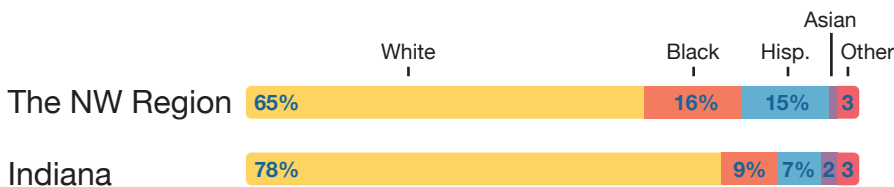


# Congregations and Polarization

## The Northwest Region Profile

The NW Region is more diverse than the state overall.

Percent of population by race

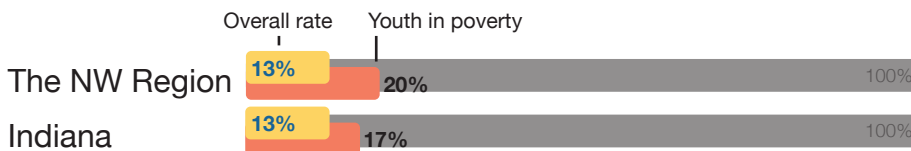


**Why This Matters for Congregations**  
*Nobody who works toward the Kingdom of God imagines it will be segregated. But we live in a society that is segregated. The question, "Who is my neighbor?" has not only theological meaning, but very real, empirical, meaning too.*

*Our goal: Share data to create productive, sustained conversations within congregations that help them minister more effectively.*

Compared to Indiana, youth poverty is slightly higher in the NW Region.

Percent of population in poverty



**Why This Matters for Congregations**  
*"Economic inequality is a polarizing issue. Help for the poor is the most universal mission shared by religious groups of all kinds, but there are great differences between ministries that provide charity and those that seek public policy change. There is considerable disagreement about the causes of inequality and the appropriate responses, but any discussions of the issue will benefit from an evidence-based understanding of differences in social context.*

Typical household earnings are higher in the NW Region than in Indiana overall.

Median household income



## Unemployment is much higher in the NW Region than in Indiana overall.

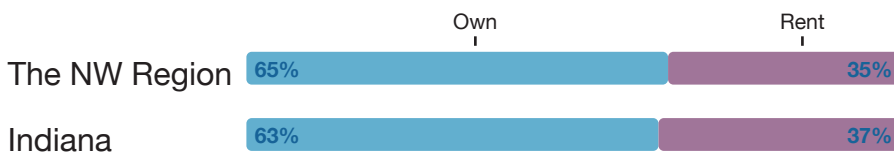
Percent of labor force that is unemployed



**Why This Matters for Congregations**  
*Urban environments present special challenges for congregations because unemployment, poverty, education, and race intertwine in ways that are complex. Many mission activities must account for multiple issues at once.*

## Homeownership is about as common in the NW Region as in the state overall.

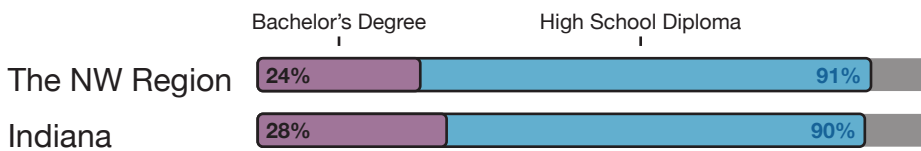
Percent of households that \_\_\_\_\_ their home



**Why This Matters for Congregations**  
*Housing is yet another complex issue intertwined with unemployment, poverty, and race. Urban congregations are much more likely to have direct housing ministries, from temporary shelter to Community Development Corporations.*

## Compared to Indiana, the NW Region has fewer college graduates but as many high school graduates.

Percent of adults 25 or older who have attained a \_\_\_\_\_



**Why This Matters for Congregations**  
*Education is closely tied to well-being, but it is also tied in complex ways to political and religious behavior.*

### How did we define urban, suburban, and rural Indiana?

We used a measure from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The American Housing Survey asks households whether they consider the character of their neighborhood urban, suburban, or rural. This was used to estimate how many households lived in each neighborhood type. Areas were classified by the predominant category. These categories are shown in the map at the right. For a larger version, visit [savi.org/understanding-context-for-ministry-urban-suburban-rural/](http://savi.org/understanding-context-for-ministry-urban-suburban-rural/).

