KEOUGH SCHOOL OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS

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Introduction

Attitude towards migrants varies within the US drastically. Though most of the migrants' population is concentrated in 3-4 major states, mostly border states such as California, Texas and Florida. Their livelihood and living conditions is almost always worse than their native-born counterparts.

This research focuses on the state of California and investigates migrants' conditions across the different counties in the state.

The research questions of this research are:

1. How are migrants distributed in the US, in general and in the state of California in specific?
2. How is the livelihood conditions of migrants in the state of California, compared to the national and state averages?
3. Is there a relationship between the support for a certain political party and migrants' livelihood?

Methods and Materials

Data: The migrants' data has been collected from the US census website for the year 2016 because this is the last presidential elections with data available on the county level to measure for the political support for parties. The political support data was collected from the MIT election lab website for the year 2016.
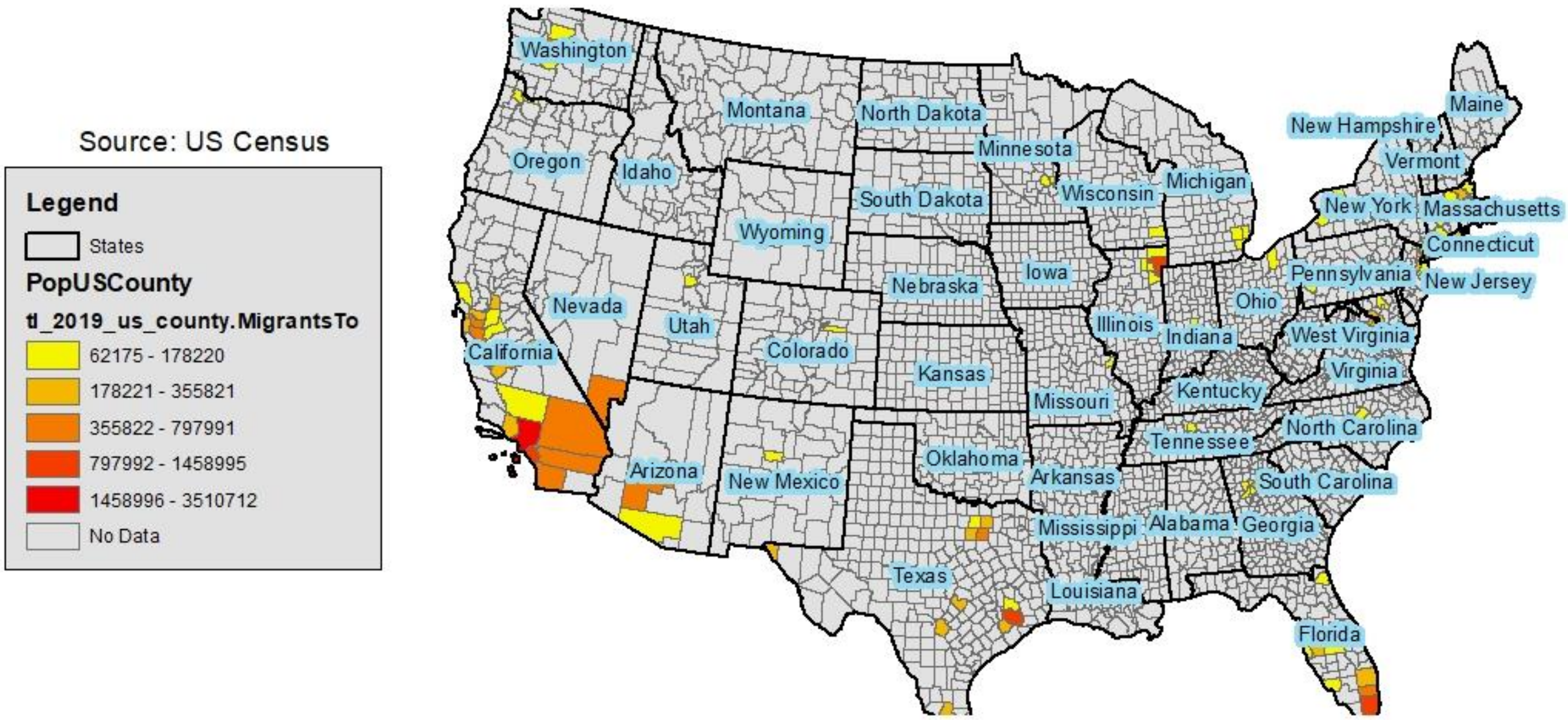
Methods: Choropleth maps were used to show the distribution of migrants across the Us, they were also used to depict the demographics indicating the livelihood of migrants in the state of California. Additionally, a choropleth map was used to test for a relationship between the political support and the livelihood conditions.

References

1. US Census Website: https://www.census.gov/
2. MIT Election Lab: https://electionlab.mit.edu/data
3. Public Policy Institute of California: https://www.ppic.org/publication/immigrants-in-california/

Map (1) : Migrants Distribution by State

Findings and Discussion

Map (1) shows here that the choropleth map indicates that most of the migrants are concentrated in border states like California, Florida, and Texas
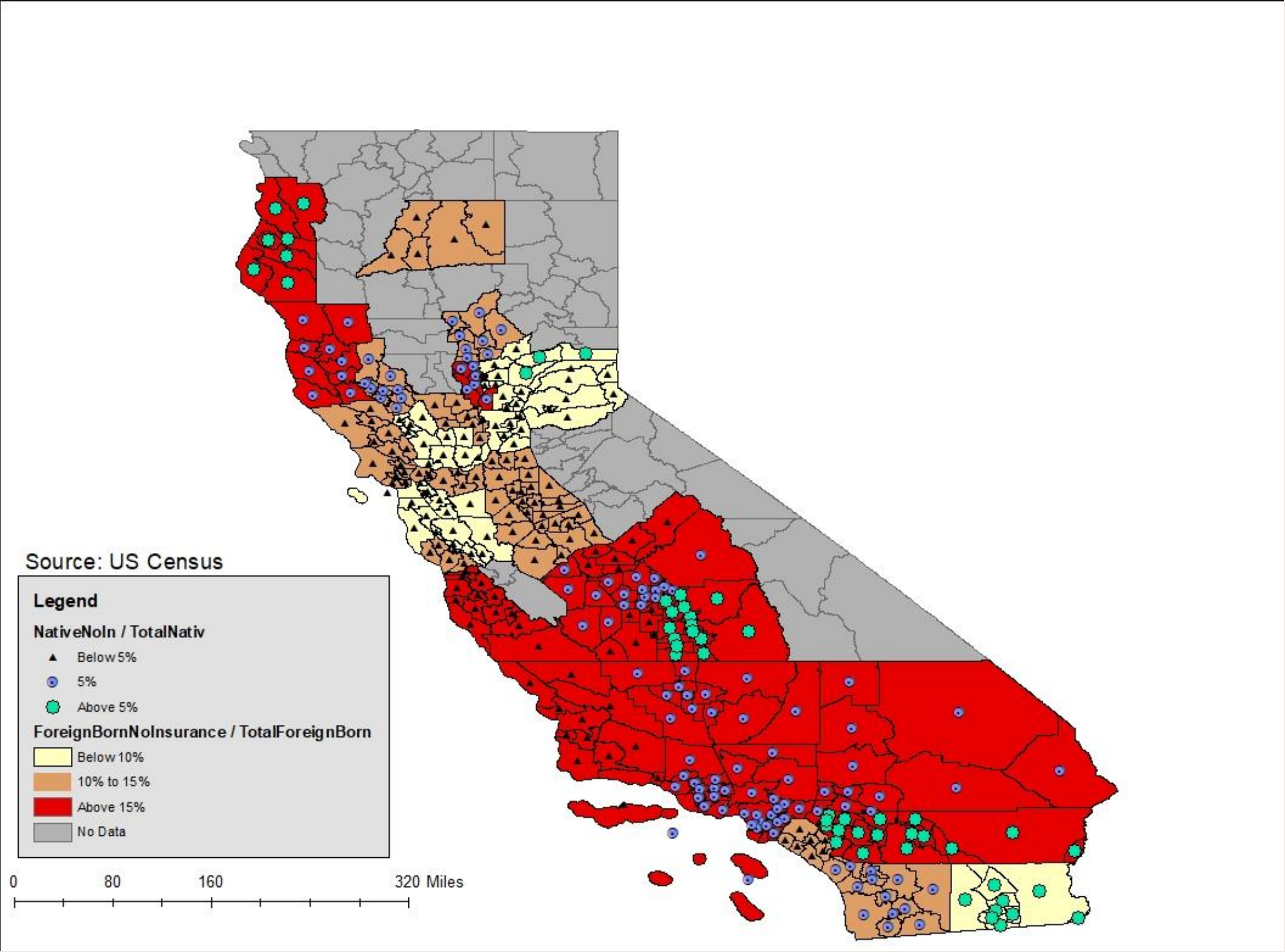
Map (2) shows that the choropleth map indicates that in counties towards the north and south uninsured migrants' percentage tend to be higher than the national average of 15% of uninsured people with the red color. Green below the national average and yellow equals to the national average. Compared to the native born who had their highest rate on insurance at 7%

Map (3), like map (2), shows that percentage of migrants under poverty line in these counties compared to the national average of 12%.The map shows that migrants below poverty line in counties existed in rates higher than the national average in 33 out of the 40 counties in this research.
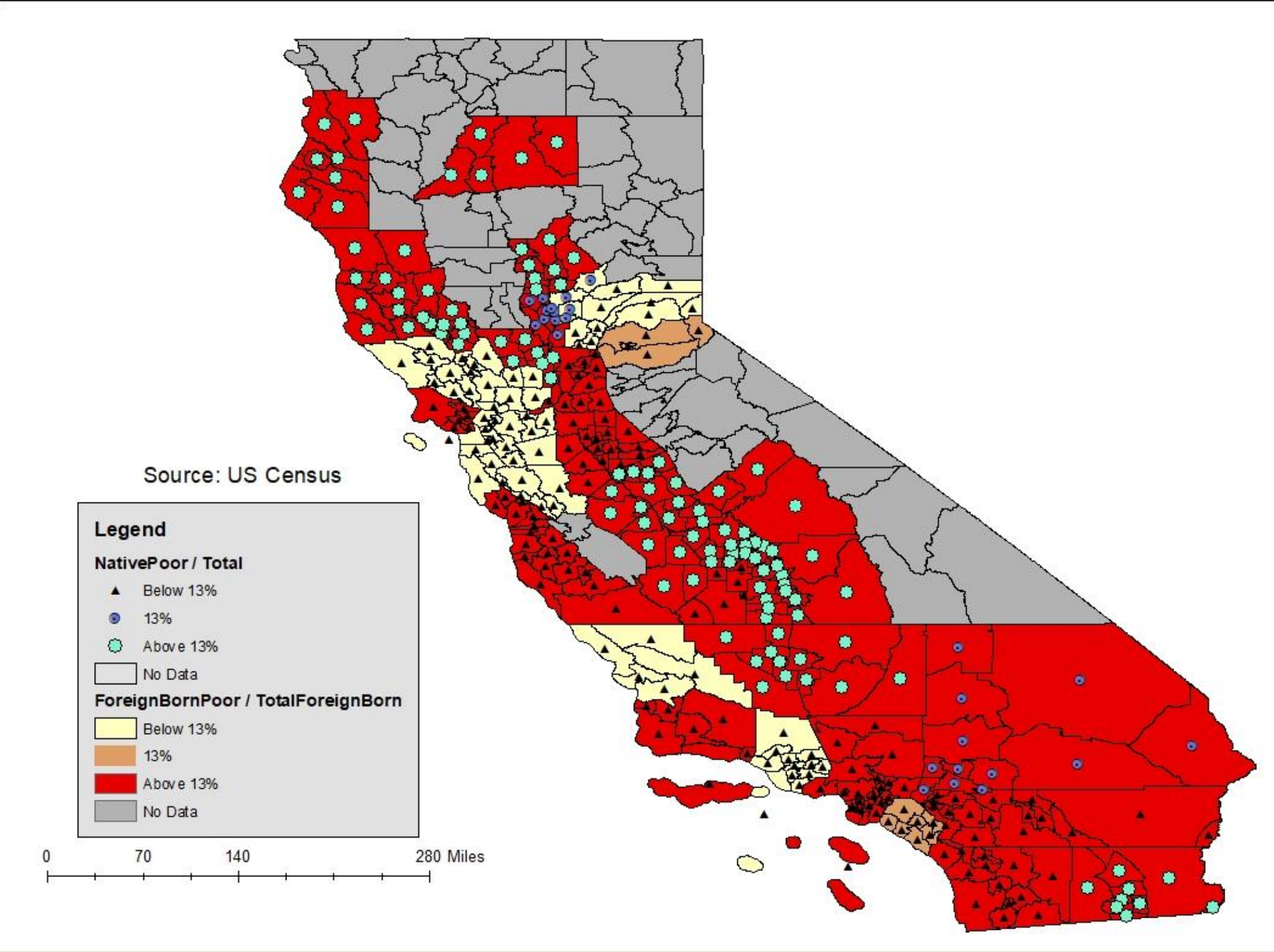
Map (4) The hotspot analysis show that the counties with the hot spots for democratic support in 2016 elections were the counties with slightly better livelihood conditions for migrants and vice versa. The counties with cold spots for migrant support had worse conditions for migrants' livelihood conditions .

The OLS Regression, supports the hypothesis that counties with more support to political parties with welcoming views on migrants tend to have better livelihood conditions for migrants
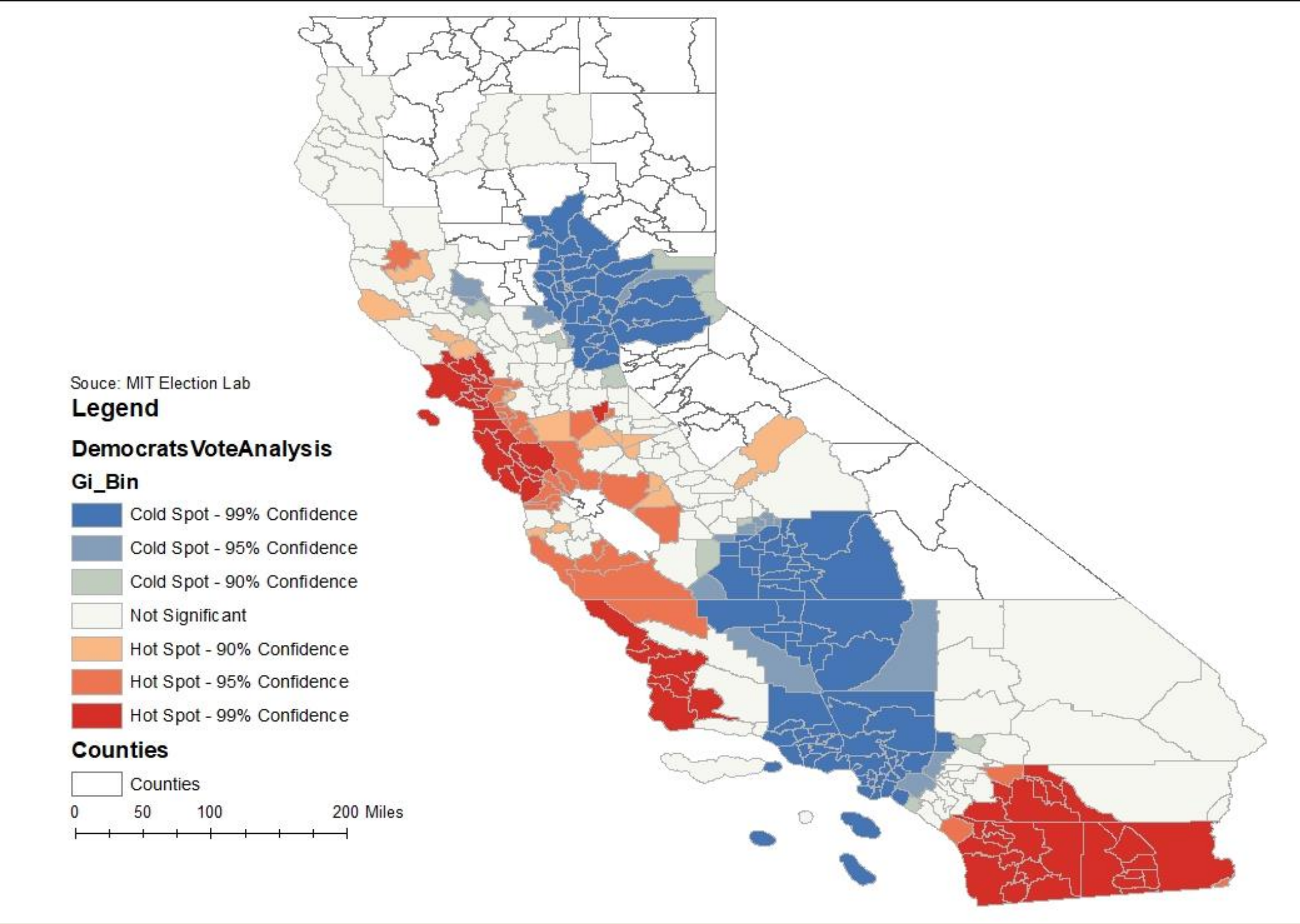
Map (2) : Percentage of Uninsured of Migrants by County

Map (3) : Percentage of Migrants under poverty line by County

Map (4) :Hotspot Analysis of Democratic Vote by County

OLS Regression: Effect of Party Support on Poverty Level

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	T-statistic	P-Value
Intercept	0.045	0.0943	1.53	0.342
Democratic Party Support	0.59	0.362	1.32	0.031
Latin Origin (dummy variable)	(0.02)	0.2111	2.2	0.45

Limitations:

This study would benefit from looking into the initial livelihood conditions of the migrants when they first entered the state of California, just to test if their overall livelihood improved or declined.

Additionally, more information about the kind of support available to these migrants in their respective counties. The OLS regression is not enough to control for many confounding variables, plus it is a tool to test for correlation, not necessarily causality. Thus, more research is needed in this regard using more rigorous statistical tools such as RCTs or Diff-in-Diff to measure the impact of any potential intervention in the future.

Recommendations

Based on the research, some of the policy recommendations include:

1. Investing in the livelihood for minorities should be done on a county level
2. More focus should be directed towards migrants with lower levels of livelihood
3. Roundtable discussions and more community-based solutions are needed to address the attitudes towards migrants that are leading to worsened livelihood conditions