

# Equitable Growth Profile of the Omaha-Council Bluffs Region

## Summary (2018 updated analysis)

PolicyLink



MAPA



The Omaha-Council Bluffs region continues to undergo a demographic transformation that has major implications for how the region charts a future of sustainable, inclusive prosperity. Communities of color – particularly a growing Latino population – are driving population growth in the region, making their ability to participate in the economy and thrive central to the region’s success.

Equitable growth is the path to prosperity. Our updated analysis finds that closing wide racial gaps in income could have boosted the regional economy by nearly \$4.8 billion in 2015. Recent community success to reduce racial inequities reveals the potential of larger-scale collective action and policy change. By connecting people with good jobs, raising the floor for low-wage workers, and building communities of opportunity metro-wide, the region’s leaders can put all residents on the path toward reaching their full potential, and secure a bright economic future for all.

### Foreword

The Heartland 2050 vision calls for a growth model that is driven by equity – full inclusion for all residents in the region’s economic, social and political life. While the Heartland region is home to tremendous resources and a high quality of life, many are not fully participating in the region’s economy. Our growth projections show our region becoming increasingly diverse, with people of color becoming the majority of Douglas County’s population by 2040. As communities of color continue to drive growth in our region, ensuring that people of color are fully participating in our economy is an urgent priority.

This 2018 profile updates the data from the 2014 Equitable Growth Profile which showed significant disparities in education, earnings, and poverty. The work of the Heartland 2050 Equity and Engagement Committee led to identifying additional indicators to track, including affordable housing, access to transportation, and health indicators, as we work to create local recommendations to resolve long-standing disparities. This profile supports the idea that we realize stronger, more sustainable economic growth when we have greater economic and racial inclusion.

Elected officials, organizations, foundations, institutions, faith-based groups, residents, and others are working to address the root causes of persistent poverty and inequities. Recent success stories such as rising graduation rates, a decline in the crime rate in the urban core, youth summer employment and work experience opportunities, and access to healthy foods show that these efforts are having an impact. This is a time to lift up what works by highlighting existing efforts in our region that begin to paint a picture of a more just and inclusive Heartland. This can only be done through partnership, collaboration, and trust. Success among communities of color is essential to our region’s continued development and to ensure that all residents, including those yet to come, will find the Heartland a place where opportunities are in abundance for all.

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## Introduction

Over the past several years, many more Omaha-Council Bluffs leaders have come to recognize the centrality of equity in building a stronger, more prosperous, more inclusive region for all. PolicyLink defines equity as just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. Realizing equity in a community means ensuring full inclusion of all residents in the economic, social, and political life, regardless of race/ethnicity, nativity, age, gender, neighborhood, or other characteristics.

In the Omaha-Council Bluffs region and across the country, profound demographic shifts, including the growing diversity of the population and the aging of the predominantly White baby boomer generation, are increasing the necessity of racial inclusion. Nationwide, the majority of children ages six and under are children of color and demographers predict that people of color will be the majority by 2044. The region is less demographically diverse than the nation as a whole, yet the same trends exist. Between 2000 and 2015, communities of color contributed the majority of population growth, increasing their share of the population from 16 to 22 percent, and by 2050, 41 percent of the region's residents are expected to be people of color.

As the share of schoolchildren, workers, and consumers who are people of color increases, ensuring that people of all races and ethnicities can participate in the regional economy and reach their full potential is both a moral imperative and an economic imperative that is critical for the region's continued growth and prosperity. Research now shows that inclusion and growth go hand in hand: economic inequality hinders economic growth and prosperity, while economic and racial inclusion fosters greater economic mobility and more robust and sustained growth.<sup>1</sup> The research also shows that the nation as a whole would be stronger and more competitive globally, with increased college-going rates and more buying power, if opportunities were expanded to those in the bottom fifth of the national income distribution. Furthermore, opportunities for social mobility for those in the lowest income bracket are also associated with increased rates of innovation, which is also a benefit to society at large.<sup>2</sup>

Embedding equity into local and regional development strategies is particularly important given the history of metropolitan development in the United States, and the Omaha-Council Bluffs region is no exception. America's regions are highly segregated by race and income, and these historic

patterns of exclusion were often created and maintained by public policies at the federal, state, regional, and local levels. In the decades after World War II, housing and transportation policies incentivized the growth of suburbs while redlining practices and racially restrictive covenants systematically prevented Blacks and other people of color from buying homes in new developments and simultaneously starved older urban neighborhoods of needed reinvestment.

This segregation and isolation resulting from redlining, blockbusting, and racially restrictive housing covenants played out on a local level in Omaha, creating pockets of concentrated poverty, particularly in the now largely Black neighborhood of North Omaha. Limited public transit stops and housing options in the redlined community exacerbated physical distress in the neighborhood, while discriminatory policies disenfranchised residents. The effects of these conditions over time reached a breaking point, culminating in civil unrest in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and leaving scars in the form of burned-out buildings and empty spaces that are still visible today.<sup>3</sup>

The razing of large swaths of the community to make way for the construction of Highway 75, which physically cut the neighborhood in half, served to further isolate the neighborhood.<sup>4</sup> The decline in manufacturing jobs and the distance required to reach those jobs that remained made it difficult for residents of the once-thriving community to access good jobs. White residents with resources left the neighborhood for new homes financed by government-backed mortgages in the suburbs, and businesses followed suit.<sup>5</sup>

Many other factors – continued racial discrimination in housing and employment, segregated schools,<sup>6</sup> exclusionary land-use practices that prevent construction of affordable multifamily homes in more affluent neighborhoods, and political fragmentation – have reinforced the geographic, race, and class inequities in Omaha-Council Bluffs.

Today, the region is a patchwork of concentrated advantage and disadvantage, with some neighborhoods home to good schools, bustling commercial districts, services, parks, and other crucial ingredients for economic success, and other neighborhoods providing none of those elements. Overcoming these forces of inequity and building a stronger region requires an intentional strategy to ensure that all neighborhoods are communities of opportunity that provide their residents with the tools they need to thrive.

Given the importance of greater inclusion for the future of the regional economy, community efforts to envision and bring about greater prosperity must focus simultaneously on economic opportunity and economic growth. A critical step is to understand the current state of equity (and inequity) in the region and then to put in place strategies, policies, investments, and new business models that remove barriers and make it possible for all to participate and reach their full potential.

In 2014, the Omaha-Council Bluffs region took this step by working with the National Equity Atlas team at PolicyLink and the Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE) at the University of Southern California to produce a study of equitable growth, the Equitable Growth Profile of the Omaha-Council Bluffs Region. Among other findings, the analysis highlighted how the region stood out for its admirably low unemployment rate (3.6 percent), yet not everyone in the region was thriving. The unemployment rate for Black workers was closer to 12 percent: three times the regional average. The profile also revealed that although communities of color were driving the region's population growth, more and more Latino, Black, and Native American residents were unable to make ends meet, even when they were working.

Many regional leaders used the profile data to educate residents and local leaders about the state of equity in the region and inform grantmaking, business development, and employment efforts. The value of the analysis led regional leaders to request updated data and analyses to help them continue to build greater awareness about the importance of equity as well as to develop more specific, actionable policies and recommendations to advance equitable growth.

This update to the Equitable Growth Profile of the Omaha-Council Bluffs Region examines demographic trends and indicators of equitable growth through 2015 (the most recent data available at the onset of this research), highlighting strengths and areas of vulnerability in relation to the goal of building a strong, resilient economy. Like the first profile, it was developed by the National Equity Atlas team at PolicyLink and PERE in partnership with the Equity and Engagement Committee for Heartland 2050, which is a community-driven initiative working toward a common vision for the Omaha-Council Bluffs region. This updated profile includes new data on measures of health and wellness, access to affordable housing and transportation, additional data disaggregated by sex in addition to race/ethnicity, and more county-level data. In addition to the data analysis, the research team interviewed

several local leaders during a site visit and solicited feedback on the profile from advisory task force members during a two-hour feedback session. The summary also includes a set of recommendations that were developed with the input of leaders on the task force.

This summary document highlights key findings from the analysis and shares policy recommendations. The full profile, including a detailed methodology section, can be found at <http://nationalequityatlas.org/reports/equity-profiles>.

## **Data and Methods**

This profile draws from a unique Equitable Growth Indicators Database developed by PolicyLink and PERE. This database incorporates hundreds of data points from public and private data sources, such as the U.S. Census Bureau, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. The database includes data for the 100 largest cities, 150 largest metropolitan regions, and all 50 states, and includes historical data going back to 1980 for many economic indicators as well as demographic projections through 2050. It enables comparative regional and state analyses as well as tracking of change over time.

Most of the indicators in the updated profile reflect a 2011 through 2015 average (the previous profile covered a 2008 through 2012 average). Because the data from the two profiles include overlapping years, we are unable to make distinct comparisons across the two profiles, but time series data are available within the profile update to capture change over time.

Note that while we are able to disaggregate most indicators by major racial/ethnic groups (i.e., White, Black, Latino, Asian or Pacific Islander, and Mixed/other), figures for the Asian/Pacific Islander population as a whole often mask wide variation on educational and economic indicators for subgroups such as Hmong, Vietnamese, and others. Also, there is often too little data to break out indicators for Native Americans.

For the purposes of this profile and data analysis, we define the Omaha-Council Bluffs region as the eight-county area included in the original Heartland 2050 regional vision developed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency and partners. The region comprises Cass, Douglas, Sarpy, Saunders, and Washington counties in Nebraska and Harrison, Mills, and Pottawattamie counties in Iowa. All data presented use this regional boundary. Any exceptions because of lack of data availability are noted in the "Data and methods" section of the complete profile.

## Profile Highlights

### The region is undergoing a major demographic shift

While Omaha-Council Bluffs is less diverse than many other metropolitan regions in the United States, its population is quickly becoming more multiracial and multicultural. In 1980, 90 percent of its 650,000 residents were White, and the remaining 10 percent were predominantly Black. By 2010, the share of the population that was people of color had more than doubled, rising to 21 percent of the region’s 865,000 residents, and a more diverse mix.

In the growing region, nearly all racial/ethnic groups are growing in absolute numbers, including the White population, but it is communities of color – particularly Latinos but also Asians, people of Mixed/other backgrounds, and Blacks – who are driving the region’s population growth and change. Communities of color contributed 59 percent of net growth between 2000 and 2015 and accounted for most new residents in five of the region’s eight counties. Between 2000 and 2010, the Latino share of the population increased from 5 percent to 9 percent.

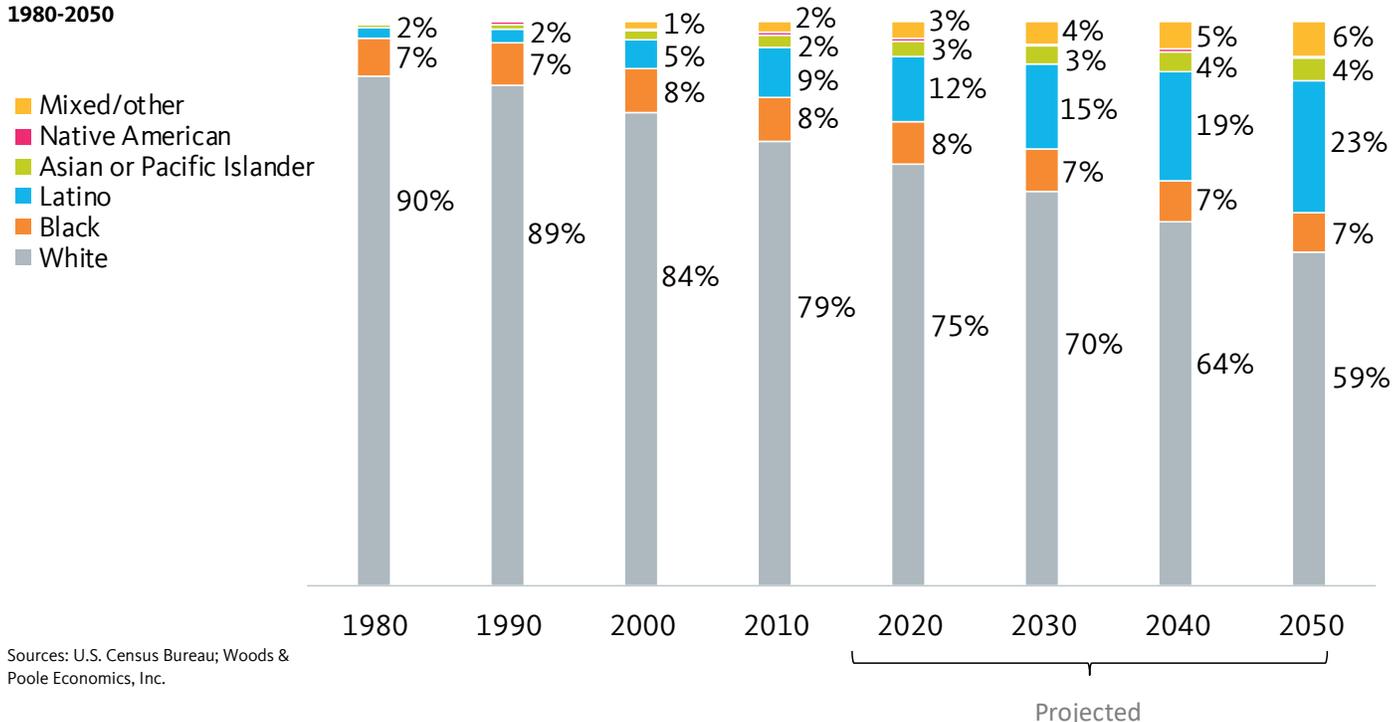
Immigrants are also contributing to growth, with 23 percent of the growth in the region between 2000 and 2015 coming from immigrants, the overwhelming majority of whom are immigrants of color.

This demographic shift is projected to continue, and, by 2050, 41 percent of the region’s residents will be people of color. Nearly one in four of the region’s residents will be Latino and the Black population will remain at about 7 percent of the total. While the Asian or Pacific Islander and Mixed/other populations will also grow, the White population share will decline.

Youth are at the forefront of the region’s rising diversity and the youth population is much more diverse than the senior population. Of the region’s residents who are under age 18, 32 percent are people of color, compared with just 9 percent of those over age 64. This amounts to a 23 percentage-point racial generation gap – this is an economic risk because places that have larger racial gaps between their young and old tend to make smaller investments in the educational systems and community infrastructure that ensure youth can contribute to the region’s economic growth and vitality.

The region is quickly becoming more diverse and, by 2050, four in 10 residents will be people of color.

**Racial/ethnic composition, 1980-2050**



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

**More inclusive growth is the key to the region’s future prosperity**

Omaha’s regional economy is relatively strong and resilient: unemployment is low and job growth is steady (though slower than it was before the recession). Although the region is experiencing rising inequality, when it comes to other measures of economic health – such as a shrinking middle class and a growing number of low-paying jobs – most of these issues are less severe in the region than they are in other metros or in the nation as a whole.

This overall positive economic outlook, however, masks growing inequities for the region’s communities of color and less-educated residents, and these inequities put the region’s economic future at risk. Several key challenges are described in the text below.

***Some of the fastest-growing segments of the region’s workforce lack the education levels required for the jobs of the future.***

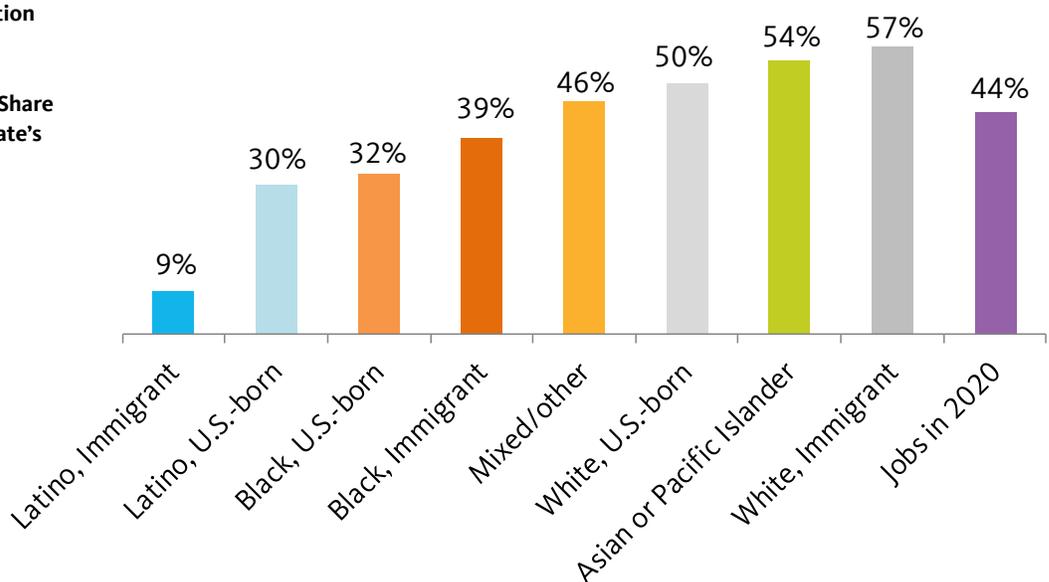
A skilled workforce is central to economic competitiveness in the 21st century’s global knowledge-driven economy, but growing segments of the Omaha-Council Bluffs workforce lack the education needed for tomorrow’s jobs. According to the Georgetown Center for Education and the Workforce, an

estimated 44 percent of jobs in the area will require an associate’s degree or higher in 2020. Today, only 32 percent of the region’s U.S.-born Black workers and 30 percent of its U.S.-born Latino workers possess that level of education. This figure is even lower for Latino immigrants, at 9 percent.

The achievement gap has deep roots in public education systems. Among youth without a high school diploma in the region, Latino youth, particularly Latino immigrants, are much less likely to have high school diplomas than their White counterparts. On the positive side, more youth of all races and ethnicities are now graduating from high school in the Omaha-Council Bluffs region than in the past, and the number of “disconnected youth” ages 16 to 24 has declined for many racial/ethnic groups since 2000. At the same time, youth of color are still less likely to earn a high school diploma and are more likely to be disconnected (13 percent) than their White counterparts (7 percent). Examining disconnected youth by sex, more young women are disconnected from school or work compared to young men. Although the number of disconnected White female youth is lower now than it was in past years, the number of disconnected Latino women and Black men increased.

There is a wide gap between the education levels of Black and Latino workers and the educational requirements of future jobs.

**Share of Working-Age Population with an Associate’s Degree or Higher by Race/Ethnicity and Nativity, 2015, and Projected Share of Jobs that Require an Associate’s Degree or Higher, 2020**



Sources: Georgetown Center for Education and the Workforce; IPUMS. Universe for education levels of workers includes all persons ages 25 through 64. Note: Data for 2015 by race/ethnicity/nativity represents a 2011 through 2015 average and is at the regional level; data on jobs in 2020 represents a regional job-weighted average of state-level projections for Nebraska and Iowa.

**Workers of color and workers with less formal education fare worse in the regional labor market than their White and more educated counterparts.**

While unemployment in the region is low and falling – 3.8 percent in 2015 – Black workers continue to face recession-level unemployment rates (9.4 percent), and unemployment remains very high for White workers without a high school diploma (12 percent). The region’s Black workers are more likely to be unemployed than their White and Latino counterparts at every level of education except for those with a bachelor’s degree or higher (Latino residents had the highest unemployment rate at this level of education at 6 percent).

For the typical worker in the Omaha-Council Bluffs region – the one right in the middle of the wage distribution – wages have been stagnant (at \$19.90/hour) since 2000. Looking at wage growth by race, we found that wages were stagnant for White workers (median wage of \$20.50/hour), and just barely increased for Black workers (from \$16.30 to \$16.70/hour), while wages decreased for Latino workers (from \$15.00 to \$13.80/hour), and increased substantially for Asian or Pacific Islander workers (from \$18.50 to \$21.20/hour).

Similar to unemployment, wages tend to increase with education, but racial gaps remain even among workers with similar education levels. People of color with a bachelor’s degree or higher earn \$3 less per hour than their White counterparts, which adds up to about \$6,000 less per year. The fact that racial economic gaps remain even after controlling

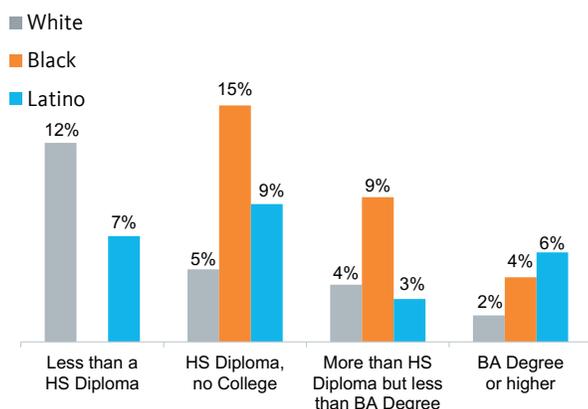
for education reveals the persistence of racial barriers to economic opportunity – including overt discrimination as well as more subtle forms of exclusion that are embedded into institutions and systems.

**Native Americans have the highest rates of business ownership of any racial/ethnic group.**

Expanding opportunities for people of color and women to start and grow successful businesses is critical for inclusive growth, given current inequities by race and gender. Research shows that businesses owned by people of color are more likely to hire people of color than other firms and they generate increased economic activity in communities of color. Analysis of data on business ownership and sales by race and gender reveals a bright spot: Native Americans have the highest rates of business ownership (15.9 businesses per 100 adults), which is double that of Latino and Black residents who have the lowest rates (6.0 and 8.3 businesses, respectively, per 100 adults). The rate for White residents is 11.7 businesses per 100 adults. Ownership rates among women are also low (7.3 per 100 adults) compared to men (12.2 businesses per 100 adults). Furthermore, business sales receipts are significantly lower for businesses of color and women-owned businesses compared to White business owners and businesses owned by men. Annual receipts for firms headed by Whites average \$758,000, which is 17 times as high as receipts for firms headed by Blacks (\$44,000). Average annual receipts for firms headed by men is a staggering \$1,057,000, or six times as high as firms headed by women (\$179,000).

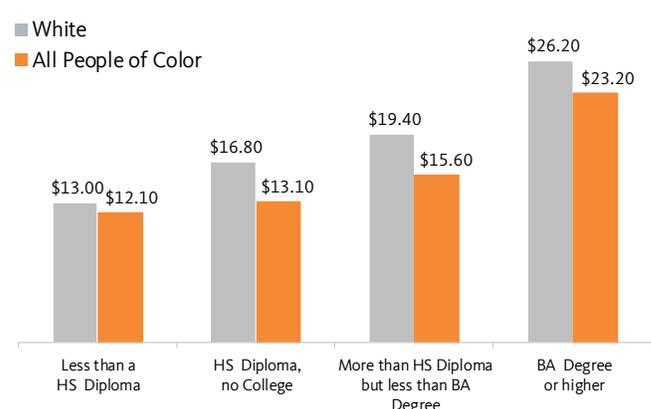
Black workers with high school diplomas or higher education are more likely than their White counterparts to be unemployed and people of color as a whole earn less than their White counterparts at the same educational level.

**Unemployment Rate by Educational Attainment and Race/Ethnicity, 2015**



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes the civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64. Note: Unemployment for Blacks with less than a HS diploma is excluded because of a small sample size. Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average

**Median Hourly Wage by Educational Attainment and Race/Ethnicity, 2015**



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes civilian noninstitutional full-time wage and salary workers ages 25 through 64. Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Values are in 2015 dollars.

**The middle class is shrinking and the number of working poor is growing.**

An inclusive, growing middle class is the hallmark of a prosperous region, but, following the national trends, fewer households earn middle-class incomes in Omaha-Council Bluffs now than in 1979 (40 percent in 1979 vs. 37 percent in 2015), while an increasing share of households are in the lower-income bracket (30 percent in 1979 vs. 36 percent in 2015). Middle-wage jobs, which have traditionally provided pathways to the middle class, are growing at a much higher rate in the region (16 percent) than the United States overall (6 percent). The manufacturing sector, however, which traditionally provided many good, middle-skill jobs for people without college degrees, has seen a decline in jobs since 2006, which, fortunately, has not been as severe as in most other regions. Although middle-wage jobs are growing, earnings growth for those in these jobs is slower than for those in high- and low-wage jobs. The middle class has also become more diverse, shifting from 8 percent people of color in 1979 to 15 percent people of color today, yet its composition still does not fully reflect the region’s racial and ethnic diversity.

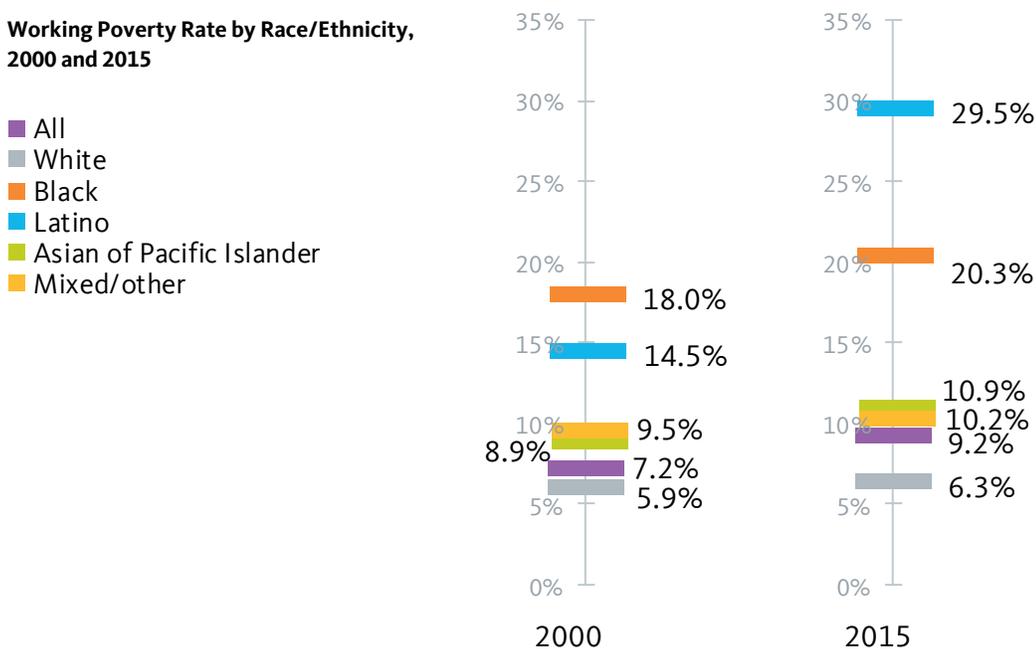
With a growing low-wage sector, the region’s ranks of the “working poor” – defined as the share working full time with a family income below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, among all workers – is also growing (9.2 percent in 2015, up from 7.2 percent in 2000). Workers of color are more likely than Whites to be working poor. Almost one in three Latinos and one in five Blacks in the region are working poor, compared with one in 16 Whites.

**Stark disparities in rent burden exist by gender and race.**

Rent burden is a measure of housing affordability that looks at the proportion of renter households that are paying more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs (which is contract rent and utilities). Of renter households in the region, 45 percent are rent burdened. For people of color, specifically Black renters, this figure is much higher (57 percent) and is even more stark when disaggregated by gender. Renter households headed by women of any race are far more likely to be rent burdened than those headed by men. Among households headed by women, Black women are most likely to spend more than 30 percent of their income on rent (69 percent) while White women are the least likely (50 percent). Still, White women have a higher rate of being rent burdened than men of any race (i.e., among renter households headed by men, those headed by Black men had the highest rate of rent burden at 39 percent).

Working poverty is on the rise and is particularly high for Latino workers.

**Working Poverty Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2000 and 2015**



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes the civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64 not living in group quarters who worked at all during the year prior to the survey. Note: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

**Households of color overall face greater barriers in accessing jobs and services throughout the region.**

Having access to a vehicle, particularly in areas with fewer transit options like in the Omaha-Council Bluffs region, can expand job opportunities and economic security for individuals and families. With nearly one in five Black households without a vehicle, these households have less access to job opportunities in the region compared to White households where only 5 percent are without a vehicle. Among people of color overall, 13 percent lack access to a vehicle.

**Racial and economic inclusion would strengthen the economy**

The Omaha-Council Bluffs region’s rising inequality and its racial gaps in income, wages, education, and poverty are not only bad for communities of color but also hinder the whole region’s economic growth and prosperity. According to our analysis, if there were no racial disparities in income, the region’s GDP would have been \$4.8 billion higher in 2015. Unless racial gaps are closed, the costs of inequity will grow as the Omaha-Council Bluffs region becomes more diverse.

**Implications**

The region’s growing, diverse population can be a major economic asset – if its leaders invest in ensuring that all of its residents can access good jobs and contribute their talent and

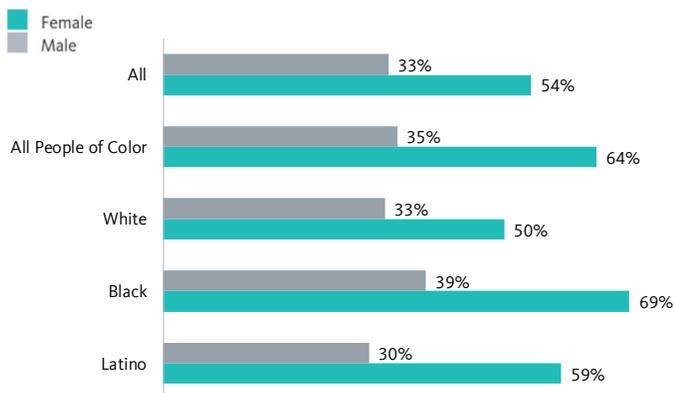
creativity to building a strong economy. The Omaha-Council Bluffs region has demonstrated economic resilience, but persistent inequities for its communities of color and low-income residents are a threat to future prosperity. Our analysis suggests that focusing on priority goals will spur more equitable growth in the region. Below we describe these goals and the strategies that regional leaders might pursue to advance them, along with examples from other regions.

**Foster racial inclusion and leadership across sectors**

As the region continues to diversify, leaders across sectors must proactively take steps to ensure communities of color can participate and contribute their knowledge and experience to decision-making and leadership. This starts by eliminating barriers to participation (for example, by making community meetings accessible for people with disabilities and providing childcare). In addition, local leaders should foster leadership development programs, including youth-focused efforts, to develop pipelines that would bolster civic participation and political representation of marginalized groups on local decision-making bodies, such as boards and commissions. Leadership development efforts, such as young professionals groups through the Urban League of Nebraska and the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce, are good examples of how the region is growing a diverse cadre of business, organizational, and civic leaders.

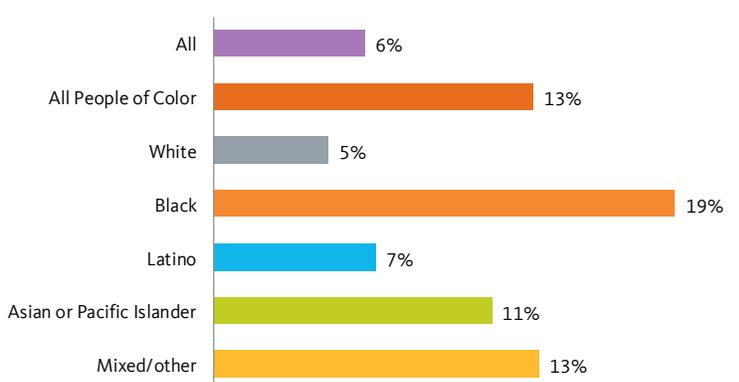
Women and people of color face higher rent burdens, and people of color overall face greater barriers in accessing jobs and services throughout the region.

**Renter Housing Burden by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2015**



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes all renter-occupied households with housing costs. Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

**Households without a Vehicle by Race/Ethnicity, 2015**



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes all households (no group quarters). Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

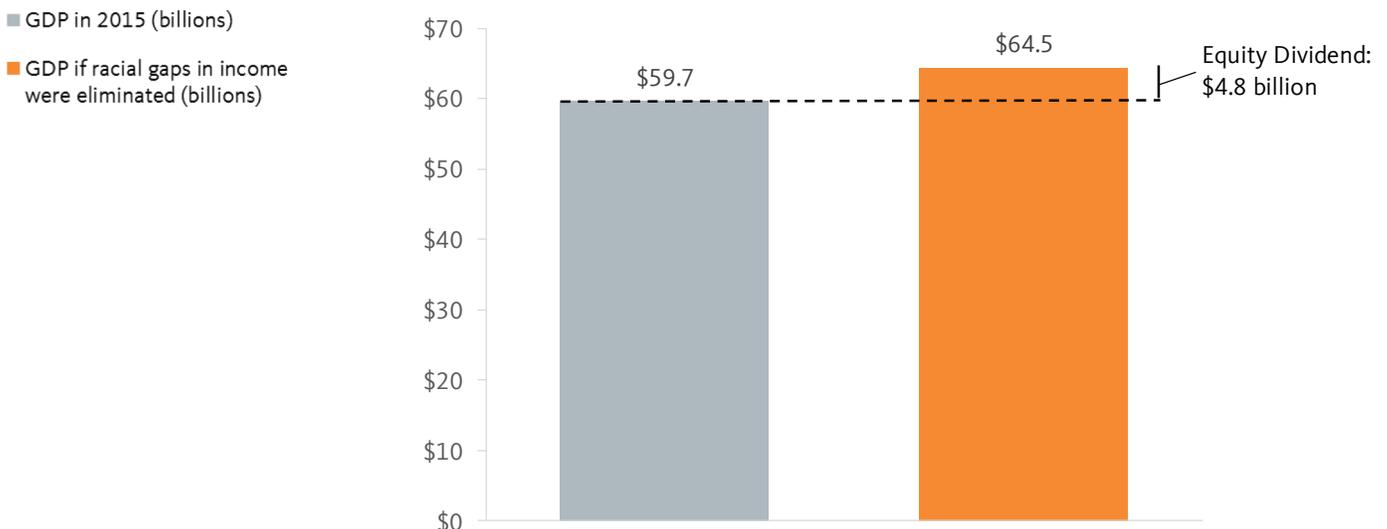
The region has made strides in increasing its diversity of civic leaders within the state legislature, city council, and school board.<sup>7</sup> However, several local leaders and residents we spoke to described local politics as an “old boys’ club” that excludes people of color. A recent survey corroborates this sentiment. Surveying roughly 180 young Black professionals in Greater Omaha, results showed that this group was far less likely than their peers of other races to recommend Greater Omaha as a place to live, work, and play. As one survey respondent put it, “Omaha is a family town, social circles are tight, and advancement seems to be about who you know, not what you know.”<sup>8</sup> A committee of volunteers developed several recommendations in response to the survey results, including developing a coalition of employers to advance diversity and inclusion in the workplace, and a diversity and inclusion strategy that companies could adopt.<sup>9, 10</sup> One recommendation that came out of the Heartland 2050 advisory task force included measuring the return on investment for a business in hiring a diverse workforce.

***The Twin Cities trains leaders of color in securing positions on publicly appointed boards and commissions.*** Nexus Community Partners Boards and Commissions Leadership Institute (BCLI) is a seven-month leadership program that supports, trains and places people of color and other underrepresented community members on city and county publicly appointed boards and commissions that influence and impact equity in the Twin Cities Metro Area in economic development, health, housing, transit and workforce development. The program was modeled after the Boards and Commissions Leadership Institute created by Urban Habitat in Oakland, California.<sup>11</sup>

***Integrate immigrants into the regional economy***  
 Immigrants are contributing to growth in the region, and 15 percent of children have immigrant parents, yet they face barriers to fully participating in economic and civic life. Across the country, many communities have recognized the importance of immigrant integration and have adopted policies to facilitate access to services, education and training, entrepreneurship, and jobs and to become more welcoming to

The Omaha-Council Bluff region’s GDP would have been \$4.8 billion higher in 2015 if there were no racial disparities in income.

**Actual GDP and Estimated GDP without Racial Gaps in Income, 2015**



Sources: Bureau of Economic Analysis; IPUMS. Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average

immigrant residents. One strategy some communities, like New Haven, Connecticut, have adopted is offering municipal IDs. In the Chicago region, several regional organizations collaborated to develop an “Immigrant Integration Toolkit” to support municipalities in adopting best practices for immigrant inclusion.<sup>12</sup> The Heartland 2050 advisory task force recommends a focus on community education and narrative change efforts to increase knowledge and understanding of the region’s shared history across Omaha’s urban and rural communities.

***Cross-sector leaders in Baltimore create a task force to create a more welcoming community for immigrants.*** In 2013, Baltimore opened its Mayor’s Office of Immigrant and Multicultural Affairs (MIMA) to promote economic growth and community well-being by creating a welcoming, supportive environment for immigrants. The city also created a New Americans Task Force of city agencies, nonprofits, the private sector, foundations, and financial institutions. This task force developed 32 recommendations to the Mayor to strengthen efforts to create a welcoming and safe environment for economic opportunity and inclusion for the immigrant community.<sup>13</sup>

***Ensure jobs created by public dollars benefit those with the greatest need through local and targeted hiring***

While the unemployment rate has improved or remained relatively stable across all groups, the region’s high level of unemployment for African Americans (9.4 percent) and Whites without a high school diploma (12 percent) calls for a strong focus on creating on-ramps to good, family-supporting careers for populations facing barriers to good jobs. Public institutions can help remedy this through efforts to ensure that a fair share of jobs created by public dollars benefit those with the greatest need, such as residents in North and South Omaha, rural communities, and other marginalized communities throughout the region. Local and targeted hiring policies can require or incentivize businesses that receive public resources, such as government contracts or tax breaks, to hire workers living in a particular geographic area (i.e., residents living near central business districts) or from specific populations, taking into account characteristics such as veteran status, sex, race or ethnicity (where allowed), residency in a low-income neighborhood, prior incarceration, disability, or long-term unemployment. This is usually done by revising employers’ hiring procedures to build in connections with referral sources that can promptly send qualified local and targeted workers in response to employer requests. These programs advance

inclusive growth by increasing job access for workers who face barriers to employment, improve economic security by increasing employment and household incomes, and benefit businesses by identifying a reliable source of local workers.

***San Francisco strengthens its local hiring strategy.*** In San Francisco, advocates successfully campaigned to replace the city’s non-mandatory “good-faith” local hiring goals for public works construction with a mandatory local hiring requirement (now at 30 percent of work hours), which is enforceable through assessment of liquidated damages. Recent reports indicate achievement of more than 40 percent local hiring, indicating the strength of a mandatory approach, as compared with the prior good-faith approach.

***Ensure equitable contracting and procurement to address racial inequities in business growth***

Municipalities spend millions of dollars each year on goods and services, from major construction projects to food, supplies, consulting, and repairs. However, local governments often fail to provide fair contracting opportunities for minority- and women-owned business enterprises (MWBs), who compete with larger companies that are politically connected, able to access financing, and more familiar with navigating the bureaucratic processes of working with governments. Successful strategies to ensure more equitable contracting and procurement include the following.

- Set equity targets for MWBEs
- Streamline certification processes
- Break up large contracts into smaller subcontracts
- Help subcontractors grow into prime contractors
- Remove onerous financial burdens for small businesses
- Help large anchor institutions, like hospitals and universities, develop intentional strategies to purchase more goods and services from MWBEs

Given Nebraska’s ban on racial preferences in public employment, the region should consider race-neutral policies in equitable contracting and procurement (see example below).

***Fulton County in Georgia makes strides in using minority- and women-owned business enterprises.*** Fulton County adopted a supplier diversity program to eliminate discrimination in the procurement process and increase diversity. Although its diversity program does not benefit MWBEs directly, it focuses on relationship building, and organization and reporting changes to increase the diversity of the bidding pool and help address racial inequities. Fulton County partners with prime contractors to find opportunities for MWBEs and other small businesses through professional organizations and publications. Data from 2014 show that through the diversity program the county attained 20 percent MWBE utilization, higher than the national average of 16 percent.<sup>14, 15</sup>

### ***Raise the floor on low-wage jobs and strengthen workers' rights***

Across all workers in the region except for Asian or Pacific Islanders, wages have remained relatively stable or declined since 2000. As noted above, even those working full-time struggle to stay out of poverty. To address these disparities, it will be important to transform low-wage jobs into good jobs by setting high community standards for wages and benefits (including paid sick leave), preventing wage theft, ensuring fair scheduling, and supporting worker organizing. Policies that promote strong and rising wages, especially for low-wage earners, are critically needed to reduce the region's rising levels of working poverty, particularly for Latino workers, even those working full-time. With Nebraska's minimum-wage increase from \$7.25 to \$9.00 per hour, someone working full time at minimum wage would make \$18,720 (up from \$15,080, an increase of nearly 25 percent). Local and state governments in the region should consider these tools and strategies to raise the floor for its low-wage workers and ensure employers it does business with are providing good jobs.

***Seattle was the first major city to adopt a \$15 per hour minimum wage.*** The effort began in SeaTac, near Seattle, where airline companies were shifting to pay workers as contractors, and wages declined dramatically as a result. A local Service Employees International Union (SEIU) chapter led a successful ballot initiative campaign, and voters approved a \$15 per hour minimum wage for airport-related jobs. At the request of the SEIU, the mayor of Seattle set up a task force to develop a proposal for a citywide \$15 per hour minimum wage, and the proposal was ultimately passed by the city council. In the years since Seattle began gradually raising its minimum wage to the \$15 floor, the local job market has grown far faster than the national rate, and researchers have found minimal effect on prices at restaurants, grocery stores, and other merchants.

### ***Cultivate homegrown talent through a strong and resilient cradle-to-career pipeline***

Ensuring that all youth in the Omaha-Council Bluffs region, including African Americans, Native Americans, Latinos, and immigrants, can access a good education that leads to a career is critical to developing the human capital to power the region's economy in the future. Boosting the share of Black and Latino youth who obtain at least a two-year college degree is critical to ensuring the region's workforce is ready for the jobs of the future, and tackling the higher education challenge requires strengthening the whole pipeline of educational supports for vulnerable youth – from birth through career. High-quality early childhood education is essential, as is equitable funding of public schools. Addressing the disproportionately high levels of high school dropout and lack of high school diplomas for Black and Latino youth, particularly Latino immigrants, as well as disproportionate levels of disconnectedness from work or school for young Black and Latina women is also necessary. Bilingual education and other language-access strategies can help youth who are English-language learners excel in school. Replacing overly harsh “zero tolerance” school discipline policies with strategies focused on positive behavior support and restorative justice can work to lower suspension and expulsion rates and reduce the number of disconnected youth. Increasing the diversity of educators and expanding the curriculum to be more inclusive of all students are important factors in the development and academic success of youth of color. For all students to thrive, school facilities also need to be free of overcrowding. Recently, local leaders proposed just that: a \$409.9 million bond referendum to build additional schools and make repairs to existing ones.<sup>16</sup> It is also important to increase the availability of apprenticeships, career academies, linked learning, high-quality afterschool programming, youth

development activities, and other education and training supports. For example, the Step-Up Omaha summer jobs program provides work experience and mentorship opportunities to keep more youth on track to graduation, college, and careers. Partnerships between K-12 and postsecondary institutions to develop scholarship programs and academic support programs for students underrepresented in higher education can help ensure greater college access and success for all students.

***San Antonio improves academic, health, and wellness outcomes for low-income children and youth and their families.***

In San Antonio, Texas, Eastside Promise Neighborhood (EPN) leaders are strengthening educational systems that have failed generations of predominately low-income children and youth of color through a cradle-to-career framework to support organizational learning within youth-serving institutions. EPN and its partners in the school district and the City of San Antonio have committed to using a results framework that provides a clear way to measure outcomes; a means for aligning partners and solutions; and a common language for communicating progress with families, residents, partners, funders, and the general public. This focus on results is paying off: the number of children age five or younger who have a consistent medical provider, other than an emergency room, has increased by 17 percent since 2013. The share of parents or family members who regularly read to their young children has doubled to 50 percent, and 77 percent of parents or family members with children in high school are helping their students plan for college and career – a nearly 25 percentage-point increase since 2013.

***Coordinate housing, transportation, and economic development investments to create healthy, opportunity-rich neighborhoods***

All neighborhoods located throughout the region should provide their residents with the ingredients they need to thrive. Rebuilding distressed neighborhoods and opening up high-opportunity neighborhoods to lower-income people and people of color who have been historically excluded are both important strategies. Coordinating transportation, housing, and economic development investments over the long term will foster more equitable development patterns and healthier neighborhoods across the region. Heartland 2050 task force leaders have described the lack of affordable housing near job centers, lack of a robust public transit system, inadequate infrastructure, and high unemployment and working-poverty rates in North Omaha

and South Omaha, respectively, as challenges to regional economic prosperity. It will be important to promote inclusive development that ensures new development delivers jobs, services, infrastructure, and affordable housing to residents and entrepreneurs of color through community benefits policies and agreements and commercial stabilization strategies. The Omaha Municipal Land Bank is an important redevelopment tool that has the potential to turn abandoned and distressed properties into affordable housing and homeownership opportunities. To prevent structures from deteriorating in the first place, community groups can work closely with city planning and code enforcement to address substandard living conditions while also protecting low-income tenants from displacement, as code enforcement violations levied on landlords are often passed on to tenants through significant rent increases. Strategies to develop funding sources to expand, improve, and maintain high-quality infrastructure in low-wealth communities of color include:

- Increasing access and affordability of sustainable infrastructure for vulnerable populations (e.g., expand accessible housing )
- Targeting infrastructure resources to expand opportunity in high-need, low-income communities (e.g., “Fix it first” – repair existing facilities before adding new ones; bus rapid transit that connects to job centers and vibrant entertainment districts; legislation to adjust Nebraska’s “lid law” restricting transit dollars; policies to offset cost to transit agencies to provide a no-fare option to low-income transit users)
- Maximizing the job and economic benefits of infrastructure investments (e.g., create job centers along high frequency transit lines and target hiring to residents near these centers)

***Bus rapid transit investments in Cleveland connect the city's population to job centers throughout the region.***

A major infrastructure investment – the HealthLine bus rapid transit system (known as BRT) – is catalyzing reinvestment and economic activity along Cleveland's historic corridor, Euclid Avenue, delivering fast, first-class transportation service to all communities along the route and connecting the high-unemployment, predominantly African American city of East Cleveland to the region's two largest job centers. Since it began in 2008, the HealthLine has provided more than 29 million riders with high-frequency, 24-hour-a-day service – 34 percent faster than the prior bus service – and has generated more than \$6.3 billion in economic activity along the corridor. That is a return on investment of \$114 for every dollar it cost to build.<sup>17</sup> Leadership, commitment, and support from city and state officials, major employers, and residents were essential to bringing the BRT from an idea to reality.

***Designate joint use facilities to build healthy communities where all residents can thrive regardless of race or income***

A joint use agreement, also known as a shared use agreement, supports a collaborative effort between two or more entities to share the use of facilities and land to increase community members' access and opportunities for physical activity, recreation, and meeting space. By promoting safe and accessible recreation areas through joint use agreements, local leaders can begin to mitigate the compounding health and social inequities of residential segregation and neighborhood poverty for underserved communities. Joint use of facilities can be an important strategy for providing safe and suitable spaces for activity in low-income neighborhoods and communities of color, in cases where parks and recreational facilities are scarce, and for hosting important services and programs that do not have dedicated space in these communities. Through joint use agreements, government agencies (such as cities, school districts, or parks and recreation departments), nonprofits, and private organizations can arrange to share both indoor and outdoor spaces. These spaces can include school athletic fields, parkland, gymnasiums, pools, auditoriums, and playgrounds. In concert with other policy interventions, shared use can be an effective strategy to build healthy communities where all residents can thrive regardless of race or income. People of color and low-income families are more likely to suffer the negative health impacts linked to lack of physical activity, including obesity and increased risks of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, depression, and some cancers.

***Maricopa County opens school facilities for shared use.*** In Maricopa County, Arizona, six elementary school districts have joined with the Maricopa County Public Health Department, community partners, and philanthropic partners to build healthier neighborhoods by opening school facilities for shared use when school is not in session. Beyond simply making playgrounds available in neighborhoods without public parks, this partnership, launched in January 2017, is using public school land and facilities to open a medical clinic two days a week in conjunction with a community hospital, build community gardens, open a farmers' market, install new outdoor fitness equipment, offer nutritional and cooking classes, and make school library resources available to the public.

**Conclusion**

Community leaders in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors are already taking steps to connect its more vulnerable communities to educational and economic opportunities, and these efforts must continue. To secure a prosperous future, the Omaha-Council Bluffs region needs to implement a growth model that is driven by equity – just and fair inclusion into a society in which everyone can participate and prosper. Concerted investments and policies for, and developed from within, communities of color will also be essential to ensure the region's fastest-growing populations are ready to lead it into the next economy. Existing local efforts, including Heartland 2050, and Strategic 4Sight, are working to create a more equitable future for the region by leading the charge in ensuring the Omaha-Council Bluffs region is one where all can thrive. These efforts along with other ongoing education, workforce, housing, and transportation initiatives signal a growing commitment toward progress. These efforts should be continued and expanded to work toward economic vitality for all people.

## Notes

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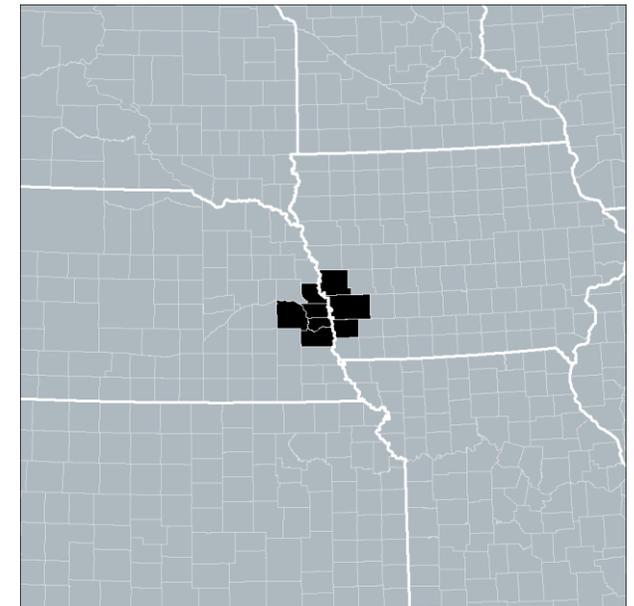
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Equitable Growth Profile of the  
**Omaha-Council Bluffs Region**  
2018 updated analysis



# Summary

The Omaha-Council Bluffs region continues to undergo a demographic transformation that has major implications for how the region charts a future of sustainable, inclusive prosperity. Communities of color – particularly a growing Latino population – are driving population growth in the region, making their ability to participate in the economy and thrive central to the region’s success.

Equitable growth is the path to prosperity. Our updated analysis finds that closing wide racial gaps in income could have boosted the regional economy by nearly \$4.8 billion in 2015. Recent community success to reduce racial inequities reveals the potential of larger-scale collective action and policy change. By connecting people with good jobs, raising the floor for low-wage workers, and building communities of opportunity metro-wide, the region’s leaders can put all residents on the path toward reaching their full potential, and secure a bright economic future for all.

# Indicators

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### How diverse is the population?

Race/Ethnicity and Nativity, 2015

### What groups are growing in population?

Growth Rates of Major Racial/Ethnic Groups, 2000 to 2015

### How is the region's racial/ethnic composition changing?

Racial/Ethnic Composition, 1980 to 2050

Percent People of Color by County, 1980 to 2050

### How much population growth is attributable to communities of color?

Share of Population Growth Attributable to People of Color by County, 2000 to 2015

### How diverse is the region?

Racial/Ethnic Composition by County, 2015

### How does the racial/ethnic composition differ among youth and seniors?

Racial Generation Gap: Percent People of Color (POC) by Age Group, 1980 to 2015

### What share of residents are immigrants?

Percent Immigrant by Race/Ethnicity, 2015

### Is the region's immigrant population growing?

Share of Overall Population Growth Attributable to Immigrants by Race/Ethnicity, 2000 to 2015

### Do children have immigrant parents?

Share of Children with at Least One Immigrant Parent, 2015

### What is the median age by race?

Median Age by Race/Ethnicity, 2015

### Who is coming to live in the region?

Share of Net Population Growth by Source, 1980 to 1990, 1990 to 2000, and 2000 to 2015

## ECONOMIC VITALITY

### Inclusive growth

### Is economic growth creating more jobs?

Average Annual Growth in Jobs and GDP, 1990 to 2007 and 2009 to 2015

### Is the region growing good jobs?

Growth in Jobs and Earnings by Industry Wage Level, 2000 to 2016

### Is inequality low and decreasing?

Level of Income Inequality, 1979 to 2015

### Are incomes increasing for all workers?

Real Earned-Income Growth for Full-Time Wage and Salary Workers, Ages 25 to 64, 2000 to 2015  
Median Hourly Wage by Race/Ethnicity, 2000 and 2015

### Is the middle class expanding?

Households by Income Level, 1979 and 2015

### Is the middle class becoming more inclusive?

Racial Composition of Middle-Class Households and All Households, 1979 and 2015

# Indicators

## Full employment

### How close is the region to reaching full employment for all?

- Unemployment Rate by County, March 2018
- Unemployment Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2015
- Unemployment Rate by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2015
- Jobless Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2015
- Jobless Rate by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2015
- Labor Force Participation Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2015
- Labor Force Participation Rate by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2015

### Do racial inequities in employment persist after controlling for education?

- Unemployment Rate by Educational Attainment and Race/Ethnicity, 2015
- Jobless Rate by Educational Attainment and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

## Access to good jobs

### Can all workers earn a living wage?

- Median Hourly Wage by Educational Attainment and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

### Is working poverty low and decreasing?

- Full-Time Workers by Poverty Status, 2015

### Are residents working multiple jobs?

- Working Two or More Jobs by Full- and Part-Time Status for Workers Ages 25 to 64 Years Old, 2015

## Economic security

### Is poverty low and decreasing?

- Poverty Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2000 and 2015

### Is working poverty low and decreasing?

- Working-Poverty Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2000 and 2015
- Children (Under 18) in Poverty by Poverty Status and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

## Entrepreneurship

### Are local businesses thriving?

- Number of Firms per 100 Adults, 2012
- Average Annual Receipts (in Thousands of Dollars) per Firm, 2012

## Strong industries and occupations

### What are the region's strongest industries?

- Strong Industries Analysis, 2016

### Who works in the region's major industry sectors?

- Employment by Industry for Major Racial/Ethnic Groups, 2015

### What are the region's strongest occupations?

- Strong Occupations Analysis, 2014 and 2024

# Indicators

## READINESS

### Health and wellness

#### **Do all residents have the opportunity to lead long and healthy lives?**

Infant Mortality Rate: Infant Deaths (Occurring before 1 Year of Age) per 1,000 Live Births, 2004, 2009, and 2014

#### **Can all residents access healthy food?**

Percent Living in Limited Supermarket Access Areas (LSAs) by Race/Ethnicity, 2014

### Skilled workforce

#### **Do workers have the education and skills needed for the jobs of the future?**

Share of Working-Age Population with an Associate's Degree or Higher by Race/Ethnicity and Nativity, 2015 and Projected Share of Jobs that Require an Associate's Degree or Higher, 2020

### Youth preparedness

#### **Are youth ready to enter the workforce?**

Share of 16- to 24-Year-Olds Not Enrolled in School and without a High School Diploma by Race/Ethnicity and Nativity, 1990, 2000, and 2015

Disconnected Youth: 16- to 24-Year-Olds Not Working or in School by Race/Ethnicity, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2015

Disconnected Youth: 16- to 24-Year-Olds Not Working or in School by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 1990, 2000, and 2015

#### **Are public schools economically segregated?**

Percent of Students by School Poverty Level, as Defined by the Share of Students Eligible for FRPL, 2016

## CONNECTEDNESS

#### **Are residents able to own their homes?**

Owner-Occupied Households by Race/Ethnicity, 2015

#### **Can all residents access affordable, quality housing?**

Renter Housing Burden by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2015

Owner Housing Burden by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2015

More than One Occupant per Room by Race/Ethnicity, 2015

#### **Do residents have access to transportation?**

Households without a Vehicle by Race/Ethnicity, 2015

#### **Do workers have short commutes to their jobs?**

Average Travel Time to Work (in Minutes) by Race/Ethnicity and Nativity, 2015

# Indicators

## ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF EQUITY

### **How much higher would GDP be without racial economic inequalities?**

Actual GDP and Estimated GDP without Racial Gaps in Income, 2015

### **What are the economic benefits of inclusion?**

Income Gains with Racial Equity by Race/Ethnicity, 2015

Source of Gains in Income with Racial Equity by Race/Ethnicity, 2015

## APPENDIX

### **What share of residents are immigrants?**

Share of Total Population that is Foreign-Born, by County and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

### **What is the median age by race?**

Median Age by County and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

### **How close is the region to reaching full employment for all?**

Unemployment Rate by County and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

### **Is poverty low and decreasing?**

Poverty Rate by County and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

### **Are residents able to own their homes?**

Owner-Occupied Households by County and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

### **Can all residents access affordable, quality housing?**

More Than One Occupant per Room by County and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

# Foreword

The Heartland 2050 vision calls for a growth model that is driven by equity – full inclusion for all residents in the region’s economic, social and political life. While the Heartland region is home to tremendous resources and a high quality of life, many are not fully participating in the region’s economy. Our growth projections show our region becoming increasingly diverse, with people of color becoming the majority of Douglas County’s population by 2040. As communities of color continue to drive growth in our region, ensuring that people of color are fully participating in our economy is an urgent priority.

This 2018 profile updates the data from the 2014 Equitable Growth Profile which showed significant disparities in education, earnings, and poverty. The work of the Heartland 2050 Equity and Engagement Committee led to identifying additional indicators to track, including affordable housing, access to transportation, and health indicators, as we work to create local recommendations to resolve long-standing disparities. This profile supports the idea that we realize stronger, more sustainable economic growth when we have greater economic and racial inclusion.

Elected officials, organizations, foundations, institutions, faith-based groups, residents, and others are working to address the root causes of persistent poverty and inequities. Recent success stories such as rising graduation rates, a decline in the crime rate in the urban core, youth summer employment and work experience opportunities, and access to healthy foods show that these efforts are having an impact. This is a time to lift up what works by highlighting existing efforts in our region that begin to paint a picture of a more just and inclusive Heartland. This can only be done through partnership, collaboration, and trust. Success among communities of color is essential to our region’s continued development and to ensure that all residents, including those yet to come, will find the Heartland a place where opportunities are in abundance for all.



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# Introduction

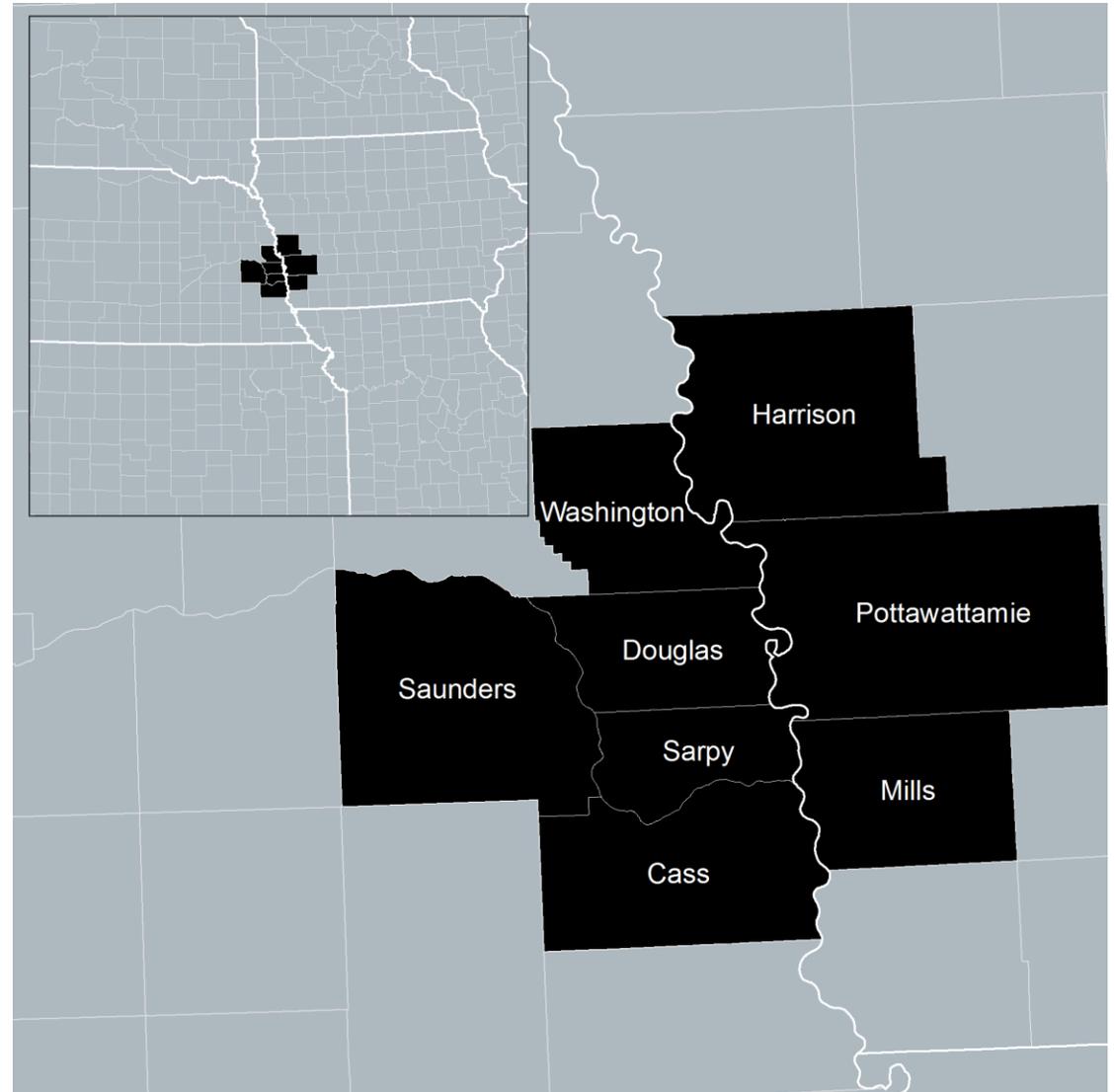


# Introduction

## Geography

For the purposes of this profile, we define the Omaha-Council Bluffs region as the eight-county area highlighted on this map, including Cass, Douglas, Sarpy, Saunders, and Washington counties in Nebraska and Harrison, Mills, and Pottawattamie counties in Iowa. These are the counties included in the original Heartland 2050 regional vision developed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency and partners. This definition also aligns with the census-designated metropolitan statistical area.

All data presented in the profile use this regional boundary. Some exceptions, due to lack of data availability, are noted beneath the relevant figures. Information on data sources and methodology can be found in the “Data and methods” section.



# Introduction

## What is an equitable region?

Regions are equitable when all residents – regardless of race/ethnicity, nativity, neighborhood, age, gender, or other characteristics – can fully participate in the region’s economic vitality, contribute to its readiness for the future, and connect to its assets and resources.

### **Strong, equitable regions:**

- Possess **economic vitality**, providing high-quality jobs to their residents and producing new ideas, products, businesses, and economic activity so the region remains sustainable and competitive.
- Are **ready for the future**, with a skilled, ready workforce, and a healthy population.
- Are **places of connection**, where residents can access the essential ingredients to live healthy and productive lives in their own neighborhoods, reach opportunities located throughout the region (and beyond) via transportation or technology, participate in political processes, and interact with other diverse residents.

# Introduction

## Why equity matters now

### The face of America is changing.

Our country's population is rapidly diversifying. Already, more than half of all babies born in the United States are people of color. By 2030, the majority of young workers will be people of color. And by 2044, the United States will be a majority people-of-color nation.

### Yet racial and income inequality is high and persistent.

Over the past several decades, long-standing inequities in income, wealth, health, and opportunity have reached unprecedented levels. Wages have stagnated for the majority of workers, inequality has skyrocketed, and many people of color face racial and geographic barriers to accessing economic opportunities.

### Racial and economic equity is necessary for economic growth and prosperity.

Equity is an economic imperative as well as a moral one. Research shows that inclusion and diversity are win-win propositions for nations, regions, communities, and firms.

For example:

- More equitable regions experience stronger, more sustained growth.<sup>1</sup>
- Regions with less segregation (by race and income) and lower income inequality have more upward mobility.<sup>2</sup>
- The elimination of health disparities would lead to significant economic benefits from reductions in health-care spending and increased productivity.<sup>3</sup>
- Companies with a diverse workforce achieve a better bottom line.<sup>4</sup>
- A diverse population more easily connects to global markets.<sup>5</sup>
- Less economic inequality results in better health outcomes for everyone.<sup>6</sup>

### The way forward is with an equity-driven growth model.

To secure America's health and prosperity, the nation must implement a new economic model based on equity, fairness, and opportunity. Leaders across all sectors must remove barriers to full participation, connect more people to opportunity, and invest in human potential.

### Regions play a critical role in shifting to inclusive growth.

Local communities are where strategies are being incubated to foster equitable growth: growing good jobs and new businesses while ensuring that all – including low-income people and people of color – can fully participate as workers, consumers, entrepreneurs, innovators, and leaders.

<sup>1</sup> Manuel Pastor, "Cohesion and Competitiveness: Business Leadership for Regional Growth and Social Equity," OECD Territorial Reviews, Competitive Cities in the Global Economy, Organisation For Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD), 2006; Manuel Pastor and Chris Benner, "Been Down So Long: Weak-Market Cities and Regional Equity" in Retooling for Growth: Building a 21st Century Economy in America's Older Industrial Areas (New York: American Assembly and Columbia University, 2008); Randall Eberts, George Erickcek, and Jack Kleinhenz, "Dashboard Indicators for the Northeast Ohio Economy: Prepared for the Fund for Our Economic Future" (Cleveland, OH: Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, 2006), <https://www.clevelandfed.org/newsroom-and-events/publications/working-papers/working-papers-archives/2006-working-papers/wp-0605-dashboard-indicators-for-the-northeast-ohio-economy.aspx>.

<sup>2</sup> Raj Chetty, Nathaniel Hendren, Patrick Kline, and Emmanuel Saez, "Where is the Land of Economic Opportunity? The Geography of Intergenerational Mobility in the U.S.," Quarterly Journal of Economics 129 (2014): 1553-1623, [http://www.equality-of-opportunity.org/assets/documents/mobility\\_geo.pdf](http://www.equality-of-opportunity.org/assets/documents/mobility_geo.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Darrell Gaskin, Thomas LaVeist, and Patrick Richard, The State of Urban Health: Eliminating Health Disparities to Save Lives and Cut Costs (New York, NY: National Urban League Policy Institute, 2012).

<sup>4</sup> Cedric Herring, "Does Diversity Pay?: Race, Gender, and the Business Case for Diversity," American Sociological Review 74 (2009): 208-22; Slater, Weigand and Zwirlein, "The Business Case for Commitment to Diversity," Business Horizons 51 (2008): 201-209.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, "Ownership Characteristics of Classifiable U.S. Exporting Firms: 2007," Survey of Business Owners Special Report, June 2012, [https://www2.census.gov/econ/sbo/07/sbo\\_export\\_report.pdf](https://www2.census.gov/econ/sbo/07/sbo_export_report.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Kate Pickett and Richard Wilkinson, "Income Inequality and Health: A Causal Review," Social Science & Medicine 128 (2015): 316-326.

# Introduction

## Background

Across the country, regional planning organizations, local governments, community organizations, residents, funders, and policymakers are striving to put plans, policies, and programs in place that build healthier, more vibrant, more sustainable, and more equitable regions.

Equity – ensuring full inclusion of the entire region’s residents in the economic, social, and political life of the region, regardless of race/ethnicity, nativity, age, gender, neighborhood of residence, or other characteristics – is an essential element of the plans.

Knowing how a region stands in terms of equity is a critical first step in planning for equitable growth. To assist communities with that process, PolicyLink and the Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE) developed a framework to understand and track how regions perform on a series of indicators of equitable growth.

This profile is an update to the original profile released in December 2014 to help Heartland 2050, a community-driven initiative working toward a common vision for the Omaha-Council Bluffs region in Nebraska and Iowa, implement its plan for equitable growth.

Most of the indicators in this profile reflect a 2011 through 2015 average (the previous profile covered a 2008 through 2012 average). Because the data from the two profiles include overlapping years, we are unable to make distinct comparisons across the two profiles, but time series data are available within the profile update to capture change over time. This profile includes additional indicators to address how the region is doing on measures of health and wellness, and access to affordable housing and transportation.

The Heartland 2050 Equity and Engagement Committee used the original profile to advance equity by educating residents and local leaders about the state of equity in the region; incorporating it into decision-making

processes, such as grantmaking; amplifying the business case for equity; illustrating the need to increase investment in youth summer and year-round job training programs; and advocating for diversity initiatives aimed at closing the income and wage gap and increasing access to high-opportunity jobs for people of color. The profile also served (and will continue to serve) as a resource for regional data disaggregated by race/ethnicity, given that some state and local agencies in Nebraska, for example, do not disaggregate data by race/ethnicity.

With this profile update, local leaders will now focus on developing specific, actionable policies and recommendations to advance equitable growth in the region. We hope that the profile continues to serve as a tool for advocacy groups, elected officials, planners, business leaders, funders, and others working to build a stronger and more equitable region.

# Introduction

## Background (continued)

The data are drawn from a regional equity database that covers the largest 100 cities and largest 150 regions in the United States. This database incorporates hundreds of data points from public and private data sources including the U.S. Census Bureau, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), and the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS). See the “Data and methods” section for a more detailed list of data sources.

Note that while we disaggregate most indicators by major racial/ethnic groups (i.e., White, Black, Latino, Asian or Pacific Islander, and Mixed/other), figures for the Asian or Pacific Islander and Latino populations as a whole often mask a wide variation on educational and economic indicators. Also, there is often too little data to break out indicators for the Native American population. Each of the racial/ethnic groups mentioned above is mutually exclusive (unless noted otherwise).

Mixed/other refers to all people (not of Hispanic origin) who identify as two or more races (“Mixed-race”) or who identify as a single race *other* than those listed above (“Other”).

In some instances we disaggregate the data by race/ethnicity and gender (or another breakdown in addition to race/ethnicity). At times we report on *people of color (POC)*, which includes all racial/ethnic groups who do not identify as non-Hispanic White.

There is no perfect model for classifying individuals by race/ethnicity. Race is a social construct, not a biological one, and in an equitable society, there would not be major differences across racial groups. See the “Data and methods” section for more details on racial/ethnic origin.

We recognize that inequities exist across many characteristics in addition to race/ethnicity and nativity, including income, gender, age, ability, sexual orientation, and

neighborhood. Unfortunately, because we are working with survey data and seek to provide data for regions, we are limited in the extent to which we can disaggregate the data. We will seek to add additional layers of data to examine other dimensions of inequity as our regional indicators database evolves.

# Introduction

## Policy change is the path to equity and inclusive growth

Equity is just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential.

Ensuring that policies and systems serve to increase inclusion and remove barriers is particularly important given the history of urban and metropolitan development in the United States. Regions and cities are highly segregated by race and income. Today's cities are patchworks of concentrated advantage and disadvantage, with some neighborhoods home to good schools, bustling commercial districts, services, parks, and other crucial ingredients for economic success, while other neighborhoods provide few of those elements.

These historic patterns of exclusion were often created and maintained by public policies at the federal, state, regional, and local levels. From redlining to exclusionary zoning practices and more, government policies have fostered racial inequities in health, wealth, and opportunity. Reversing the trends and shifting to equitable growth requires dismantling barriers and enacting proactive policies that expand opportunity.

Equity can be achieved through policy and systems changes that remove barriers and build opportunity. Equity addresses both structural drivers, like the inequitable distribution of power and opportunity, and the environments of everyday life – where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rachel Davis, Diana Rivera, and Lisa Fujie Parks, *Moving from Understanding to Action on Health Equity: Social Determinants of Health Frameworks and THRIVE* (Oakland, CA: The Prevention Institute, August 2015), <https://www.preventioninstitute.org/publications/moving-understanding-action-health-equity-social-determinants-health-frameworks-and>

# Demographics



# Demographics

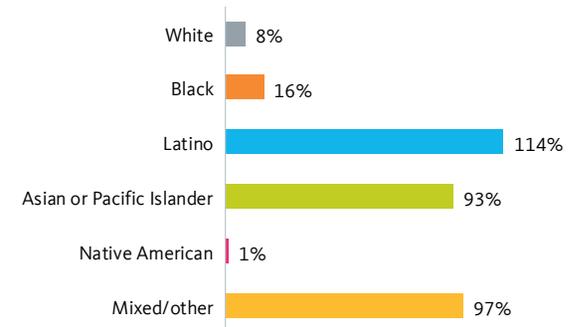
## Who lives in the region and how is this changing?

**Summary:** Although Omaha-Council Bluffs is less diverse than most other regions, it is becoming more diverse as communities of color – especially the growing Latino population – drive its population growth. By 2050, 41 percent (or 479,600) of the region’s population will be people of color, up from just 10 percent (or 63,500) in 1980. Although all racial and ethnic groups are growing, the Latino, Asian or Pacific Islander, and Mixed/other populations are growing the fastest, collectively adding 66,600 residents and about doubling their numbers since 2000. These fast-growing demographic groups are also younger than the White population.

Growth in the Latino population from 2000 to 2015:

# 114%

Growth Rates of Major Racial/Ethnic Groups, 2000 to 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Note: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

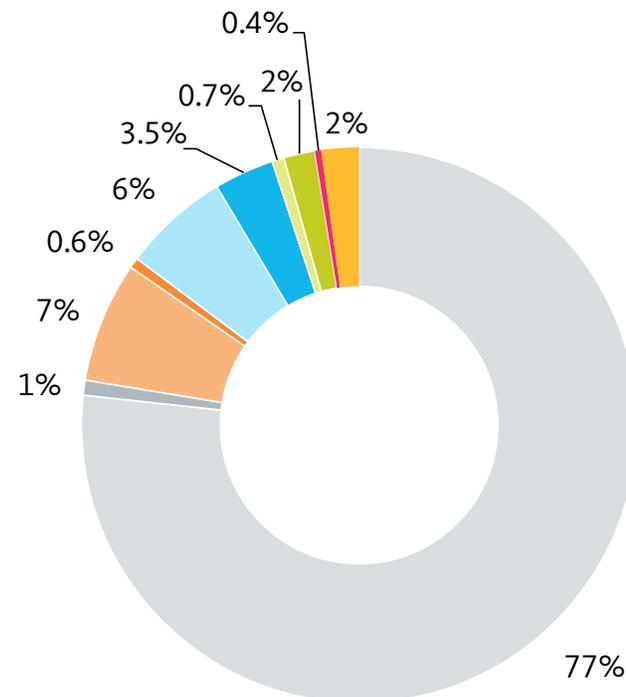
# Demographics

## How diverse is the population?

**Omaha-Council Bluffs is less diverse than most other regions.** A little over one-fifth (22 percent or 200,700) of residents are people of color, compared with 38 percent nationwide. Among communities of color, Latinos are the largest racial/ethnic group (10 percent or 86,100), closely followed by Black residents (8 percent or 68,400).

### Race/Ethnicity and Nativity, 2015

- White, U.S.-born
- White, Immigrant
- Black, U.S.-born
- Black, Immigrant
- Latino, U.S.-born
- Latino, Immigrant
- Asian or Pacific Islander, U.S.-born
- Asian or Pacific Islander, Immigrant
- Native American and Alaska Native
- Mixed/other



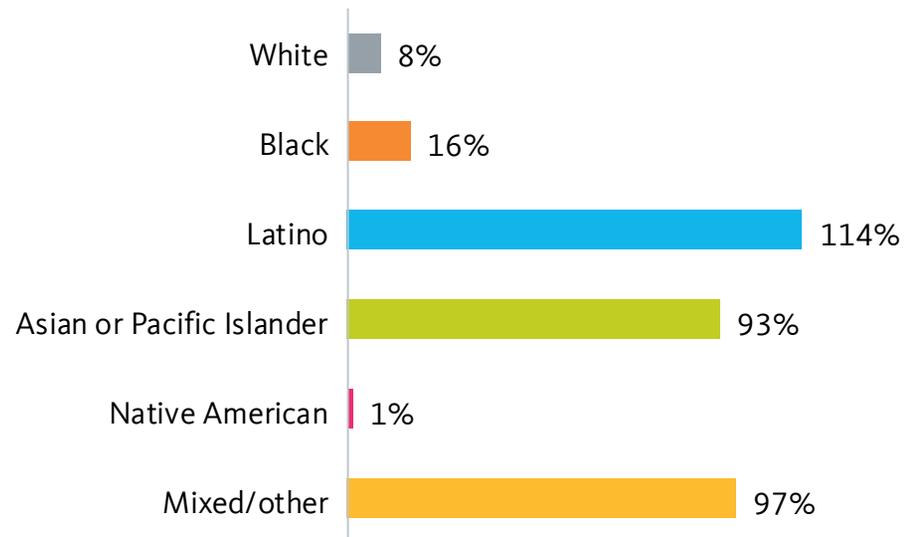
Source: IPUMS.  
 Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

# Demographics

## What groups are growing in population?

**All racial and ethnic groups are growing in the region, with the fastest growth among the Latino, Asian or Pacific Islander, and Mixed/other populations.** The Latino population doubled (from 40,200 people in 2000 to 86,100 in 2015). The Asian and Mixed/other populations also grew quickly (combined, they nearly doubled, from 21,700 people in 2000 to 42,400 in 2015). The Black, Native American, and White populations grew more slowly.

### Growth Rates of Major Racial/Ethnic Groups, 2000 to 2015



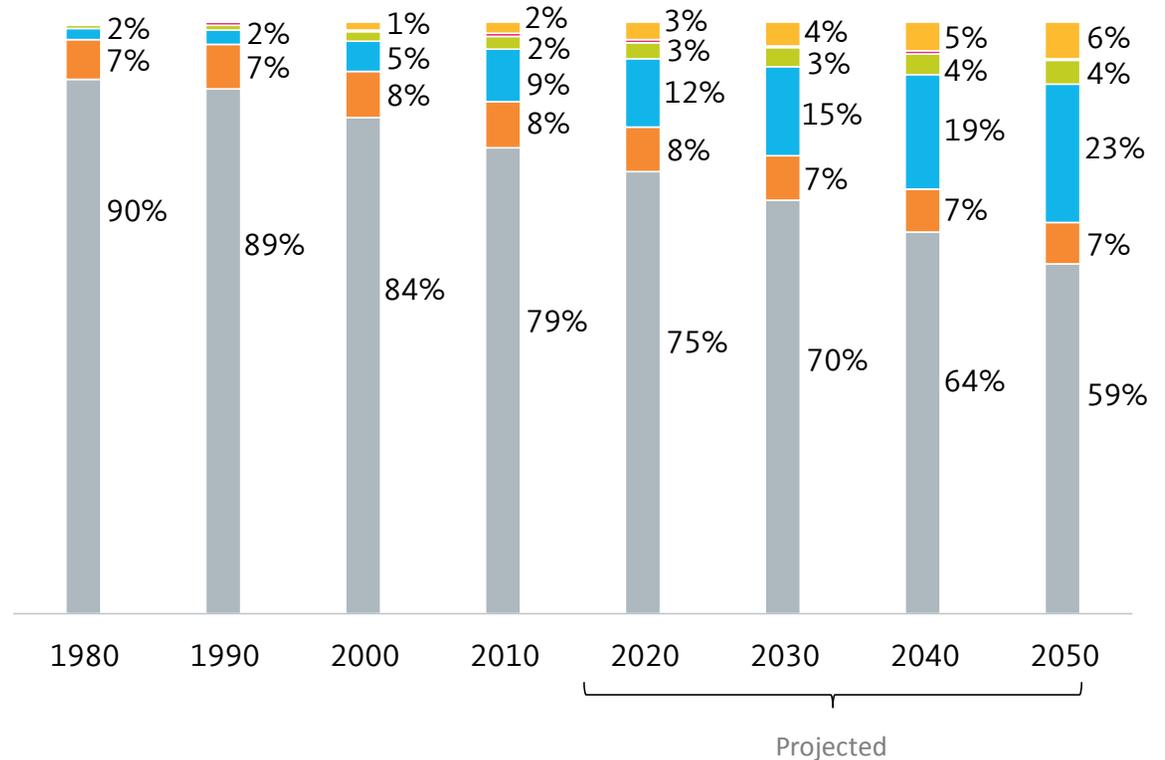
# Demographics

## How is the region's racial/ethnic composition changing?

**The region is experiencing a rapid demographic shift.** Latinos will continue to drive population growth, rising from 9 percent (or 77,500) to 23 percent (or 270,300) of the population between 2010 and 2050. When the nation becomes majority people of color around 2044, about 38 percent of the region's population will be people of color.

Racial/Ethnic Composition, 1980 to 2050

- Mixed/other
- Native American
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Latino
- Black
- White



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

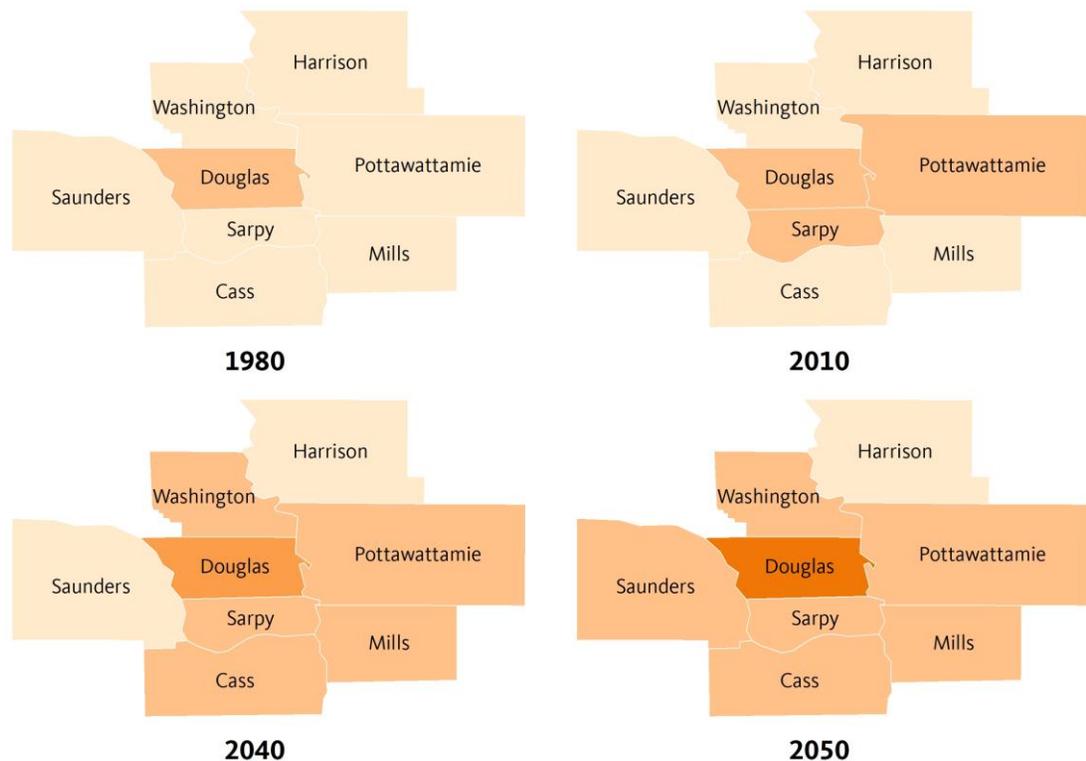
# Demographics

## How is the region's racial/ethnic composition changing?

**Diversity is increasing throughout the region.** Between 2010 and 2050, the share of people of color is projected to double or nearly double in every county. In 2050, Douglas County will be majority people of color.

Percent People of Color by County, 1980 to 2050

- Less than 10%
- 10% to 29%
- 30% to 49%
- 50% or more

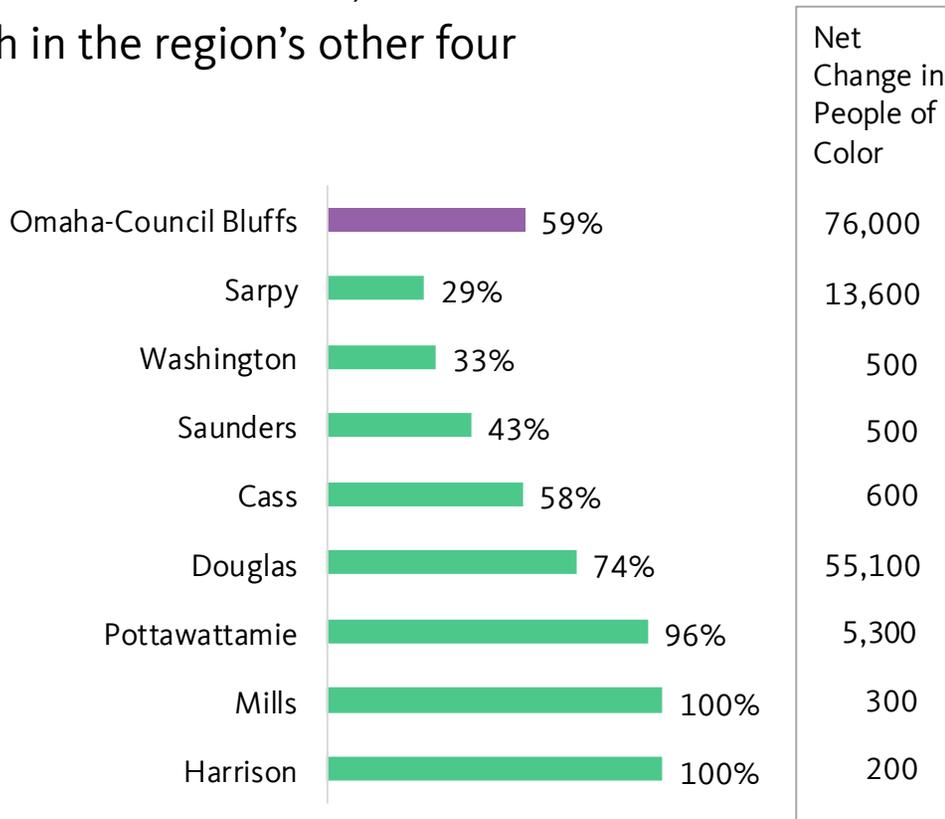


# Demographics

## How much population growth is attributable to communities of color?

**Since 2000, communities of color contributed the majority of population growth (59 percent or 76,000).** People of color contributed nearly three-quarters or more of net growth in Douglas, Pottawattamie, Mills, and Harrison counties, and between 29 to 58 percent of growth in the region’s other four counties.

Share of Population Growth Attributable to People of Color by County, 2000 to 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.  
 Note: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

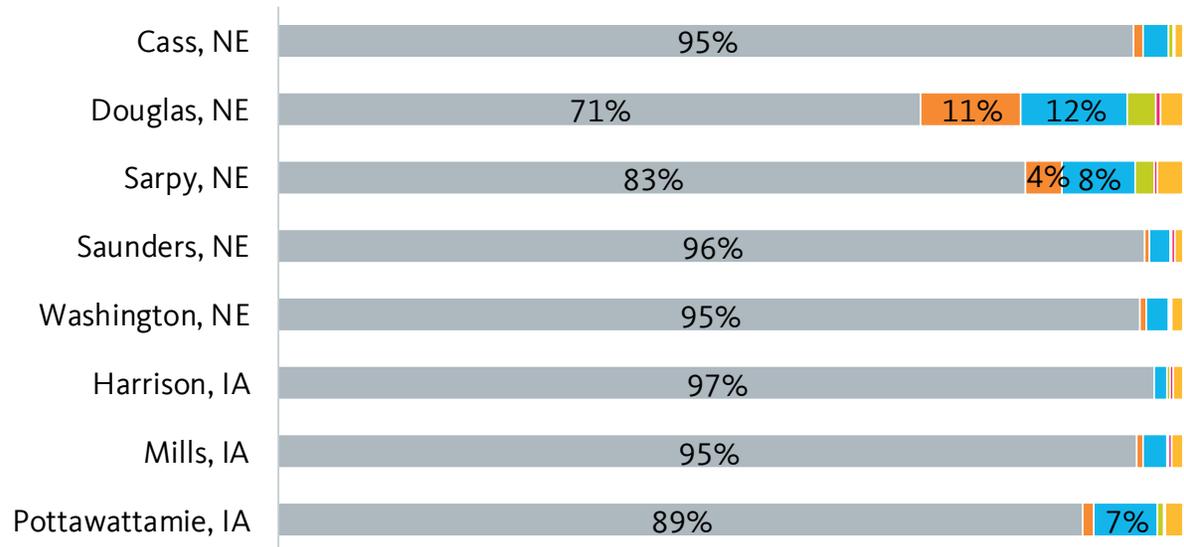
# Demographics

## How diverse is the region?

**Douglas County is the most racially and ethnically diverse county in the region, followed by Sarpy and Pottawattamie counties.** About three in 10 residents (29 percent or 156,100) in Douglas County are people of color and most are Latino (12 percent or 63,500) or Black (11 percent or 59,800).

Racial/Ethnic Composition by County, 2015

- Mixed/other
- Native American
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Latino
- Black
- White



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.  
 Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

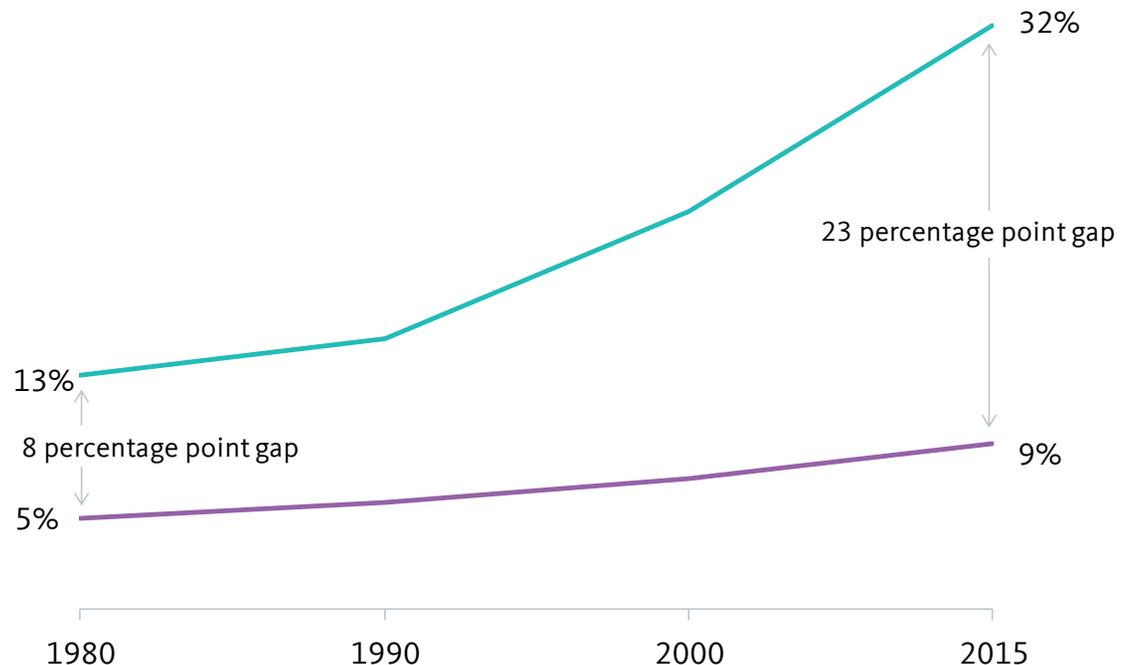
# Demographics

## How does the racial/ethnic composition differ among youth and seniors?

**The racial generation gap is growing in the region.** Today, 32 percent (or 74,800) of youth are people of color, compared with 9 percent (or 9,800) of seniors. This 23 percentage point racial generation gap is below the national average (26 percentage points) but has grown rapidly, almost tripling since 1980.

### Racial Generation Gap: Percent People of Color (POC) by Age Group, 1980 to 2015

- Percent of seniors who are POC
- Percent of youth who are POC



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

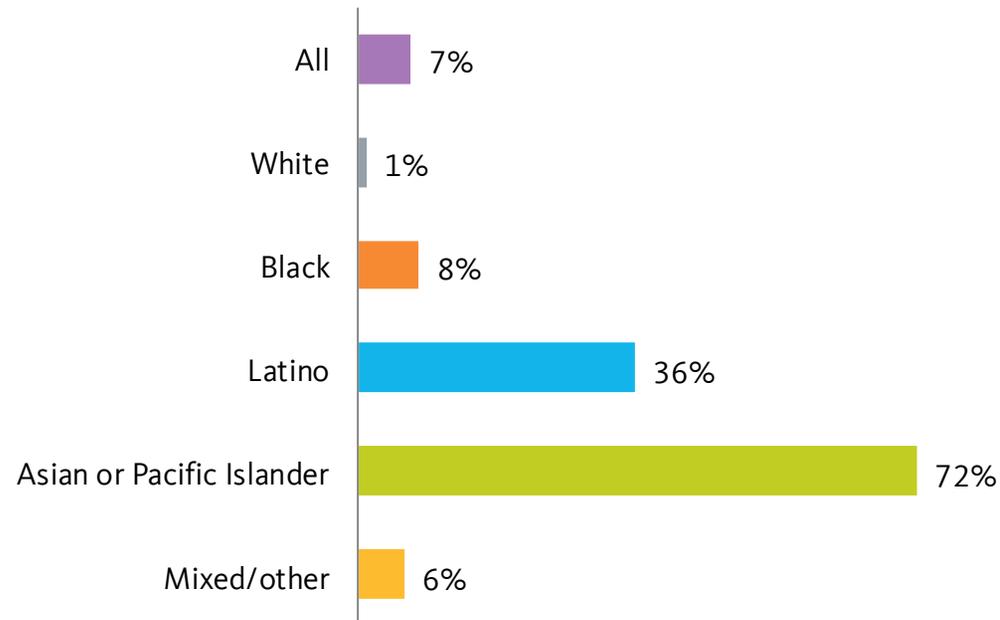
Note: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Youth include persons under age 18 and seniors include those ages 65 or older.

# Demographics

## What share of residents are immigrants?

**The majority of Latino residents in the region are U.S. born (only 36 percent or 31,300 are foreign born).** By contrast, nearly three in four (or 16,400) Asian residents are foreign born. The immigrant share is much smaller for Black and White residents (8 percent or 5,500 and 1 percent or 7,800, respectively).

### Percent Immigrant by Race/Ethnicity, 2015



Source: IPUMS.

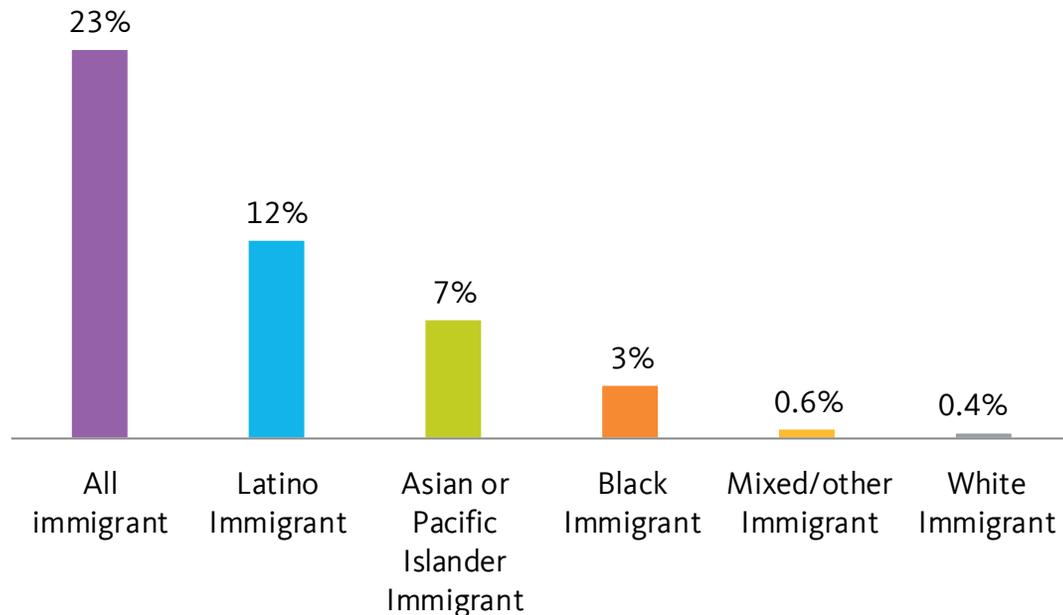
Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Native Americans are excluded from the chart because no respondents in the underlying survey identified as immigrants.

# Demographics

## Is the region's immigrant population growing?

**Immigrants accounted for over one-fifth of net population growth in the region between 2000 and 2015 (29,400 of 128,900 residents).** This growth was largely driven by the Latino and Asian or Pacific Islander immigrant populations.

Share of Overall Population Growth Attributable to Immigrants by Race/Ethnicity, 2000 to 2015



Source: IPUMS.

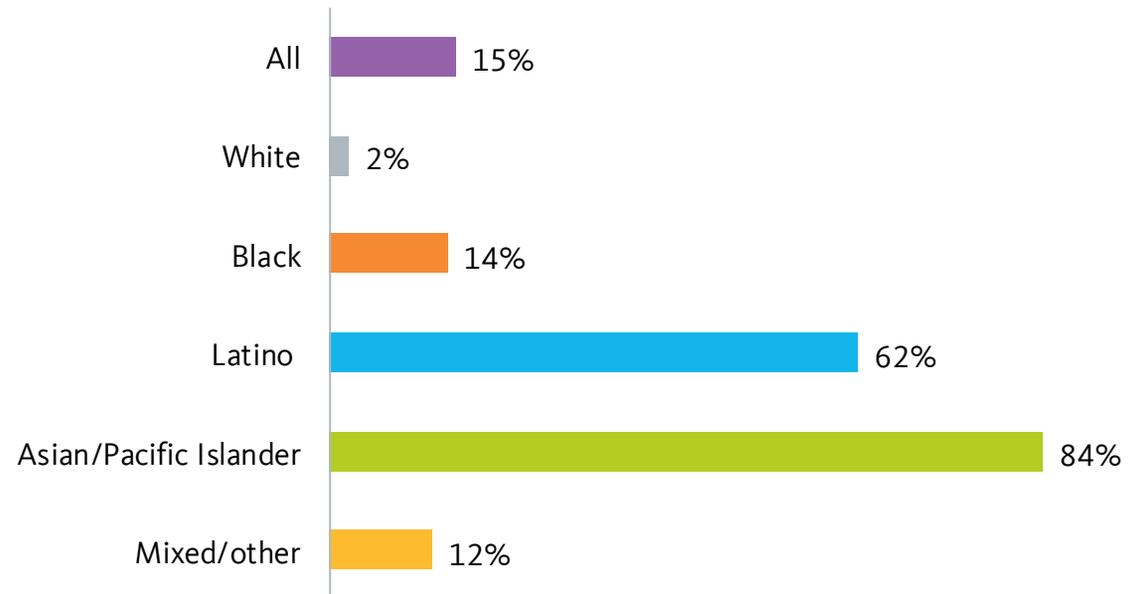
Note: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Because of the very small numbers, immigrants whose racial/ethnic identification is Native American or Mixed/other are not shown separately in the chart, but are included in the figure for "all immigrants."

# Demographics

## Do children have immigrant parents?

**The majority of the region's Asian and Latino youth have at least one immigrant parent.** Today, 15 percent (or 33,100) of youth in the region have an immigrant parent. Asian youth are most likely to have an immigrant parent (84 percent or 5,000), followed by Latino youth (62 percent or 20,900).

### Share of Children with at Least One Immigrant Parent, 2015



Source: IPUMS.

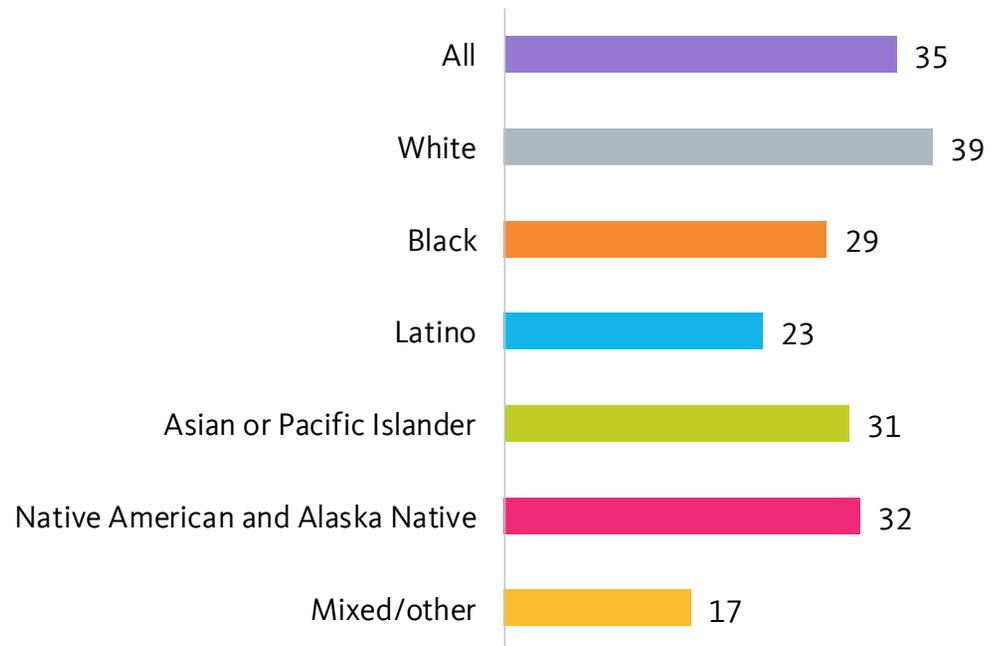
Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Children/youth are defined as persons under age 18. Only parents who live in the same household as their children are included.

# Demographics

## What is the median age by race?

**The region's fastest-growing demographic groups are also comparatively young.** The Latino population in the region has a median age of 23 and the Mixed/other population has a median age of 17. The Black population also has a median age below 30 (29 years).

### Median Age by Race/Ethnicity, 2015



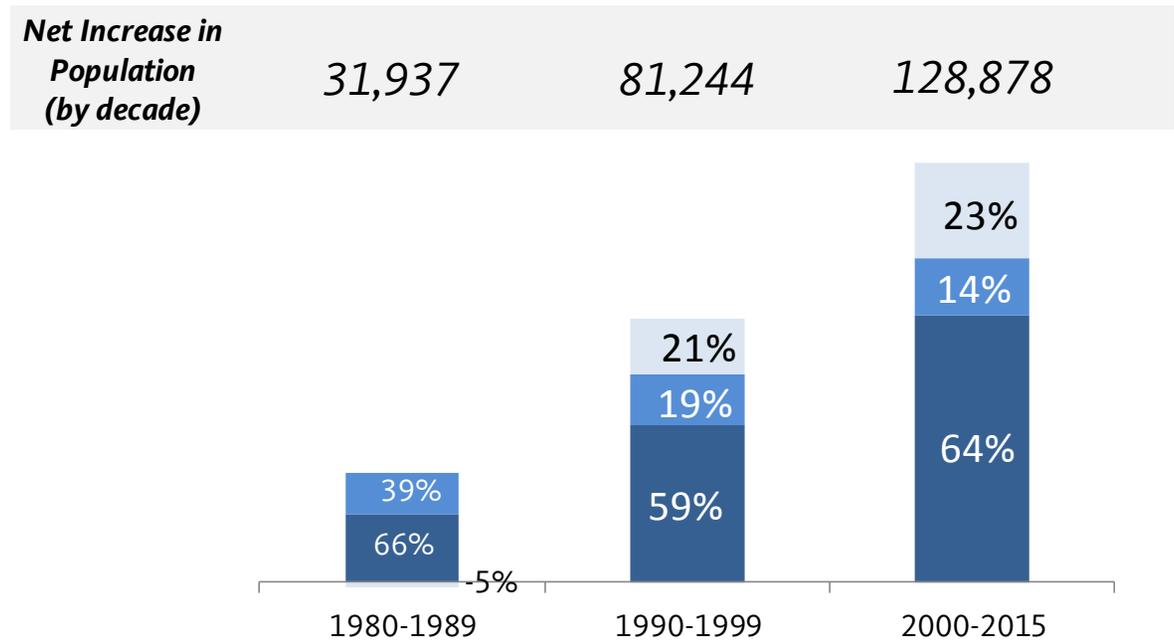
# Demographics

## Who is coming to live in the region?

**U.S.-born, in-state residents continue to drive growth in the region** while the share of net population growth attributable to U.S.-born, out-of-state residents declined each decade. The immigrant community contributed significantly to growth in the region in the 1990s, and even more so since 2000.

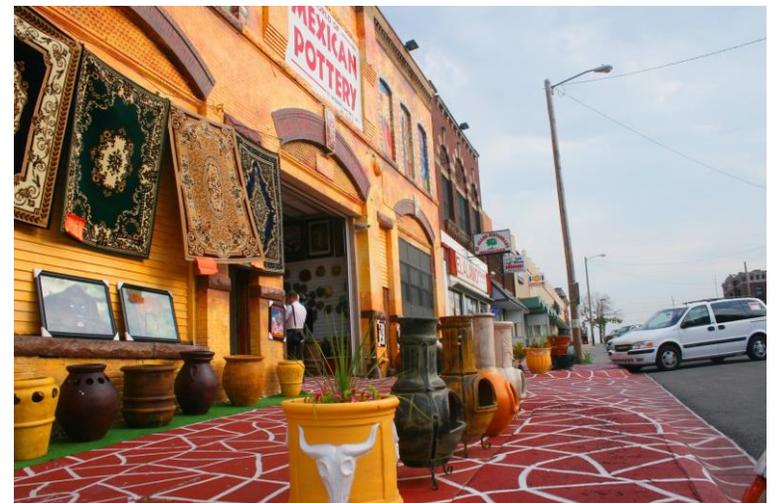
Share of Net Population Growth by Source, 1980 to 1990, 1990 to 2000, and 2000 to 2015

- Foreign Born
- U.S. Born, Out of State
- U.S. Born, In State



Source: IPUMS.  
 Note: Data for 2015 reflects a 2011 through 2015 average.

# Economic vitality



# Economic vitality

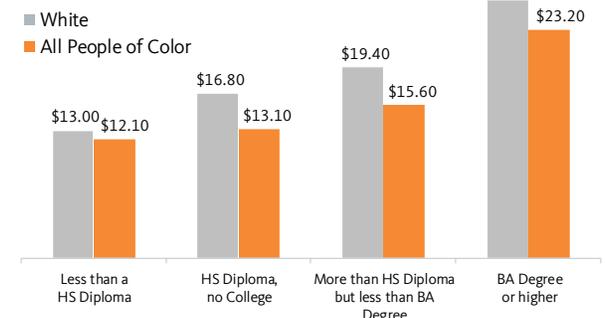
## How is the region doing on economic growth, opportunity, and inclusion?

**Summary:** The region has a growing economy, but not all are sharing in the fruits of that growth. Despite growing GDP and declining unemployment, median wages have not increased since 2000 and wages have declined for Latinos and workers with incomes below the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile. Racial inequities in the labor market even persist when accounting for education: college-educated Black and Latino workers are two to three times as likely, respectively, to be unemployed as their White counterparts.

Wage gap between Whites and people of color with a high school diploma but no college degree:

**\$3.70/  
hour**

Median Hourly Wage by Educational Attainment and Race/Ethnicity, 2015



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes civilian noninstitutional full-time wage and salary workers ages 25 through 64.

Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Values are in 2015 dollars.

# Inclusive growth

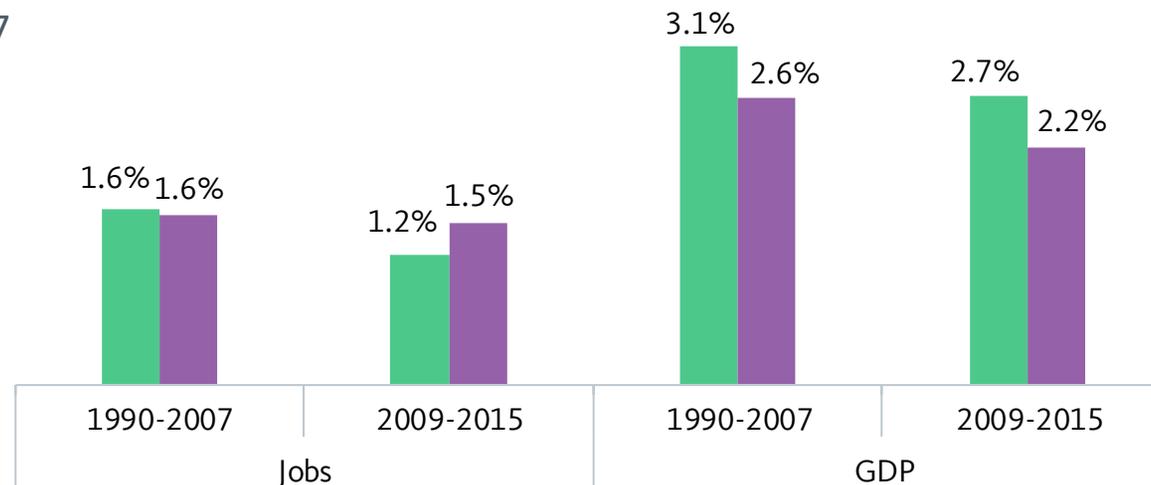
## Is economic growth creating more jobs?

### The region continues to experience job and GDP growth.

Before the Great Recession, the region's economy performed as well as or better than the nation in terms of job and GDP growth. Since 2009, it has experienced slightly slower growth in jobs and higher growth in GDP compared to the nation.

#### Average Annual Growth in Jobs and GDP, 1990 to 2007 and 2009 to 2015

■ Omaha-Council Bluffs  
■ United States



# Inclusive growth

## Is the region growing good jobs?

**The region is growing middle-wage jobs, but earnings growth is slower for middle-wage jobs than high- and low-wage jobs.** Middle-wage jobs, which have traditionally provided pathways to the middle class, are growing at a much higher rate in the region (16 percent) than the U.S. overall (6 percent).

### Growth in Jobs and Earnings by Industry Wage Level, 2000 to 2016

- Low-wage
- Middle-wage
- High-wage



# Inclusive growth

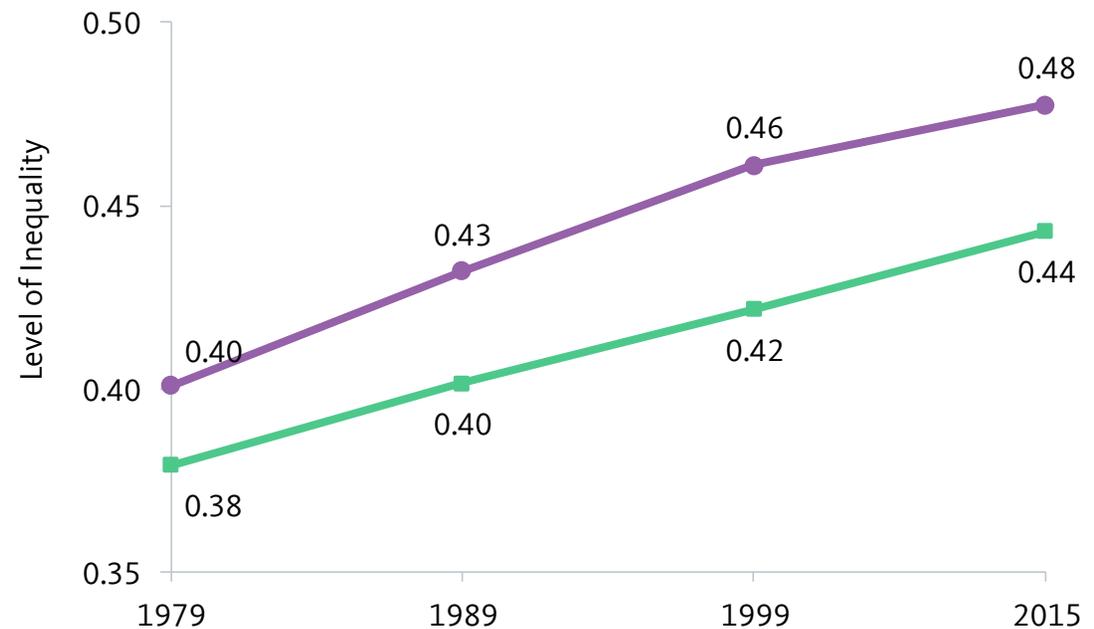
## Is inequality low and decreasing?

**Income inequality is relatively low but increasing.** Inequality in the region is below the national average and is not rising quite as rapidly as it is nationally. Still, inequality has steadily increased over the past four decades.

### Level of Income Inequality, 1979 to 2015

- United States
- Omaha-Council Bluffs

Inequality is measured here by the Gini coefficient, which ranges from 0 (perfect equality) to 1 (perfect inequality: one person has all of the income).



Source: IPUMS.

Note: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

# Inclusive growth

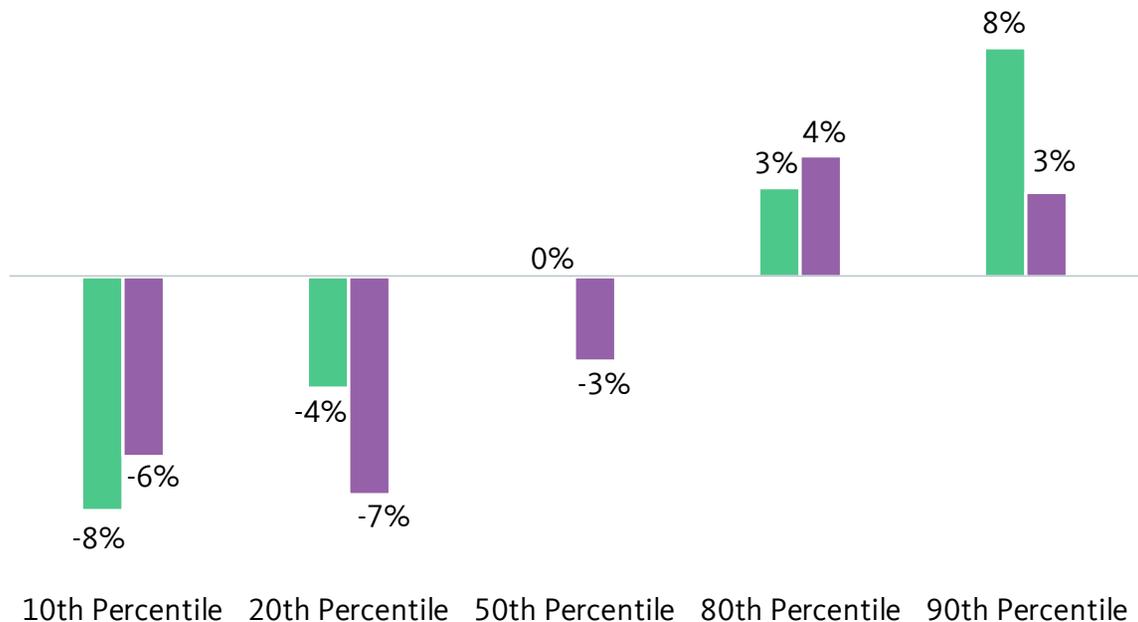
## Are incomes increasing for all workers?

### Wages have declined or stagnated for all but the top earners.

Incomes for workers in the bottom half of the income spectrum have been flat or declining since 2000, following the national trend. The region's higher earners have seen wage increases on par with or above the national average.

Real Earned-Income Growth for Full-Time Wage and Salary Workers, Ages 25 to 64, 2000 to 2015

- Omaha-Council Bluffs
- United States



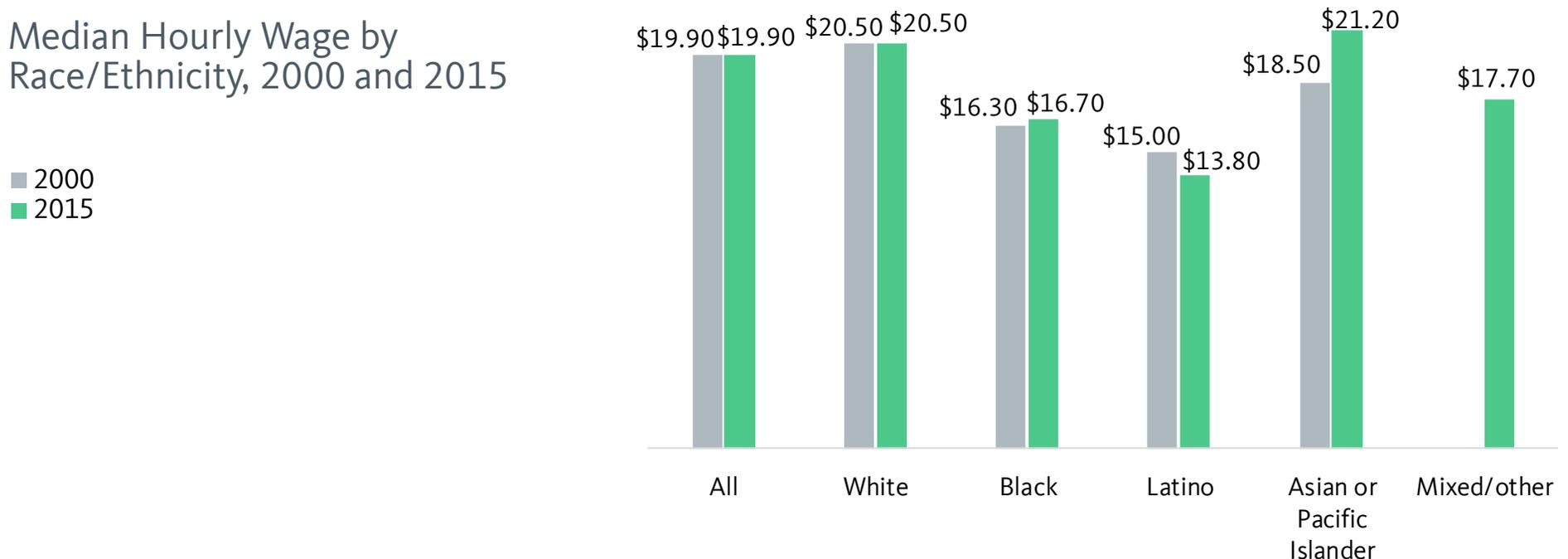
Source: IPUMS. Universe includes civilian noninstitutional full-time wage and salary workers ages 25 through 64.  
 Note: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

# Inclusive growth

## Are incomes increasing for all workers?

**Latinos have experienced wage declines.** Asian or Pacific Islanders experienced the largest increase in median hourly wage between 2000 and 2015 (\$2.70/hour increase), making them the highest earners of any group. During this same period Latino workers experienced the largest wage declines (\$1.20/hour decrease).

Median Hourly Wage by Race/Ethnicity, 2000 and 2015

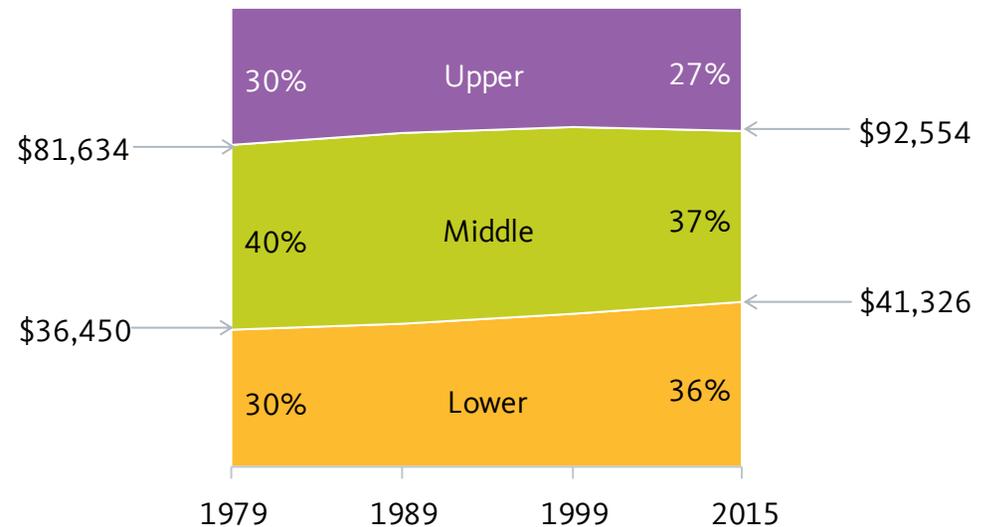


# Inclusive growth

## Is the middle class expanding?

**The middle class is shrinking.** Following the national trend, the region’s share of households with middle-class incomes fell from 40 to 37 percent since 1979. The share of upper-income households fell from 30 to 27 percent, and lower-income households grew from 30 to 36 percent.

Households by Income Level, 1979 and 2015



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes all households (no group quarters).  
 Note: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Dollar values are in 2015 dollars.

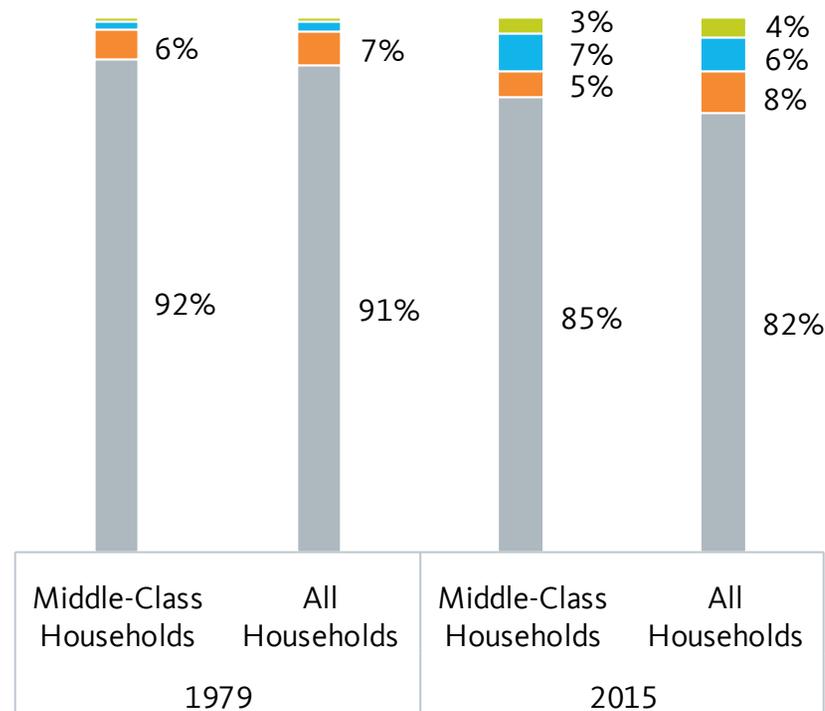
# Inclusive growth

## Is the middle class becoming more inclusive?

**The middle class is slightly less diverse than the population as a whole.** Asians and Latinos have increased their presence in the middle class over time. Black households, however, are a smaller share of the middle class now than in 1979 and are disproportionately lower income.

Racial Composition of Middle-Class Households and All Households, 1979 and 2015

- Asian, Native American or Mixed/other
- Latino
- Black
- White



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes all households (no group quarters).  
 Note: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

# Full employment

## How close is the region to reaching full employment for all?

**Unemployment is low in the region.** In March 2018, the U.S. unemployment rate was 4.1 percent, compared with Omaha-Council Bluffs' 3.0 percent. While rates varied across counties, the highest unemployment rate, in Cass County (3.3 percent), was still below the national average.

### Unemployment Rate by County, March 2018

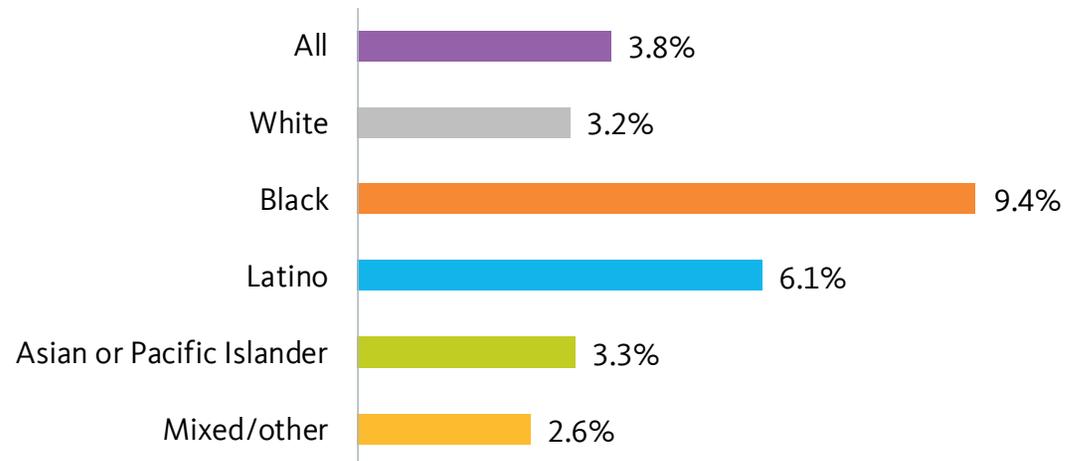


# Full employment

## How close is the region to reaching full employment for all?

**Racial inequities in employment persist.** Looking at unemployment by race/ethnicity (for which the data available is less recent), rates are relatively low for most groups, but the rate for Blacks is still at recession levels (9.4 percent).

### Unemployment Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2015



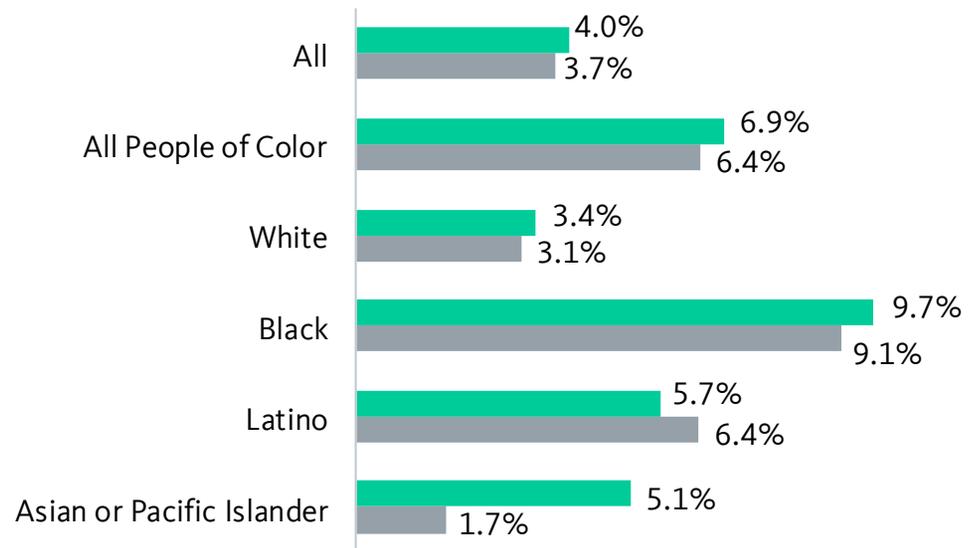
# Full employment

## How close is the region to reaching full employment for all?

**Racial inequities in employment persist, but gender differences within most racial/ethnic groups are small.** Although the unemployment rate for Asian or Pacific Islanders is relatively low at 3.3 percent, the gender gap is larger – the unemployment rate for male workers is 1.7 percent compared with 5.1 percent for female workers.

Unemployment Rate by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2015

■ Male  
■ Female



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes the civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64.  
Note: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

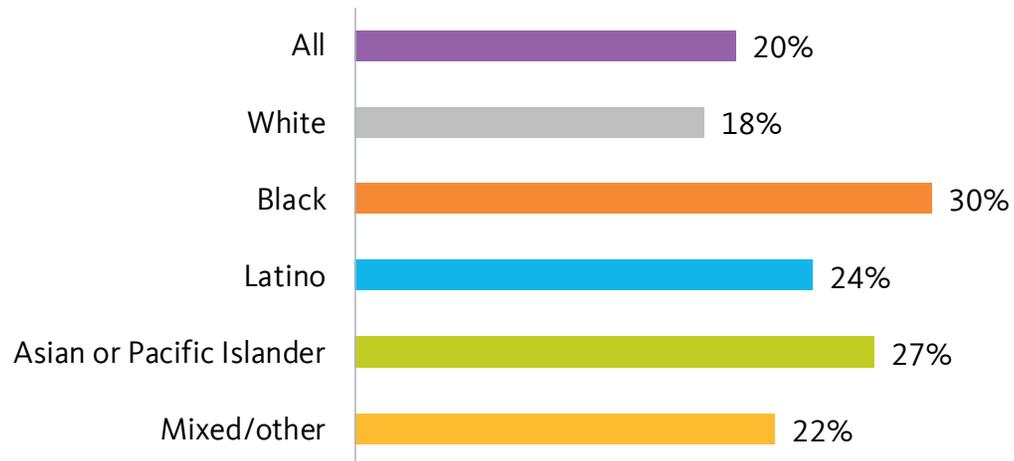
# Full employment

## How close is the region to reaching full employment for all?

### Blacks and Asians have the highest levels of joblessness.

Joblessness measures the share of the population not working (whether or not they are looking for work), so it captures people who have dropped out of the labor force because of lack of opportunity as well as those who choose not to work.

#### Jobless Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2015



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes the civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64.

Note: The jobless rate is figured as the number not employed as a share of the population. Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

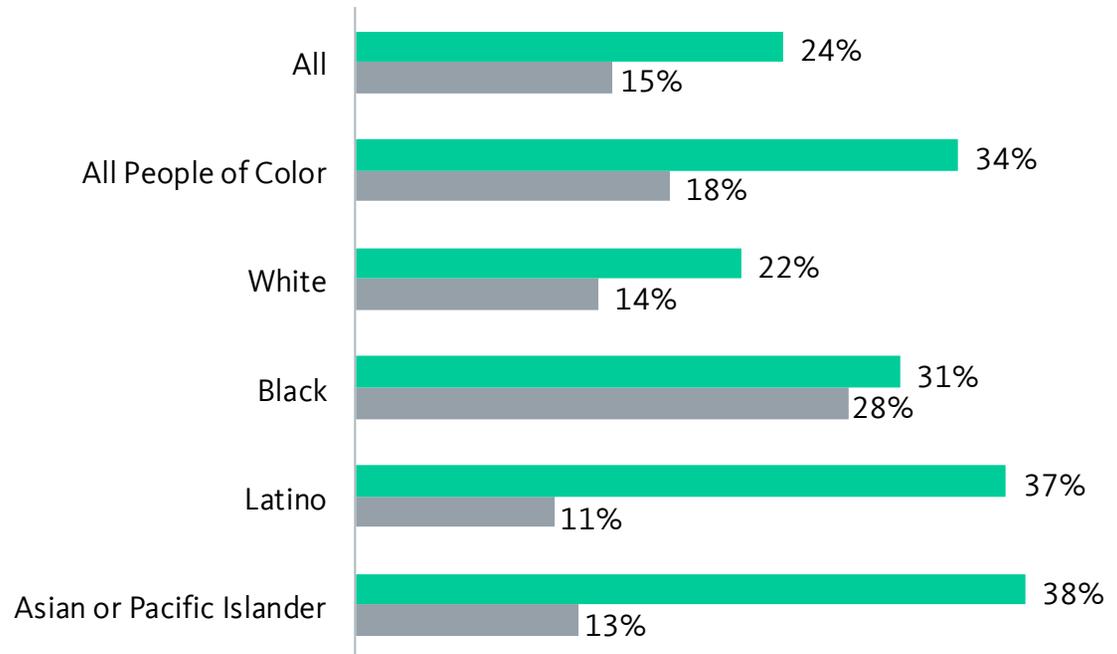
# Full employment

## How close is the region to reaching full employment for all?

**Asian or Pacific Islander and Latino women have the highest levels of joblessness (38 and 37 percent, respectively),** about triple the rate of their male counterparts. The jobless rate includes individuals who have dropped out of the labor force because of lack of opportunity as well as those who choose not to work.

Jobless Rate by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2015

■ Male  
■ Female



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes the civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64.

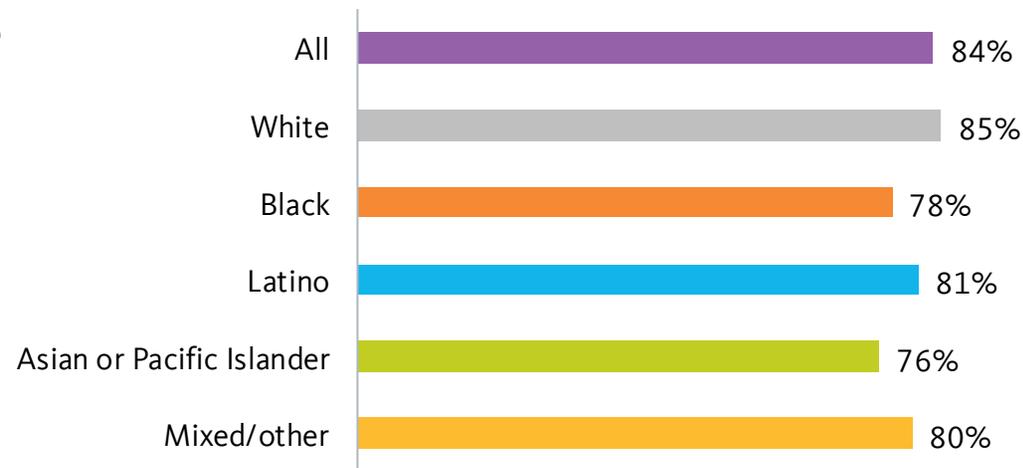
Note: The jobless rate is figured as the number not employed as a share of the population. Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

# Full employment

## How close is the region to reaching full employment for all?

**Labor force participation rates differ by race/ethnicity.** The Asian or Pacific Islander community has the lowest participation rate (76 percent), followed by the Black community (78 percent).

Labor Force Participation Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2015



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes the civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64.

Note: The labor force participation rate is figured as the number either employed or looking for work as a share of the population. Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

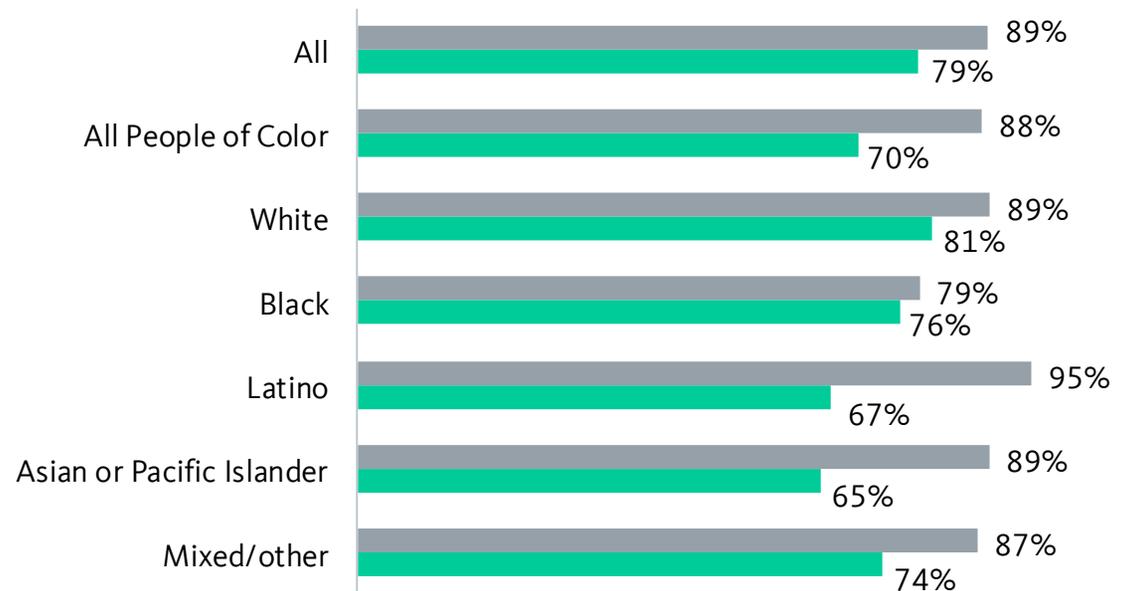
# Full employment

## How close is the region to reaching full employment for all?

**Female residents across all racial/ethnic groups have lower labor force participation rates than males (79 percent vs. 89 percent, respectively).** Latino and Asian or Pacific Islander residents in particular have the largest gender disparities in labor force participation rates with 28 and 24 percentage point differences, respectively.

Labor Force Participation Rate by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2015

■ Male  
■ Female



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes the civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64.

Note: The labor force participation rate is figured as the number either employed or looking for work as a share of the population. Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average

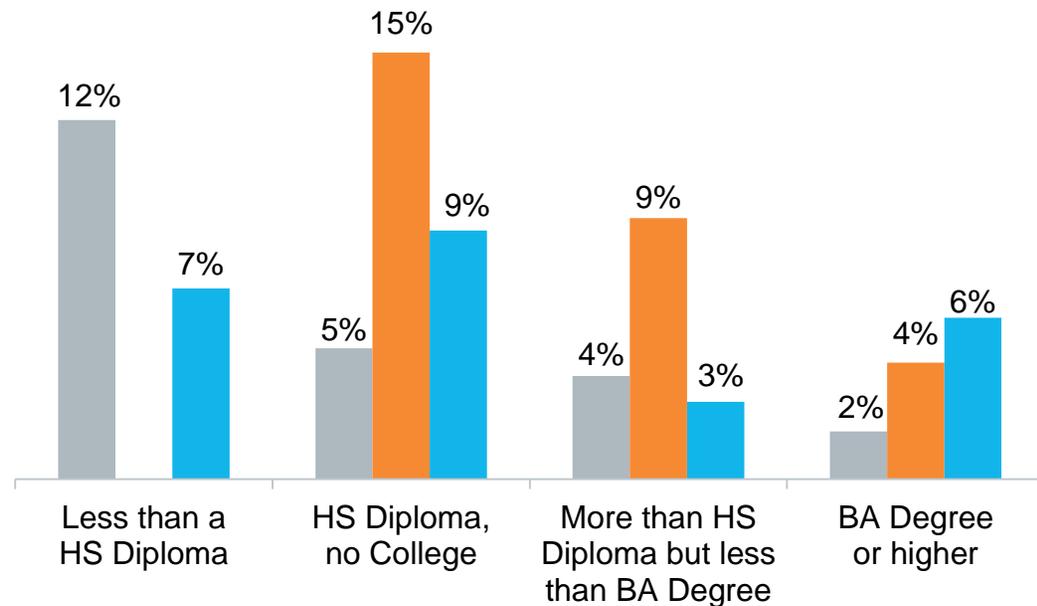
# Full employment

## Do racial inequities in employment persist after controlling for education?

**Unemployment decreases as educational attainment rises, but racial gaps remain.** Black workers are two to three times as likely to be unemployed as their White counterparts across education levels. Latinos with very low education have lower unemployment than their White counterparts.

### Unemployment Rate by Educational Attainment and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

- White
- Black
- Latino



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes the civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64.

Note: Unemployment for Blacks with less than a HS diploma is excluded because of a small sample size. Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

# Full employment

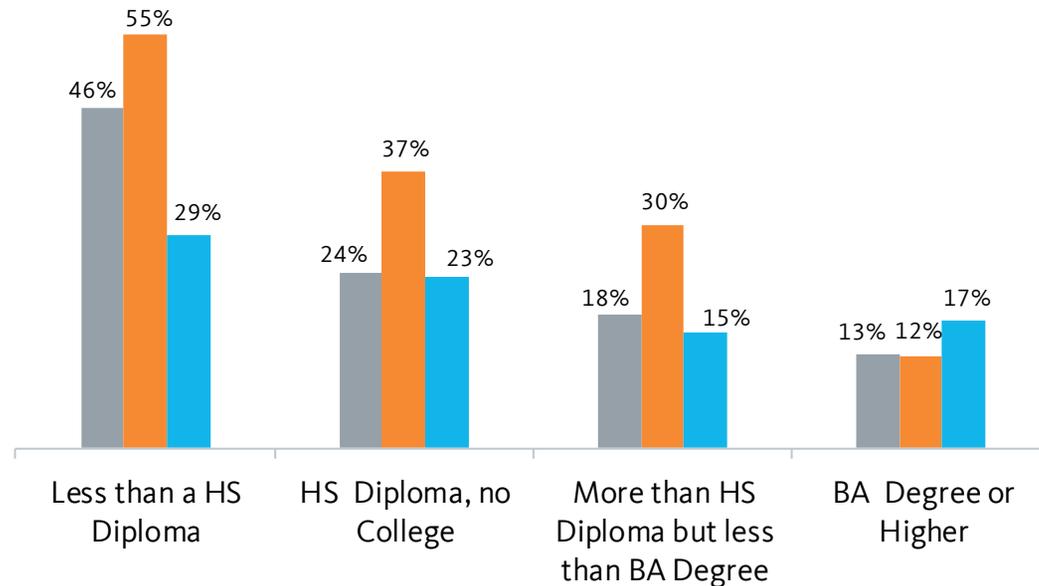
## Do racial inequities in joblessness persist after controlling for education?

### Joblessness also decreases as education rises, but racial inequities for Blacks without a four-year degree persist.

More than half of Blacks without a high school diploma are not working, and their White counterparts also face high levels of joblessness (46 percent).

#### Jobless Rate by Educational Attainment and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

- White
- Black
- Latino



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes the civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64.

Note: The jobless rate is figured as the number not employed as a share of the population. Data reflect a 2011 through 2015 average.

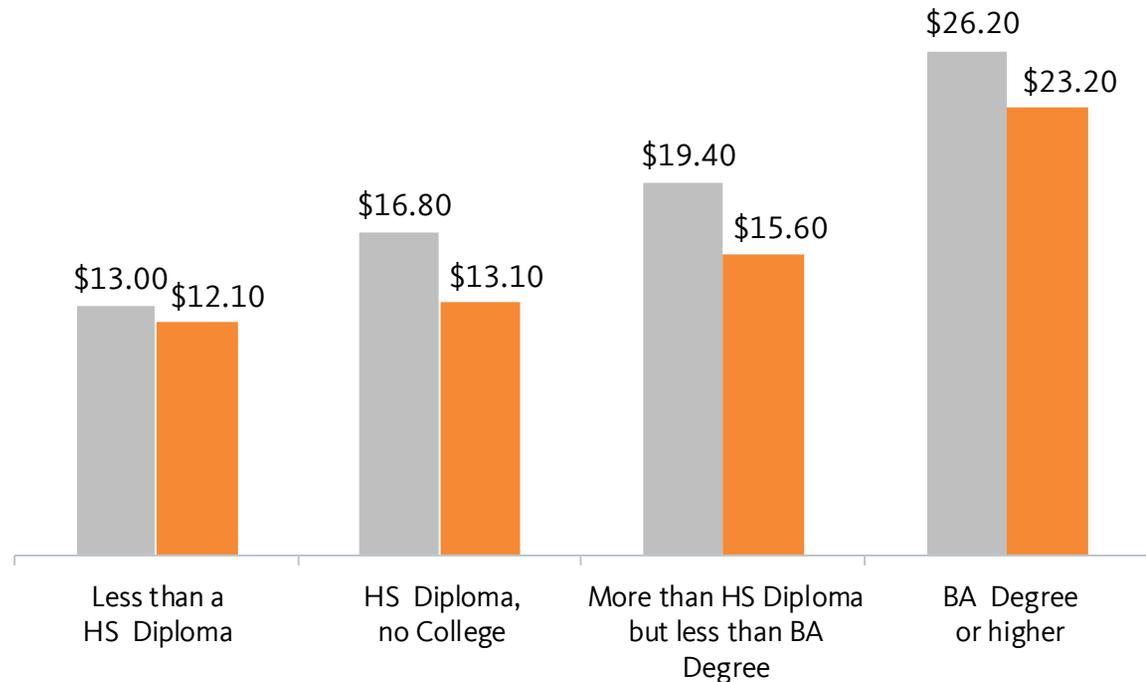
# Access to good jobs

## Can all workers earn a living wage?

**People of color earn lower wages than Whites at every education level.** People of color with college and graduate degrees still earn \$3/hour less than their White counterparts. People of color with a high school diploma but no college earn nearly \$4/hour less than their White counterparts.

Median Hourly Wage by Educational Attainment and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

■ White  
 ■ All People of Color



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes civilian noninstitutional full-time wage and salary workers ages 25 through 64.  
 Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Values are in 2015 dollars.

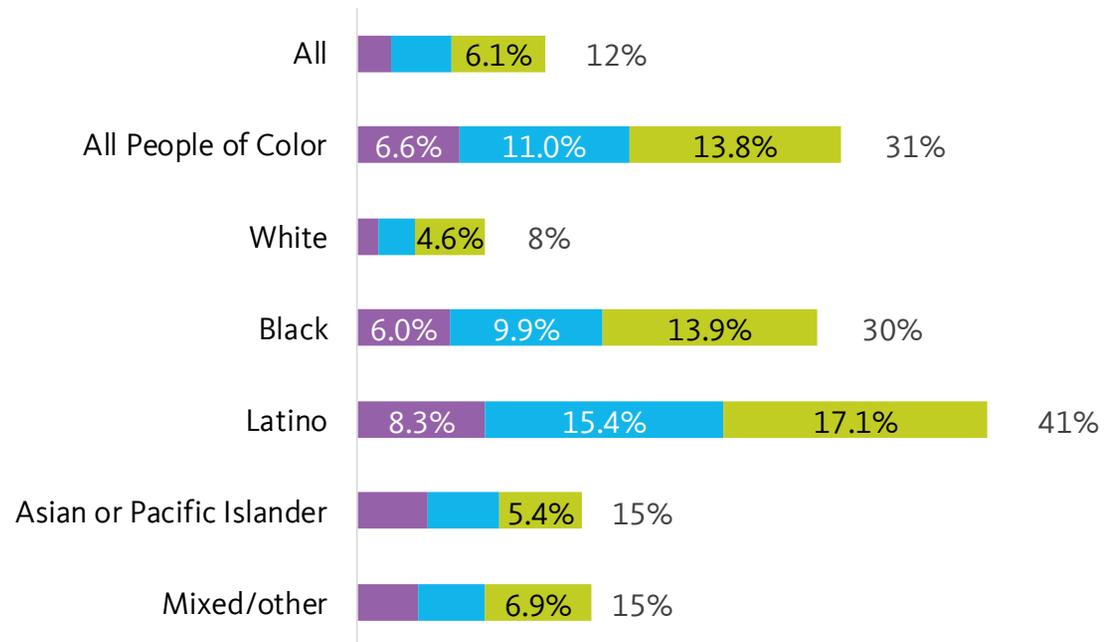
# Access to good jobs

## Is working poverty low and decreasing?

**Four in 10 of the region’s full-time working Latinos are economically insecure**, defined as earning less than twice the federal poverty level (\$20,420 for a family of three). Full-time workers of color are two and half times more likely to be economically insecure than their White counterparts.

Full-Time Workers by Poverty Status, 2015

- < 100% Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
- 100-150% FPL
- 150-200 FPL



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes civilian noninstitutional full-time workers ages 25 through 64 not living in group quarters.  
 Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

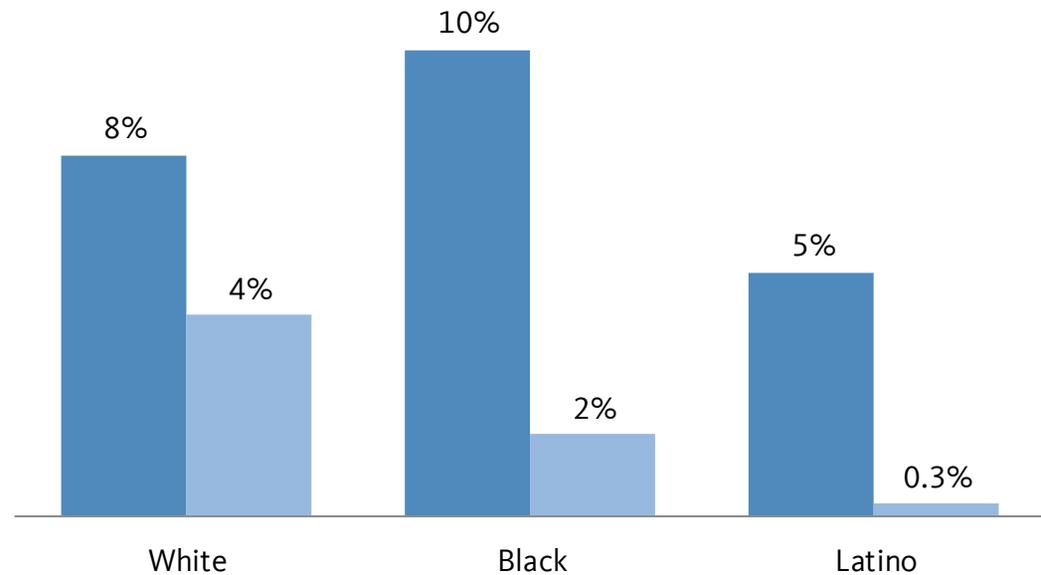
# Access to good jobs

## Are residents working multiple jobs?

**Black and White full-time workers are more likely to work multiple jobs (10 and 8 percent, respectively) compared to 5 percent of Latino full-time workers. A smaller proportion of part-time workers across any of the groups shown work two or more jobs.**

Working Two or More Jobs by Full- and Part-Time Status for Workers Ages 25 to 64 Years Old, 2015

■ Full-time  
■ Part-time



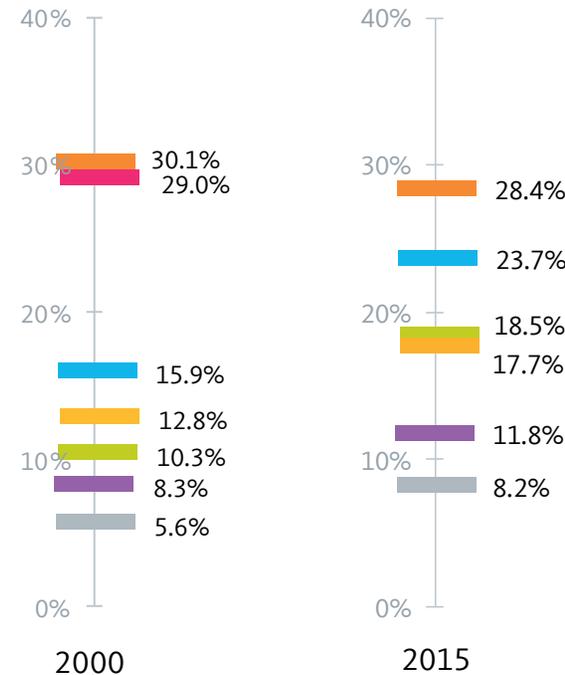
# Economic security

## Is poverty low and decreasing?

**Poverty is on the rise, and it is higher for communities of color.** About one-quarter of Blacks and Latinos live in poverty in the region, compared with less than one in 10 Whites. Poverty has increased dramatically for many communities of color since 2000.

Poverty Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2000 and 2015

- All
- White
- Black
- Latino
- Asian of Pacific Islander
- Native American
- Mixed/other



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes all persons not in group quarters.  
 Note: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

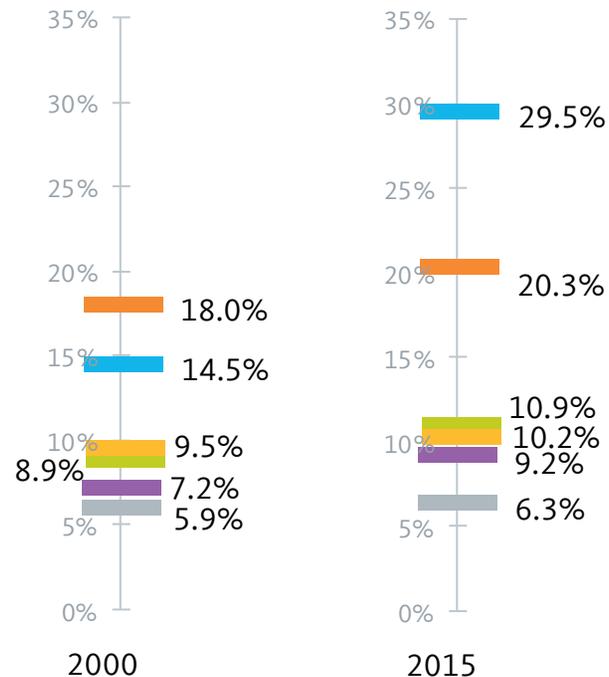
# Economic security

## Is working poverty low and decreasing?

**Working poverty is also on the rise and is particularly high among Latinos and Blacks.** Among working Latinos, 30 percent are working poor – working full time with income below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. While this figure is high, the overall rate of working poverty in the region (9 percent) is lower than the national average of 10 percent.

Working-Poverty Rate by Race/Ethnicity, 2000 and 2015

- All
- White
- Black
- Latino
- Asian of Pacific Islander
- Mixed/other



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes the civilian noninstitutional population ages 25 through 64 not living in group quarters who worked at all during the year prior to the survey.  
 Note: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

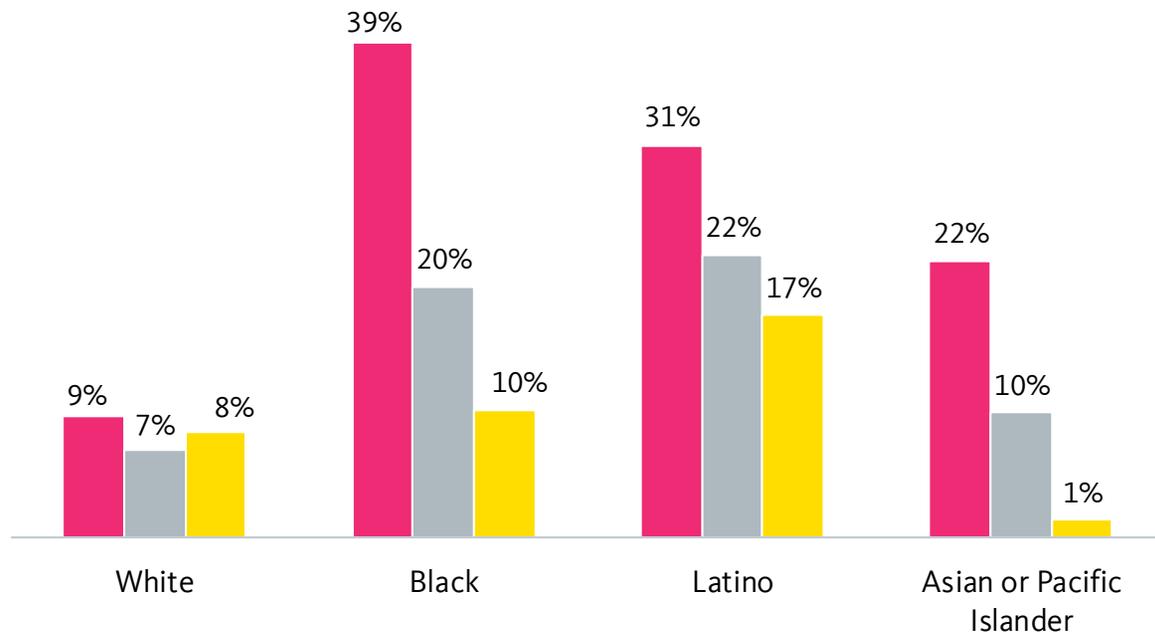
# Economic security

## Is working poverty low and decreasing?

**Children of color are at least twice as likely to be in poverty compared with White children.** Black and Latino children have especially high rates of living in families with incomes below the federal poverty level (39 percent and 31 percent, respectively).

Children (Under 18) in Poverty by Poverty Status and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

- < 100% Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
- 100% FPL to 150% FPL
- 150% FPL to 200% FPL



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes all persons not in group quarters.  
 Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

# Entrepreneurship

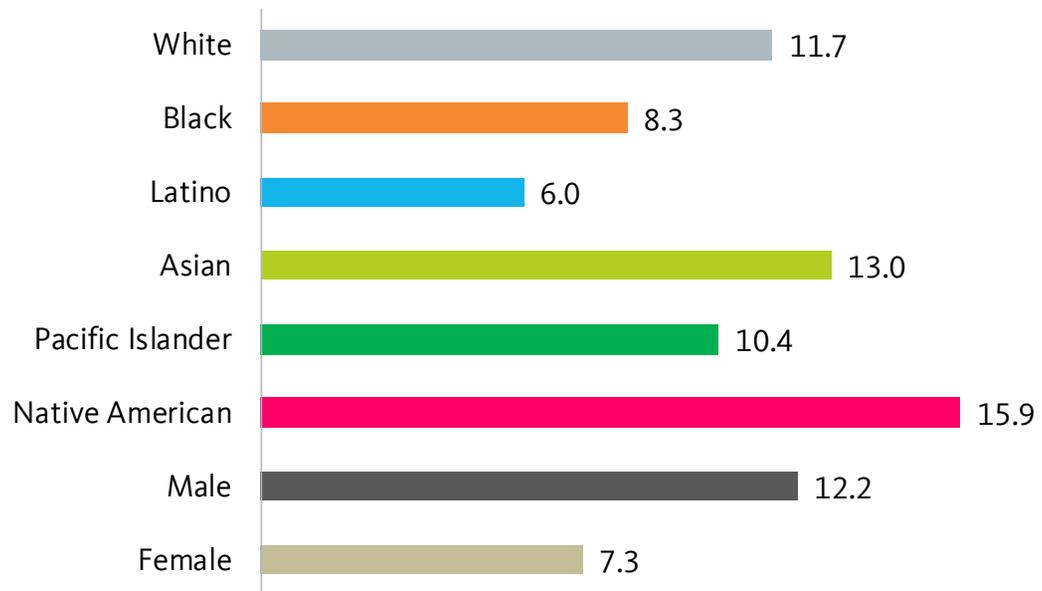
## Are local businesses thriving?

**Native Americans have the highest levels of business ownership (15.9 per 100 adults) compared to any other group.** Asian adults and men also have high business ownership levels (13.0 and 12.2 firms per 100 adults, respectively). Latino adults (6.0 per 100 adults) and women (7.3 per 100 adults) have the lowest levels of entrepreneurship.

### Number of Firms per 100 Adults, 2012

Source: PolicyLink/PERE analysis of data from the 2012 Survey of Business Owners and the 2014 American Community Survey 5-year summary file.

Note: Data on firms and firm characteristics is from the 2012 Survey of Business Owners (SBO) and includes firms with paid employees and sole proprietorships/self-employed. A single firm may be tabulated in more than one racial/ethnic group. This can result because the sole owner was reported to be of more than one race, the majority owner was reported to be of more than one race, or a majority combination of owners was reported to be of more than one race. White is defined as non-Hispanic White, and people of color are defined to include all racial categories except non-Hispanic White. All other racial/ethnic groups other than White may include Latinos who identify with each particular group. Data on the number of adults (ages 18 or older) by race/ethnicity are from the 2014 American Community Survey 5-year summary file, which has a central year of 2012, aligning with the firm data from the SBO. No data are reported if the relative standard error of any estimate used from the SBO to derive the data shown is more than 30 (e.g., if the standard error of the estimate is more than 30 percent of the estimate itself).



# Entrepreneurship

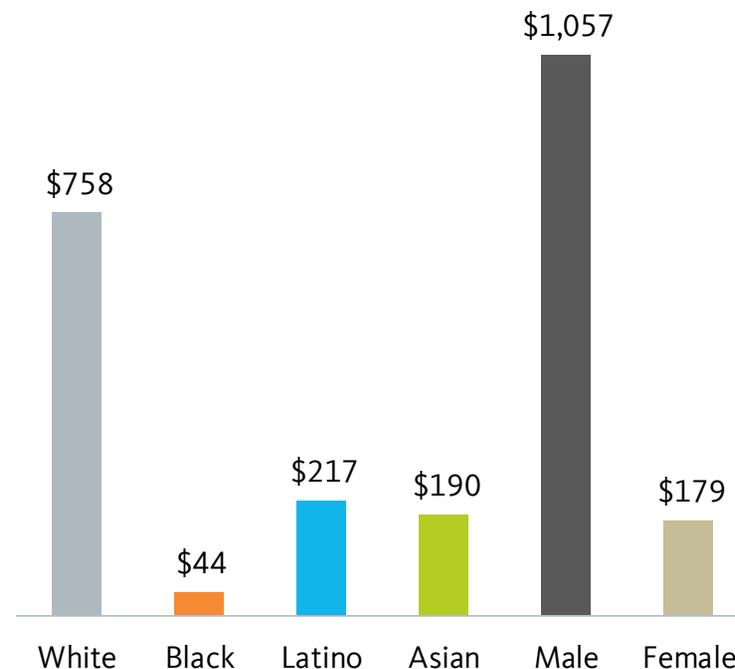
## Are local businesses thriving?

**Firms headed by men and White residents have substantially higher sales than firms of color or firms headed by women.** Average annual receipts for firms headed by men are nearly six times as high as sales at women-led firms. The Black/White disparity is even more startling with average annual receipts for White firms over 17 times as high as receipts for Black firms.

### Average Annual Receipts (in Thousands of Dollars) Per Firm, 2012

Source: PolicyLink/PERE analysis of data from the 2012 Survey of Business Owners.

Note: Data includes firms with paid employees and sole proprietorships/self employed. A single firm may be tabulated in more than one racial/ethnic group. This can result because the sole owner was reported to be of more than one race, the majority owner was reported to be of more than one race, or a majority combination of owners was reported to be of more than one race. White is defined as non-Hispanic white, and people of color are defined to include all racial categories except non-Hispanic white. All other racial/ethnic groups other than white may include Latinos who identify with each particular group. No data are reported if the relative standard error of any estimate used to derive the data shown is more than 30 (e.g. if the standard error of the estimate is more than 30 percent of the estimate itself).



# Strong industries and occupations

## What are the region's strongest industries?

**Management and health care are strong and growing industries in the region.** The manufacturing sector, which traditionally provided many good, middle-skill jobs for people without college degrees, has seen a decline in jobs since 2006, but it has not been as severe as that seen in most other regions.

### Strong Industries Analysis, 2016

Industry	Size	Concentration	Job Quality	Growth			Industry Strength Index
	Total employment (2016)	Location Quotient (2016)	Average annual wage (2016)	Change in employment (2006 to 2016)	% Change in employment (2006 to 2016)	Real wage growth (2006 to 2016)	
Management of Companies and Enterprises	15,659	2.1	\$101,395	4,898	46%	6%	124.1
Health Care and Social Assistance	64,729	1.0	\$46,604	14,695	29%	1%	87.0
Finance and Insurance	32,663	1.7	\$72,197	2,096	7%	12%	81.0
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	26,396	0.9	\$69,980	2,261	9%	7%	20.0
Retail Trade	54,218	1.0	\$27,914	2,805	5%	0%	18.8
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation	31,812	1.1	\$38,888	3,630	13%	8%	15.1
Accommodation and Food Services	41,493	0.9	\$17,564	5,582	16%	10%	9.0
Information	11,826	1.3	\$67,800	-1,070	-8%	6%	5.1
Construction	26,022	1.2	\$51,455	-111	0%	-1%	0.7
Transportation and Warehousing	20,566	1.3	\$41,851	-1,961	-9%	8%	-5.1
Wholesale Trade	16,847	0.9	\$64,296	-1,336	-7%	7%	-13.7
Manufacturing	32,572	0.8	\$48,982	-409	-1%	-3%	-18.3
Utilities	498	0.3	\$136,637	-714	-59%	8%	-22.5
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	6,251	0.9	\$44,479	330	6%	15%	-26.6
Other Services (except Public Administration)	11,797	0.8	\$31,669	720	6%	6%	-44.6
Mining	377	0.2	\$79,330	-294	-44%	20%	-58.5
Education Services	6,379	0.7	\$47,938	509	9%	-9%	-61.2
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	7,579	1.0	\$19,610	40	1%	-7%	-67.9
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1,671	0.4	\$40,183	-176	-10%	14%	-72.5

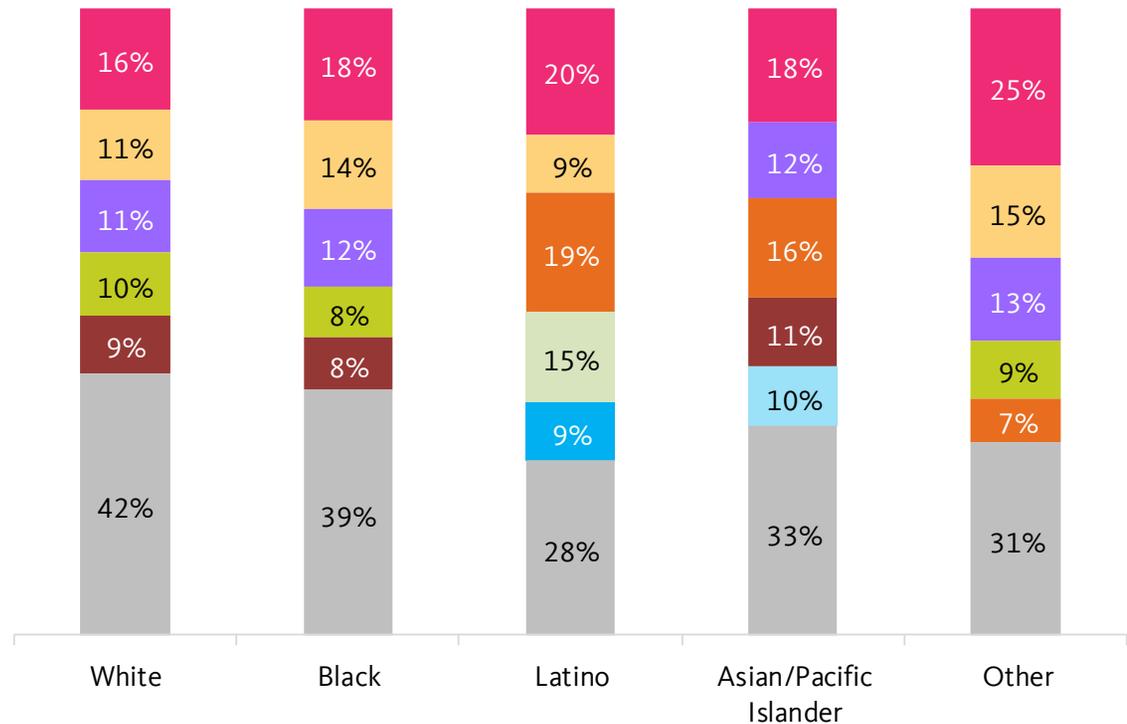
# Strong industries and occupations

## Who works in the region's major industry sectors?

**The largest single industry for all groups is retail**, which employs 16 percent of White, 18 percent of both Black and Asian or Pacific Islander, and 20 percent of Latino workers. Latino workers are much more concentrated in manufacturing and construction compared with other groups (34 percent of Latinos work in these industries).

Employment by Industry for Major Racial/Ethnic Groups, 2015

- Retail Trade
- Other Services
- Health Services
- Finance, Insurance, Real Estate
- Manufacturing
- Education
- Construction
- Professional Services
- Information
- Other Industries



Source: IPUMS.

Note: Only the top three industries by employment are broken out for each racial/ethnic group. Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

# Strong industries and growth occupations

## What are the region's growing occupations?

**The region's fastest growing occupations are computer and mathematical support, health care, construction, sciences, personal care, and social services.** These job categories are projected to experience employment growth of more than 12 percent between 2014 and 2024.

### Strong Occupations Analysis, 2014 and 2024

Occupation	2014 Estimated Employment	2024 Projected Employment	Total 2014-2024 Employment Change	Annual Avg. Percent Change	Total Percent Change
Computer and Mathematical	26,852	31,540	4,688	1.6%	17%
Healthcare Support	26,222	30,099	3,877	1.4%	15%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	63,644	72,664	9,020	1.3%	14%
Construction and Extraction	48,542	55,137	6,595	1.3%	14%
Life, Physical, and Social Science	8,079	9,168	1,089	1.3%	13%
Personal Care and Service	36,825	41,524	4,699	1.2%	13%
Community and Social Services	18,233	20,512	2,279	1.2%	13%
Business and Financial Operations	52,382	58,584	6,202	1.1%	12%
Legal	6,253	6,985	732	1.1%	12%
Architecture and Engineering	11,789	13,153	1,364	1.1%	12%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	46,594	51,456	4,862	1.0%	10%
Food Preparation and Serving Related	83,326	91,662	8,336	1.0%	10%
Transportation and Material Moving	90,259	99,169	8,910	1.0%	10%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	35,119	37,669	2,550	0.7%	7%
Education, Training, and Library	67,618	72,516	4,898	0.7%	7%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	16,217	17,362	1,145	0.7%	7%
Production	82,485	88,308	5,823	0.7%	7%
Sales and Related	108,791	116,355	7,564	0.7%	7%
Protective Service	15,464	16,435	971	0.6%	6%
Management	85,582	90,255	4,673	0.5%	5%
Office and Administrative Support	163,601	171,679	8,078	0.5%	5%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	35,925	35,130	-795	-0.2%	-2%
Total All	1,129,802	1,227,362	97,560	0.8%	9%

# Readiness



# Readiness

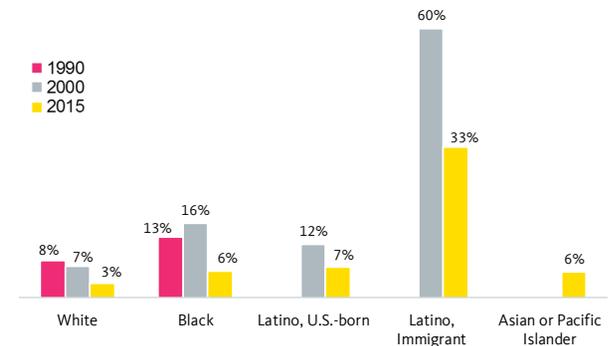
## How prepared are the region's residents for the 21st century economy?

**Summary:** The residents of the region face looming skills and education gaps, especially Blacks and Latinos. The Black and Latino rates of postsecondary education (having at least an associate's degree) are far lower than the share of future jobs that will require that level of education. Looking at the youth who will ultimately fill these jobs, youth of color are more likely to be disconnected from school or work than White youth (13 percent and 7 percent, respectively). Furthermore, despite some progress since 2000, young Latino immigrants are 11 times as likely as White youth to be without a high school diploma and not in pursuit of one. Health disparities for youth and residents in general also exist. Residents of color are more likely to have limited supermarket access (11 percent) compared with White residents (4 percent).

Share of Latino immigrant youth not enrolled in school and without a high school diploma:

# 33%

Share of 16- to 24-Year-Olds Not Enrolled In School And Without A High School Diploma by Race/Ethnicity And Nativity, 1990, 2000, and 2015



Source: IPUMS.

Note: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Data are excluded for U.S.-born and immigrant Latinos in 1990, and for Asian or Pacific Islanders in 1990 and 2000, due to small sample size.

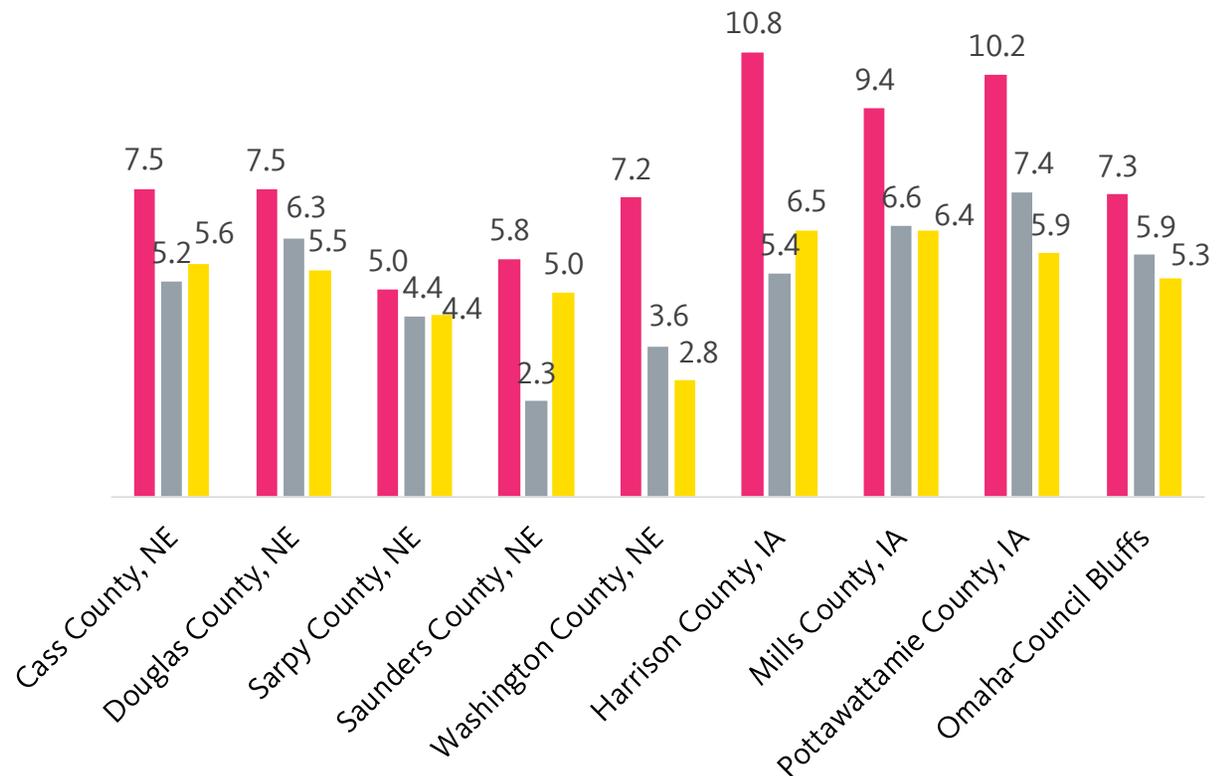
# Health and wellness

**Do all residents have the opportunity to lead long and healthy lives?**

**Infant mortality rates were lower in every county in the region in 2014 compared to 2004.** Most counties experienced declines or relatively small increases between 2009 and 2014, except Saunders County where the rate jumped from 2.3 to 5.0 per 1,000 live births. In 2014, Harrison and Mills counties had the highest rates.

Infant Mortality Rate: Infant Deaths (Occurring before 1 Year of Age) Per 1,000 Live Births, 2004, 2009, and 2014

- 2004
- 2009
- 2014



Sources: Vital Statistics of Iowa Reports, Iowa Public Health Tracking Portal (Reproductive Outcomes), Iowa Dept. of Public Health; Nebraska Vital Statistics Reports, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. Compiled by David Drozd, UNO Center for Public Affairs Research, on November 27, 2017.

Note: Data reported for each year represents a five-year average through that year (i.e. 2000-2004, 2005-2009, and 2010-2014, respectively).

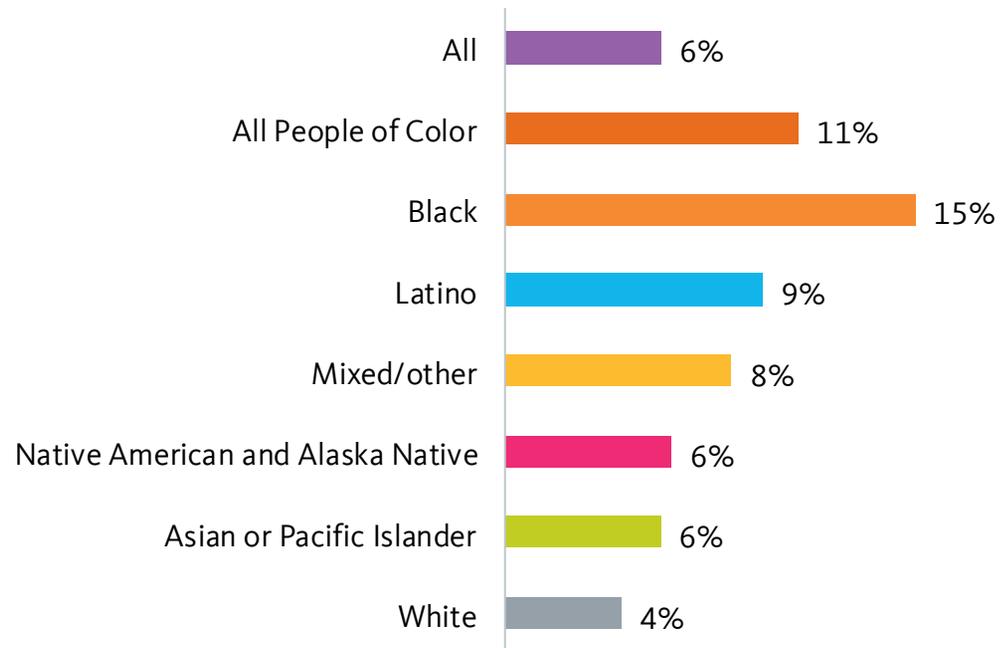
# Health and wellness

## Can all residents access healthy food?

**Black residents of the region are more likely to have limited supermarket access (15 percent) compared with White residents (4 percent).** Residents living in areas with limited food access have fewer healthy food options. They may also face higher transportation costs to access areas with more food options.

### Percent Living in Limited Supermarket Access Areas (LSAs) by Race/Ethnicity, 2014

LSAs are defined as areas where residents must travel significantly farther to reach a supermarket than the “comparatively acceptable” distance traveled by residents in well-served areas with similar population densities and car ownership rates.



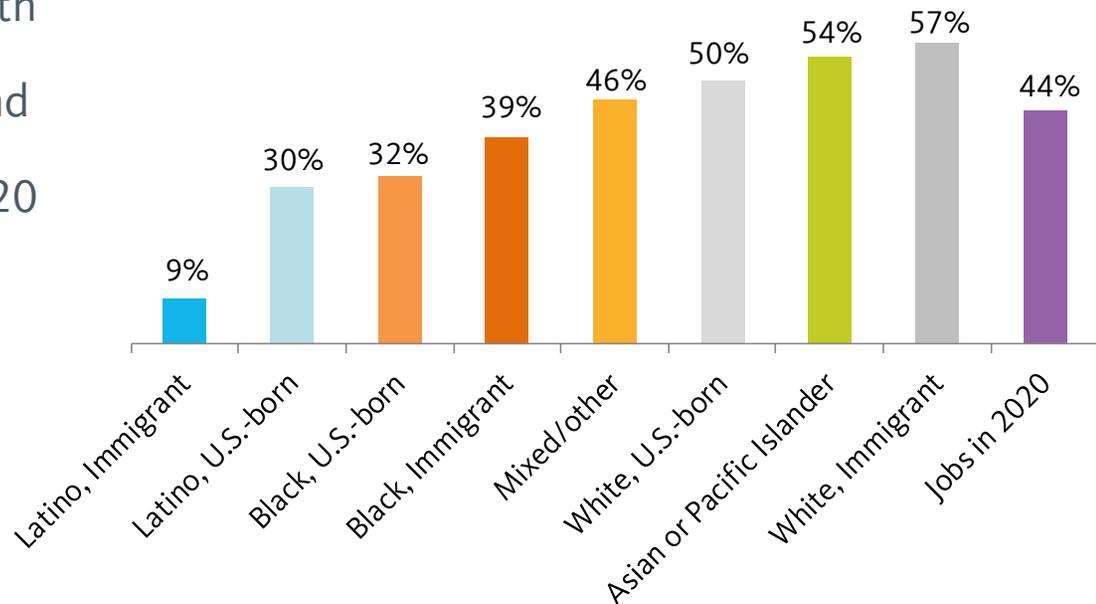
Sources: The Reinvestment Fund, 2014 LSA analysis; U.S. Census Bureau.  
 Note: Data on population by race/ethnicity reflects a 2011 through 2015 average.

# Skilled workforce

**Do workers have the education and skills needed for the jobs of the future?**

**Some of the fastest-growing segments of the region’s workforce lack the education levels required for the jobs of the future.** By 2020, an estimated 44 percent of jobs will require at least an associate’s degree. Yet, only 30 percent of U.S.-born Latinos, 32 percent of U.S.-born Blacks, and 9 percent of Latino immigrants have that level of education.

Share of Working-Age Population with an Associate’s Degree or Higher by Race/Ethnicity and Nativity, 2015 and Projected Share of Jobs That Require an Associate’s Degree or Higher, 2020



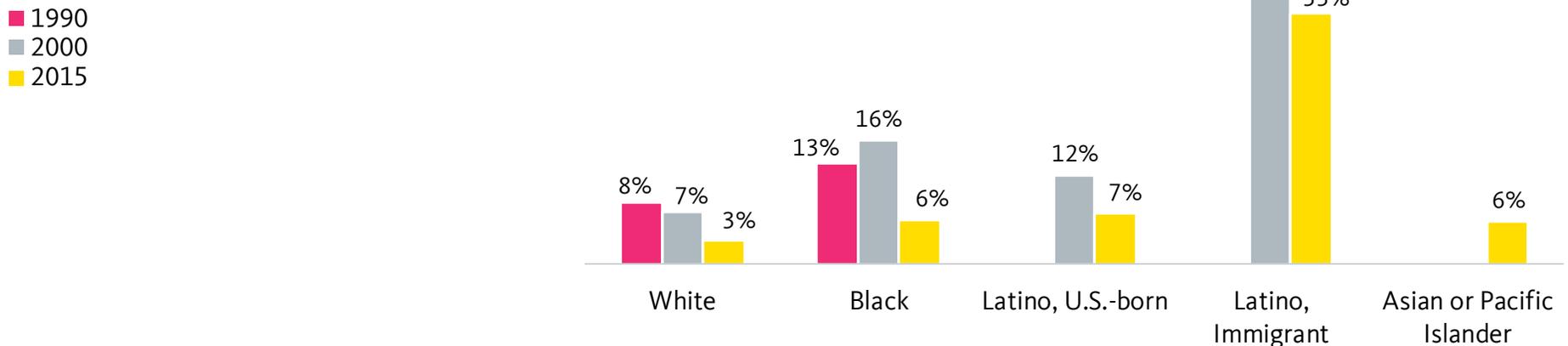
Source: Georgetown Center for Education and the Workforce; IPUMS. Universe for education levels of workers includes all persons ages 25 through 64.  
 Note: Data for 2015 by race/ethnicity/nativity represents a 2011 through 2015 average and is at the regional level; data on jobs in 2020 represents a regional job-weighted average of state-level projections for Nebraska and Iowa.

# Youth preparedness

## Are youth ready to enter the workforce?

**More of the region’s youth are getting high school diplomas, but racial gaps remain.** A third of the region’s Latino immigrant youth ages 16 to 24 are neither in school nor have a diploma, and Black, U.S.-born Latino, and Asian or Pacific Islander youth also are at least twice as likely to not have a high school diploma as their White counterparts.

Share of 16- to 24-Year-Olds Not Enrolled in School and without a High School Diploma by Race/Ethnicity and Nativity, 1990, 2000, and 2015



Source: IPUMS.

Note: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Data are excluded for U.S.-born and immigrant Latinos in 1990, and for Asian or Pacific Islanders in 1990 and 2000, because of small sample size.

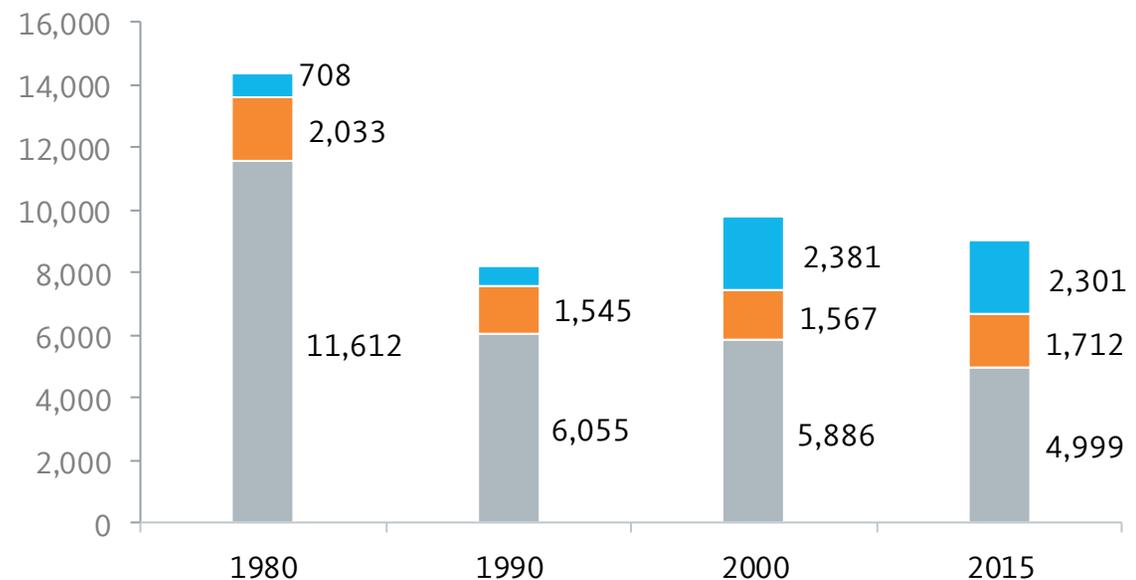
# Youth preparedness

## Are youth ready to enter the workforce?

**More youth are connected to work or school now than in the past, but youth of color are more likely to be disconnected.** Of the 9,000 disconnected youth in the region in 2015, 45 percent were youth of color, but they only made up 29 percent of the youth population. While not shown, 13 percent of youth of color are disconnected but only 7 percent of White youth are.

### Disconnected Youth: 16- to 24-Year-Olds Not Working or In School by Race/Ethnicity, 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2015

- Latino, API, Native American or Mixed/other
- Black
- White



Source: IPUMS.

Note: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Racial/ethnic groups in which the individual sample size is too small to report have been combined so that they can be included in the analysis. See "Data and methods" for additional information.

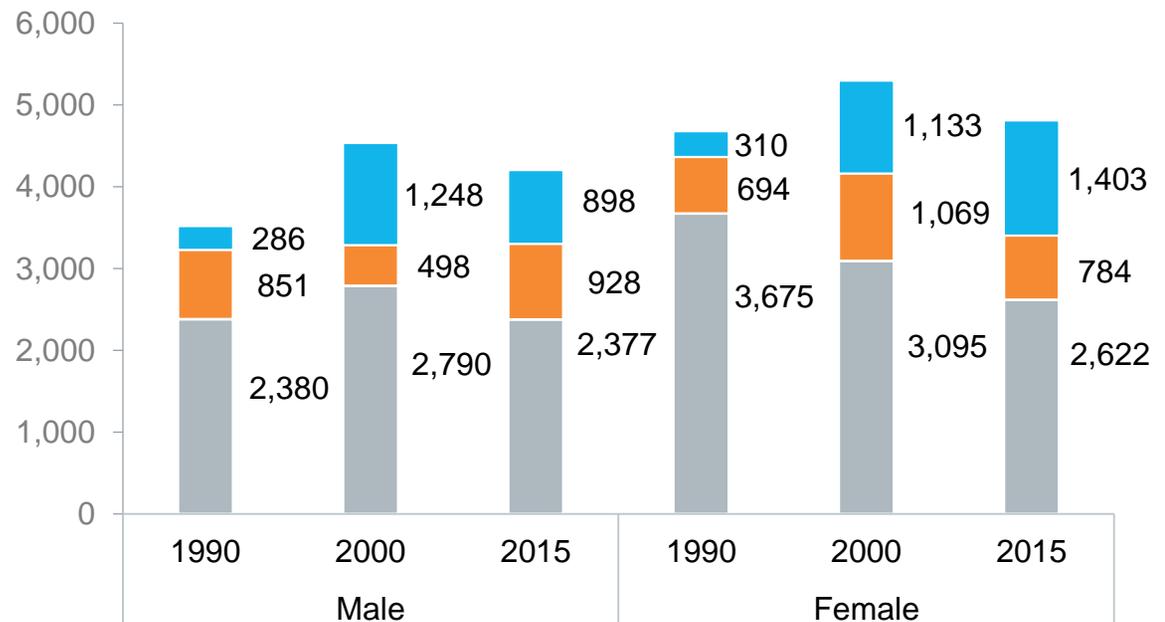
# Youth preparedness

## Are youth ready to enter the workforce?

**More female youth are disconnected from school or work compared with males.** The number of disconnected White female youth declined substantially between 1990 and 2015 but the numbers for female youth of color increased (partly because of population growth). While not shown, Latina females (18 percent), Black males (17 percent), and Black females (15 percent) had the highest rates of disconnection in 2015 (among groups with available data).

Disconnected Youth: 16- to 24-Year-Olds Not Working or in School by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 1990, 2000, and 2015

- Latino, API, Native American or Mixed/other
- Black
- White



Source: IPUMS.

Note: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Racial/ethnic groups in which the individual sample size is too small to report have been combined so that they can be included in the analysis. See "Data and methods" for additional information.

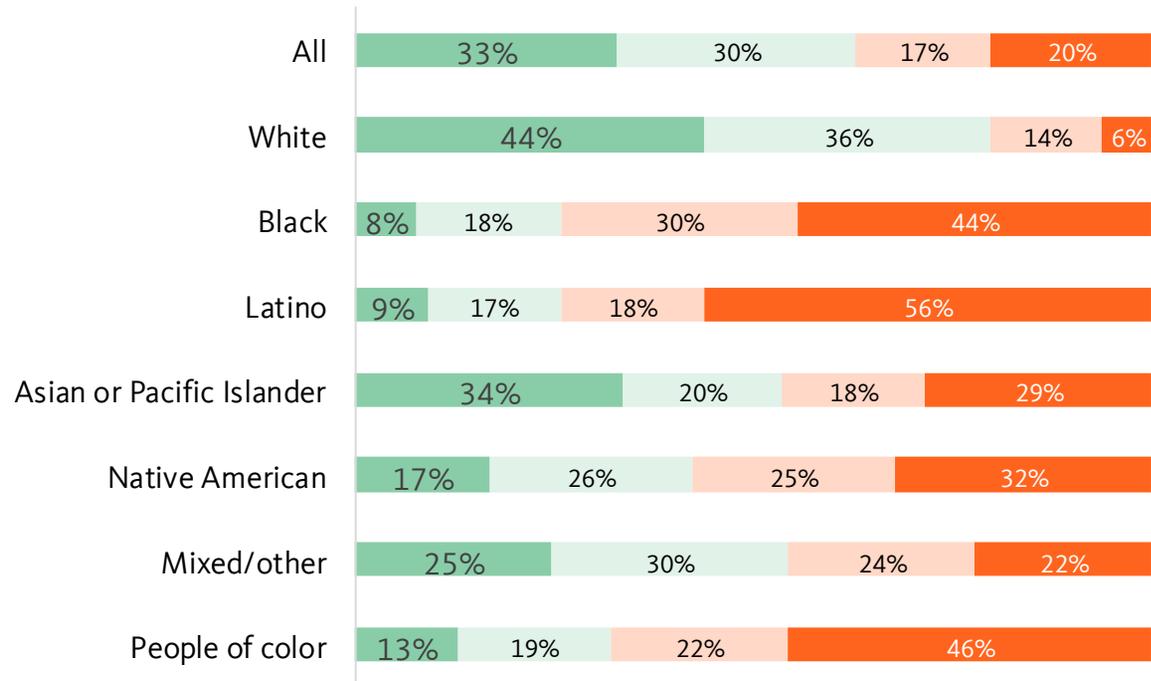
# Youth preparedness

## Are public schools economically segregated?

**Three-quarters of Black and Latino students attend schools where more than half of the student body is eligible for free or reduced price lunch (FRPL).** Almost six in 10 Native American students attended such schools as well. By contrast, only one in five White students attended such schools.

Percent of Students by School Poverty Level, as Defined by the Share of Students Eligible for FRPL, 2016

- Low (<25% FRPL)
- Mid-low (25-50% FRPL)
- Mid-high (50-75% FRPL)
- High (>75% FRPL)



Source: National Center for Education Statistics. Universe includes all public elementary and secondary schools and school districts in the region.  
 Note: Data for the "Mixed/other" category includes only those of mixed race.

# Connectedness



# Connectedness

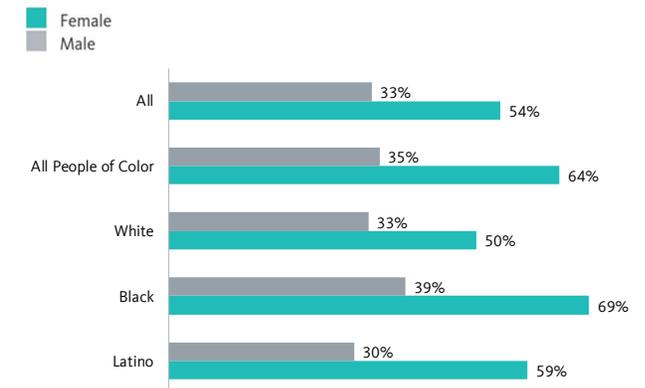
## Are residents connected to one another and to the region's assets and opportunities?

**Summary:** People of color, especially Black women, are more likely to face higher rent burdens than White residents, and Black residents overall are less likely to have access to a vehicle. People in Latino households are far more likely to share a room with others, although Native American and Asian or Pacific Islander households also have higher than average rates of room-sharing.

Share of renter households headed by Black women that are rent-burdened:

69%

Renter Housing Burden By Race/Ethnicity And Gender, 2015



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes all renter-occupied households with housing costs.

Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Rent burden is a measure of housing affordability that looks at the proportion of renter households that are paying more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs (which is contract rent and utilities).

Indicators referenced: Renter Housing Burden by Race/Ethnicity and Gender (page 70); Households without a Vehicle by Race/Ethnicity (page 73); More than One Occupant per Room by Race/Ethnicity (page 72).

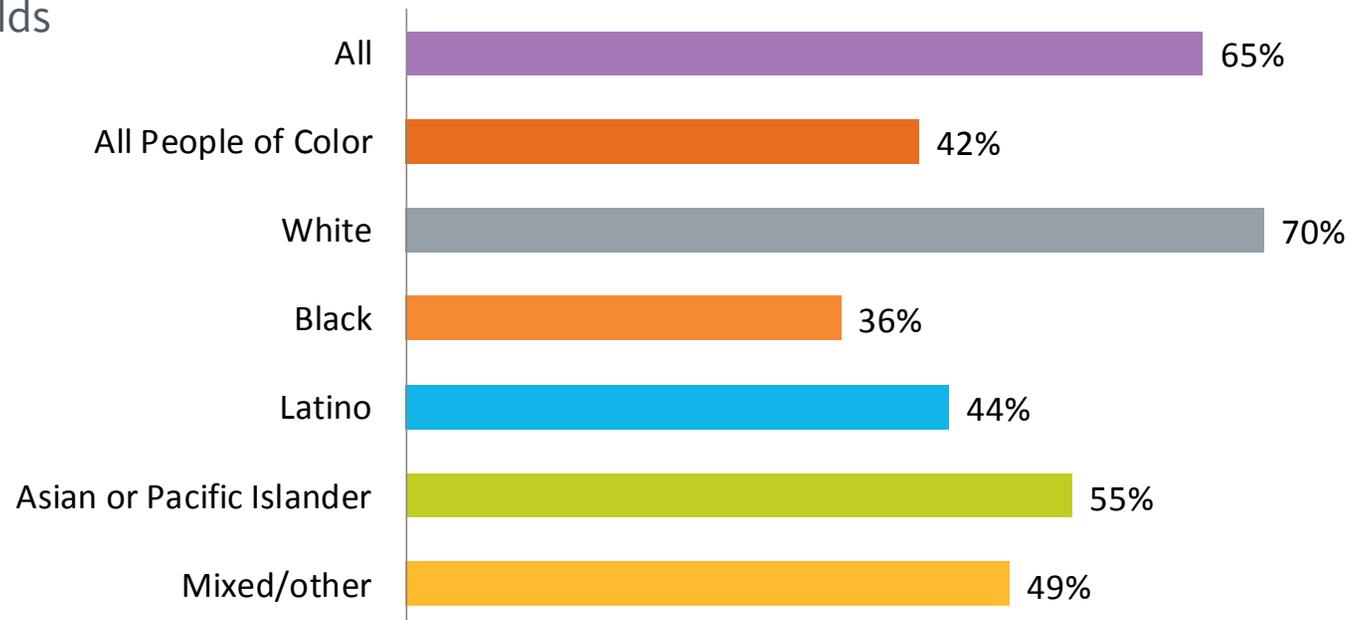
# Connectedness

## Are residents able to own their homes?

**White residents have the highest homeownership rates among various races/ethnicities in the region by far (70 percent).**

Homeownership rates for Black residents (36 percent) are well below the regional average (65 percent).

### Owner-Occupied Households by Race/Ethnicity, 2015

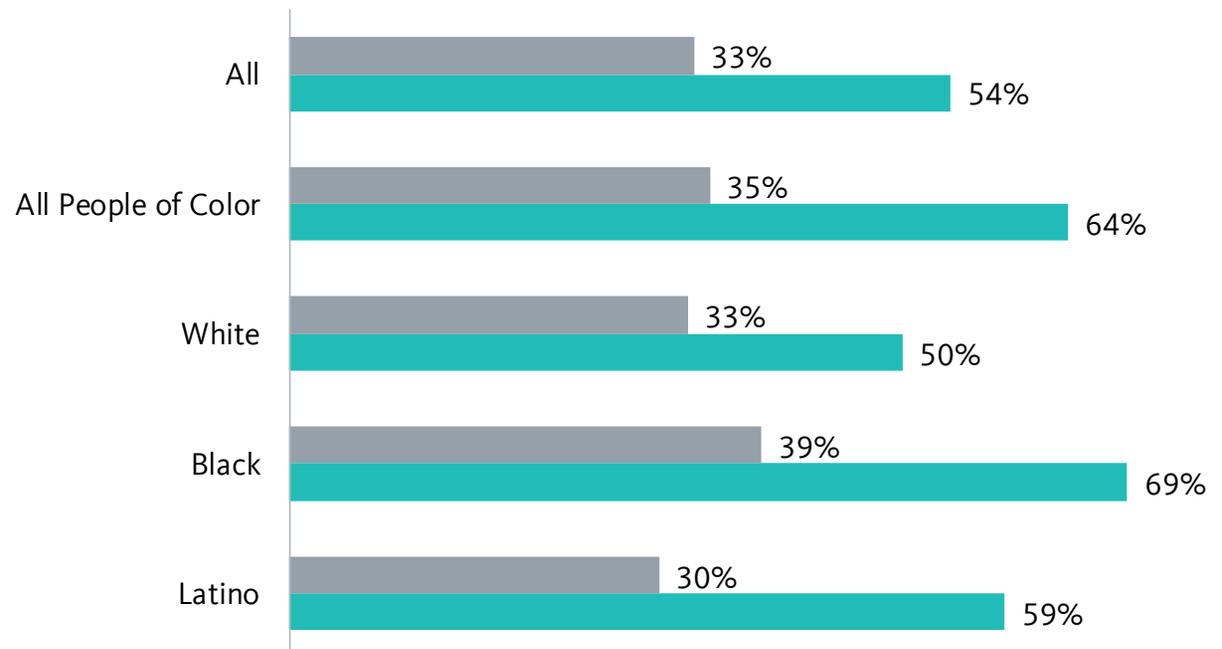


# Connectedness

## Can all residents access affordable, quality housing?

**Women-headed households of any race are far more likely to be rent burdened than those headed by men.** Among female renters, Black women are most likely to be rent-burdened, meaning they spend more than 30 percent of income on rent (69 percent) while White women are least likely (50 percent). Still, White women have a higher rate of being rent burdened than men of any race.

### Renter Housing Burden by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2015



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes all renter-occupied households with housing costs.

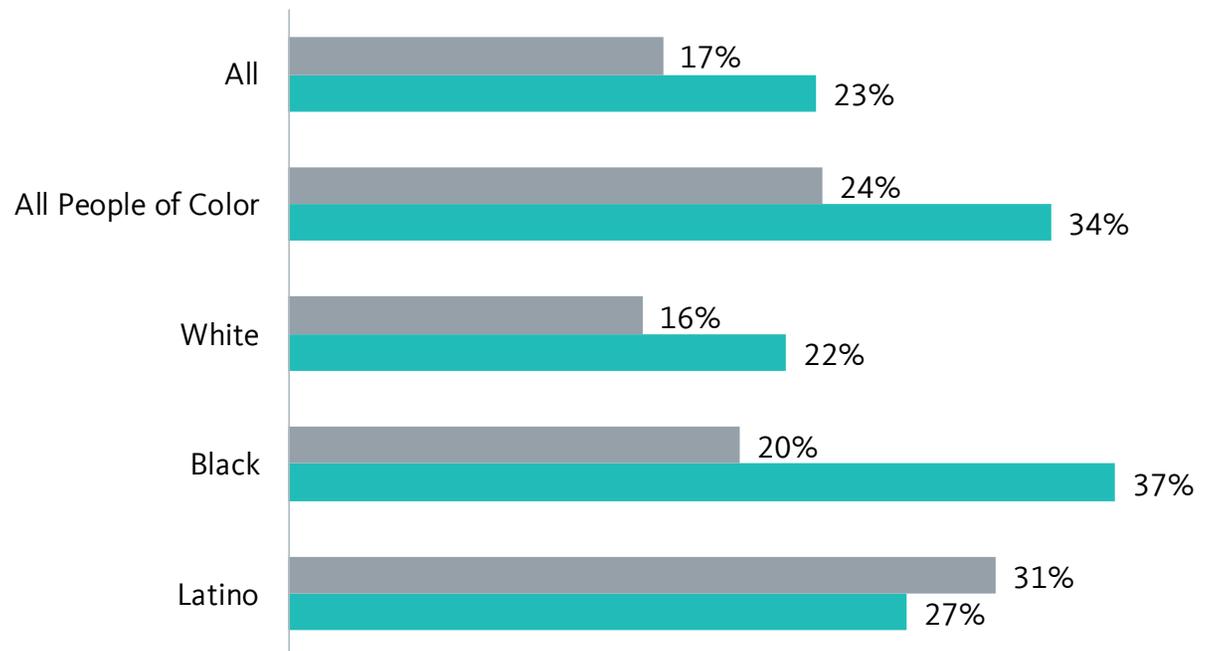
Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Rent burden is a measure of housing affordability that looks at the proportion of renter households that are paying more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs (which is contract rent and utilities).

# Connectedness

## Can all residents access affordable, quality housing?

**The housing burden for homeowners is higher for women than for men across all racial/ethnic groups except for Latinos.** Among Latina homeowners, 27 percent pay more than 30 percent of income on housing costs, but the figure is higher for their male counterparts (31 percent). Among Black women homeowners, 37 percent face very high housing costs, nearly double the rate for Black men (20 percent).

Owner Housing Burden by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2015



Source: IPUMS. Universe includes all owner-occupied households with housing costs.

Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Owner housing burden is a measure of housing affordability that looks at the proportion of owner households that are paying more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs.

# Connectedness

## Can all residents access affordable, quality housing?

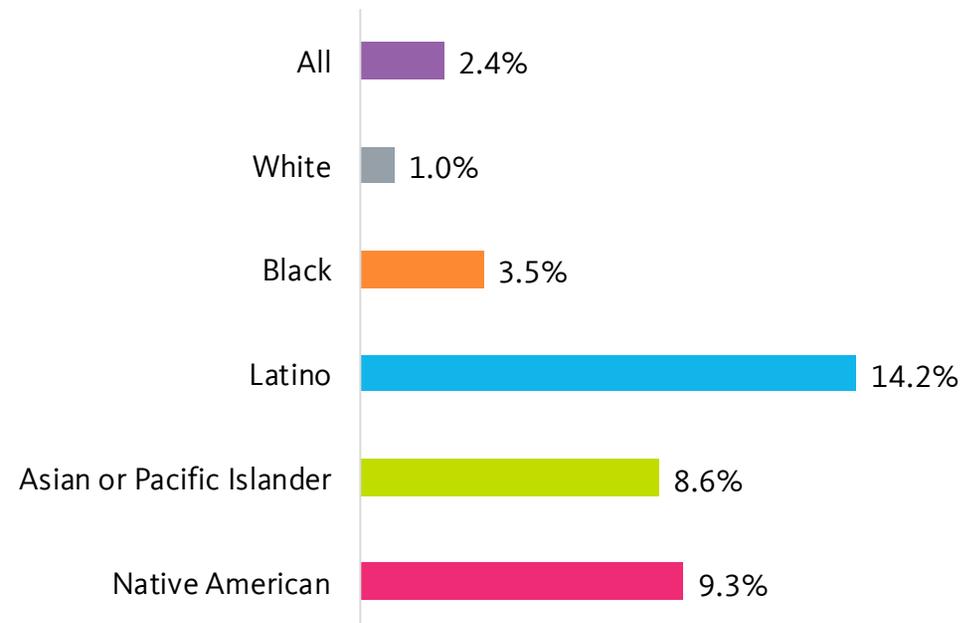
**People in Latino households are most likely to share a room, which may indicate that they have fewer affordable housing options available.** Those living in Latino households are 14 times as likely as those in White households to share a room or experience what may be considered *overcrowding*; see note below. Native American and Asian or Pacific Islander households also have higher than average rates of room-sharing.

### More Than One Occupant Per Room By Race/Ethnicity, 2015

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau. Compiled by David Drozd, UNO Center for Public Affairs Research, on November 27, 2017. Universe includes all occupied housing units.

Notes: Data for 2015 represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Black, Asian or Pacific Islander, and Native American or Alaska Native householders may include individuals who also identify as Latino.

Overcrowding: Although having multiple occupants per room does not in itself signal an alarm and could, in fact, reflect personal or cultural preferences, it could also be a response to a lack of quality affordable housing. In this case, these conditions could lead to overcrowding, which can pose health and safety concerns for occupants.

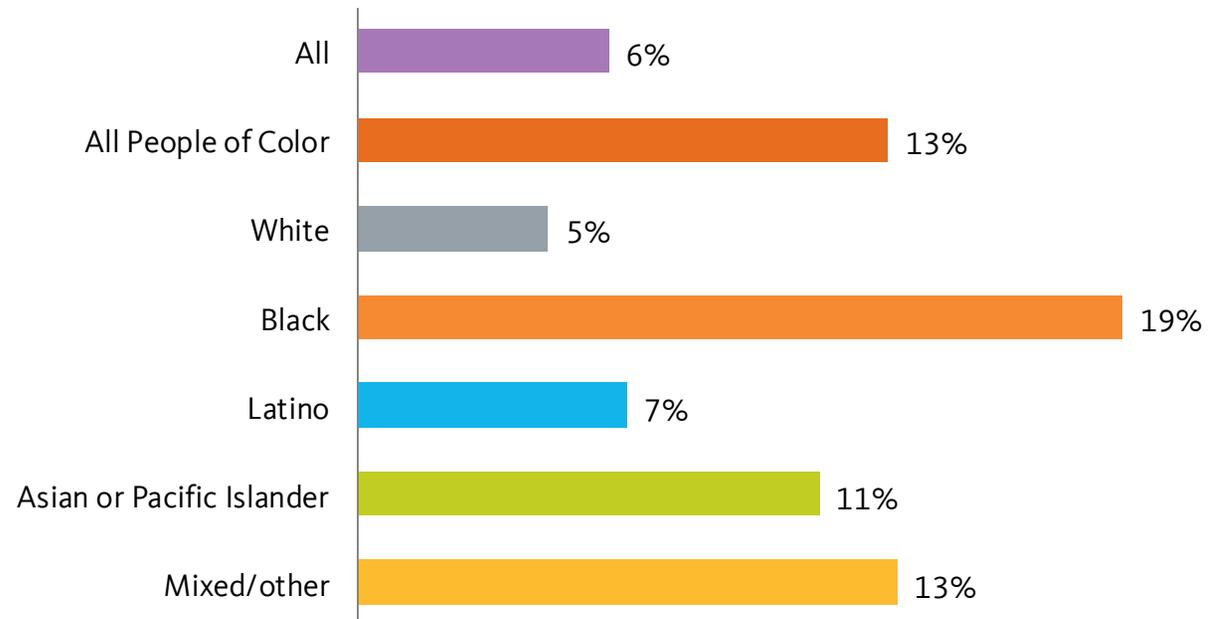


# Connectedness

## Do residents have access to transportation?

**Black households are more than three times as likely to be without a vehicle compared with all households.** Similarly, households of color are nearly three times as likely as White households to be without a vehicle. After Black households, Mixed/other and Asian or Pacific Islander households have the highest rates of vehicle inaccessibility.

Households without a Vehicle  
by Race/Ethnicity, 2015

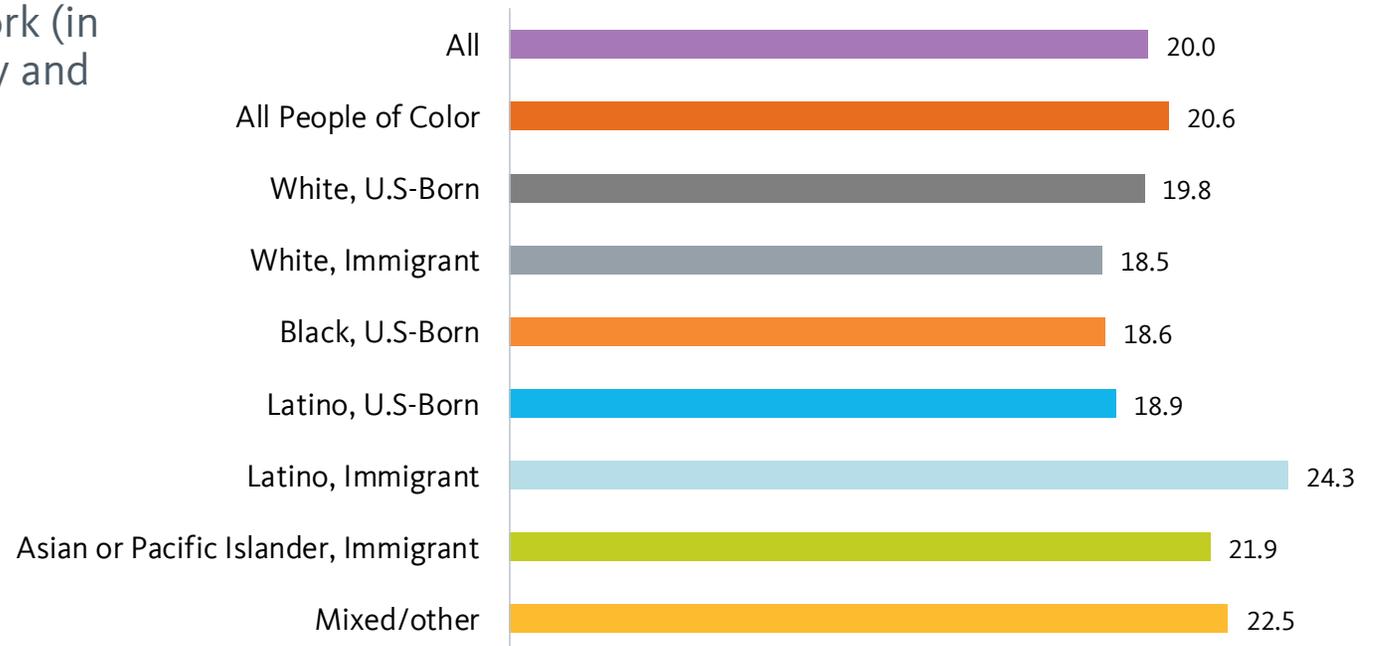


# Connectedness

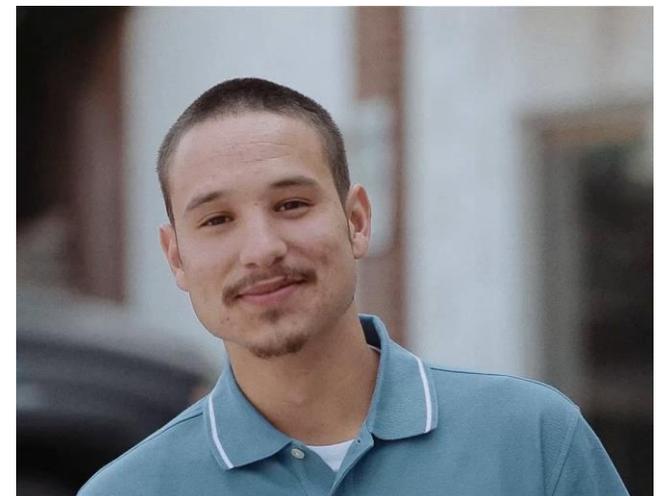
## Do workers have short commutes to their jobs?

**Latino immigrants have the longest average commute times to work** (24 minutes) followed by those identifying as Mixed/other (23 minutes), and Asian or Pacific Islander immigrants (22 minutes). The commute time to work for all groups is typically under 20 minutes.

Average Travel Time to Work (in Minutes) by Race/Ethnicity and Nativity, 2015



# Economic benefits of equity



# Economic benefits of equity

## What are the benefits of racial economic inclusion to the broader economy?

**Summary:** Eliminating racial inequities in income and wealth would benefit families, communities, and the regional economy. The Omaha-Council Bluffs economy could have been \$4.8 billion stronger in 2015 absent its large racial gaps in income. Breaking down the racial gap in incomes we find that 57 percent of the gap for the region's communities of color is attributable to wage inequities and 43 percent is attributable to employment inequities. For the region's Latino workers, however, 74 percent of the income gap comes from wage inequities.

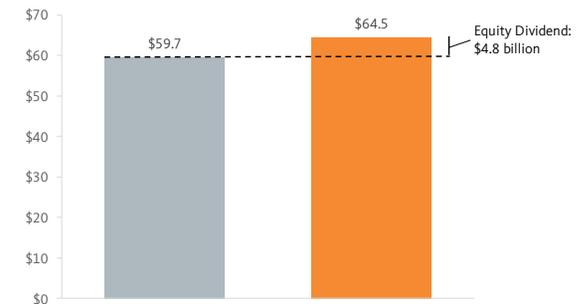
Potential gain in GDP with racial equity in the region (in billions):

# \$4.8

Actual GDP And Estimated GDP Without Racial Gaps In Income, 2015

■ GDP in 2015 (billions)

■ GDP if racial gaps in income were eliminated (billions)



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis; IPUMS.  
Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

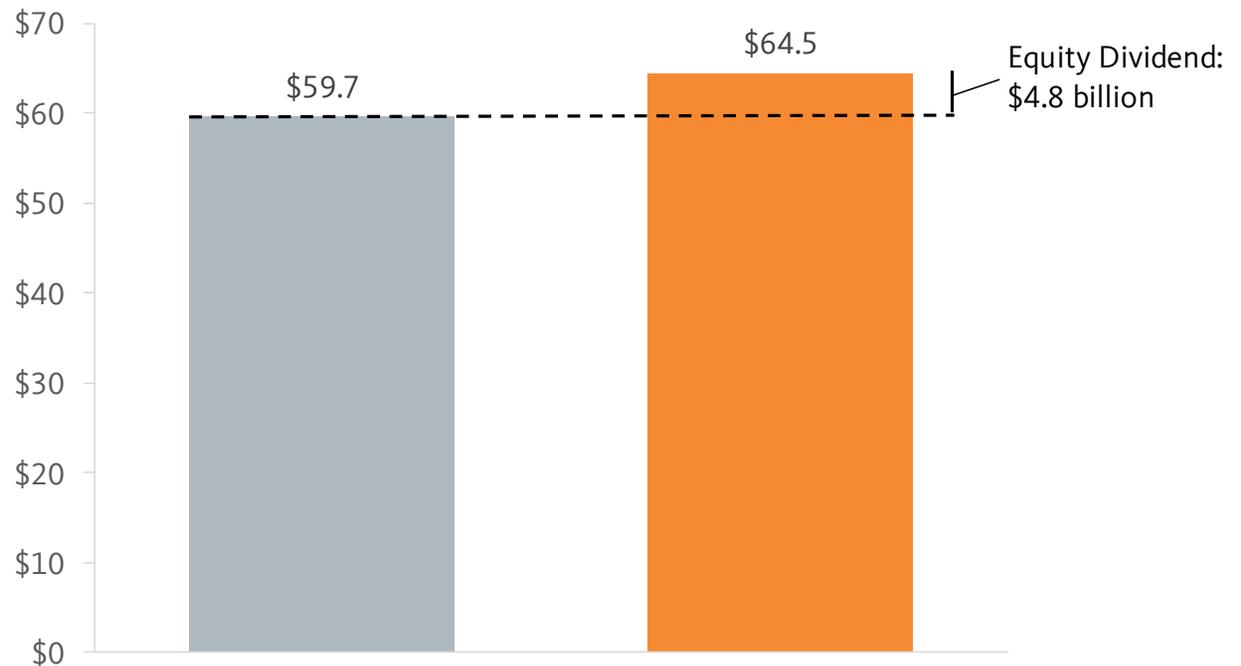
# Economic benefits of equity

## How much higher would GDP be without racial economic inequalities?

The Omaha-Council Bluffs region's GDP would have been \$4.8 billion higher in 2015 if its racial gaps in income were closed.

Actual GDP and Estimated GDP without Racial Gaps in Income, 2015

- GDP in 2015 (billions)
- GDP if racial gaps in income were eliminated (billions)



Sources: Bureau of Economic Analysis; IPUMS.  
 Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

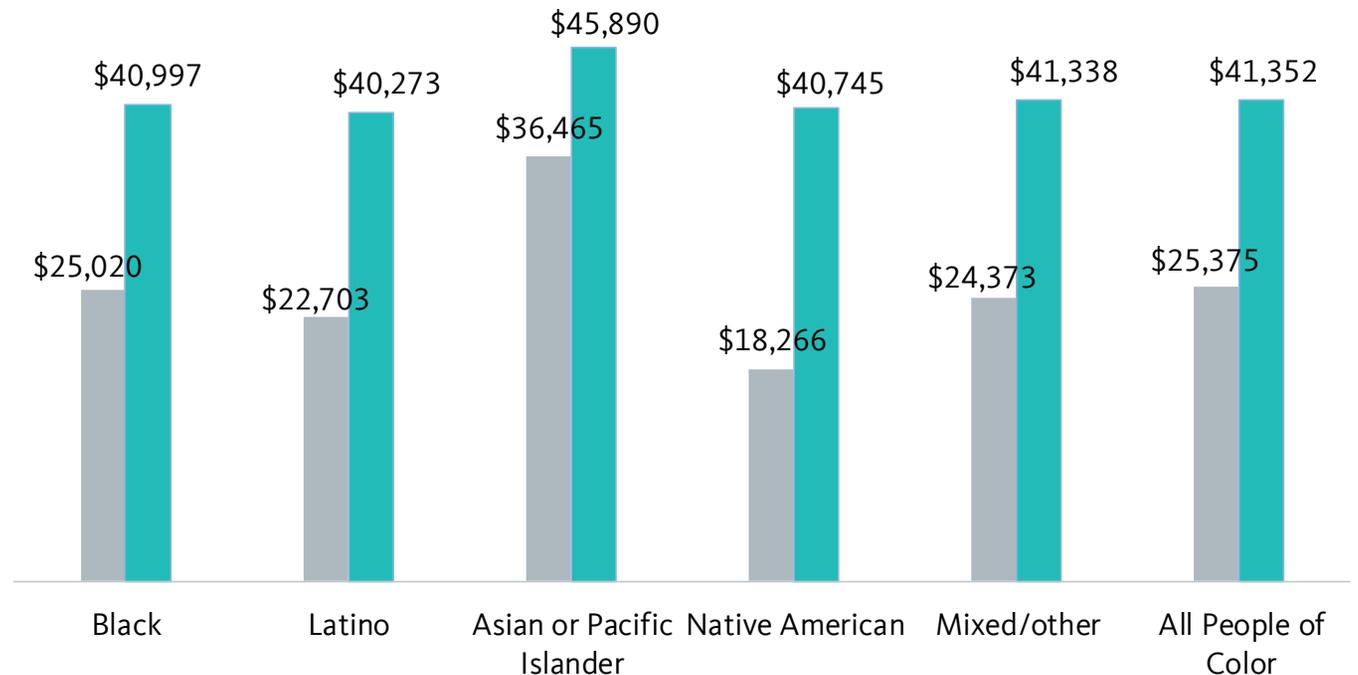
# Economic benefits of equity

## What are the economic benefits of inclusion?

**With racial equity in income, Black, Latino, and Mixed/other workers would be earning at least one and a half times their current earnings.** Native American workers would earn more than double their current income.

Income Gains with Racial Equity by Race/Ethnicity, 2015

■ Average income  
■ Average income with racial equity



Source: IPUMS.  
Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average.

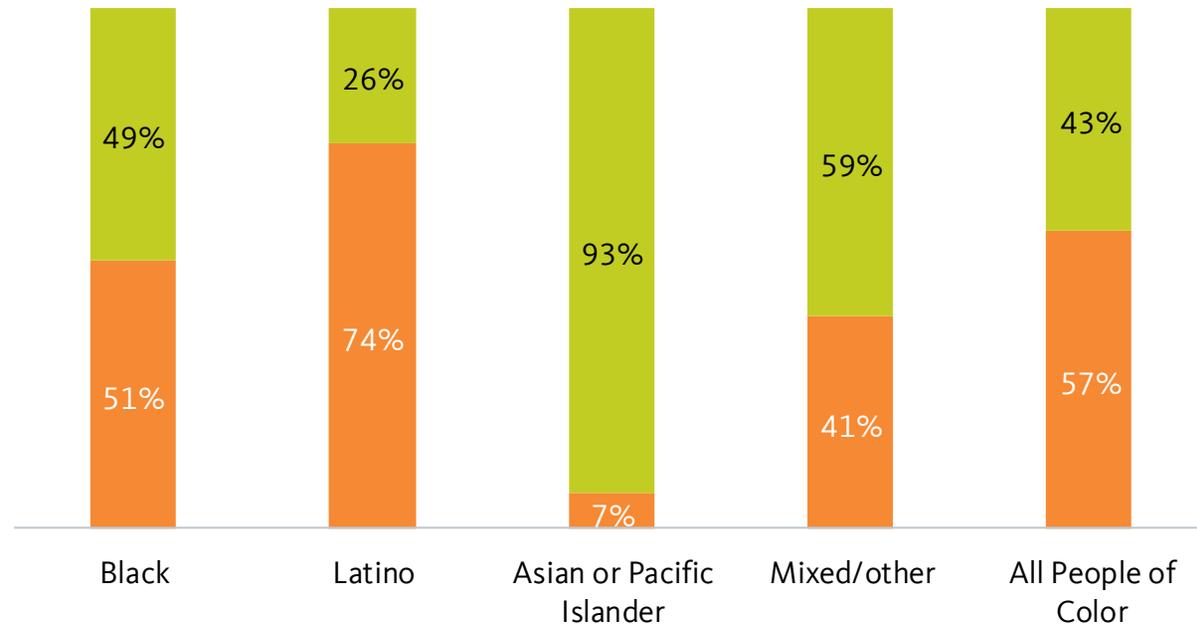
# Economic benefits of equity

## What are the economic benefits of inclusion?

**For Latinos, the vast majority of income gains with racial equity achieved would come from closing the racial wage gap with Whites.** For Asian or Pacific Islander residents, most of the gains would come from closing employment differences with White workers (as measured by employment rates and hours worked).

### Source of Gains in Income with Racial Equity by Race/Ethnicity, 2015

- Employment
- Wages



# Data and methods

## Data source summary and regional geography

### Selected terms and general notes

Broad racial/ethnic origin

Nativity

Other selected terms

General notes on analyses

### Summary measures from IPUMS microdata

### Adjustments made to census summary data on race/ ethnicity by age

### Adjustments made to demographic projections

National projections

County and regional projections

### Estimates and adjustments made to BEA data on GDP

Adjustments at the state and national levels

County and metropolitan area estimates

### Middle-class analysis

### Assembling a complete dataset on employment and wages by industry

### Growth in jobs and earnings by industry wage level, 2006 to 2016

### Analysis of access to healthy food

### Analysis of school poverty

### Estimates of GDP without racial gaps in income

# Data and methods

## Data source summary and regional geography

Unless otherwise noted, all of the data and analyses presented in this equity profile are the product of PolicyLink and the USC Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE). The specific data sources are listed in the table on the right. Unless otherwise noted, the data used to represent the region were assembled to match the eight counties served by Heartland 2050. While much of the data and analysis presented in this profile are fairly intuitive, in the following pages we describe some of the estimation techniques and adjustments made in creating the underlying database, and provide more detail on terms and methodology used. Finally, the reader should bear in mind that while only a single region is profiled here, many of the analytical choices in generating the underlying data and analyses were made with an eye toward replicating the analyses in other regions and the ability to update them over time. Thus, while more regionally specific data may be available for some indicators, the data in this profile are drawn from our regional equity indicators database that provides data that are comparable and replicable over time.

Source	Dataset
Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS)	1980 5% State Sample 1990 5% Sample 2000 5% Sample 2015 American Community Survey, 5-year microdata sample
U.S. Census Bureau	1980 Summary Tape File 1 (STF1) 1980 Summary Tape File 2 (STF2) 1980 Summary Tape File 3 (STF3) 1990 Summary Tape File 2A (STF2A) 1990 Modified Age/Race, Sex and Hispanic Origin File (MARS) 1990 Summary Tape File 4 (STF4) 2000 Summary File 1 (SF1) 2010 Summary File 1 (SF1) 2015 ACS 5-year Summary File (2015 5-year ACS) 2010 TIGER/Line Shapefiles, 2010 Counties 2012 Survey of Business Owners
Geolytics	1980 Long Form in 2010 Boundaries 1990 Long Form in 2010 Boundaries 2000 Long Form in 2010 Boundaries
Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.	2017 Complete Economic and Demographic Data Source
U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis	Gross Domestic Product by State Gross Domestic Product by Metropolitan Area Local Area Personal Income Accounts, CA30: Regional Economic
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics	Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Local Area Unemployment Statistics
The Reinvestment Fund	2014 Analysis of Limited Supermarket Access (LSA)
Common Core of Data (CCD) Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey	School Year 2015-16
Nebraska Department of Labor	Labor Market Information, Occupational Projections Vital Statistics of Iowa Reports, Iowa Public Health Tracking Portal (Reproductive Outcomes)
Iowa Department of Public Health	Nebraska Vital Statistics Reports
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services	Updated projections of education requirements of jobs in 2020, originally appearing in: Recovery: Job Growth And Education Requirements Through 2020; State Report
Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce	

# Data and methods

## Selected terms and general notes

### **Broad racial/ethnic origin**

In all of the analyses presented, all categorization of people by race/ethnicity and nativity is based on individual responses to various census surveys. All people included in our analysis were first assigned to one of six mutually exclusive racial/ethnic categories, depending on their response to two separate questions on race and Hispanic origin as follows.

- “White” and “non-Hispanic White” are used to refer to all people who identify as White alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.
- “Black” and “African American” are used to refer to all people who identify as Black or African American alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.
- “Latino” refers to all people who identify as being of Hispanic origin, regardless of racial identification.
- “Asian,” “Asian/Pacific Islander,” and “API” are used to refer to all people who identify as Asian or Pacific Islander alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.

- “Native American” and “Native American and Alaska Native” are used to refer to all people who identify as Native American or Alaskan Native alone and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.
- “Other” and “Other or Mixed-race” are used to refer to all people who identify with a single racial category not included above, or identify with multiple racial categories, and do not identify as being of Hispanic origin.
- “People of color” or “POC” is used to refer to all people who do not identify as non-Hispanic White.

### **Nativity**

The term “U.S. born” refers to all people who identify as being born in the United States (including U.S. territories and outlying areas), or born abroad of American parents. The terms “immigrant” and “foreign born” are used interchangeably and refer to all people who identify as being born abroad, outside of the United States, to non-U.S. citizen parents.

### **Other selected terms**

Below we provide some definitions and clarification around some of the terms used in the equity profile.

- The terms “region,” “metropolitan area,” “metro area,” and “metro,” are used interchangeably to refer to the geographic areas defined as Metropolitan Statistical Areas by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, as well as to the region that is the subject of this profile as defined previously.
- The term “communities of color” generally refers to distinct groups defined by race/ethnicity among people of color.
- Unless otherwise noted, the term “full-time” workers refers to all persons in the IPUMS microdata who reported working at least 45 or 50 weeks (depending on the year of the data) and usually worked at least 35 hours per week during the year prior to the survey. A change in the “weeks worked” question in the 2008 American Community Survey (ACS), as compared with prior years of the ACS and the long form of the decennial census, caused a dramatic rise in the share of respondents indicating that they worked

# Data and methods

## Selected terms and general notes

(continued)

at least 50 weeks during the year prior to the survey. To make our data on full-time workers more comparable over time, we applied a slightly different definition in 2008 and later than in earlier years: in 2008 and later, the “weeks worked” cutoff is at least 50 weeks while in 2007 and earlier it is 45 weeks. The 45-week cutoff was found to produce a national trend in the incidence of full-time work over the 2005-2010 period that was most consistent with that found using data from the March Supplement of the Current Population Survey, which did not experience a change to the relevant survey questions. For more information, see

[https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/2007/acs/2007\\_Holder\\_02.pdf](https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/2007/acs/2007_Holder_02.pdf).

Unless otherwise noted, “working age” refers to persons ages 25 through 64, “children” and “youth” refer to persons under age 18, “adults” refers to persons ages 18 or older, and “seniors” and “elderly” refer to persons ages 65 or older.

### General notes on analyses

Below we provide some general notes about the analyses conducted.

- In regard to monetary measures (income, earnings, wages, etc.) the term “real” indicates the data have been adjusted for inflation, and, unless otherwise noted, all dollar values are in 2015 dollars. All inflation adjustments are based on the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U) from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, available at <https://data.bls.gov/timeseries/CUUR0000SA0>.
- Note that income information in the decennial censuses for 1980, 1990, and 2000 is reported for the year prior to the survey.
- When reporting numbers in charts, they are often rounded and thus may not add up to the totals (if shown/reported).
- When reporting data on households by characteristics such as race/ethnicity, nativity, or gender, the characteristics are drawn from the householder.

# Data and methods

## Summary measures from IPUMS microdata

Although a variety of data sources were used, much of our analysis is based on a unique dataset created using microdata samples (i.e., “individual-level” data) from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS), for four points in time: 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2011 through 2015 pooled together. While the 1980 through 2000 files are based on the decennial census and cover about 5 percent of the U.S. population each, the 2011 through 2015 files are from the American Community Survey (ACS) and cover only about 1 percent of the U.S. population each. Five years of ACS data were pooled together to improve the statistical reliability and to achieve a sample size that is comparable to that available in previous years. Survey weights were adjusted as necessary to produce estimates that represent an average over the 2011 through 2015 period.

Compared with the more commonly used census “summary files,” which include a limited set of summary tabulations of population and housing characteristics, use of the microdata samples allows for the

flexibility to create more illuminating metrics of equity and inclusion, and provides a more nuanced view of groups defined by age, race/ethnicity, and nativity in each region of the United States.

The IPUMS microdata allows for the tabulation of detailed population characteristics, but because such tabulations are based on samples, they are subject to a margin of error and should be regarded as estimates – particularly in smaller regions and for smaller demographic subgroups. In an effort to avoid reporting highly unreliable estimates, we do not report any estimates that are based on a universe of fewer than 100 individual survey respondents.

A key limitation of the IPUMS microdata is geographic detail: each year of the data has a particular “lowest-level” of geography associated with the individuals included, known as the Public Use Microdata Area (PUMA) or “County Groups.” PUMAs are drawn to contain a population of about 100,000, and vary greatly in size from being

fairly small in densely populated urban areas, to very large in rural areas, often with one or more counties contained in a single PUMA.

Because PUMAs do not neatly align with the boundaries of metropolitan areas, we created a geographic crosswalk between PUMAs and the region for the 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2011-2015 microdata. This involved estimating the share of each PUMA’s population that falls inside the region using population information from Geolytics for 2010 census block groups (2011-2015 population information from the ACS summary file was used for the 2011-2015 geographic crosswalk). If the share was at least 50 percent, the PUMAs were assigned to the region and included in generating regional summary measures. For the remaining PUMAs, the share was somewhere between 50 and 100 percent, and this share was used as the “PUMA adjustment factor” to adjust downward the survey weights for individuals included in such PUMAs in the microdata when estimating regional summary measures.

## Data and methods

# Adjustments made to census summary data on race/ethnicity by age

For the racial generation gap indicator, we generated consistent estimates of populations by race/ethnicity and age group (under 18, 18-64, and over 64 years of age) for the years 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010, at the county level, which was then aggregated to the regional level and higher. The racial/ethnic groups include non-Hispanic White, non-Hispanic Black, Hispanic/Latino, non-Hispanic Asian and Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic Native American/Alaskan Native, and non-Hispanic Other (including Other single race alone and those identifying as Multiracial). While for 2000 and 2010, this information is readily available in SF1 of each year, for 1980 and 1990, estimates had to be made to ensure consistency over time, drawing on two different summary files for each year.

For 1980, while information on total population by race/ethnicity for all ages combined was available at the county level for all the requisite groups in STF1, for race/ethnicity by age group we had to look to STF2, where it was only available for non-

Hispanic White, non-Hispanic Black, Hispanic, and the remainder of the population. To estimate the number of non-Hispanic Asian and Pacific Islanders, non-Hispanic Native Americans/Alaskan Natives, and non-Hispanic Others among the remainder for each age group, we applied the distribution of these three groups from the overall county population (of all ages) from STF1.

For 1990, population by race/ethnicity at the county level was taken from STF2A, while population by race/ethnicity was taken from the 1990 Modified Age Race Sex (MARS) file – special tabulation of people by age, race, sex, and Hispanic origin. However, to be consistent with the way race is categorized by the Office of Management and Budget’s (OMB) Directive 15, the MARS file allocates all persons identifying as “Other race” or Multiracial to a specific race. After confirming that population totals by county were consistent between the MARS file and STF2A, we calculated the number of “Other race” or Multiracial that had been added to each racial/ethnic group in each county (for all

ages combined) by subtracting the number that is reported in STF2A for the corresponding group. We then derived the share of each racial/ethnic group in the MARS file that was made up of “Other race” or Multiracial people and applied this share to estimate the number of people by race/ethnicity and age group exclusive of the “Other race” and Multiracial, and finally the number of the “Other race” and Multiracial by age group.

# Data and methods

## Adjustments made to demographic projections

### **National projections**

National projections of the non-Hispanic White share of the population are based on the U.S. Census Bureau's 2014 National Population Projections. However, because these projections follow the OMB 1997 guidelines on racial classification and essentially distribute the Other single-race alone group across the other defined racial/ethnic categories, adjustments were made to be consistent with the six broad racial/ethnic groups used in our analysis.

Specifically, we compared the percentage of the total population composed of each racial/ethnic group from the Census Bureau's Population Estimates program for 2016 (which follows the OMB 1997 guidelines) to the percentage reported in the 2016 ACS 1-year Summary File (which follows the 2000 Census classification). We subtracted the percentage derived using the 2016 Population Estimates program from the percentage derived using the 2016 ACS to obtain an adjustment factor for each group

(all of which were negative except that for the Mixed/other group) and carried this adjustment factor forward by adding it to the projected percentage for each group in each projection year. Finally, we applied the resulting adjusted projected population distribution by race/ethnicity to the total projected population from the 2014 National Population Projections to get the projected number of people by race/ethnicity in each projection year.

### **County and regional projections**

Similar adjustments were made in generating county and regional projections of the population by race/ethnicity. Initial county-level projections were taken from Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. Like the 1990 MARS file described above, the Woods & Poole projections follow the OMB Directive 15-race categorization, assigning all persons identifying as Other or Multiracial to one of five mutually exclusive race categories: White, Black, Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander, or Native American. Thus, we first generated an adjusted version of the county-level Woods &

Poole projections that removed the Other or Multiracial group from each of these five categories. This was done by comparing the Woods & Poole projections for 2010 to the actual results from SF1 of the 2010 Census, figuring out the share of each racial/ethnic group in the Woods & Poole data that was composed of Other or Mixed-race persons in 2010, and applying it forward to later projection years. From these projections, we calculated the county-level distribution by race/ethnicity in each projection year for five groups (White, Black, Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Native American), exclusive of Other and Mixed-race people.

To estimate the county-level share of population for those classified as Other or Mixed-race in each projection year, we then generated a simple straight-line projection of this share using information from SF1 of the 2000 and 2010 Census. Keeping the projected Other or Mixed-race share fixed, we allocated the remaining population share to each of the other five racial/ethnic groups by applying the racial/ethnic distribution implied

# Data and methods

## Adjustments made to demographic projections

(continued)

by our adjusted Woods & Poole projections for each county and projection year. The result was a set of adjusted projections at the county level for the six broad racial/ethnic groups included in the profile, which were then applied to projections of the total population by county from the Woods & Poole data to get projections of the number of people for each of the six racial/ethnic groups.

Finally, an Iterative Proportional Fitting (IPF) procedure was applied to bring the county-level results into alignment with our adjusted national projections by race/ethnicity described above. The final adjusted county results were then aggregated to produce a final set of projections at the metro area and state levels.

# Data and methods

## Estimates and adjustments made to BEA data on GDP

The data on national gross domestic product (GDP) and its analogous regional measure, gross regional product (GRP) – both referred to as GDP in the text – are based on data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). However, because of changes in the estimation procedure used for the national (and state-level) data in 1997, and a lack of metropolitan-area estimates prior to 2001, a variety of adjustments and estimates were made to produce a consistent series at the national, state, metropolitan area, and county levels from 1969 to 2012.

### **Adjustments at the state and national levels**

While data on gross state product (GSP) are not reported directly in the equity profile, they were used in making estimates of gross product at the county level for all years and at the regional level prior to 2001, so we applied the same adjustments to the data that were applied to the national GDP data. Given a change in BEA's estimation of gross product at the state and national levels from a Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) basis to a North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) basis in 1997, data prior to

1997 were adjusted to avoid any erratic shifts in gross product in that year. While the change to a NAICS basis occurred in 1997, BEA also provides estimates under an SIC basis in that year. Our adjustment involved figuring the 1997 ratio of NAICS-based gross product to SIC-based gross product for each state and the nation, and multiplying it by the SIC-based gross product in all years prior to 1997 to get our final estimate of gross product at the state and national levels.

### **County and metropolitan-area estimates**

To generate county-level estimates for all years, and metropolitan-area estimates prior to 2001, a more complicated estimation procedure was followed. First, an initial set of county estimates for each year was generated by taking our final state-level estimates and allocating gross product to the counties in each state in proportion to total earnings of employees working in each county – a BEA variable that is available for all counties and years. Next, the initial county estimates were aggregated to metropolitan-area level, and were compared with BEA's official metropolitan-area estimates for 2001 and

later. They were found to be very close, with a correlation coefficient very close to one (0.9997). Despite the near-perfect correlation, we still used the official BEA estimates in our final data series for 2001 and later. However, to avoid any erratic shifts in gross product during the years up until 2001, we made the same sort of adjustment to our estimates of gross product at the metropolitan-area level that was made to the state and national data – we figured the 2001 ratio of the official BEA estimate to our initial estimate, and multiplied it by our initial estimates for 2000 and earlier to get our final estimate of gross product at the metropolitan-area level.

We then generated a second iteration of county-level estimates – just for counties included in metropolitan areas – by taking the final metropolitan-area level estimates and allocating gross product to the counties in each metropolitan area in proportion to total earnings of employees working in each county. Next, we calculated the difference between our final estimate of gross product for each state and the sum of our second-

# Data and methods

## Estimates and adjustments made to BEA data on GDP

(continued)

iteration county-level gross-product estimates for metropolitan counties contained in the state (that is, counties contained in metropolitan areas). This difference, total nonmetropolitan gross product by state, was then allocated to the nonmetropolitan counties in each state, once again using total earnings of employees working in each county as the basis for allocation. Finally, one last set of adjustments was made to the county-level estimates to ensure that the sum of gross product across the counties contained in each metropolitan area agreed with our final estimate of gross product by metropolitan area, and that the sum of gross product across the counties contained in the state agreed with our final estimate of gross product by state. This was done using a simple IPF procedure.

# Data and methods

## Middle-class analysis

To analyze middle-class decline over the past four decades, we began with the regional household income distribution in 1979 – the year for which income is reported in the 1980 Census (and the 1980 IPUMS microdata). The middle 40 percent of households were defined as “middle class,” and the upper and lower bounds in terms of household income (adjusted for inflation to be in 2010 dollars) that contained the middle 40 percent of households were identified. We then adjusted these bounds over time to increase (or decrease) at the same rate as real average household income-growth, identifying the share of households falling above, below, and in between the adjusted bounds as the upper, lower, and middle class, respectively, for each year shown. Thus, the analysis of the size of the middle class examined the share of households enjoying the same relative standard of living in each year as the middle 40 percent of households did in 1979.

## Data and methods

# Assembling a complete dataset on employment and wages by industry

Analysis of jobs and wages by industry, reported on pages 32 and 55 is based on an industry-level dataset constructed using two-digit NAICS industries from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). Because of some missing (or nondisclosed) data at the county and regional levels, we supplemented our dataset using information from Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., which contains complete jobs and wages data for broad, two-digit NAICS industries at multiple geographic levels. (Proprietary issues barred us from using Woods & Poole data directly, so we instead used it to complete the QCEW dataset.) While we refer to counties in describing the process for "filling in" missing QCEW data below, the same process was used for the regional and state levels of geography.

Given differences in the methodology underlying the two data sources (in addition to the proprietary issue), it would not be appropriate to simply "plug in" corresponding Woods & Poole data directly to fill in the QCEW data for nondisclosed industries.

Therefore, our approach was to first calculate the number of jobs and total wages from nondisclosed industries in each county, and then distribute those amounts across the nondisclosed industries in proportion to their reported numbers in the Woods & Poole data.

To make for a more accurate application of the Woods & Poole data, we made some adjustments to it to better align it with the QCEW. One of the challenges of using Woods & Poole data as a "filler dataset" is that it includes all workers, while QCEW includes only wage and salary workers. To normalize the Woods & Poole data universe, we applied both a national and regional wage and salary adjustment factor; given the strong regional variation in the share of workers who are wage and salary, both adjustments were necessary. Second, while the QCEW data are available on an annual basis, the Woods & Poole data are available on a decadal basis until 1995, at which point they become available on an annual basis. For the 1990-1995 period, we estimated the Woods & Poole annual jobs and wages figures using a

a straight-line approach. Finally, we standardized the Complete Economic and Demographic Data Source (CEDDS) industry codes to match the NAICS codes used in the QCEW.

It is important to note that not all counties and regions were missing data at the two-digit NAICS level in the QCEW, and the majority of larger counties and regions with missing data were only missing data for a small number of industries and only in certain years. Moreover, when data are missing, it is often for smaller industries. Thus, the estimation procedure described is not likely to greatly affect our analysis of industries, particularly for larger counties and regions.

## Data and methods

# Growth in jobs and earnings by industry wage level, 2006 to 2016

The analysis on page 55 uses our filled-in QCEW dataset (see the previous page) and seeks to track shifts in regional job composition and wage growth by industry wage level.

Using 2006 as the base year, we classified broad industries (at the two-digit NAICS level) into three wage categories: low, middle, and high wage. An industry's wage category was based on its average annual wage, and each of the three categories contained approximately one-third of all private industries in the region.

We applied the 2006 industry wage category classification across all the years in the dataset, so that the industries within each category remained the same over time. This way, we could track the broad trajectory of jobs and wages in low-, middle-, and high-wage industries.

This approach was adapted from a method used in a Brookings Institution report, *Building From Strength: Creating Opportunity in Greater Baltimore's Next Economy*. For more information, see:

[https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/0426\\_baltimore\\_economy\\_vey.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/0426_baltimore_economy_vey.pdf),

While we initially sought to conduct the analysis at a more detailed NAICS level, the large amount of missing data at the three to six-digit NAICS levels (which could not be resolved with the method that was applied to generate our filled-in two-digit QCEW dataset) prevented us from doing so.

# Data and methods

## Analysis of access to healthy food

The analysis of access to healthy food is based on the 2014 Analysis of Limited Supermarket Access (LSA) from The Reinvestment Fund (TRF). LSA areas are defined as one or more contiguous census block groups (with a collective population of at least 5,000) where residents must travel significantly farther to reach a supermarket than the “comparatively acceptable” distance traveled by residents in well-served areas with similar population densities and car ownership rates.

The methodology’s key assumption is that block groups with a median household income greater than 120 percent of their respective metropolitan area’s median (or non-metro state median for non-metropolitan areas) are adequately served by supermarkets and thus travel an appropriate distance to access food. Thus, higher-income block groups establish the benchmark to which all block groups are compared controlling for population density and car ownership rates.

A LSA score is calculated as the percentage by

which the distance to the nearest supermarket would have to be reduced to make a block group’s access equal to the access observed for adequately served areas. Block groups with an LSA score greater than 45 were subjected to a spatial connectivity analysis, with 45 chosen as the minimum threshold because it was roughly equal to the average LSA score for all LSA block groups in the 2011 TRF analysis.

Block groups with contiguous spatial connectivity of high LSA scores are referred to as LSA areas. They represent areas with the strongest need for increased access to supermarkets. Our analysis of the percent of people living in LSA areas by race/ethnicity and poverty level was done by merging data from the 2015 five-year ACS summary file with LSA areas at the block group level and aggregating up to the city, county, and higher levels of geography.

For more information on the 2014 LSA analysis, see:

[https://www.reinvestment.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/2014\\_Limited\\_Supermarket\\_Access\\_Analysis-Brief\\_2015.pdf](https://www.reinvestment.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/2014_Limited_Supermarket_Access_Analysis-Brief_2015.pdf).

# Data and methods

## Analysis of school poverty

The school poverty data are derived from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Common Core of Data (CCD) Public Elementary/Secondary School Universe Survey. Survey responses are submitted annually to NCES by state education agencies in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and other U.S. territories and outlying areas. The data is then cleaned and standardized by CCD survey staff and made available to the public. All public elementary and secondary schools from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade with a positive total student count (based on the NCES variable *MEMBER*) in each year were included in our analysis of school poverty. This includes both regular schools as well as special education, vocational education, alternative, charter, magnet, and Title 1-eligible schools.

The share of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL) was calculated at the school level by dividing the count of students eligible for FRPL (NCES variable *TOTFRL*) by the total student count (NCES variable *MEMBER*). Schools were then

classified into four groups – school poverty level categories – based on this share (low, mid-low, mid-high, and high), and the number and shares of students by school poverty level category were aggregated to the city, county, and higher levels of geography for each racial/ethnic group.

For the vast majority of schools, the total student count is consistent with the sum of the counts by race/ethnicity. For a small number of schools, however, it is slightly higher given that the latter excludes any students belonging to an unknown or non-CCD race category. For this reason, data for all racial/ethnic groups combined (the "All" category) is based on the sum of student counts by race/ethnicity.

It is important to note that the measure of school poverty used, the share of students eligible for FRPL, is not always reported and is subject to some degree of error at the school level. The reasons for this include the fact that the count of students deemed FRPL-eligible may be taken at a different time than the total

student count, and, in some states, a single school may administer the free lunch program for a group of schools (in which case its count and share of FRPL-eligible students would be overstated). However, it is likely that any bias caused by these inconsistencies in reporting at the school level are largely mitigated once the data is aggregated across many schools in a given geography.

It is also important to note that the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 changed eligibility requirements and this can impact the consistency of data collection and thus the estimates of the share of students eligible for FRPL.

# Data and methods

## Estimates of GDP without racial gaps in income

Estimates of the gains in average annual income and GDP under a hypothetical scenario in which there is no income inequality by race/ethnicity are based on the IPUMS 2015 five-year American Community Survey (ACS) microdata. We applied a methodology similar to that used by Robert Lynch and Patrick Oakford in Chapter Two of *All-in Nation: An America that Works for All* with some modification to include income gains from increased employment (rather than only those from increased wages).

We first organized individuals ages 16 or older in the IPUMS ACS into six mutually exclusive racial/ethnic groups: non-Hispanic White, non-Hispanic Black, Latino, non-Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic Native American, and non-Hispanic Other or Multiracial. Following the approach of Lynch and Oakford in *All-In Nation*, we excluded from the non-Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islander category subgroups whose average incomes were higher than the average for non-Hispanic Whites. Also, to avoid excluding subgroups based on unreliable average

income estimates due to small sample sizes, we added the restriction that a subgroup had to have at least 100 individual survey respondents in order to be included.

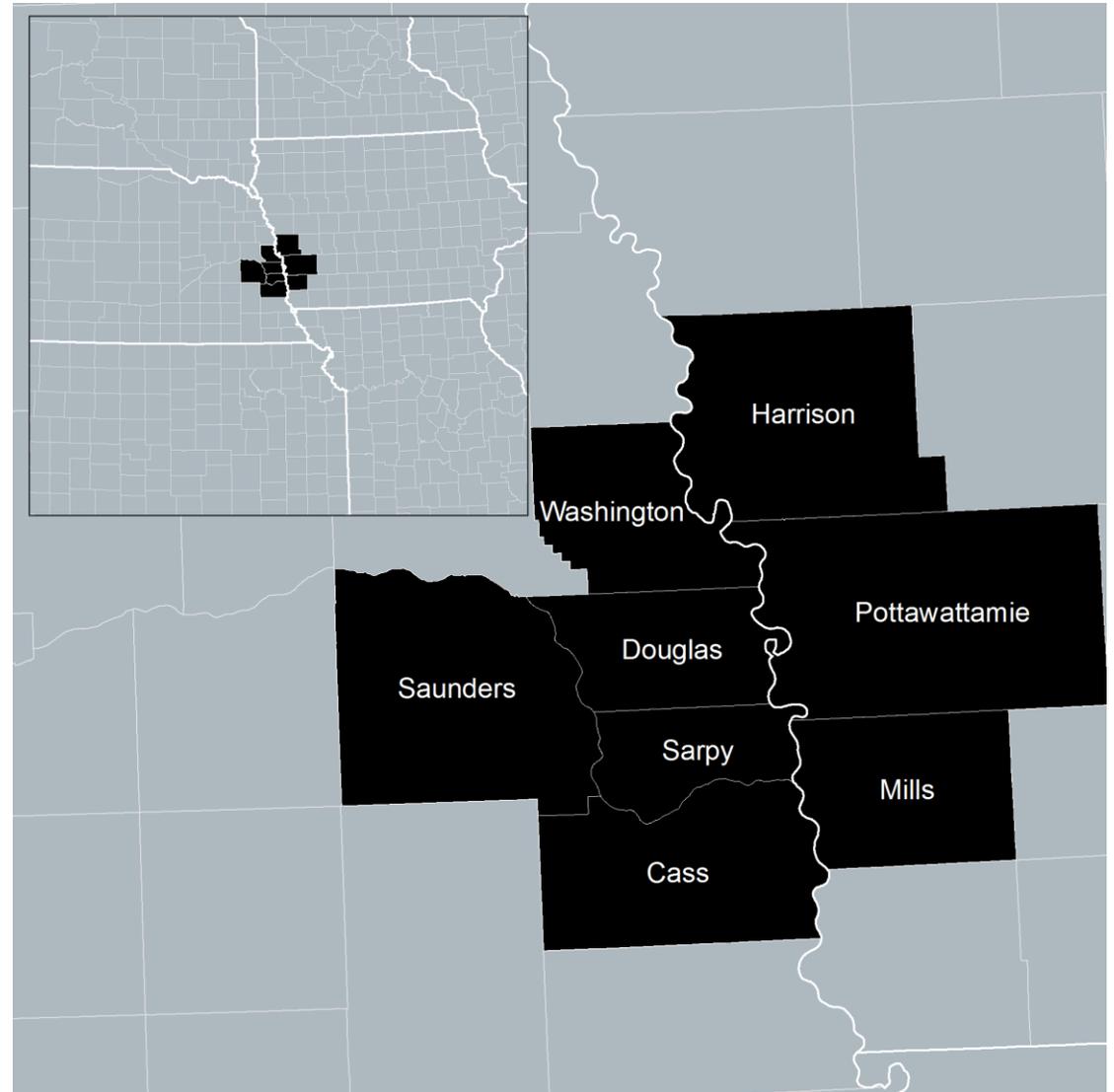
We then assumed that all racial/ethnic groups had the same average annual income and hours of work, by income percentile and age group, as non-Hispanic Whites, and took those values as the new “projected” income and hours of work for each individual. For example, a 54-year-old non-Hispanic Black person falling between the 85th and 86th percentiles of the non-Hispanic Black income distribution was assigned the average annual income and hours of work values found for non-Hispanic White persons in the corresponding age bracket (51 to 55 years old) and “slice” of the non-Hispanic White income distribution (between the 85th and 86th percentiles), regardless of whether that individual was working or not. The projected individual annual incomes and work hours were then averaged for each racial/ethnic group (other than non-Hispanic Whites) to get projected average incomes and work

hours for each group as a whole, and for all groups combined.

The key difference between our approach and that of Lynch and Oakford is that we include in our sample all individuals ages 16 years and older, rather than just those with positive income values. Those with income values of zero are largely non-working, and they were included so that income gains attributable to increases in average annual hours of work would reflect both an expansion of work hours for those currently working and an increase in the share of workers – an important factor to consider given measurable differences in employment rates by race/ethnicity. One result of this choice is that the average annual income values we estimate are analogous to measures of per capita income for the age 16 and older population and are notably lower than those reported by Lynch and Oakford; another is that our estimated income gains are relatively larger as they presume increased employment rates.

# Appendix

The tables in the appendix include select indicators for the individual counties in the eight-county, Omaha-Council Bluffs region. These counties are highlighted on the map and include Cass, Douglas, Sarpy, Saunders, and Washington counties in Nebraska and Harrison, Mills, and Pottawattamie counties in Iowa.



# Demographics

## What share of residents are immigrants?

### Share of Total Population that is Foreign-Born, by County and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

Omaha-Council Bluffs 8-County Region	Immigrant	White, Immigrant	Black, Immigrant	Latino, Immigrant	Asian, Immigrant	Other, Immigrant
Cass, NE	--	--	--	--	--	--
Douglas, NE	9.1%	1.0%	1.0%	4.6%	2.4%	1.5%
Sarpy, NE	5.3%	1.0%	--	2.1%	1.6%	--
Saunders, NE	1.6%	--	--	--	--	--
Washington, NE	--	--	--	--	--	--
Harrison, IA	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mills, IA	--	--	--	--	--	--
Pottawattamie, IA	3.5%	--	--	2.5%	--	--

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.

Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average. Universe includes all people. "White" is defined as non-Hispanic White and "Latino" includes all who identify as being of Hispanic origin. "Asian" does not include those who identify as "Pacific Islander." All other racial/ethnic groups include any Latinos who identify with that particular racial category. A "--" is present when the sample size is too small to report. Racial/ethnic groups not included in the table have sample sizes too small to report.

# Demographics

## What is the median age by race?

### Median Age by County and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

Omaha-Council Bluffs 8-County Region	All	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Pacific Islander	Native American or Alaska Native	Mixed	Other
Cass, NE	42	42	--	20	--	--	--	--	--
Douglas, NE	34	38	29	23	30	26	29	15	24
Sarpy, NE	34	36	31	24	37	--	35	14	35
Saunders, NE	41	42	8	23	--	--	--	13	--
Washington, NE	41	42	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Harrison, IA	44	44	--	22	--	--	--	18	--
Mills, IA	42	43	25	18	--	--	--	--	--
Pottawattamie, IA	39	41	24	24	30	--	--	16	32

Sources: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.

Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average. "White" is defined as non-Hispanic White and "Latino" includes all who identify as being of Hispanic origin. "Asian" does not include those who identify as "Pacific Islander." All other racial/ethnic groups include any Latinos who identify with that particular racial category. A "--" is present when the sample size is too small to report.

# Full employment

## How close is the region to reaching full employment for all?

### Unemployment Rate by County and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

Omaha-Council Bluffs 8-County Region	All	White	Black	Latino	Mixed	Other
Cass, NE	4%	4%	--	--	--	--
Douglas, NE	6%	4%	12%	10%	10%	10%
Sarpy, NE	4%	4%	--	--	--	--
Saunders, NE	4%	3%	--	--	--	--
Washington, NE	--	--	--	--	--	--
Harrison, IA	4%	4%	--	--	--	--
Mills, IA	4%	4%	--	--	--	--
Pottawattamie, IA	5%	5%	--	--	--	--

Sources: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau. Universe includes the civilian noninstitutional population ages 16 and older.

Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average. "White" is defined as non-Hispanic White and "Latino" includes all who identify as being of Hispanic origin. All other racial/ethnic groups include any Latinos who identify with that particular racial category. A "--" is present when the sample size is too small to report. Racial/ethnic groups not included in the table have sample sizes too small to report.

# Economic security

## Is poverty low and decreasing?

### Poverty Rate by County and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

Omaha-Council Bluffs 8-County Region	All	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American or Alaska Native	Mixed	Other
Cass, NE	6%	6%	--	--	--	--	--	--
Douglas, NE	15%	9%	31%	30%	23%	31%	24%	31%
Sarpy, NE	6%	5%	--	13%	--	--	--	--
Saunders, NE	10%	10%	--	--	--	--	--	--
Washington, NE	10%	9%	--	--	--	--	--	--
Harrison, IA	10%	10%	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mills, IA	9%	8%	--	--	--	--	--	--
Pottawattamie, IA	13%	12%	--	23%	--	--	--	--

Sources: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau. Universe includes all persons not in group quarters.

Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average. "White" is defined as non-Hispanic White and "Latino" includes all who identify as being of Hispanic origin. "Asian" does not include those who identify as "Pacific Islander." All other racial/ethnic groups include any Latinos who identify with that particular racial category. A "--" is present when the sample size is too small to report. Racial/ethnic groups not included in the table have sample sizes too small to report.

# Connectedness

## Are residents able to own their homes?

### Owner-Occupied Households by County and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

Omaha-Council Bluffs 8-County Region	All	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Native American or Alaska		
						Native	Mixed	Other
Cass, NE	81%	81%	--	--	--	--	--	--
Douglas, NE	62%	69%	34%	43%	46%	48%	41%	43%
Sarpy, NE	70%	72%	44%	58%	63%		50%	72%
Saunders, NE	78%	79%	--	--	--	--	--	--
Washington, NE	79%	79%	--	--	--	--	--	--
Harrison, IA	75%	75%	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mills, IA	80%	81%	--	--	--	--	--	--
Pottawattamie, IA	69%	71%	--	52%	--	--	--	--

Sources: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau. Universe includes all households (no group quarters).

Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average. "White" is defined as non-Hispanic White and "Latino" includes all who identify as being of Hispanic origin. "Asian" does not include those who identify as "Pacific Islander." All other racial/ethnic groups include any Latinos who identify with that particular racial category. A "--" is present when the sample size is too small to report. Racial/ethnic groups not included in the table have sample sizes too small to report.

# Connectedness

## Can all residents access affordable, quality housing?

### More Than One Occupant per Room by County and Race/Ethnicity, 2015

Omaha-Council Bluffs 8-County Region	All	White	Black	Latino	Asian	Other
Cass, NE	--	--	--	--	--	--
Douglas, NE	2%	1%	3%	15%	10%	15%
Sarpy, NE	2%	1%	--	14%	--	--
Saunders, NE	--	--	--	--	--	--
Washington, NE	--	--	--	--	--	--
Harrison, IA	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mills, IA	--	--	--	--	--	--
Pottawattamie, IA	2%	1%	--	--	--	--

Sources: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau. Universe includes all occupied housing units.

Note: Data represents a 2011 through 2015 average. "White" is defined as non-Hispanic White and "Latino" includes all who identify as being of Hispanic origin. "Asian" does not include those who identify as "Pacific Islander." All other racial/ethnic groups include any Latinos who identify with that particular racial category. A "--" is present when the sample size is too small to report. Racial/ethnic groups not included in the table have sample sizes too small to report.

# Heartland 2050 Task Force Members

1. 100 Black Men
2. City of Omaha Human Rights and Relations
3. Creighton University
4. Douglas County
5. Douglas County Health Department
6. Empowerment Network
7. Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce
8. Greater Omaha Young Professionals
9. Heartland Workforce Solutions
10. Housing and Urban Development
11. Latino Center of the Midlands
12. Live Well Omaha
13. Malcolm X Foundation
14. Metro Transit
15. No More Empty Pots
16. Office of Congressman Don Bacon
17. Omaha By Design
18. Omaha Community Foundation
19. Omaha Municipal Land Bank
20. Omaha Public Schools
21. Omaha-Council Bluffs Metropolitan Area Planning Agency
22. Peter Kiewit Foundation
23. Ready First Nation Wide
24. Sherwood Foundation
25. United Way of the Midlands
26. University of Nebraska Medical Center
27. University of Nebraska-Omaha Center for Public Affairs Research
28. University of Nebraska-Omaha Office of Latino/Latin American Studies
29. Urban Indian Health Coalition
30. Urban League of Nebraska
31. Urban League Young Professionals



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