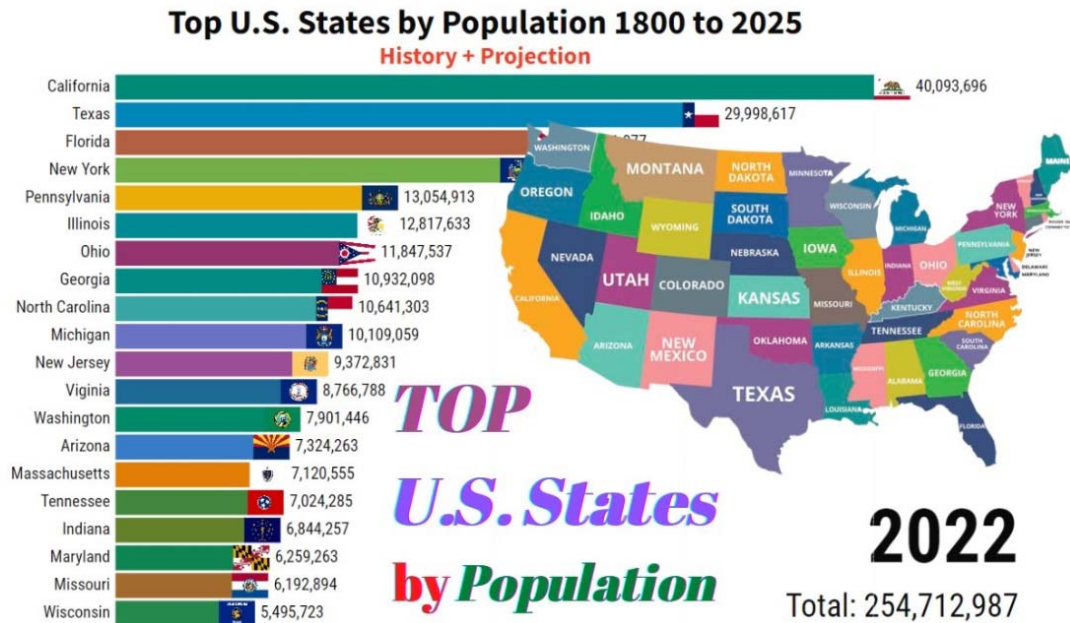


Fig. 1: Top US states by population²²

New York and decided to establish Hollywood in California. Founded in 1912, Universal Studios and Metro Golden Myer (MGM) were among the first companies in the industry that were established in those days and have survived to this day; for example, Disney (ABC) and Fox, the four largest commercial channels that we all watch, are California-based companies²⁶.

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND ITS NOTABLE EVENTS

Homelessness is one of the international problems experienced today, especially in big cities. In the face of the problem of homelessness faced by people who move away from their surroundings for different reasons or individuals who cannot continue their normal lives due to negative habits, there is a need to provide housing environments in cities. Action is being taken with emergency shelters, transitional shelters, rapid resettlement or solutions aimed at financial and moral support for homeless people. It is noteworthy that the idea that the problem for individuals who remain in a state of homelessness in California is not only the inability to find a living space but also that attention should be paid to providing opportunities to support participation in living in housing environments. Taking into account psycho-social needs is also important in this regard.

“California State Association of Counties” is the website of California County Local Governments and this page was used within the scope of the study. In the content of the page, all kinds of social projects and events taking place in the State of California are included. Projects that are worthy of Challenge Awards, especially in the State of California, are introduced on the page. There is a link to the “Institute of Local Governments” page. In the California Institute of Local Governments section, the achievements of the communities affiliated with the California County Local Government for the local people of California were described and the aid funds allocated to these projects were included.

The state government, along with district and local governments, address all matters of public concern. Within the scope of the responsibilities of local governments, education, health, business life, security, homeless people and other projects carried out for the public are among the areas of study. When the budget of local governments is not sufficient within the framework of projects and activities carried out on behalf of the people, they enter into cooperation with the federal government called “Cooperative Federalism” and obtain the necessary budget.

There are three main themes that the California Institute of Local Government focuses on with importance. The first of these is related to sustainable communities. Local governments adopt innovative policies and practices to create

sustainable communities, for example, in this context, the ambitious efforts of these communities in California, the state's climate change, have attracted worldwide attention. California's 482 cities and 58 states have carried out many successful projects and raised awareness to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Despite limited resources, the fact that they have produced low-cost and innovative solutions throughout the state is a picture of pride for California County Local Governments.

One of the remarkable applications in the state of California in the United States is the social responsibility design study prepared for homeless people in the Santa Monica area. The design group first met with 42 organizations that provide guidance to the homeless population and investigated the factors that cause homelessness. In the research, they discovered that non-governmental organizations established for the homeless provide employment and medical assistance. However it has become clear that homeless people do not know their simple rights and they are not sure about where they can get guidance. For this reason, the design group has prepared a city guide called project OPEN, where they can get information about the rights of homeless people and community services²⁷. The guide, designed in the form of a foldable map, has been distributed to homeless people living in different parts of the city to inform them about doctor's offices, shelters, food banks, the route of public transport, the rights of homeless people and public services in the region. The design of the map and the light dirty coffee sand color used were inspired by the experiences of homeless people living in Santa Monica²⁷. The guide design for the homeless has been created and completed as a result of working in partnership with non-governmental organizations and local institutions. In this context, it can be said that social responsibility design makes a difference and attracts attention based on joint works.

Another issue that the California Institute of Local Governments focuses on is the working together module. According to this module understanding, there is a belief that joint efforts make local governments more effective and efficient. They say working together helps build healthy and vibrant communities for all Californians. In this context, coordination centers have been established for the use of shared facilities, especially for the homeless of California. There is a great cooperation involved. They are focused on improving the conditions of children, families and communities at the local level. Representative members of the California Association of School Boards, the Association of States of the State of California and the Association of

California cities constitute the partnership institutions in working together.

These community-based organizations interact together with community members daily and are often located in neighborhoods. They will have unique and important information about the challenges and opportunities faced by residents of the district. Those who work in these organizations often go inside the ethnic and cultural communities of the homeless and work to build trust, to engage residents in any efforts. The people working at the California Institute of Local Government are never for-profit and perform voluntary duties.

One of the most important issues that the California Institute of Local Government focuses on is the issue of ethics. For them, accountability to the public, transparency and a model of ethical behavior are important. In California, state and federal laws are always trying to promote the concept of ethics. For this reason, they attach importance to rewarding exemplary behaviors that will make the world a better place. "How does the conscientious civil servant rank with competing thoughts and what is the right thing to do?" with their question, they emphasize the necessity for all civil servants to act conscientiously and in accordance with ethical rules. There is a "Global Ethics Institute" in California which also makes positive orientations by defining ethical values that transcend all cultures and religions.

Like other County Governments in America, the California County Local Government was established by the States. The basic provisions of the state of California and the necessary laws are contained in the California Constitution and the California Government Code. According to the California Legislature, it is very important to ensure the health and well-being of people located within the state's borders.

There are approximately 650 thousand homeless people in the United States. This number surpasses about 50 cities in Turkey. About 400 thousand of them are men, while 250 thousand of them are women. Approximately 76% of homeless women can find shelter in local shelters or urban housing, while approximately 70% of homeless men live on the streets²⁸. It is estimated that the number of homeless people worldwide will be about 1.6 billion in 2025. According to the Report of the World Resources Institute, 1.2 billion people are deprived of the guarantee of sustainable and affordable housing²⁹. In this context, a special budget has been allocated to California Homelessness Funds³⁰.

The projects organized by the state of California and especially the local governments of the district reflect the innovative and creative spirit of the California state governments. In particular, the Challenge Awards provide

California’s 58 Counties with the opportunity to share their best practices in Counties across the state and country. They are proud that they have found new and effective ways to provide programs and services to their hard-pressed citizens.

**PROPORTION OF HOMELESS PEOPLE IN CALIFORNIA
BY NUMBERS**

California has long struggled to confront its homelessness crisis. After big city mayors called for more funding for the state to do something about it, state administrators agreed to spend an additional \$600 million to combat the homelessness problem in California in 2019³¹. California Governor Gavin Newsom has stated that \$1 billion of the total \$213 billion budget for 2019 will be allocated to the homeless³².

According to data from 2018, there are approximately 129,972 homeless people in California. This roughly accounts for 24% of the country’s total homeless population. The largest number of homeless people is also located in Los Angeles. Approximately 68% of homeless people in California live in

abandoned vehicles, buildings, nearby parks or on the streets. California has the highest rate of unprotected homelessness of any state. In addition, 82% of homeless youth in California are not protected in anyway, compared to 38% of homeless in the rest of the country³³.

According to the data of 2018, the comparative number of homeless people by state is shown on the map³⁴ (Fig. 2).

Depending on the years, there is a change in the number of homeless people in the Counties. However, even with these declines, homelessness still remains a major problem. Los Angeles County alone is home to about 50,000 homeless people. The other nine Counties with the largest homeless population are known to have experienced homelessness Dec between 2,300 and 8,600 people³⁵ (Fig. 3).

The vast majority of homeless Californians (69%) live on the streets, in parks or other places unsuitable for human habitation (the highest proportion in America). Among homeless veterans, California has the nation’s highest proportion of Decedents who are unprotected (69%) and who are unprotected (31%) ranks second³⁶ (Fig. 4).

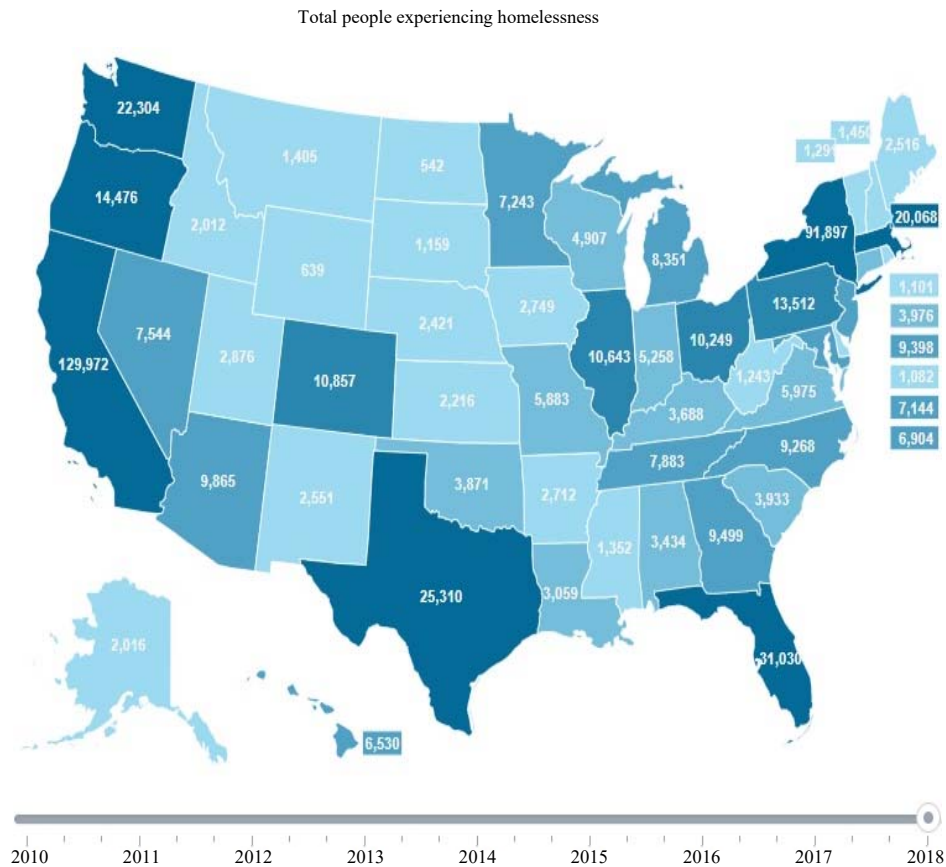


Fig. 2: Number of homeless people by state³⁵

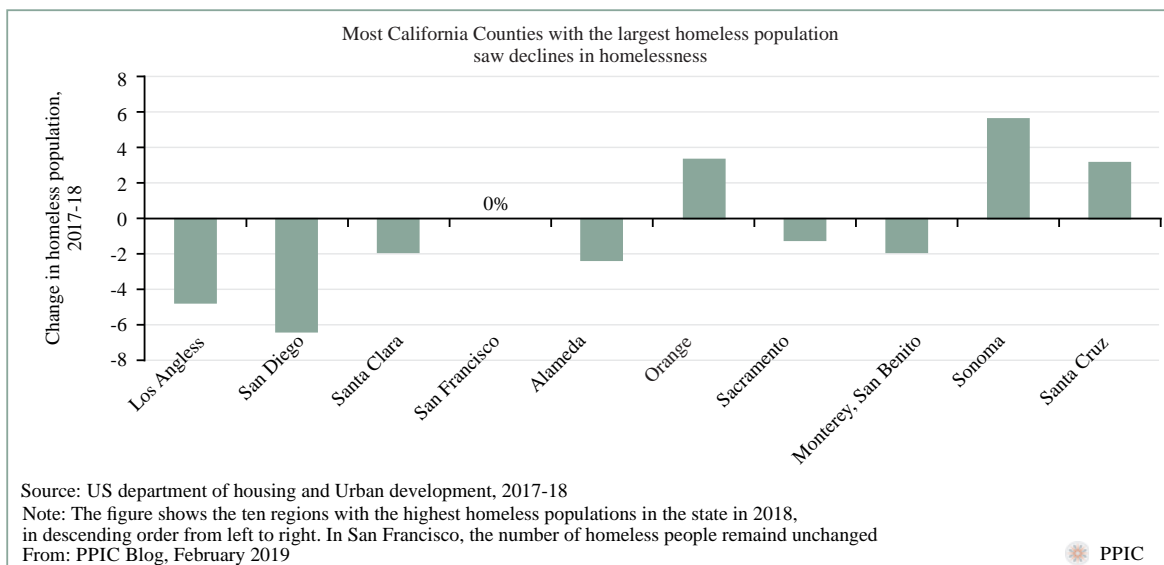


Fig. 3: Percentage changes of homeless people in some counties of California in 2017-2018³⁶

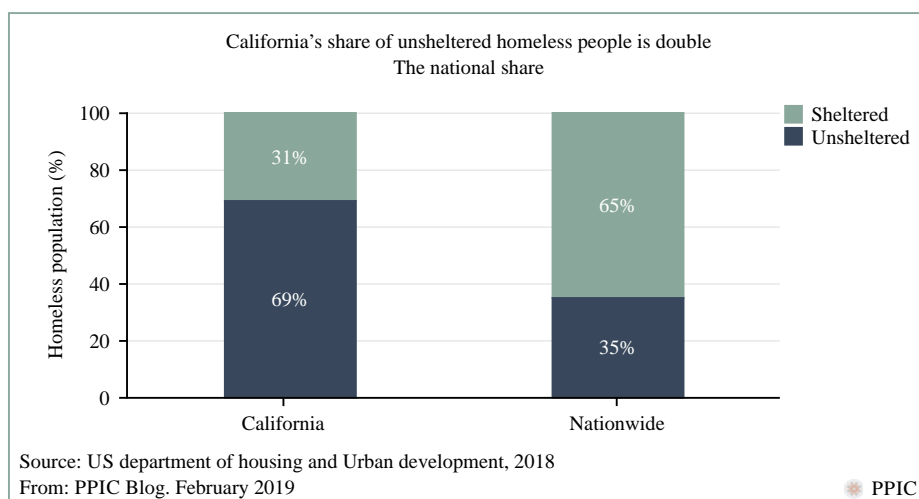


Fig. 4: Comparison of protected/non-protected homeless people in America and California³⁶

DISCUSSION

When the federal system and local governments in the United States and especially in the state of California are examined, it has been observed that Counties are the largest administrative administration after the state in one state, while there is no such administrative division in the other state. Some states do not accept the local government of towns and townships, while some states accept the local government of towns and townships. In most states, the mayor is elected to office for the execution of the executive duty in the city government, while in some states the city council appoints this person.

Although, the local governments of the United States differ from state to state, the local government bodies mentioned in the study are the same for many states. Although, the state governments are a central government, they have a local government function in terms of the federal government. When taken into consideration within the scope of the state, local governments appear as a central government from a legal point of view. Within the scope of the study, "county", "municipal" "town and township" "administrations and district" and school administrations were mentioned as local governments. Although, there is no provision for the formation of local governments, it is a fact that the states generally go to the organization of local

government in a similar way. In particular, the election of most local government bodies to office, the implementation of elections from the central federal government to the state government, city and village and town government to school administrations are very important for the representation of the American people and the implementation of democracy.

When the statistics within the scope of the research are examined, it is determined that California is the state with the highest number of homeless people decently with 129,972 homeless people among all the states in America in 2018. This homeless number accounts for 24% of the total number of homeless individuals in the country. It is observed that the funds allocated for the homeless by the State Administration within the scope of the 2019 budget have increased compared to previous years. This is a positive development for the homeless. Looking at the statistics, it has been determined that the proportion of unprotected homeless people in California (69%) is about twice that of those in the entire country (35%). When a comparison was made between Counties in 2017-2018, it was also found that the homelessness rate decelerated slightly in San Diego and Los Angeles among the deceleration 10 Counties.

When California County governments are examined, we can say that every state resident manages themselves on many issues in applications such as homeless funds made against homeless people in California. Competitions organized within the scope of the state, award-winning project competitions and funds collected through cooperation and solidarity for the homeless, voluntary performance of employees in institutions can be given as an examples of a successful management model.

The California Institute of Local Government continues its activities in accordance with American federalism and in relation to the state government and has almost no relations with the central federal government. The local government system in California is a flexible and lively structure that can vary according to the needs of the period and society. We also observe that the corrections made by local governments against the new needs of society are made on time and quickly and that the local government mechanism does not have a legislative life. As a result, it is usual to mention that California Local Governments are a highly institutionalized, effective, functioning and functionally highly democratic local government mechanism that serves the public. Local governments that can achieve institutionalization will be able to solve all the problems of local people in the future with the theme of serving the public. When states plan their social policies, it is to create policies for social protection measures based on the inclusive social development of all individuals living in a society.

CONCLUSION

Achieving the goal of social policy is possible with social policy tools. Among these tools, social services and legal regulations are especially applicable to the disadvantaged segments in practice, as well as to the homeless, who have become an international problem. In this context, all countries experiencing homelessness problems must produce social service-oriented, sustainable models for the homeless.

SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT

Homelessness is an international problem faced by every major urban center in the world. Purpose of this review to raise awareness about the problem of homelessness, which has become a global problem, based on the example of California, which has a very high population density and homelessness rate. When the publications examined within the scope of the review are examined, it has been determined that California local governments have brought remarkable solutions to the problem of homelessness. It has been recommended that the remarkable practices implemented for the homeless within the state should set an example for other countries.

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