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Northeast Indiana Bucks Trend on Self-Employment

Although the nation and state have seen an increase in people choosing self-employment, northeast Indiana has not followed the trend, according to U.S Census Bureau estimates from the five-year periods ending 2013 and 2018.

Nationally, the number of self-employed people has risen 6.0 percent between 2009-2013 and 2014-2018. A 1.4 percent increase was registered statewide. Regionally, the number of self-employed people dipped 3.1 percent. The county with the largest decline was Wabash at 16.9 percent. The county with the largest increase was Whitley at 20.4 percent.

Various studies nationally have suggested people gravitate to self-employment because it gives them more scheduling flexibility, allowing for a better work-life balance. It also tends to ensure greater job security, some study organizers say.

The national trend toward self-employment, studies suggest, is more than just a reflection of a so-called gig economy, which often denotes temporary work. It is a profound shift in work preference and is more common among older and more highly educated workers.

The U.S. Census data accounts for self-employed workers in both incorporated and unincorporated businesses. Self-employed workers make up 8.6 percent of northeast Indiana's employed civilian workforce 16 and older.

It is unclear why the percentage of self-employed workers in northeast Indiana is declining, but one reason may be a low unemployment rate and an abundance of company jobs. The unemployment rate in northeast Indiana has consistently been below the national rate for the last few years.

About Northeast Indiana Works: Northeast Indiana Works, the region's workforce development board, provides public and private financial and employment resources to businesses and individuals for education and skills training to meet the needs of regional industries. The nonprofit sets policy for how public and private funds are utilized to support talent development. It also operates and staffs the 11 county-based WorkOne Northeast career centers in the region. Individuals and companies may access resources and services by visiting or calling WorkOne in their county. To find your local WorkOne, log on to www.neinworks.org
