



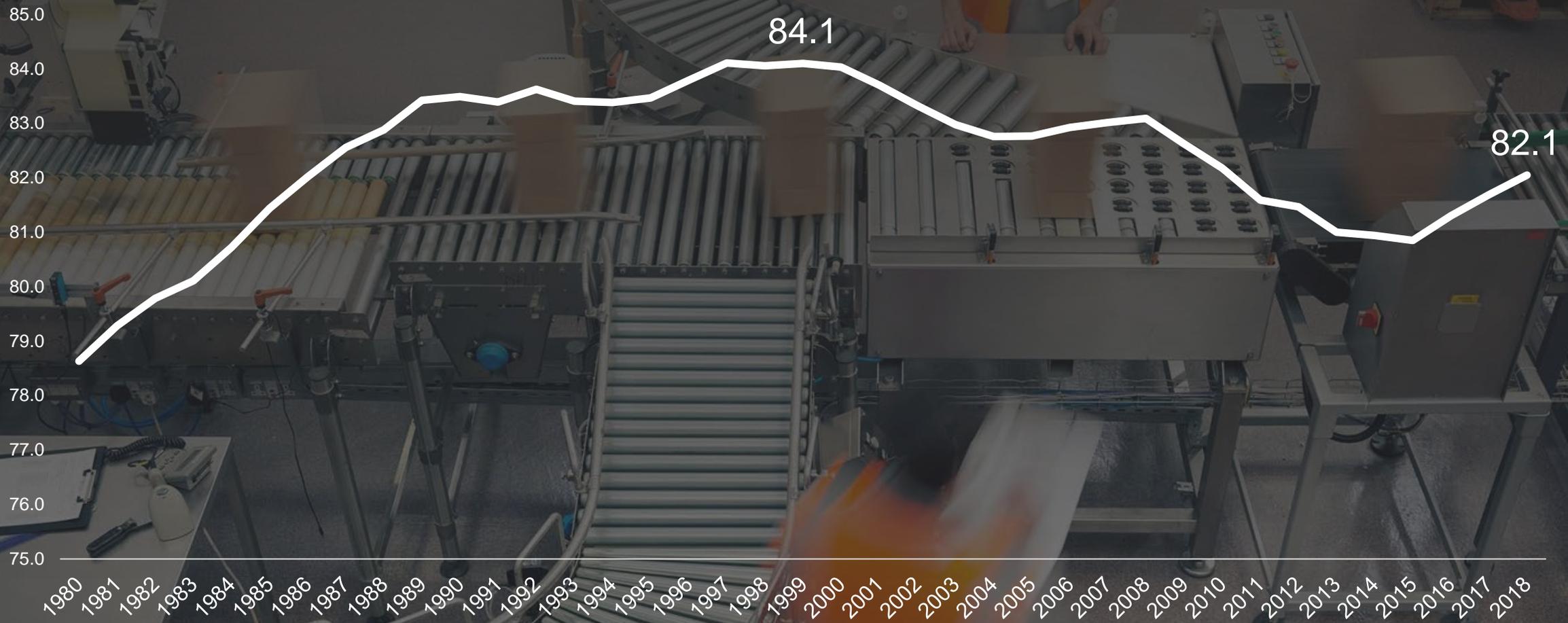
Not Just a Job:  
New Evidence on  
the Quality of Work  
in the United States  
and California

The median household income has risen only slightly as income inequality has grown. The median income increased 0.6% per year from 1979 to 2016, while the top 1% of household incomes increased at an average rate of 3.2% per year during that time (using CBO data).

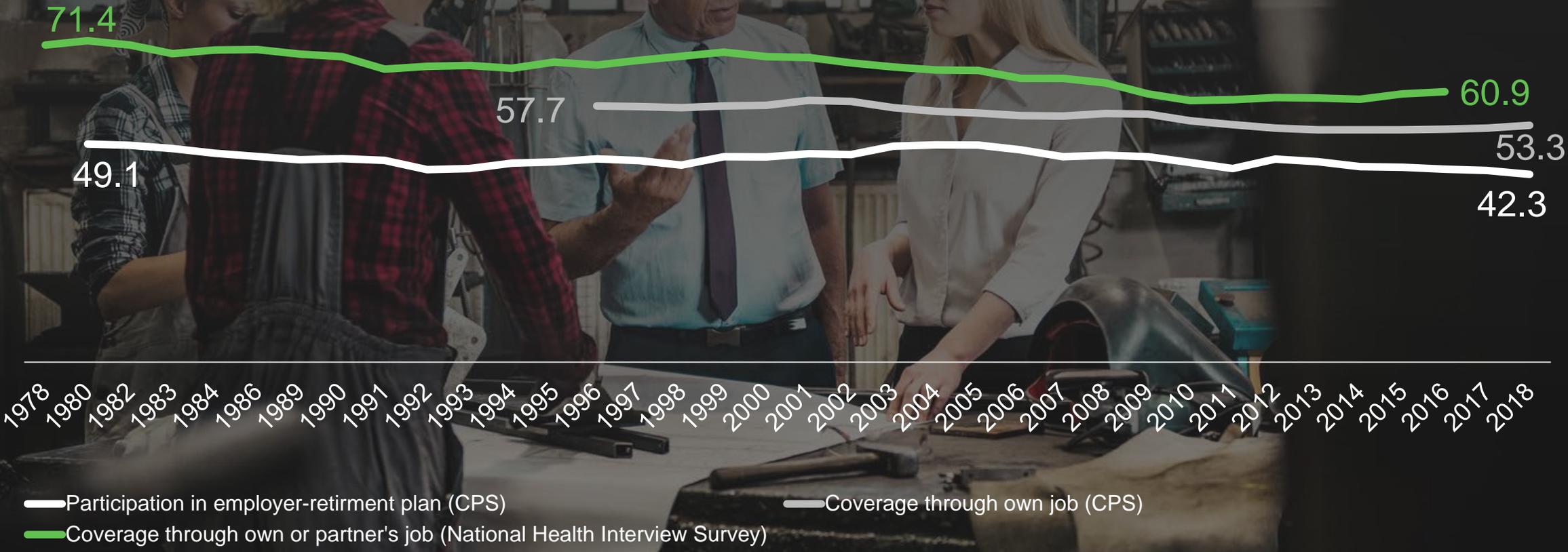
Median and top 1% household labor income growth, adjusted for inflation using PCE Index (1979-2016)



# Labor force participation rate for U.S. residents aged 25-54 (1980-2018)



# Percentage of workers and people aged 18-64 who had health insurance coverage and retirement plan benefits through their employer from 1978-2018



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*Why job quality  
needs to be measured*



# The dimensions of job quality consist of more than income and benefits.

THEY INCLUDE:

01 LEVEL OF PAY

02 STABLE AND PREDICTABLE PAY

03 STABLE AND PREDICTABLE HOURS

04 CONTROL OVER HOURS AND/OR LOCATION  
(e.g., ability to work flexible hours, work remotely)

05 JOB SECURITY

06 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS  
(e.g., healthcare, retirement)

07 CAREER ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES  
(e.g., promotion path, learning new skills)

08 ENJOYING YOUR DAY-TO-DAY WORK  
(e.g., good coworkers/managers, pleasant work environment,  
manageable stress level)

09 HAVING A SENSE OF PURPOSE AND  
DIGNITY IN YOUR WORK

10 HAVING THE POWER TO CHANGE THINGS  
ABOUT YOUR JOB THAT YOU'RE NOT  
SATISFIED WITH

**Job Quality = Satisfaction with Dimension 1 + Satisfaction with Dimension 2 + ...**

# Great Jobs Demonstration Survey

FUNDING



BILL & MELINDA  
GATES foundation



DATES February 8–April 1, 2019

METHOD

Address-based sampling  
with encouragement to  
respond online

SAMPLE POPULATION

Adults aged 18 and older from  
across all 50 states and the  
District of Columbia

RESPONSE

9,671  
individuals

6,633  
workers

919  
in California

638  
workers in  
California

RESPONSE RATE

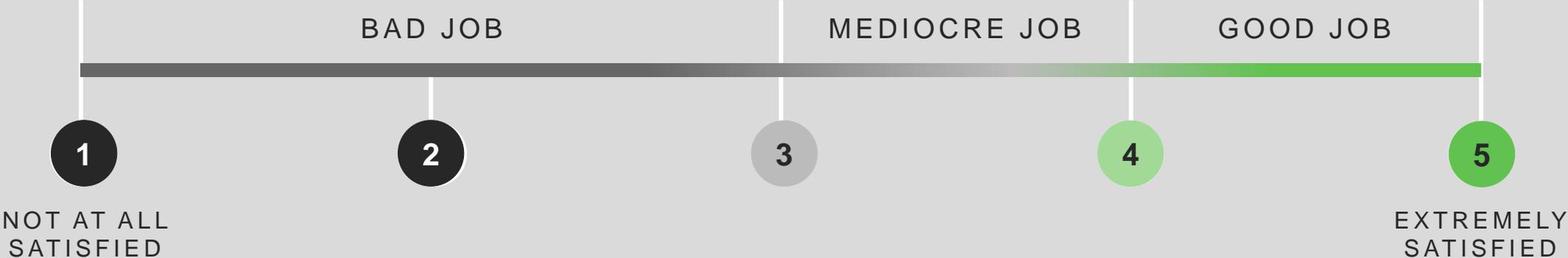
14.5%

CONTENT

81 items

on a variety of topics  
connected to work

# Defining a good job using the 10 dimensions of job quality



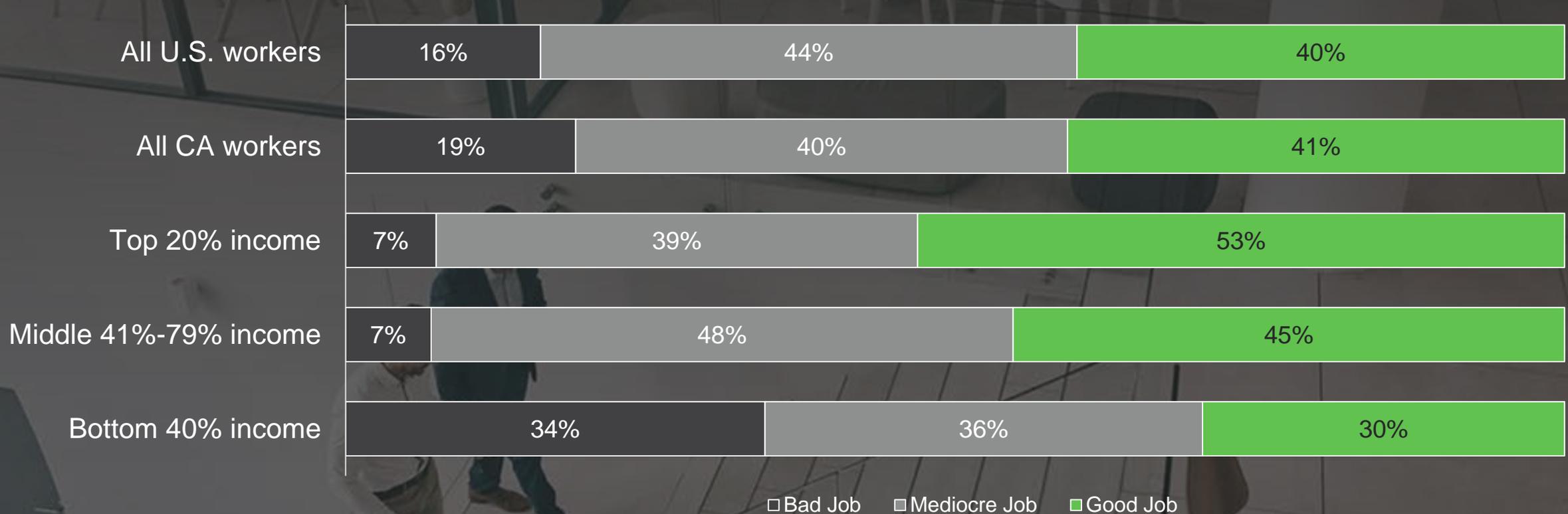
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# *Highlights of the findings*



# Less than half of California workers are in good jobs. Job quality is closely related to income.

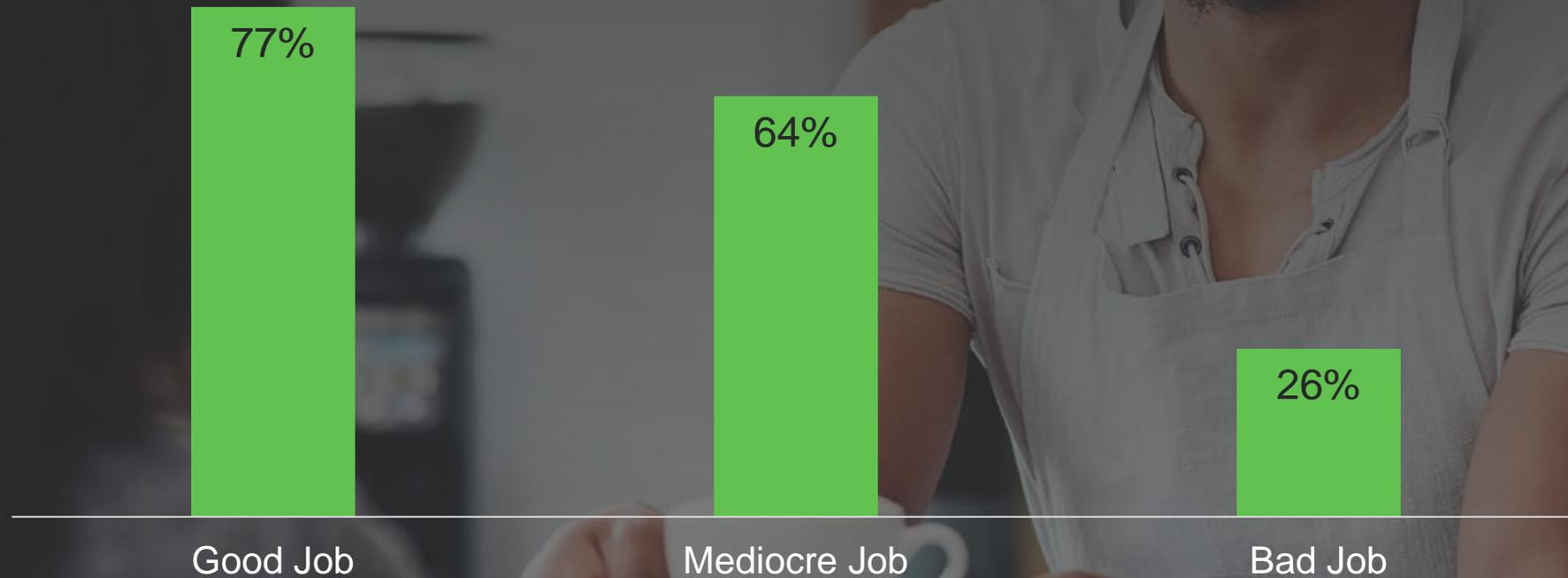
Percentage of California workers in good, mediocre and bad jobs by income level



Unless otherwise indicated, all data refer to CA workers

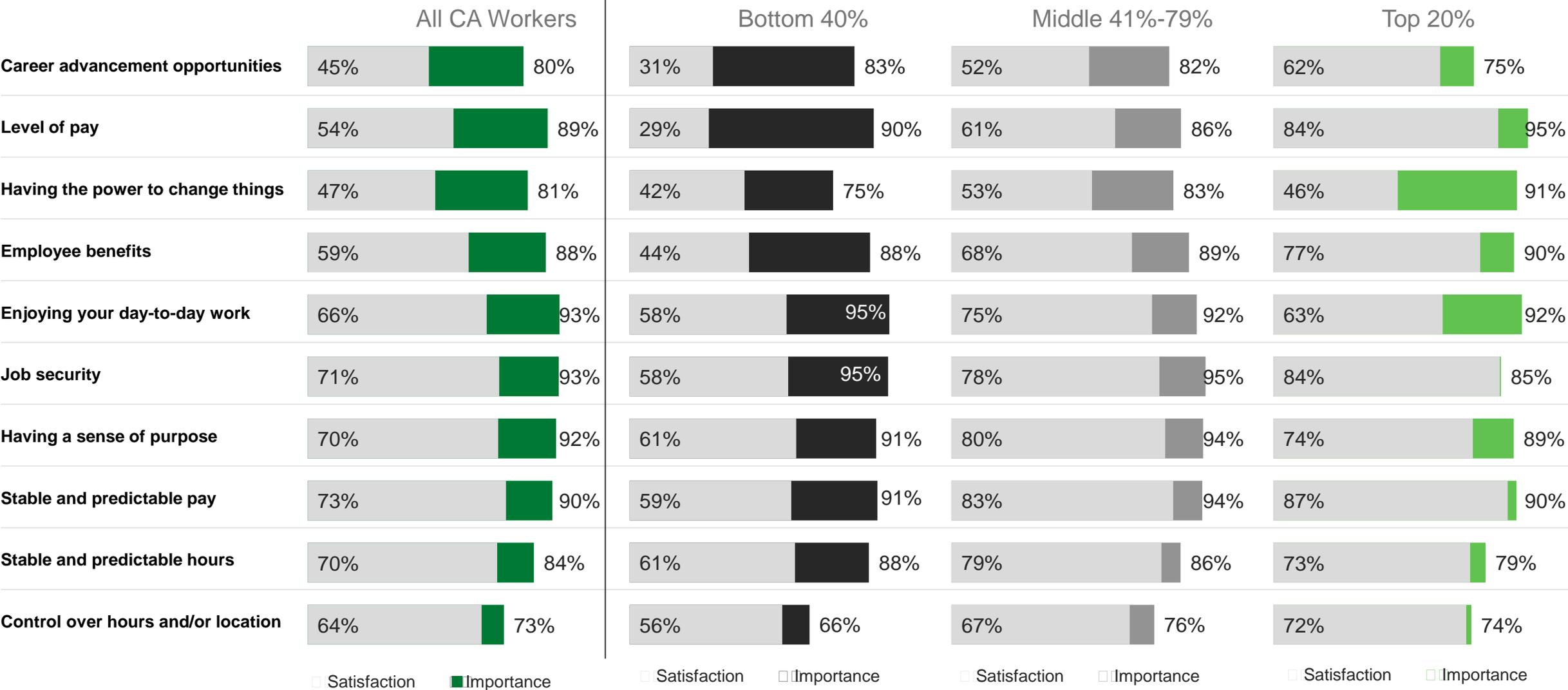
# Most California workers in good and even mediocre jobs are thriving in their life evaluation. Most in bad jobs are struggling or suffering.

Percent of workers with high life evaluation by whether they are in a good, mediocre or bad job situation



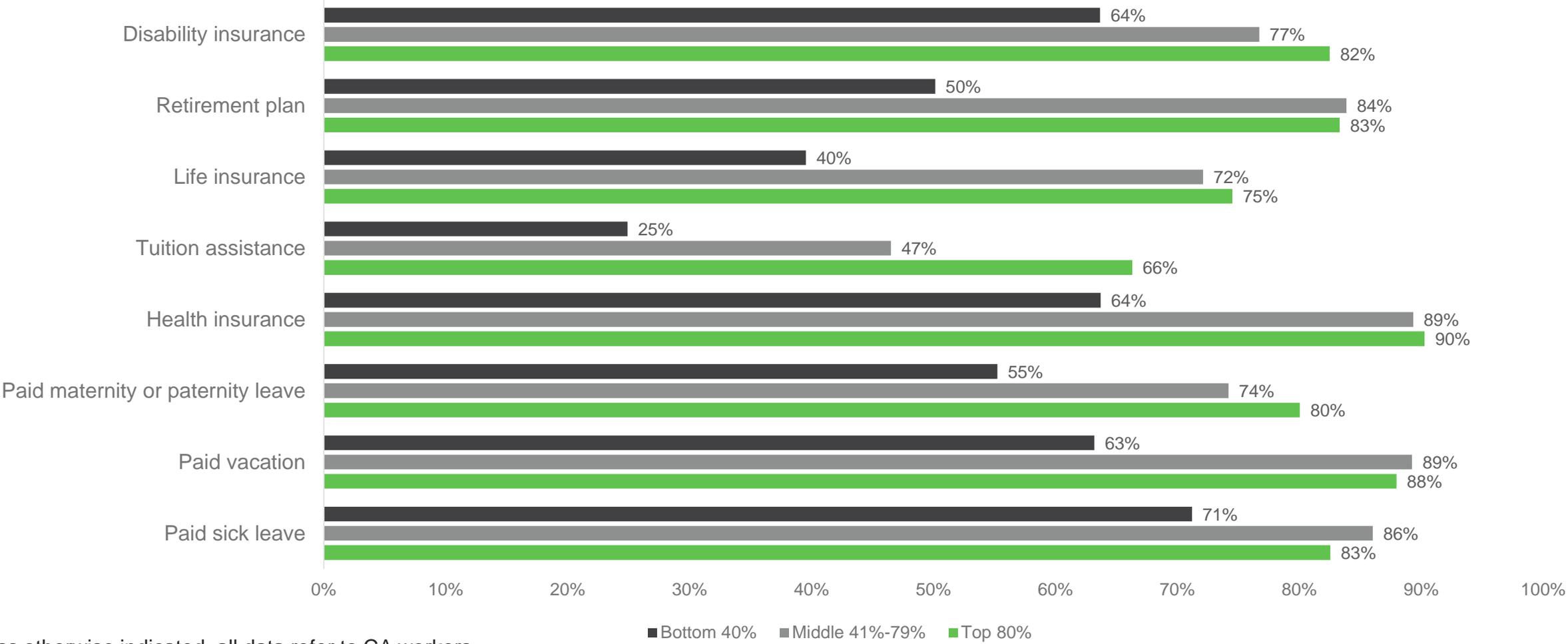
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# There is a noticeable gap between what California workers find important for a good job and how satisfied they are with those dimensions



# Employee benefits are closely tied to income level. Workers in the bottom 40% income bracket lag in all forms of benefits.

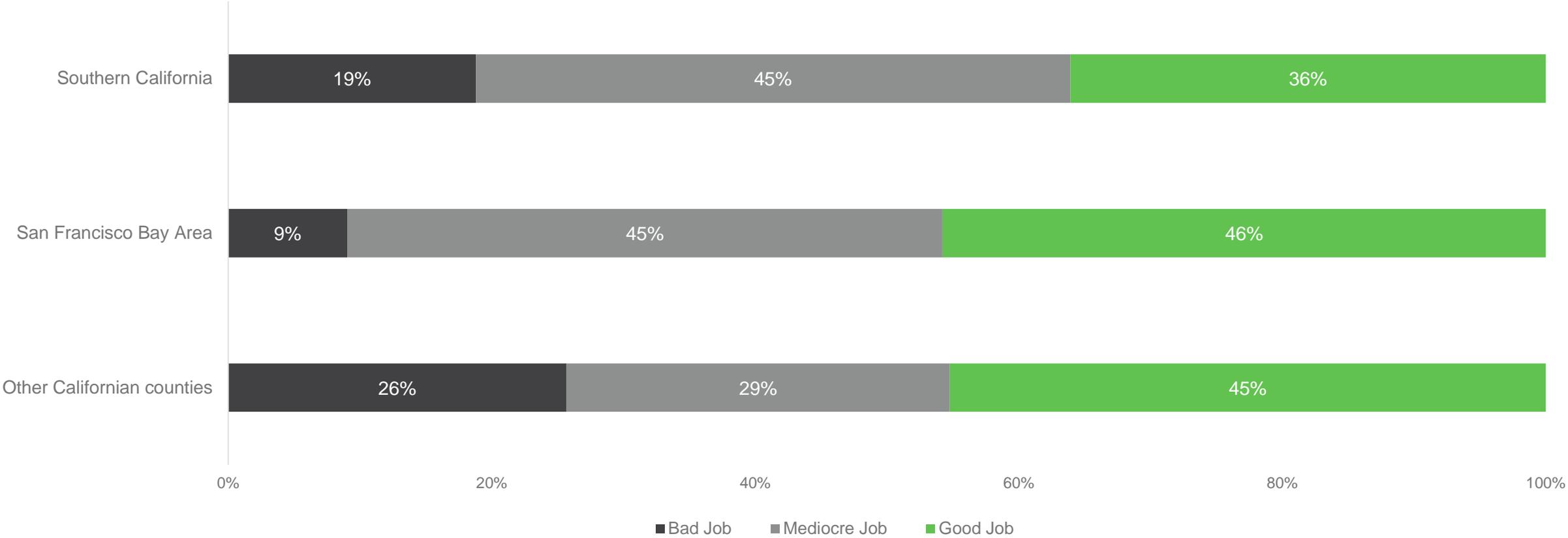
Percent of California workers with each benefit by income level



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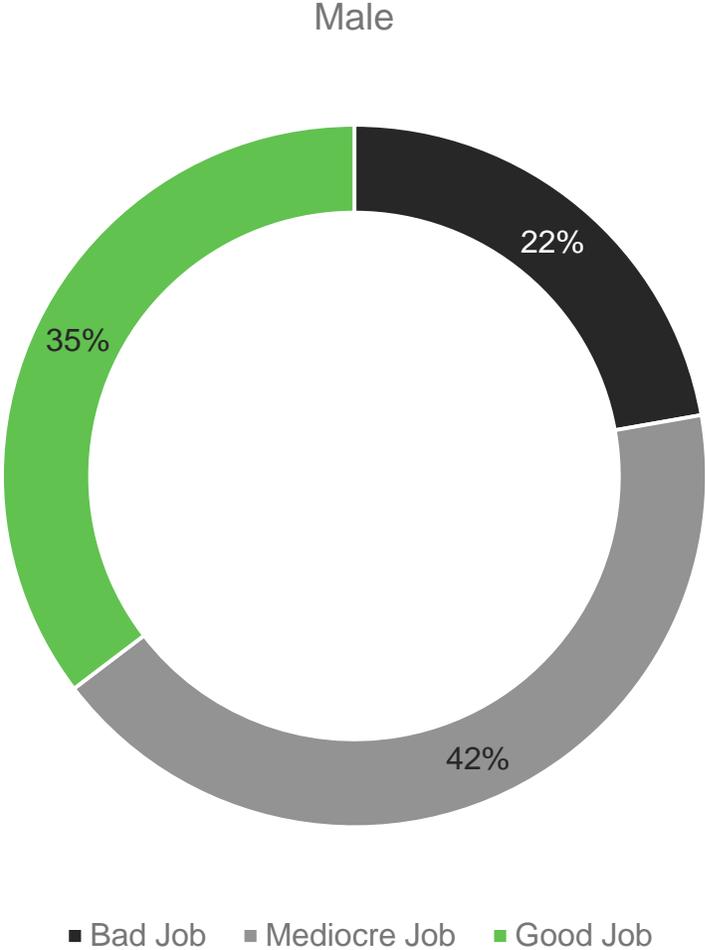
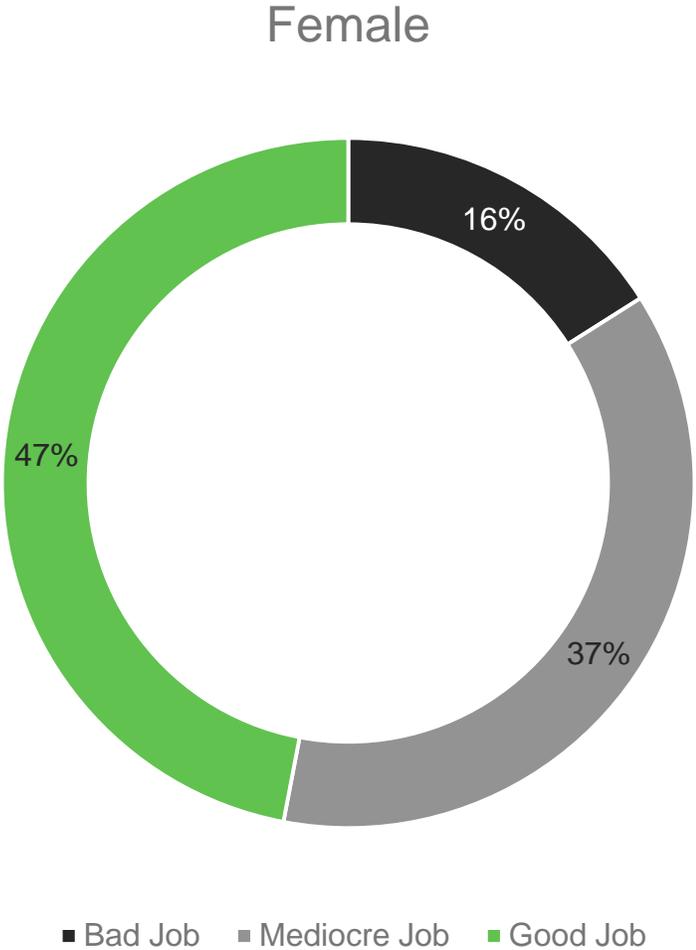
# Workers in counties with smaller metropolitan areas are in bad jobs at greater rates than those in Southern California and the Bay Area.

Percent of California workers in good, mediocre and bad jobs by region



Regions were defined using the California Employment Development Department's [Economic Markets and Sub-Markets for Regional Economic Analysis Profiles](#). Unless otherwise indicated, all data refer to CA workers

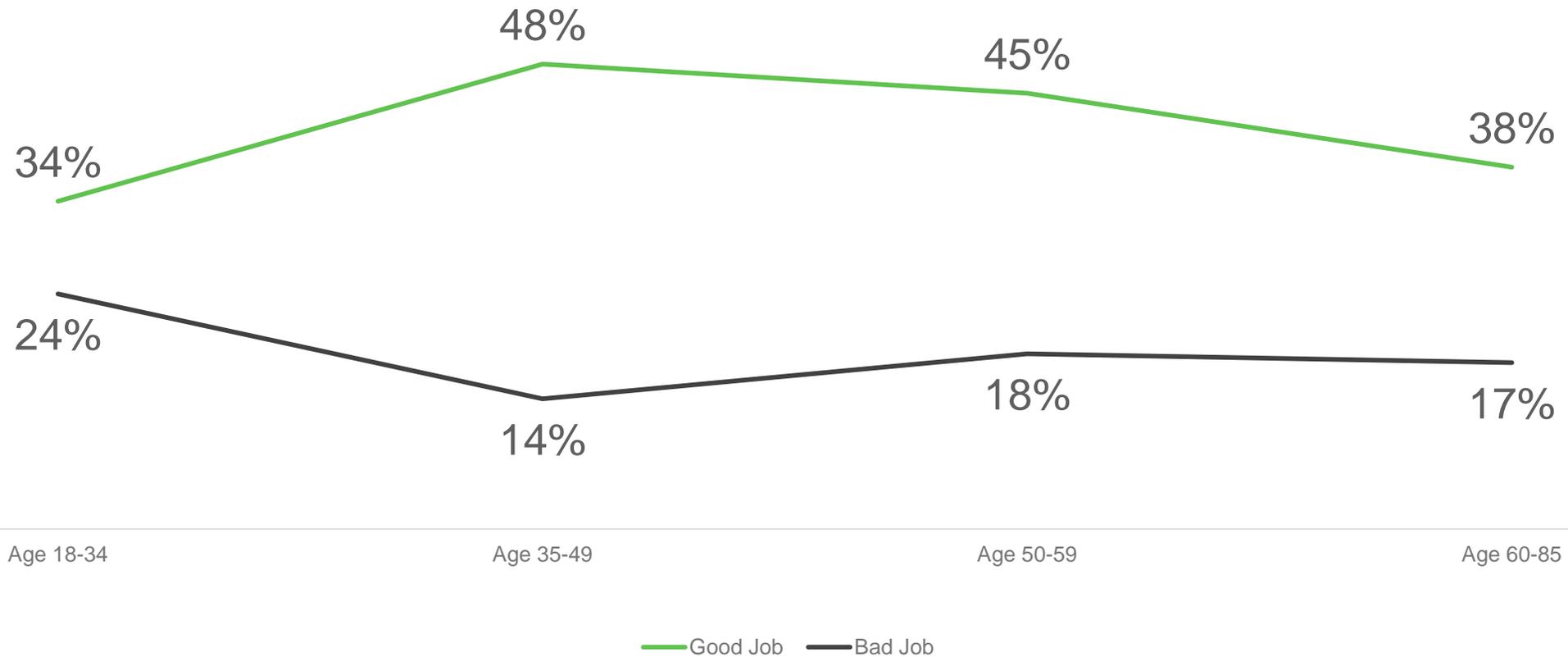
# Female workers in California are in good jobs at greater rates than male workers.



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# Job quality in California tends to rise with age, then decline for older workers.

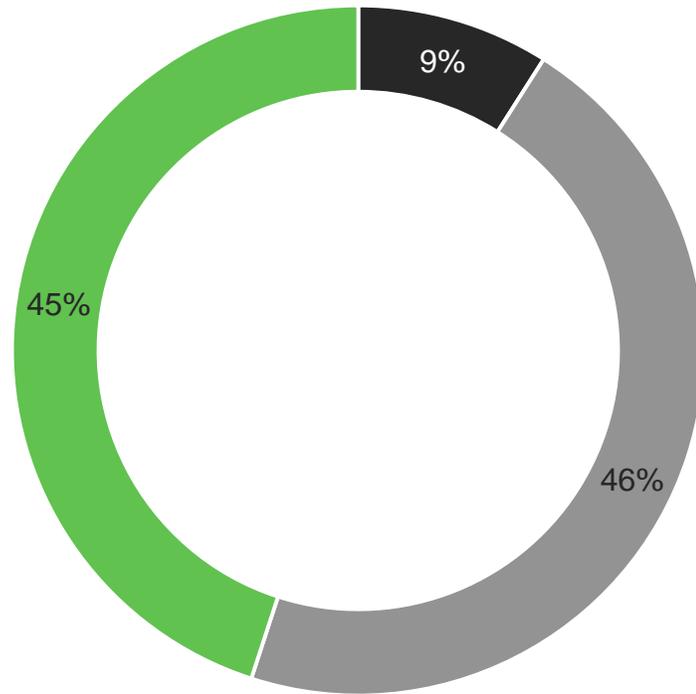
Percent of California workers in good jobs and bad jobs by age



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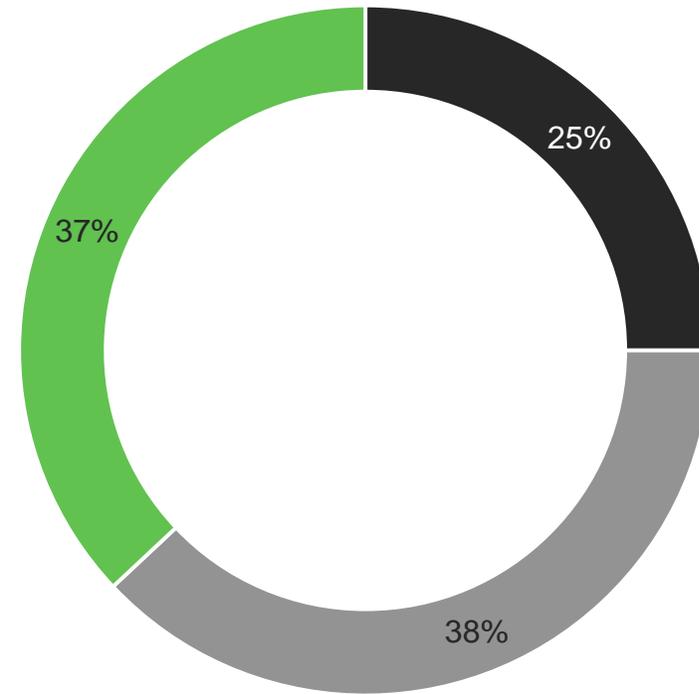
# Those with a bachelor's degree have bad jobs at much lower rates than those whose education is less than a bachelor's degree.

Bachelor's degree or higher



■ Bad Job ■ Mediocre Job ■ Good Job

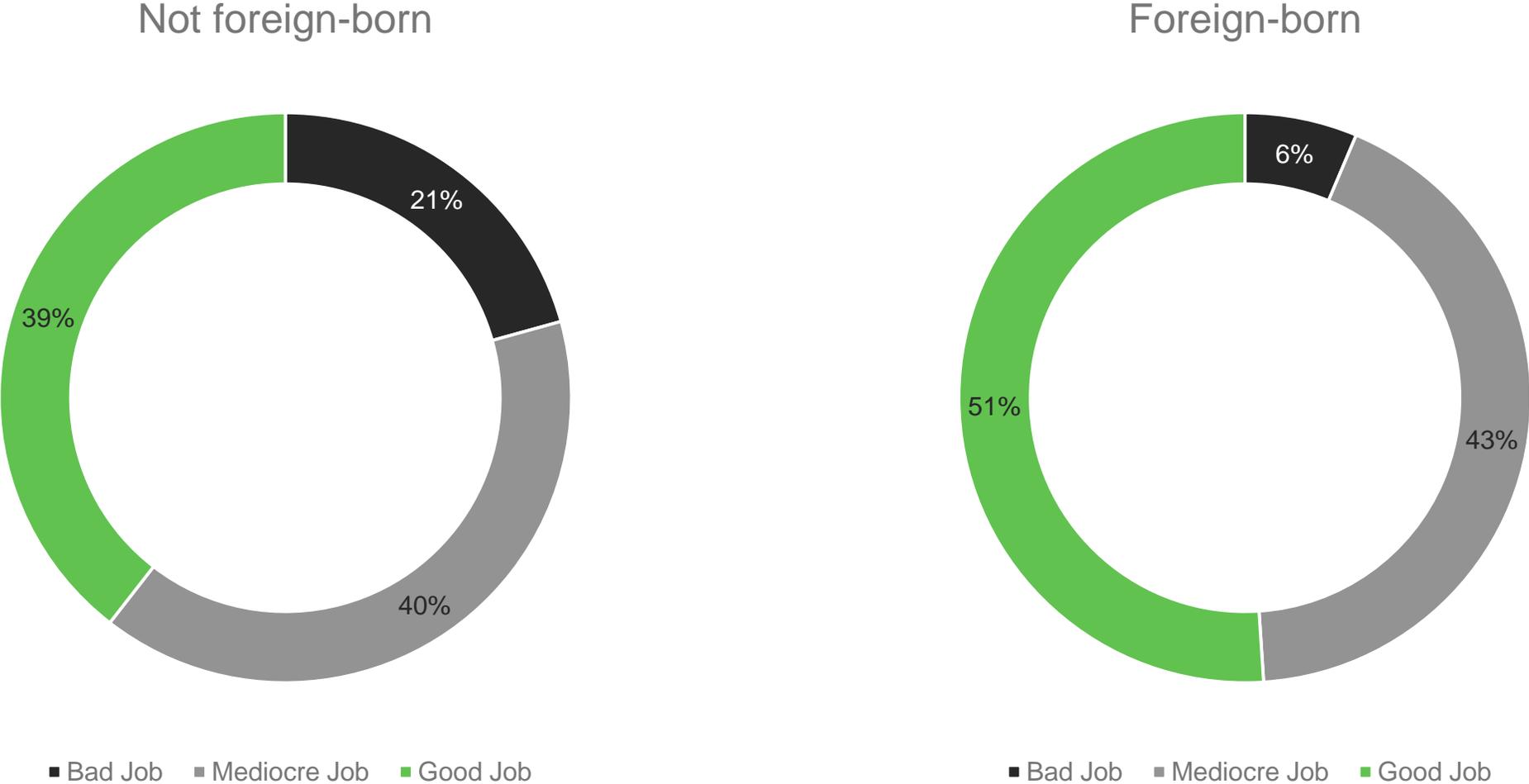
Less than bachelors degree



■ Bad Job ■ Mediocre Job ■ Good Job

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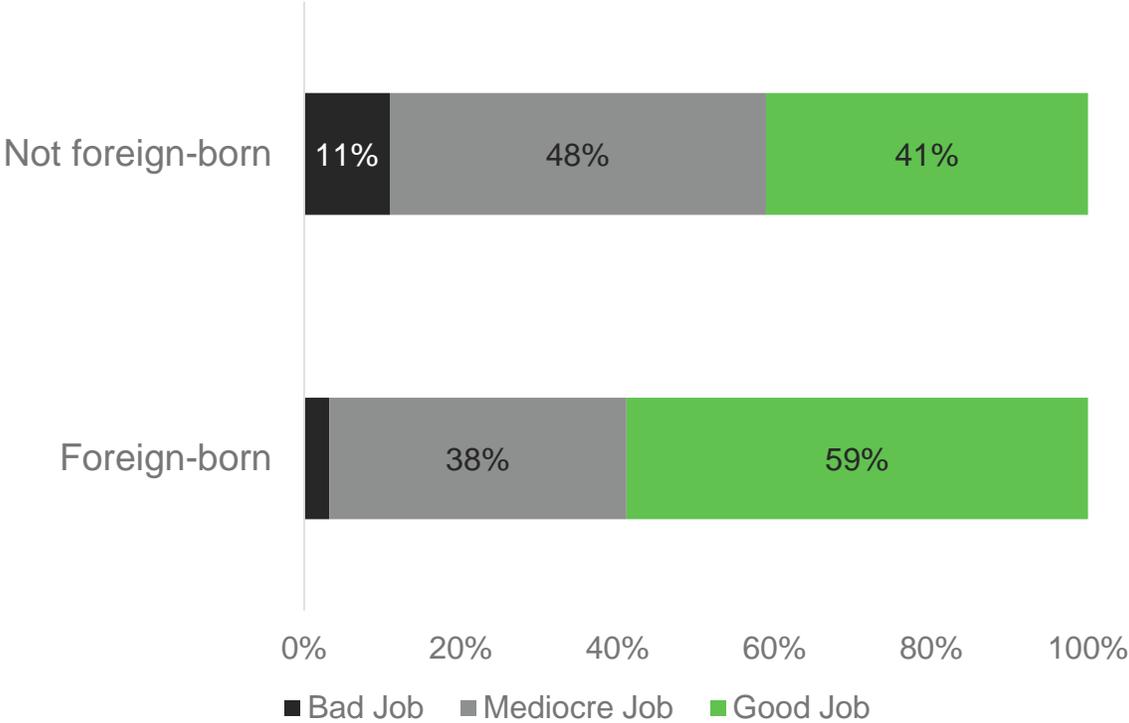
# California workers who were immigrants to the U.S. are in good jobs at higher rates and bad jobs at lower rates than workers who were not foreign-born.



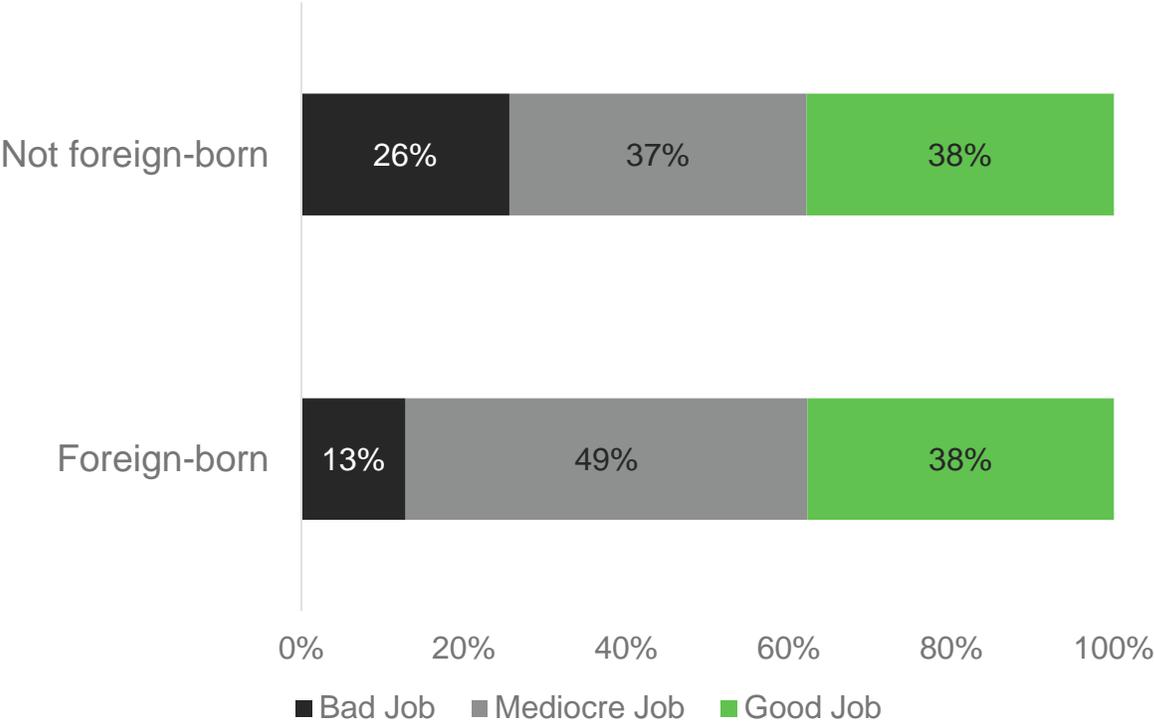
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# The difference in rates of good and bad jobs between California workers who were immigrants and those who were not foreign born is particularly notable when considering education level.

Bachelor's degree or higher



Less than a Bachelor's degree



Percentages below 5% are not shown  
 Unless otherwise indicated, all data refer to CA workers

**California workers are more likely to be in a good job when they strongly agree that they have the opportunity to do what they do best every day.**



## National Analysis: Factors that do and do not predict job quality

Control variables: age, race, ethnicity, immigration status, family characteristics, education

### Unsurprising Confirmations

- 1 Benefits and income predict higher job quality.
- 2 Younger workers and African American workers exhibit significantly lower job quality.
- 3 Workers rate their job lower when they work too many or too few hours.
- 4 Full-time jobs are rated better than part-time jobs.
- 5 Permanent jobs are rated much higher than temporary jobs.
- 6 Workers in production jobs tend to have lower job quality ratings, but those in the manufacturing sector more broadly do not have lower job quality.
- 7 Working multiple jobs out of need predicts lower job quality.

## National Analysis: Factors that do and do not predict job quality

Control variables: age, race, ethnicity, immigration status, family characteristics, education

### Surprising Non-results

- 1 Geography, gender and union status do not matter.
- 2 Republicans have higher job quality than Democrats and those with no party affiliation.
- 3 At least some measures of vulnerability to automation or trade don't matter:
  - no effect from “face-to-face interactions with clients, customers, partners or students”
  - no effect from “a machine, computer or robot could do my job”
- 4 Education attainment has only a weak effect.

# The Most Important Predictors of Job Quality Nationally:

Engagement + Income + Benefits + Tasks + Right amount of hours

## Engagement and Tasks

- My opinions count at work.
  - I have the opportunity to do my best work.
  - Someone encourages my development.
  - I have the opportunity to learn new skills that will be valuable to my career.
  - I am expected to be creative or innovative at my job.
  - I take risks at my job that could lead to new products, services or solutions.
- 
- I manage others.
  - I solve problems with math.
  - My job does not involve repetitive tasks.
  - I have remote interactions with clients, customers, partners or students via email, phone or another device.
  - I don't perform physical tasks.

MORE PREDICTIVE THAN  
INCOME OR BENEFITS

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