

Macro Roundup Article

Headline: Does Nothing Stop a Bullet Like a Job? The Effects of Income on Crime

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Publication	University of Chicago
Publication Date	June 05, 2024

Tweet: US jobs programs, transfers, and macroeconomic upturns tend to reduce property crime but not serious violent crime, so these programs have little impact on the total social costs of crime, which are driven by serious violence.

Summary: The best available evidence suggests that policies that reduce economic desperation, like more jobs or more generous transfer programs, reduce property crime and, hence, overall crime (Figure 1). The best available evidence [also] suggests that jobs and transfer programs have little, if any, systematic relationship to violent crime (Figure 1). That's true for jobs programs or social programs for low-income populations in general, or for specific higher-risk sub-populations like people exiting prison. Economic conditions contribute importantly to property crime but are not the key driver of violent crime. If anything, the evidence seems to be at least as strong for the reverse relationship: Uncontrolled violence exacerbates poverty and joblessness. Exposure to community violence harms children's schooling outcomes and the mental health of both parents and children. Local economic development is hard when people and businesses are fleeing to safety. The flip side is that anything that helps control [the] violent crime problem can be a massive tailwind for community development efforts.

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Primary Topic: Poverty/Crime

Topics: Academic paper, Database, Poverty/Crime, Workforce

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