

2023 INDIANA CIVIC HEALTH INDEX™



ABOUT THE PARTNERS

INDIANA UNIVERSITY NORTHWEST

One of seven campuses of Indiana University, IU Northwest is located in metropolitan Northwest Indiana, approximately 30 miles southeast of Chicago and 10 miles from the Indiana Dunes National Park. We are proud to be the most diverse IU campus. Our purpose is to enhance the quality of life of the most diverse, urban, industrialized region of the state. The campus engages with the community in high-quality teaching and scholarship and partners with communities to impact and promote social, economic, and cultural development. Indiana University Northwest students are inspired and empowered to be active citizens, who apply their knowledge to transform their communities and the world. Working together as a community, Indiana University Northwest serves as a premiere resource to advance the educational, social, civic and economic well-being of the people of Northwest Indiana and beyond.

INDIANA BAR FOUNDATION

The Indiana Bar Foundation continues to inspire and lead change to improve civic education and legal assistance for all Hoosiers. Our vision is to be the premiere statewide charitable organization and trusted partner advancing civic literacy and the legal system. Throughout its 70-year history, the Foundation has been a national leader in the development and implementation of civic education programs. Through a grant from the Indiana Housing and Community Development Agency, the Foundation will implement a statewide initiative focused on housing stability legal services. Supporting the Indiana Civic Health Index with our partners is another example of the Foundation's commitment to expanding civic education and being a catalyst for expanding our support of civil legal assistance services.

INDIANA CITIZEN EDUCATION FOUNDATION, INC. (ICEF)

ICEF is a strictly nonpartisan 501(c)(3) dedicated to providing unbiased information that will assist Hoosier voters in casting an informed ballot. Operating online as *The Indiana Citizen*, ICEF aspires to promote increased registration and turnout connected to a digital platform that permits access to a wealth of information about officeholders, candidates and issues.

THE CENTER ON REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT — INDIANA UNIVERSITY

The Center on Representative Government was established in January 1999. It developed out of Lee Hamilton's recognition during his time in the U.S. House of Representatives that the public should be more familiar with Congress' strengths and weaknesses, its role in our system of government, and its impact on the lives of ordinary people every day. The Center seeks to inspire young people and adults to take an active part in revitalizing representative government in America. To that end, the Center offers multiple resources, programs, and projects that foster an informed electorate that understands our system of government and participates in civic life.

CHURCH CHURCH HITTLE + ANTRIM

CCHA Law has proudly served Indiana and its communities since 1880. We value the personal connection to our clients immensely and are here to help however we can. As a full-service law firm, CCHA Law provides a myriad of legal services to clients across a wide variety of practice areas including personal injury, divorce and family law, estate planning and administration, criminal law, business formation and representation, real estate law, governmental entity and municipal law, education, sports law, labor and employment law, complex litigation, mediation services and appellate litigation. CCHA Law serves clients across the state with offices in Noblesville, Fishers, Fort Wayne, Tipton, Crown Point, Westfield, and Zionsville.

THE INDIANA CIVICS COALITION

The Indiana Civics Coalition was formed to convene like-minded groups and individuals representing education, business, the legal community, government, and local communities sharing a common goal to bring awareness, collaboration, and amplification to building a strong civic culture for all Hoosiers. The Coalition welcomes new members to join us.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CITIZENSHIP

The National Conference on Citizenship (NCoC) is a congressionally chartered organization dedicated to strengthening civic life in America. We pursue our mission through a nationwide network of partners involved in a cutting-edge civic health initiative and our cross-sector conferences. At the core of our joint efforts is the belief that every person has the ability to help their community and country thrive. ncoc.org



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FOREWORD

This sixth edition of the Indiana Bar Foundation’s Indiana Civic Health Index (INCHI) begins a new chapter in the decade of past research undertaken to explore Indiana’s overall civic health. This report examines some of Indiana’s successes and shortcomings during the past few years and continues to use this data to examine future opportunities for improvement in our collective civic health. In this latest INCHI we look at new data from the 2022 election cycle as well as additional data demonstrating other areas of our state’s civic health as we look forward to the national elections in 2024. The insights gained by examining Hoosiers’ participation in civic life from 2010 to the present will inform and motivate citizens and leaders alike to build a culture of civic engagement that enhances our economic, social, and political wellbeing.

Building on the recommendations outlined in past INCHIs, the report details progress in advancing the goals of enhancing civic education in schools and promoting citizen participation in the election process, goals that are profoundly intertwined. Studies show a consistent and robust relationship between school experiences with voting education and civic participation later in life. As cornerstones of representative democracy, civic education and participation are crucial to advancing our civic health.

The report incorporates earlier analyses and current data, examining additional measures of Indiana’s civic activity, identifying areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. The 2023 INCHI is meant to further stimulate discussion and inspire a renewed commitment to advancing Indiana’s civic health. Strengthening Hoosiers’ civic health vitality will require a concerted effort of all stakeholders interested in supporting citizen participation in its many forms; the result will be a more vibrant, successful, and engaged Indiana and nation.

2011

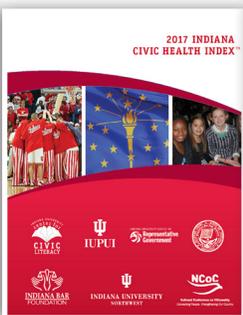
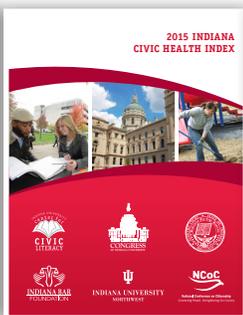
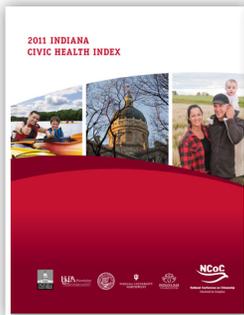
2015

2017

2019

2021

2023



THE CRUCIAL NEXUS: *Civic Health through Engagement and Education to Sustain Democracy*

In the intricate tapestry of a thriving democracy, the crucial connecting threads that lead to robust civic health are composed of engaged citizens and a foundation of civic education. These are both fundamental aspects that play a pivotal role in preserving the strengthened longevity of democratic institutions. The symbiotic relationship among civic health, civic engagement, and civic education is fundamental, as the health of a democracy is contingent upon the active participation of its citizens and their informed understanding of the democratic principles upon which it is built.

Civic education serves as the cornerstone of an empowered citizenry. It equips individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the complexities of democratic governance, fostering an understanding of rights, responsibilities, and the mechanisms through which citizens can actively participate in the political process. A well-informed populace is better equipped to make reasoned decisions, critically evaluate information, and actively engage in civic life.

Civic education is the catalyst transforming passive observers into active contributors to democracy. By providing a comprehensive understanding of the political system, civic education instills a sense of civic duty and responsibility. It goes beyond the mere dissemination of facts to cultivate critical thinking, encouraging citizens to question, analyze, and participate in shaping the policies that affect their lives. In essence, civic education empowers individuals to be not just recipients of democracy but architects of its continuous improvement.

The importance of civic education becomes evident in its role in nurturing an informed electorate. Informed citizens are better prepared to make thoughtful choices at the ballot box, ensuring that elections are reflective of the will and values of the people. A populace well-versed in civic education acts as a bulwark against misinformation and manipulation, fostering a more resilient democracy that is resistant to the erosion of truth and the rise of populism.

Civic engagement is the lifeblood of democratic governance. It encompasses the active participation of citizens in the political processes that shape their lives, from voting in elections to engaging in community initiatives and advocacy.

The importance of civic engagement becomes even more apparent when considering its role in holding government officials accountable. A well-informed and engaged citizenry acts as a watchdog, scrutinizing the actions of those in power and demanding transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct. This active oversight is a safeguard against corruption and the abuse of power, ensuring that democratic institutions remain true to their purpose of serving the public interest.



Civic engagement serves as a bridge between diverse perspectives, fostering inclusivity and preventing the entrenchment of divisive ideologies. In a healthy democracy, citizens engage in respectful dialogue, listen to differing opinions, and find common ground to address shared challenges. This collaborative spirit is essential for the continued evolution of democratic societies, promoting social cohesion and mitigating the risks of polarization that can erode the foundations of democracy.

Beyond the ballot box, civic engagement extends to community involvement and grassroots initiatives. Building and maintaining civic infrastructure, such as local community organizations, enhances the overall civic health of a society. These organizations become platforms for citizens to address local issues, voice concerns, and collectively work towards the common good. By actively participating in community life, individuals contribute to the development of a civic ecosystem that is responsive to the needs of its constituents.

Civic health also is intertwined with the concept of social capital, a measure of the quality and quantity of interpersonal relationships within a community. These bonds are the supports that hold a society together, fostering trust, cooperation, and a shared sense of responsibility. A community with strong social capital is better equipped to weather challenges, as individuals are more likely to collaborate, support one another, and engage in constructive dialogue. This sense of connectedness not only strengthens the fabric of society but also forms the bedrock of a resilient democracy.

The vitality of a democracy is intrinsically linked to the health of its civic body and the level of engagement exhibited by its citizens. Our civic health reflects existing social capital and interconnectedness. It is a foundation for future civic engagement. This dynamic interplay ensures that democracy remains a form of governance and a living, breathing system that adapts, evolves, and endures through the active participation of an informed and engaged citizenry. As we navigate the complexities of the modern world, fostering civic health and promoting civic engagement are not merely choices, but imperatives for preserving a healthy and vibrant democracy.

The synergy among civic health, civic engagement, and civic education forms the bedrock of a resilient democracy. Civic education acts as the catalyst, empowering citizens with the knowledge and skills needed to actively participate in governance. This informed engagement, in turn, contributes to the overall civic health of a society, fostering social capital and inclusivity.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Since its founding, the United States democracy has relied upon having an informed and active citizenry to maintain our system of ideals and beliefs. In order to be a government by, of and for the people, the populace needs to be engaged knowingly in civic processes.”

-2020 Indiana Civic Education Task Force Recommendations Report

In 2011, former Indiana Congressman Lee H. Hamilton and former Indiana Chief Justice Randall T. Shephard championed the Indiana Civic Health Index (INCHI) to explore the status of our state’s civic engagement and to encourage reflection and action. Robust civic engagement, including an exchange of ideas, an investment in finding solutions to public problems and using civil discourse to address issues, is a practice adopted in the founding of our democracy. It is a process that binds us together, makes us stronger, and secures the future of democracy.

Since the publication of the first INCHI more than a decade ago, Indiana has made good on its commitment to building civic institutions and democratic participation through continued data-driven examinations of the state of our civic health. The subsequent publication of 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2021 INCHI reports deepened the understanding of Hoosier’s civic participation actions and recognition of the obstacles that limit active citizenship. The reports also connected knowledge to action, with the most recent publication of a set of recommendations addressing civic education and voter registration/turnout in our state.

In this INCHI, the most recent data on voting, voter registration, civic awareness, and social and community connectivity, a reflection on a decade of analysis and an assessment of progress to date are examined. The progress to date is a direct result of a focused effort to advance the recommendations of the 2019 INCHI and to build on the lessons learned in the process. A movement is growing, based on the analysis of the data and continuous and inclusive dialogue supporting our quest to realize an ideal set forth on our currency - “E Pluribus Unum” - out of many, one.

The significant challenge remains formal participation in the election process, i.e., voter registration and voter turnout. In 2010, a midterm election year, Indiana was ranked 48th in voting in the nation and in 2022, Indiana ranked 50th. The national voting rate of 52.2% exceeded the Indiana voting rate (41.9%) by more than 10%. It should be noted that Indiana consistently placed in the bottom 10 of all states on midterm voter turnout since 2010. The presidential election year turnout was even less encouraging. In 2012, Indiana ranked 36th in voting turnout, and in 2020, the state’s rank fell to 46th. Indiana’s ranking for voter registration is consistently in the bottom half of all states. Between 2010-2022, Indiana’s voter registration ranking has consistently fallen and places the state in the bottom half of all states, with a most recent rank of 40th (66.5%) — falling again from the rank of 39th (69.3%) in 2020. It is in this area of voter registration that the most significant impact can be made in preparation for the upcoming 2024 election, especially with a concerted focus on registration of Hoosier youth.

It will also be critical to continue working with institutions and individuals to ensure improvements on all measures of civic participation, not just around voting and voter registration. Creating a sense of belonging that fosters a spirit that unites us will take time, but Hoosiers have shown that when we combine a data-based approach with a belief in the value of community, we can achieve our goals.

Devising ways to improve our civic health, to build on Indiana’s unique strengths and interests, and act to build stronger communities is at the heart of the 2023 INCHI message.

The analysis acknowledges our differences and similarities while highlighting our strengths and reframing our obstacles as opportunities. We take a closer look at ourselves — our political, social, and civic views and actions — so we can better realize our potential for civic leadership in our local communities and our state.

The report shows Hoosiers exceed the national average on some measures of civic health; however, on others, our performance leaves room for significant improvement if we wish to be a model for other states. We hope to improve awareness and inspire action in our communities by sharing what we have learned.

INTRODUCTION

The story of Indiana’s civic health reflects engagement with one another, our community, and with the government. INCHI examines who we are and how we engage in civic life so central to our identity as citizens, states, and a nation. The 2023 report continues the past decade of work examining Indiana’s civic health.

The new partnerships and collaborations developed in the field of civics in Indiana are inspiring and create positive momentum. These insights and new areas of cooperation enable stakeholders to increase a collective impact and continue to make Indiana a national leader in civic health. The 2023 INCHI will address progress and discuss unanswered questions to stimulate deeper commitments from stakeholders and policymakers alike.

What is Civic Health?

Civic health is “the way that communities are organized to define and address public problems.” Communities with strong indicators of civic health have higher employment rates, stronger schools, better physical health, and more responsive governments. Much like an individual’s physical checkup, a review of the measures of civic health helps communities to stay on the path of improving civic health. Since 2011, Indiana has taken stock of civic challenges, set the course for improvement, and celebrated successes strengthening Indiana’s civic health, recognizing that improvements in civic health are critical to individual, community, state, and national well-being.

INCHI serves as a civic health “checkup” uncovering beliefs and values and telling a story of the actions taken in support of community wellbeing/public good. We are able to answer questions including:

- **How are we bound together in our activities, e.g., volunteering?**
- **How do we work together, e.g., participate in public meetings**
- **What ways do we prefer to work together, in political or non-political activities, elections, civic organizations?**
- **In what ways does our participation differ, e.g., by age, income?**

While individual preferences for civic participation may differ, the collective story reveals numerous ways Hoosiers contribute to their communities and the public good, and together these efforts enhance the quality of life in Indiana.

This report, as those in the past, examines Hoosiers’ activities and views by examining three key areas of civic health:

- **Voting and Voter Registration**
- **Social and Community Connectedness**
- **Civic Awareness and Action**

With more than a decade of information and data collected, a much better understanding of cohesiveness as a state and overall performance compared to other states can be gained. Not all trends are positive, so strategies must be pursued building on strengths and better connect Hoosiers to one another and the state. Civically engaged citizens are the bedrock for positive civic health; civic health positively contributes to economic and community development, including the health and wellness of community members and the functioning of government.

Why is Civic Health Important?

Hoosiers care about their communities and work together to improve the world around them. These connections matter. Civic health is strengthened when common ground is found. However, the benefits of active, constructive civic engagement also spill into other critical areas of our lives. When citizens are actively engaged and are supported, they can identify common goals and use their shared knowledge to solve problems in all areas of community concern.

Democracy and Representative Government

Citizens are central to governance and representative democracy. Today, there are worrying signs that U.S. democracy is declining (NCOC, 2021), including downward trends in U.S. electoral confidence, government transparency, and increasing levels of corruption. (NCOC, 2021; Repucci & Slipowitz, 2021) The state of our civic health will determine if citizens continue to respond to and improve the many public policies that affect their daily lives. The effectiveness of many public policies is connected to the responses of citizens, businesses, government, and nonprofits the policies are meant to serve. Citizens working together, sharing viewpoints, and communicating with democratic institutions can not only reduce inefficiencies and errors, but they will also build habits that will ensure that democracy survives.

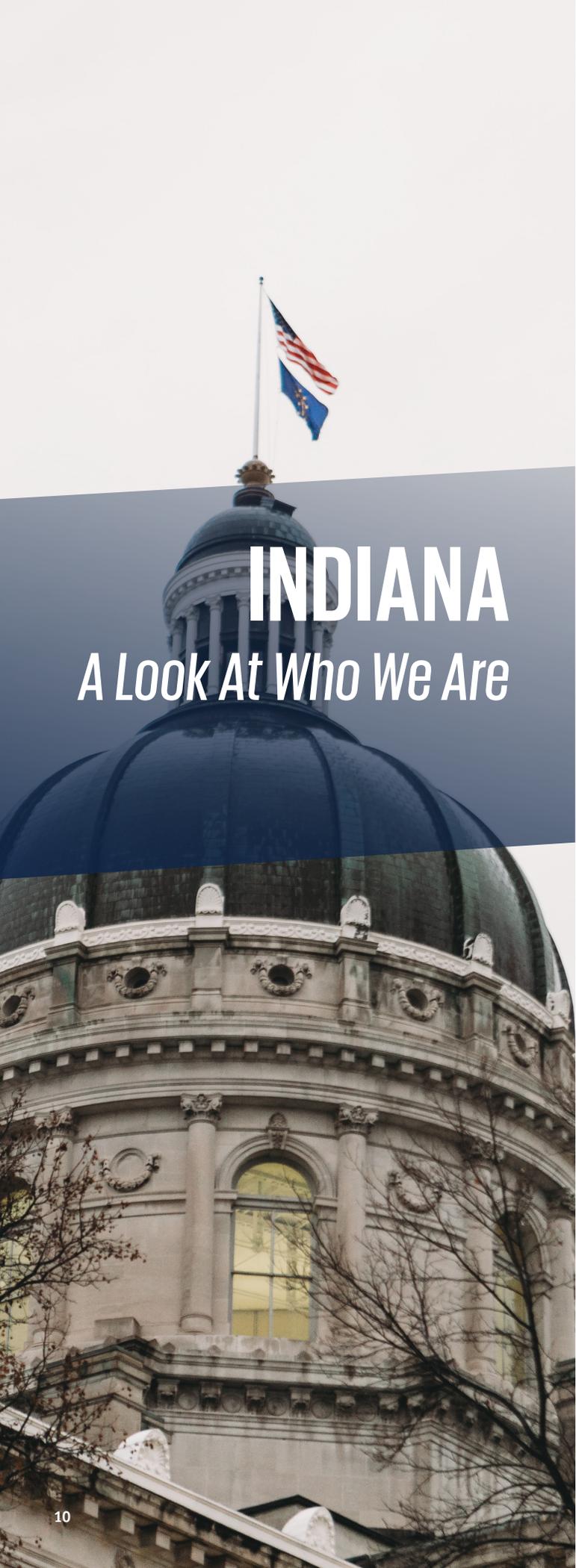
Civic health reflects a shared commitment to democracy and is related to economic and physical/psychological health. It is connected, either directly or indirectly, to all aspects of daily life. Studies such as this underscore the importance of examining civic health to build a better democracy and build better lives.

Economic and Community Development

Civic engagement supports economic and community development.⁵ Participating in civic activities can develop the skills, confidence, and attractive habits sought by existing and potential employers. Economic transactions, i.e., purchases and sales, and innovation require high levels of trust among people. Civic engagement is strongly correlated with trust. When high levels of trust exist, there are fewer obstacles to conducting efficient and equitable transactions. In addition, when we engage, we build connections to one another and create the social capital needed to keep residents invested in the wellbeing of their communities.⁶

Health and Well-Being

Physical, psychological, and behavioral health and wellbeing are closely connected to civic health. Recent studies, including those conducted by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Rand Corporation, document the important role civic engagement, including voting, volunteering, and participating in civic organizations, plays in addressing community health related challenges. Solid social connections combined with civic participation support the creation of shared values, including making health a shared value.



INDIANA

A Look At Who We Are

- **Indiana is growing.** Indiana is the 17th most populous state and is growing. Since 1990 the state's population has grown steadily from 5.5 million residents to approximately 6.83 million residents in 2022. We are retaining residents and attracting new residents.⁹
- **Indiana's people are diverse.** The 2020 Census shows a growing diversity, with one-quarter of Hoosiers identifying as part of a minority race or ethnic group, up from 19% in 2010.¹⁰
- **Indiana is aging.** Like many states in our nation, the population of the State of Indiana is aging. Indiana's age distribution closely mirrors that of the United States, e.g., 16.9% of Hoosiers are aged 65 plus, compared to 17.3% of U.S. citizens.¹¹ By 2030, one of every five people living in Indiana will be 65 or older.¹² Population estimates by age in 2022 show the percent distribution of school age children (5-17) in Indiana is slightly higher at 17% compared to 16.2% nationally.¹³
- **Hoosier income levels rank Indiana in the lower half of all states.** The adjusted value median household income of Hoosiers in 2022 (\$70,030) placed Indiana 35th in the nation. Improvements in median household income, since 2011, moved the state from 41st in 2011 to 35th in 2022.¹⁴ Indiana's poverty rate in 2022 was 12.6% - up from 11.9% in 2019. The U.S. poverty rate during a similar period ranged from 10.9%, in 2019 to 11.5% in 2023.¹⁵
- **Indiana's educational attainment in 2022 reflects a strength around high school graduation.** Ninety percent (90%) of Hoosiers possess a high school degree or higher, placing Indiana 35th among all states. A lower percentage of Hoosiers possess bachelor's and graduate degrees, than most other states; Nineteen percent (19%) of Hoosiers hold a bachelor's degree and 10.6% hold a graduate degree or higher, with ranks of 41st and 43rd respectively in the nation.¹⁶
- **Indiana's economy is diversified.** Five sectors contribute to almost 40% of the Indiana Gross Domestic Product. Another 15 sectors complete the economic picture and are increasingly contributing to economic growth and prosperity.

This snapshot of who we are – a growing state that supports economic diversification while recognizing the significant opportunities to reduce poverty and expand educational opportunity – sets the context for the report. The ways that we respond to our challenges will define our outcomes. The 2023 INCHI, as its predecessors, moves us closer to creating a more civically engaged state.

A LOOK AT THE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN INDIANA'S CIVIC HEALTH

Since the last INCHI in 2021, there have been several developments in Indiana's civic health landscape that demonstrate positive momentum. The Indiana Bar Foundation and other organizations have continued to play an important role in advancing civics initiatives throughout the state.

Indiana Bar Foundation

One of the most significant developments has been the continued investments in civic education to improve civic knowledge, understanding, and engagement among Indiana students. Indiana has emerged as a national leader in civic education through the bipartisan passage of legislation in the Indiana General Assembly requiring a full semester of civics for all sixth-grade students, making Indiana one of only seven other states that have a requirement of a full semester of civics in middle school. The requirement resulted from grassroots work led by the Indiana Bar Foundation partners, and legislative advocates which will pay dividends for generations to come.

The Foundation continues to support this new civics course through the development of free ready-to-use academic standard-aligned classroom materials designed to be used by teachers as they design the new sixth-grade civics course for their classroom. Educators across the state have free access to a package of lessons, resources, graphic organizers, and presentations aligned to state standards to teach the sixth-grade civics course. The new resources are rooted in the Foundation's program "We the People: the Citizen and the Constitution" curriculum and developed by the Foundation and Hoosier educators with new materials including standard-specific lesson plans, reading selections, student activities, PowerPoint presentations, and other elements beneficial to classroom civics instruction.

Another tool the Foundation has developed to support civics teachers is a publication about Indiana state and local government. The Foundation has partnered with the Indiana Chamber of Commerce to develop this comprehensive resource to help Hoosier teachers to better understand and teach their students about the critical role Indiana state and local governments play in the lives of citizens across the state.

The Foundation continues to administer the "We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution" program which helps students master government, history, and social studies. The program aligns with state standards and applies to elementary, middle, and high school classes. More than 10,000 students are impacted by some aspect of We the People annually. In addition, students at all three levels can showcase their knowledge and understanding through simulated legislative hearings in regional and state competitions to showcase their poise and knowledge and have a chance to represent Indiana at a national competition.

The Foundation has also partnered with the Center for Civic Education, to expand its outreach for the We the People program and reach Hoosier teachers and students through a joint initiative focused on social studies teachers in grades 4-8 through the Civics that Empowers All Students (CEAS) initiative. This partnership creates incredible opportunities for expanding civic education and engagement from classrooms to communities.

In addition to We the People, the Foundation continues to administer the Indiana High School Mock Trial program. Mock Trial is a social and educational opportunity for students to learn about our justice system and judicial branch of government. Through Mock Trial, students read the Indiana Code, trial rules, and an originally developed complex case package and then develop witness statements, prepare litigation strategies, and craft persuasive arguments to support their positions in the competition. A complete trial is simulated, with opening statements, direct and cross-examinations, and closing arguments. Students present both sides of the case (e.g., Prosecution and Defense), so they must prepare strong arguments for both sides. The program is available for high school classes and aligns with social studies and English Language Arts standards.

One of the highest priorities of the Foundation is to expand the reach of its high-quality civics programming to schools across the state and ensure that students from high needs schools have the same opportunities as those in other school districts. Through the Foundation's Mock Trial Diversity Initiative, presented by Krieg DeVault, additional resources are provided to support students from qualifying schools. This initiative helps to provide them with resources covering travel, competition materials, matching with volunteer legal advisors, and other supports allowing the school to establish and maintain a mock trial program.

The Foundation, in partnership with the Hearst Foundations, continues to administer the United States Senate Youth Program for Indiana. The program is open to all high school seniors, and it uses a competitive application process, letters of recommendation, essays, and in-person interviews to select two students to serve as Indiana Delegates during an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., to learn government and leadership and earn a \$10,000 college scholarship.

The Indiana Legislative Youth Advisory Council (ILYAC) is a legislatively created council administered by the Foundation with the purpose of advising the Indiana General Assembly on topics related to Indiana youth, including: education, employment, strategies to increase youth involvement in state and local government, safe environments for youth, substance abuse, foster care, poverty, homelessness, and youth access to state and local services. This council has continued its work and expanded some of the areas that it has explored and provided input on to state policy makers.

The Indiana Kids Election program is a new program for the Foundation. Indiana Kids Election highlights the importance of elections within our democracy and provides students with the opportunity to participate in mock elections to set the foundation for developing voting as a habit extended into adulthood. A pilot program was held in 2022 with 15 schools participating and more than 2,100 votes cast by students across the state. Indiana Kids Election will be expanded for the 2024 election.

In 2023, the Foundation formally expanded its partnerships with other organizations who are interested in advancing civic education and engagement in Indiana by hosting the state's first Indiana Civics Summit and creating the Indiana Civics Coalition. There are many other organizations around the state making essential contributions to advancing civics and bringing everyone together under the Indiana Civics Coalition. Working together allows increased coordination and collaboration towards shared common civics goals.



Indiana Bar Foundation President & CEO Charles Dunlap



Indiana Civics Coalition Partners

Ball State University has made great strides recently with the creation of the **Civic Renewal through Education for Agency, Tolerance, and Engagement (CREATE)** program which recently received a multi-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education. CREATE is an innovative approach to instruction, student learning, and professional development in civics that integrates American history, geography, government, and media literacy. CREATE builds on cutting-edge approaches to civic learning, integrating, and adapting multiple evidence-based strategies and tracking and assessing outcomes to produce a scalable model for building the civic capacity of communities through their K-12 schools.

Purdue University's James F. Ackerman Center for Democratic Leadership also continues as a leader in civics education as well. The Ackerman Center plays a significant leadership role in preparing the next generation of American citizens as well as teachers studying their craft at the University. The center focuses on providing programs and resources for educators to implement more powerful citizenship education that promotes active student involvement in schools and communities. Purdue also is one of the first universities in the nation to implement a civics literacy requirement for all undergraduate students in order to graduate.

The Indiana University Center on Representative Government has developed several new initiatives around its mission to advance civics in Indiana. In addition to the Center's continued outreach to teachers and students through a variety of professional development and online interactive resources, it also received a three-year, \$5.7 million cooperative agreement award from the U.S. Department of Defense to enhance civics education and expand student interest in public service careers.

The center, founded by former U.S. Rep. Lee Hamilton of Indiana, will use the funding to develop "Democracy Quest," a virtual-reality-based interactive learning tool. "Democracy Quest" is designed to engage high school students in the workings of representative government, help them better understand the nation's political institutions, and strengthen their civic skills and literacy. And other examples of civic learning and engagement are happening in the state.

Indiana is fortunate to have several national civics organizations located within the state. One organization in particular, the **American Legion**, hosts an annual Oratorical Contest in Indianapolis that supports a deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students. Since 1938 the program has presented participants with an academic speaking challenge that teaches important leadership qualities, the history of our nation's laws, the ability to think and speak clearly, and an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship. As a testament to Indiana's commitment to civic education and engagement the 2023 winner of this competition was Haley Bock from Indianapolis, Indiana. Haley Bock is also a mock trial student from Heritage Christian High School and a mock trial Best Attorney award winner.

The **Indiana Secretary of State's** office recently created the "Hoosier Hall Pass" program. Hoosier Hall Pass enables 16- and 17-year-old students to have a "live" experience of democracy in action on Election Day. This program provides an opportunity for students to learn about democracy, actively participate in their community, and work to support free and fair elections in Indiana.

The **Indiana Chamber of Commerce** and **Indiana Department of Education** partnered with local chambers to create the Indiana Civic Bee, through an initiative of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. The aim is to motivate, engage, and excite students with civics and their communities. Participation in the civics bee begins with an essay competition at the local level, through local chambers of commerce across the state. Winners of local civics bee competitions advance to the state level. The state winner will go to the national civics bee next fall.

The **Court of Appeals of Indiana** was recently recognized for its Appeals on Wheels program with the **National Center for State Courts** Sandra Day O'Connor Award for the Advancement of Civics Education. The Appeals on Wheels program has brought Court of Appeals judges to all 92 Indiana counties to hear traveling oral arguments in schools, retirement homes, and conference centers. Since 2000, the court has held more than 650 traveling oral arguments, including 20 sessions in early 2023. NCSC President Mary C. McQueen commended the program as "an excellent example of meeting people where they're at to increase public understanding of the justice system."

The **United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana** has also added new resources and outreach opportunities for civic education. The Court created a new Federal Court Learning Center in the courthouse to provide a unique space for learning about the role that the federal courts and juries play in our system of government, investigate the types of cases heard in federal court, explore careers within the judiciary, and engage in critical thinking interactive activities.



The Indiana Court of Appeals received the prestigious Sandra Day O'Connor Award for Advancements in Civics Education from the National Center for State Courts. Pictured L-R: Indiana Court of Appeals Judge Dana J. Kenworthy, Judge Melissa S. May, Chief Judge Robert Altice, Jr., Judge Nancy H. Vaidik, and Judge Elizabeth F. Tavitias

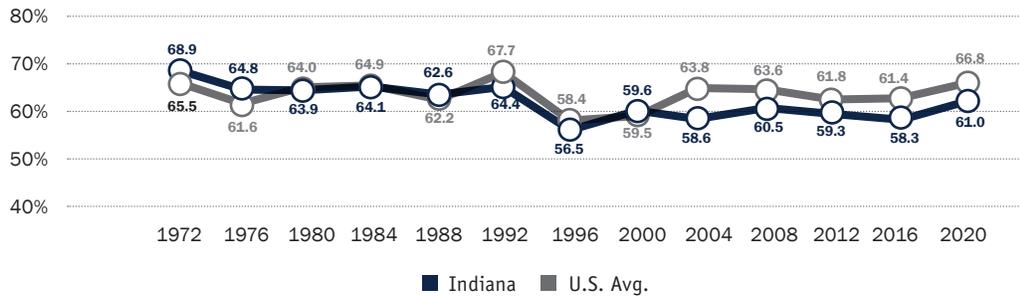
A FUTURE FOR INDIANA'S CIVIC PARTICIPATION

In contrast to the steady progress made in civic education, the data reported in the 2023 INCHI show that civic engagement via voting participation and voting registration is concerning. Indiana's turnout ranking in presidential election years fell to the Bottom 10 of states from 41st in 2016 to 46th in 2020. The 2021 INCHI reviewed key findings related to presidential year voting and midterm voting, noting changes in Indiana law that might be considered. The 2023 INCHI reports Indiana's midterm turnout in 2022 dropping in national rank to 50th from 43rd in 2018.

Presidential Election Years – Voting and Voter Registration

When Hoosiers were questioned through the U.S. Census Current Population Survey Voting and Registration Supplement project in November 2020, 61% said they had just voted in the general election. This compares to 58.3% in November 2016 - representing a 2.7% increase.

Chart 1. Indiana Voter Turnout During Presidential Election Years 1972 - 2020



In comparison, residents in the Top 10 states reported turnout averaging 75.2% in 2020. The average turnout across the Top 10 states in 2016 was 69.5%. From 2016 to 2020, Indiana's average turnout increased by 5.7%, however, nationally voter turnout soared.¹⁷

Chart 2. Voting and Registration in Presidential Election Years in Indiana

| | PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEARS | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|
| | 2012 | | 2016 | | 2020 | |
| | Rank | Rate | Rank | Rate | Rank | Rate |
| VOTER REGISTRATION | 37th | 71.3% | 40th | 68.8% | 39th | 69.3% |
| VOTING | 38th | 59.3% | 41st | 58.3% | 46th | 61.0% |

*Note: The 2021 INCHI publication listed the 2020 voting rate in error (60.6%); the correct number is listed above at 61.0%.

How Indiana could increase turnout yet drop in its national ranking is underscored by official turnout reports. According to the Indiana Secretary of State’s General Election Turnout and Registration report, a record number of Hoosiers – 3,068,625 – voted in the 2020 general election. This compares to 2,807,676 in 2016, therefore a 9.3% increase. Such an increase might be characterized as “substantial” but for a bigger turnout surge nationwide.

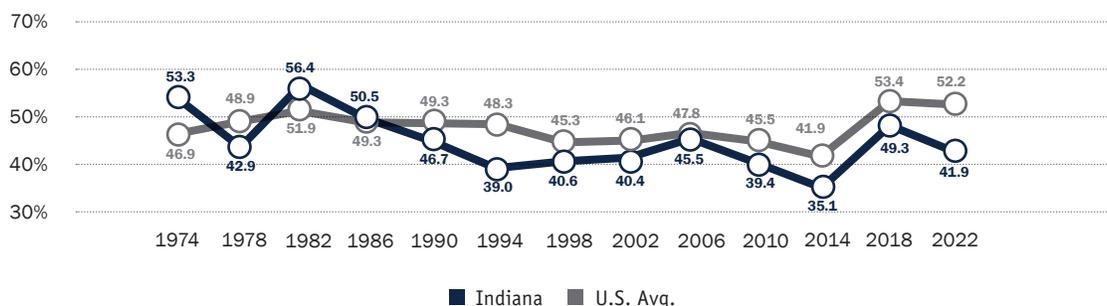
The national turnout increase was much more significant – 15% – from 139 million in 2016 to 160 million in 2020. There are many theories on why Indiana’s record turnout did not match the rest of the country. The most frequently mentioned theories fall broadly into two categories:

- **The absence of contested elections**
- **Election administration policy choices**

Midterm Election Years – an Update

Midterm voter turnout rates fell from 49.3% to 41.9% a drop of 7.4 percentage points, while the national voter turnout rate fell by only 1.2 percentage points from 53.4% to 52.2%. Voter registration rates in 2022 were also lower than the national rate. In Indiana, 66.5% were reportedly registered while the national voter registration rate was 69.1%.

Chart 3. Indiana Voter Turnout During Midterm Election Years 1974 - 2022



These trends reveal a complex story reflecting the voting infrastructure and preferences in place prior to 2021 in Indiana. While Indiana’s voter turnout rate has fallen since the 1980s, by as much as 14.5%, the national rate of voting turnout is the highest since the early 1980s. The result is that in 2022, Indiana’s voter turnout rank is now at 50th of 51 jurisdictions, a fall from 43rd in 2018.

A look at voter registration reveals a similar theme. In 2022, Indiana ranked 40th in voter registration while in 2018, Hoosiers ranked 37th, reflecting a decline when compared to rates in other states.

Chart 4. Voting and Registration in Midterm Election Years in Indiana

| | MIDTERM ELECTION YEARS | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|
| | 2010 | | 2014 | | 2018 | | 2022 | |
| | Rank | Rate | Rank | Rate | Rank | Rate | Rank | Rate |
| VOTER REGISTRATION | 43rd | 65.1% | 30th | 64.9% | 37th | 65.3% | 40th | 66.5% |
| VOTING | 48th | 39.4% | 47th | 35.1% | 43rd | 49.3% | 50th | 41.9% |

Several factors need to be considered when examining this data — including pandemic recovery and economic, social, and political conditions — to understand our underperformance. However, when we measure ourselves against other states, many of whom have faced similar challenges (e.g. COVID 19) we find that we are less able to adapt to change in a way that supports civic participation at a time when research shows civic participation can enhance our ability to thrive and prosper.

The 2019 INCHI recommended Indiana set the goal of vaulting from the Bottom 10 to the Top 10 of states for turnout in the 2020 elections. As reported in the 2021 edition of INCHI, Indiana saw record turnout in 2020 — eclipsing 3 million for the first time — but the 9% increase from 2016 was vastly exceeded by the national increase of 15%. Accordingly, Indiana’s ranking dropped from 41st to 46th.

The 2021 INCHI attributed Indiana’s 2020 performance to (a) the absence of contested elections and (b) election administration policy choices. Without advocating for the enactment of any of them, policy choices made by states consistently at the top for turnout were noted in the report, such as:

- **Automatic voter registration**
- **Same-day voter registration**
- **Unrestricted absentee voting**
- **Election day voting hours exceeding 12 hours**

In the ensuing two years, none of these policies were considered by the Indiana General Assembly, and it is fair to predict that the legislature is not inclined to enact any of them for the foreseeable future. Thus, the principal influencer of turnout in Indiana will continue to be registered voters’ perceived intensity of the election contests.

This can be seen clearly when comparing 2018 to 2022.

In 2018, Indiana saw record turnout for a midterm election. So did the rest of the country, as President Trump sought, successfully, to “nationalize” the midterms.

A hotly contested and expensive Senate race in Indiana between the incumbent Sen. Joe Donnelly and his opponent businessman Mike Braun undoubtedly contributed to the record 2018 turnout. Mr. Braun defeated Sen. Donnelly 51% to 45% (the remaining going to other candidates).

In 2022, however, the Senate campaign between Sen. Todd Young and his opponent Hammond Mayor Tom McDermott did not attract national attention and resources. Sen. Young defeated Mayor McDermott 60% to 38%.

Perhaps of greater significance is that overall turnout in Indiana dropped from 2,308,258 in 2018 to 1,881,560 in 2022 — almost a 20% decline — further underscoring the effect that truly contested elections appear to have on turnout.

Independent efforts to increase turnout in Indiana — such as the “One More Voice” campaign launched by the Indiana Citizen Education Foundation in 2020 and persistent efforts by worthy organizations like the League of Women Voters of Indiana, Women4Change, Common Cause and the NAACP — have not attracted the financial resources to make any measurable impact.

Without policy changes that apparently increase turnout, it is impossible to foresee whether the 2024 election contests will generate sufficient interest among Hoosier voters to spur turnout at or above the national average.

A Call for Increased Voter Registration Efforts in 2024

Of course, turnout starts with registration.

Registration campaigns are no longer labor-intensive, door-to-door, clipboard-pen-and-paper-form efforts where the error rates are high. Thanks to the online tool perfected by the Indiana Secretary of State's office, registering to vote is seamless for those who possess a valid Indiana driver's license.

The 2023 INCHI recommends a renewed interest in increasing the number of registered voters, especially among the youngest Hoosiers, ages 18-21. According to the Indiana Department of Education's public schools enrollment report, there are approximately 80,000 students in each of this year's senior and junior classes, representing almost 160,000 new voters for the 2024 elections.



The need to focus on registering the youngest eligible Hoosiers was revealed right before the 2020 general elections.

In September 2020, Tufts University's respected Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) released a study that drilled into the voter registration files of 39 states. The study compared the number of registrants as of August 2020 to November 2016.

In the age group 18-24, Indiana ranked 6th from the bottom. In the age group 18-19, Indiana ranked last. Several Indiana groups reacted to the data with alarm. Fortunately, there was an apparent pre-election surge of registrations in Indiana such that the 18-24 cohort finished 5% above 2016, but the 18-19 cohort showed 10% fewer registrants than in 2016.

CIRCLE also performed the same analysis for the 2022 midterms, comparing November 2022 to November 2018. In Indiana, the number of youths registered was 14% lower in the 18-24 group (36 of 41 states reviewed) and 54% lower (37 of 41) among the newly eligible 18-19 ages.

An examination of the voter registration deficit in Indiana requires some analysis.

First, the pool of potential voters must be calculated. One widely-accepted data source is the United States Election Project at the University of Florida, led by Prof. Michael P. McDonald. According to their methodology, the Voting Age Population (VAP) for each state is calculated using census data. From the VAP, the number of non-citizens and other ineligible people is subtracted, yielding the Voting Eligible Population (VEP). For the 2022 midterms, they calculated Indiana's VEP to be 5,061,894. (<https://www.electproject.org/2022g>)

Second, a calculation of the number of Hoosiers who are currently registered must be made.

The Indiana Secretary of State's office reports that 4,674,413 Hoosiers are registered as of January 2, 2024. As a percentage of VEP, this would mean about 92% of eligible Hoosiers are registered and about 8% (387,481) are not. This over-statement of the number of registered voters persists in every state due to death, out-migration and movement within a state.

For this 2023 INCHI, 66.5% of those surveyed said they were registered to vote in the 2022 elections. This would mean 3,366,160 Hoosiers were registered in November 2022 — 5,061,894 (.665) — and 1,695,734 were not.

Whether the number of unregistered Hoosiers is closer to 400,000 or 1.7 million, it is indisputable that hundreds of thousands of young people have aged into voting eligibility since 2020.

The considerable, laudable efforts to promote civic education in Indiana exist to create the next generation of informed, engaged Hoosier citizens who take the most important step of their civic lives by registering and voting.

The 2023 INCHI proposes an all-out effort in 2024 to register every eligible Hoosier, with special emphasis on our youngest citizens. We propose setting the goal of registering every willing, eligible high school senior in the Spring and Fall semesters of 2024, thereby reaching the classes of 2024 and 2025. Concentrations of 18–22 year-olds are also present at college campuses, of course.

The League of Women Voters of Indiana (LWVIN) has placed a high priority on deploying its local members to high schools to register students. COVID restrictions curtailed LWVIN’s in-school efforts in 2020, but planning is underway to place volunteers in as many high schools as possible in the spring and fall semesters of 2024.

On Indiana college campuses, it is anticipated such groups as the Community-Engaged Alliance will supplement student-led efforts to promote registration. Indiana University (IU) and Purdue University devote considerable resources in presidential election years encouraging registration. The Big Ten Voting Challenge causes competition both between IU and Purdue and among the other 12 universities for turnout.

INCHI continues to highlight Indiana’s registration and turnout rankings with the hope that the information will spur Hoosier policymakers, the political parties, and candidates to invest in increased voter registration, access to candidate information, and higher turnout.



Please use this QR code to access Indiana voter registration and general voting information.

State-Level Laws and Statutes that Help Grow Voters

The table below reflects policies in place as of mid-2022.

🔍 Indiana ✕

| State | Youth Ages 16-17 Can Pre-Register to Vote | Youth Under 18 Can Vote in Primaries | Voter Registration Forms in Schools | Voter Registration Activities in Schools | Youth Can Serve as Poll Workers | Schools as Voter Registration Sites ▲ | CGV - Deputy Registrars in Schools | GOTV Activities in Schools | Student Leadership in Voter Registration |
|---------|---|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Indiana | No | Yes | No | No | Yes | No | No | No | No |

CIRCLE Tufts University Tisch College · CIRCLE

Source: CIRCLE, <https://circle.tufts.edu/latest-research/state-statutes-support-growing-voters>

CIVIC PARTICIPATION INFLUENCERS

Non-Voters' Perceptions

Consistently, surveys of non-voters show some version of “My vote doesn’t matter” as the most frequently cited excuse for not voting. According to a national poll of non-voters, most respondents who did not vote in recent presidential elections expressed a feeling that voting has little impact, and two-thirds agreed with the statement, “voting in elections has little to do with the way that real decisions are made in our country.” Notably, among non-voters the results were similar regardless of income or educational attainment levels.

Voting and Civic Infrastructure

State infrastructure supporting voter turnout and registration also can play a role. Feelings of disengagement, apathy, and distrust in the democratic process are present throughout the country, yet some states perform better in formal civic participation measures, i.e., voting and voter registration.

Of states typically performing at the top of all states in voter turnout and registration are policies supportive of automatic voter registration, same-day voter registration, unrestricted absentee voting and election day voting hours exceeding 12 hours, among other voting policies.

In addition, looking to the future, the actions of other states around youth engagement can be considered. The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) succinctly summarizes state actions targeting youth including voter registration forms and activities in schools, youth service as poll workers, schools as voter registration sites. As of mid-2022, Indiana supports two of eight activities that help grow voters.



Indiana has passed several bills since 2020, the impact of which is yet to be determined. Since 2021, the state has enacted changes in Indiana law related to voting and elections including:

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| HB 1365 (2021) | Polling place procedures, mail ballots, voter list maintenance, returning, verifying, and curing mail ballots |
| HB 1479 (2021) | Early voting availability |
| SB 260 (2021) | Polling place procedures, election day voting sites, returning, verifying and curing mail ballots |
| SB 398 (2021) | Standard registration process, requesting mail ballots, criminal and civil enforcement, early voting availability, returning, verifying, and curing mail ballots, interferences with election administration |
| HB 1334 (2023) | Requesting mail in ballots and id requirements |
| HB 1336 (2023) | Mail ballots, election day voting sites, returning, verifying, and curing mail ballots |
| SB 106 (2023) | Shifts in election authority |

CONNECTEDNESS AND CIVIC AWARENESS

Key Findings

Like that of the nation, Indiana's civic health reflects the changing preferences and behaviors of the citizenry related to civic engagement. A comparison of the indicators for Indiana and the United States revealed changes in the types and frequency of civic behaviors, including social and community connectedness and civic awareness. As in previous reporting, there have been gains in some areas and losses in others.

Social and Community Connectedness

Community involvement is a broad indicator of civic health. A sense of community drives us to connect locally, explore differences, express our views, and contribute to the wellbeing of friends, family, and neighbors.

Involvement in civic life speaks to a shared commitment to families and a sense of community. Engagement fosters new and enriches existing relationships, as we explore common interests and concerns and seek to build consensus when differences arise. How do Hoosiers build community? Examples include volunteering, joining groups, and helping neighbors. Indiana ranks in the top half of all states in all these civic activities. Chart 5 summarizes the areas of Hoosier's excellence in community and social connectedness.

Since 2010, Hoosiers' social and community connectedness has improved.

- **Two indicators, talking with neighbors and doing favors for neighbors, revealed improvements in participation and rank.**
- **Hoosier's rate of membership in groups of any kind fell during the decade but compared to other states, Indiana's participation rank improved from 22 to 16.**

While declines in participation and rank can be observed during the 2020 to 2022 period, it should be noted this period included the pandemic, a time when the opportunities for interaction were limited.

In 2020, 52.2% of Hoosiers donated to charitable or religious organizations, placing Indiana **25th in national rankings.**



Chart 5. 2012-2022 Civic Health Indicator Trends Summary

| CIVIC HEALTH INDICATOR | 2022 Percent Engaged (Rank) | 2020 Percent Engaged (Rank) | 2012 Percent Engaged (Rank) | Change in Rank from 2020 |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Social and Community Connectedness | | | | |
| Volunteering | 27.6% (21st) | 34.0% (18th) | 26.1% (32nd) | ↓ |
| Talk with or spend time with neighbors | 26.4% (36th) | 28.6% (35th) | 34.8% (50th) (2011) | ↓ |
| Do favors for neighbors | 9.5% (35th) | 12.3% (17th) | 13.5% (43rd) | ↓ |
| Group membership | 29.4% (16th) | 32.7% (17th) | 36.6% (22nd) | ↑ |
| Donation to charitable or religious organizations | 52.2% (25th) | 50.6% (33rd) | 45.6% (45th) | ↑ |
| Civic Awareness and Action | | | | |
| Discussing politics, social, or local issues - family | 38.6% (18th) | 34.8% (28th) | 21.6% (48th) | ↑ |
| Discuss politics with neighbors | 8.3% (25th) | 7.3% (32nd) | 21.6% (48th) | ↑ |
| Posting on the internet frequently about social or political views | 8.8% (5th) | 7.5% (12th) | 5.9% (45th) (2011) | ↑ |
| Contacting public officials | 10.5% (26th) | 10.4% (31st) | 10.6% (32nd) | ↑ |
| Voting in the local elections | 61.2% (13th) | 48.0% (45th) | n/a | ↑ |
| Donate to a political organization | 8.3% (29th) | 5.8% (47th) | n/a | ↑ |
| Attend a public meeting | 8.1% (35th) | 9.6% (37th) | 7.4% (44th) | ↑ |
| Voting and Voter Registration | | | | |
| Voting (2012 and 2020) | 41.9% (50th) (midterm) | 61.0% (46th) | 59.3% (38th) | ↓ |
| Voter Registration | 66.5% (40th) (midterm) | 69.3% (39th) | 71.3% (37th) | ↓ |

Civic Awareness

A closer look at changes in civic awareness reveals improvement across the board. All indicators have improved since 2010 and most continued to improve during the 2020 to 2022 period. Where civic participation rates fell, the reductions were lower than those occurring nationally, thus Indiana's rank continued to improve. Opportunities for growth remain. While we excel in our family connections and actively engage with neighbors and groups, engagement with public leaders and local elections does not speak to the ability to connect, assist, and participate civically.

In Chart 5, multiple indicators of civic awareness point to a populace not actively engaged with public officials contributes minimally to political organizations and has limited exposure to the media. Indiana's lowest ranked indicator (donating to political organizations) is in sharp contrast to Hoosier's political involvement through internet and social media interactions.

- **Approximately 8.8% of Hoosiers post their views on social, political, or local issues on the internet; Indiana ranks 5th in the nation on this indicator of civic awareness.**
- **More Hoosiers attended public meetings in 2020 (9.6%) than in 2010 (7.4%)**
- **Hoosiers' donations to political organizations, place Indiana 29th in the country, with an average of 8.3% of Hoosiers donating.**



CONCLUSION

In this 2023 examination of Indiana’s Civic Health, the combination of successes and challenges reveals a nuanced portrait of the state’s democratic vitality. While the Index reflects commendable achievements in certain facets of civic education and engagement, it also sheds light on some persistent challenges that warrant attention and strategic intervention.

The successes underscore a resilient civic spirit within Indiana’s communities. Noteworthy achievements in a more robust focus on civic education within our schools, community involvement, and the vibrancy of local organizations exemplify the active participation of Hoosiers in shaping their shared future. These positive outcomes contribute to the social capital that forms the bedrock of a healthy democracy, fostering a sense of connectedness and mutual responsibility.

Indiana’s journey toward civic health is not without its hurdles, however. Challenges – including disparities in educational access, uneven civic knowledge dissemination, and the persistent issue of low voter participation – present formidable obstacles. Educational disparities, in particular, can contribute to gaps in civic participation, limiting the full potential of citizens to engage actively in the democratic process. Addressing these challenges demands a concerted effort to bridge gaps in resources, enhance educational opportunities, and promote inclusivity to ensure that the benefits of civic engagement are accessible to all. While Hoosiers have enjoyed the important success of a universal requirement for all sixth graders throughout the state to receive a full semester of civics, the quality of that instruction is still not consistent throughout the state. Indiana must continue to build on this momentum by investing more resources in preparing our teachers to be the content experts that our future generation needs to reinvest in our critical civics infrastructure.

Amidst the successes and challenges, there are several areas demanding immediate attention. Factors such as polarization, civic apathy, and barriers to political inclusivity pose significant threats to the democratic fabric. The rise of polarization underscores the need for initiatives fostering constructive dialogue, bridge ideological divides, and strengthen the civic infrastructure binding communities.



TECHNICAL NOTE

Unless otherwise noted, findings presented in this report are based on the National Conference on Citizenship's (NCoC) analysis of the U.S. Census Current Population Survey (CPS) data. Any and all errors are NCoC's own. Volunteering and Civic Engagement estimates are from CPS September Volunteering/Civic Engagement Supplement from 2021 and voting estimates from 2022 November Voting and Registration Supplement.

Using a probability selected sample of about 60,000 occupied households, the CPS collects monthly data on employment and demographic characteristics of the nation. Depending on the CPS supplement, the single-year Indiana CPS sample size used for this report ranges from 250-887 (volunteering/civic engagement supplement) and to 1,236 (voting supplement) residents from across Indiana. This sample is then weighted to representative population demographics for the district. Estimates for the volunteering and civic engagement indicators (e.g., volunteering, working with neighbors,

making donations) are based on U.S. residents ages 16 and older. Voting and registration statistics are based on U.S. citizens who are 18 and older (eligible voters). When we examined the relationship between educational Attainment and engagement, estimates are based on adults ages 25 and older, based on the assumption younger people may be completing their education.

Because multiple sources of data with varying sample sizes are used, the report is not able to compute one margin of error for Indiana across all indicators. Any analysis that breaks down the sample into smaller groups (e.g., gender, education) will have smaller samples, and therefore the margin of error will increase. Furthermore, while helpful in benchmarking, national rankings may be small in range, with one to two percentage points separating the state/district ranked first from the state/district ranked last.

APPENDIX A: DEFINITION OF TERMS

Civic Health

Civic health reflects the degree to which citizens participate in their communities, from local and state governance to interactions with friends or family. Civic health also relates to the overall well-being of neighborhoods, communities, states, and the nation.

Civic Engagement

Civic engagement is the act of working with local institutions and fellow residents to promote meaningful actions, movements, and relationships within a community or population. This can take many forms, from voter registration rates to talking politics with friends or family and from trusted local businesses to participating in community groups. Some measures of civic engagement are political, some are social, and some are individual, but each reflects something important about a community's civic health.

Social Connectedness

Social connectedness is a series of interactions between friends, families, and neighbors, such as eating dinner with friends or family and trusting your neighbors.

Community Involvement

Community involvement refers to the ways people interact with fellow residents beyond their friends, family, and immediate neighbors. These actions include group membership, charitable giving, volunteer rate, and attending public meetings.

Political Action or Political Participation

Political action and participation refer to the ways people influence local government and public institutions, including voting in state and local elections, contacting public officials, discussing politics, and buying or boycotting goods to reflect political opinions.

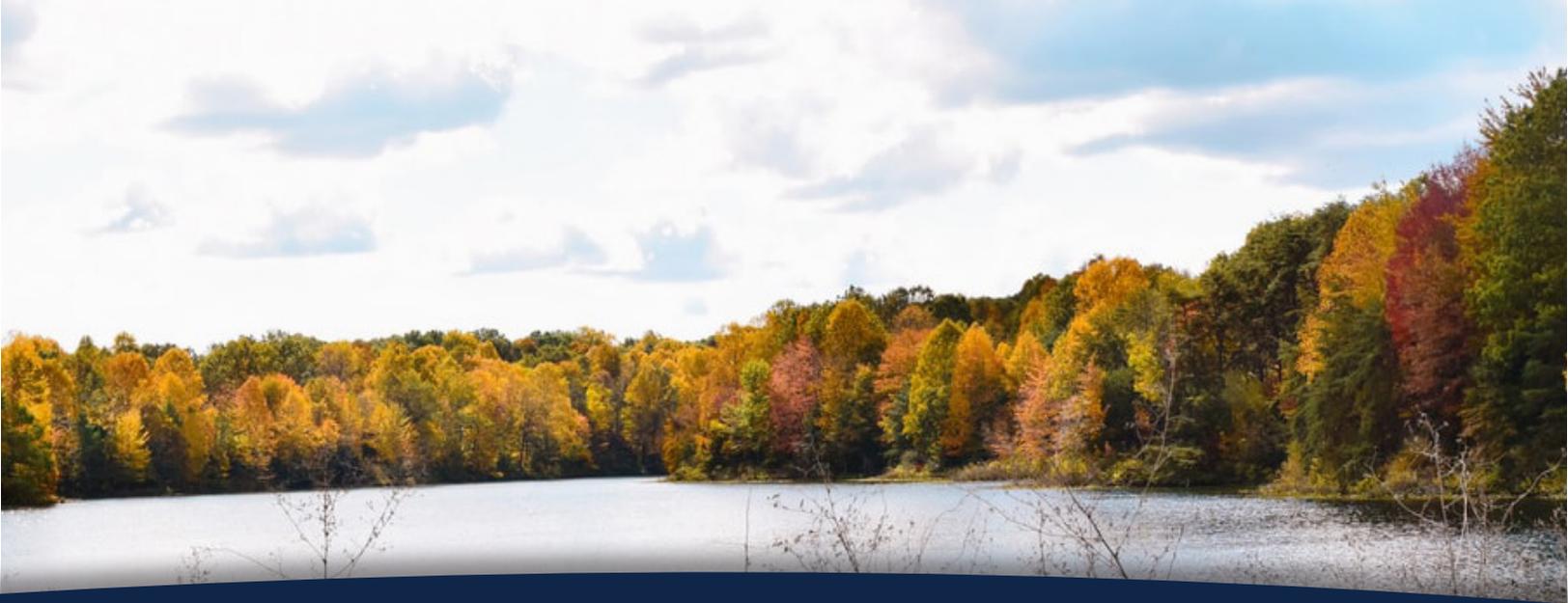
Confidence in Institutions

Confidence in institutions refers to the degree to which residents believe that various local institutions, including public schools, media, and corporations, will do what is right.



ENDNOTES

- ¹ CIRCLE, “Youth Who Learned about Voting in High School More Likely to Become Informed and Engaged Voters,” August 31, 2020, accessed October 9, 2021, from <https://circle.tufts.edu/latest-research/youth-who-learned-about-voting-high-school-more-likely-become-informed-and-engaged> See also: David E. Campbell (2019): What Social Scientists Have Learned About Civic Education: A Review of the Literature, *Peabody Journal of Education*, DOI: 10.1080/0161956X.2019.1553601
- ² The findings presented are based on an analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS) data. Estimates are from the CPS Volunteering Supplement, Voting/Registration Supplement, and the Civic Engagement Supplement.
- ³ NCoC, “Civic Health Index” accessed December 6, 2023, from [https://ncoc.org/chi/#:~:text=Civic%20Health%20Index%20\(CHI\)%20is,health%2C%20and%20more%20responsive%20governments.](https://ncoc.org/chi/#:~:text=Civic%20Health%20Index%20(CHI)%20is,health%2C%20and%20more%20responsive%20governments.)
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- ¹⁴ Statista, “U.S. poverty rate 1990-2022,” accessed December 4, 2023, from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/200463/us-poverty-rate-since-1990/>
- ¹⁵ Statsamerica, “Indiana’s Education,” accessed December 1, 2023 from <https://www.statsamerica.org/sip/Education.aspx?page=edu1&ct=S18>
- ¹⁶ Pew Research Center, “One in Eight Voter Registrations Inaccurate; 51 Million Citizens Unregistered,” <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/about/news-room/press-releases-and-statements/2012/02/14/pew-one-in-eight-voter-registrations-inaccurate-51-million-citizens-unregistered>



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CIVIC HEALTH INDEX

State and Local Partnerships

The National Conference on Citizenship (NCoC) began America's *Civic Health Index* in 2006 to measure the level of civic engagement and health of our democracy. In 2009, the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act directed NCoC to expand this civic health assessment in partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service and the U.S. Census Bureau.

NCoC now works with partners in more than 35 states and cities to use civic data to lead and inspire a public dialogue about the future of citizenship in America and to drive sustainable civic strategies.

STATES

Alabama

University of Alabama
David Mathews Center for Civic Life
Auburn University

Arizona

Center for the Future of Arizona

California

California Forward
Center for Civic Education
Center for Individual and Institutional Renewal
Davenport Institute

Colorado

Metropolitan State University of Denver
The Civic Canopy
Denver Metro Chamber Leadership
Campus Compact of Mountain West
History Colorado
Institute on Common Good

Connecticut

Everyday Democracy

District of Columbia

ServeDC

Florida

Florida Joint Center for Citizenship
Bob Graham Center for Public Service
Lou Frey Institute of Politics and Government

Georgia

Georgia Family Connection Partnership
Georgia Municipal Association

Illinois

McCormick Foundation

Indiana

Indiana University Center on Representative Government
Indiana Bar Foundation
Indiana Citizen Education Foundation, Inc.
Indiana Supreme Court

Indiana University Northwest
Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis
O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs

Kansas

Kansas Health Foundation

Kentucky

Commonwealth of Kentucky, Secretary of State's Office
Institute for Citizenship & Social Responsibility,
Western Kentucky University
Kentucky Advocates for Civic Education
McConnell Center, University of Louisville

Maryland

Mannakee Circle Group
Center for Civic Education
Common Cause-Maryland
Maryland Civic Literacy Commission

Michigan

Michigan Nonprofit Association
Michigan Campus Compact
Michigan Community Service Commission
Volunteer Centers of Michigan
Council of Michigan Foundations
Center for Study of Citizenship at Wayne State University

Minnesota

Center for Democracy and Citizenship

Missouri

Missouri State University
Park University
Saint Louis University
University of Missouri Kansas City
University of Missouri Saint Louis
Washington University

Nebraska

Nebraskans for Civic Reform

New Hampshire

Carsey Institute
Campus Compact of New Hampshire
University System of New Hampshire
New Hampshire College & University Council

New York

Siena College Research Institute
New York State Commission on National and Community Service

North Carolina

Institute for Emerging Issues

Ohio

Miami University Hamilton Center for Civic Engagement

Oklahoma

University of Central Oklahoma
Oklahoma Campus Compact

Pennsylvania

Center for Democratic Deliberation
National Constitution Center

Rhode Island

Rhode Island Council for the Humanities
Rhode Island Department of State

South Carolina

University of South Carolina Upstate

Texas

The University of Texas at Austin
The Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life
RGK Center for Philanthropy & Community Service

Virginia

Center for the Constitution at James Madison's Montpelier
Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

ISSUE SPECIFIC

Latinos Civic Health Index

Carnegie Corporation

Veterans Civic Health Index

Got Your 6

Millennials Civic Health Index

Mobilize.org
Harvard Institute of Politics
CIRCLE

Economic Health

Knight Foundation
Corporation for National & Community Service (CNCS)
CIRCLE

CITIES

Atlanta

Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta

Greater Austin

The University of Texas at Austin
RGK Center for Philanthropy and
Community Service
Annette Strauss Institute for Civic Life
Leadership Austin
Austin Community Foundation
KLRU-TV, Austin PBS
KUT News

Chicago

McCormick Foundation

Kansas City & Saint Louis

Missouri State University
Park University
Washington University

Miami

Florida Joint Center for Citizenship
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Miami Foundation

Pittsburgh

University of Pittsburgh
Carnegie Mellon University

Seattle

Seattle City Club

Twin Cities

Center for Democracy and Citizenship
Citizens League
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

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