



# Blaine County

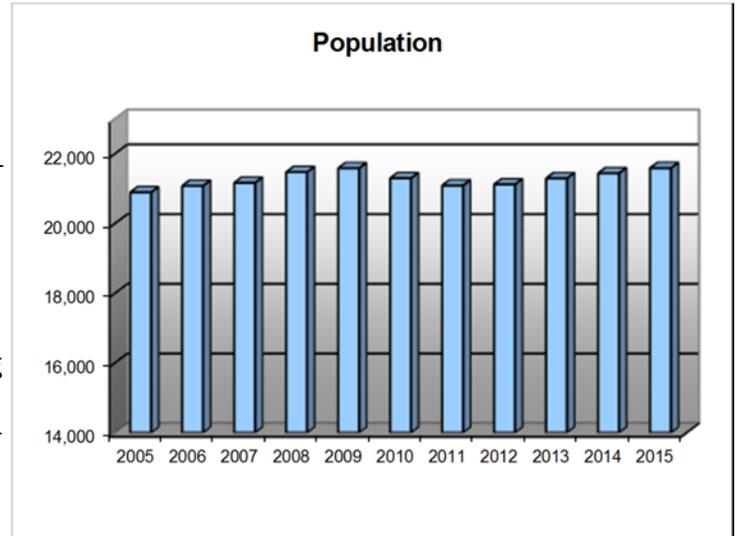
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IDAHO  
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## Workforce Trends

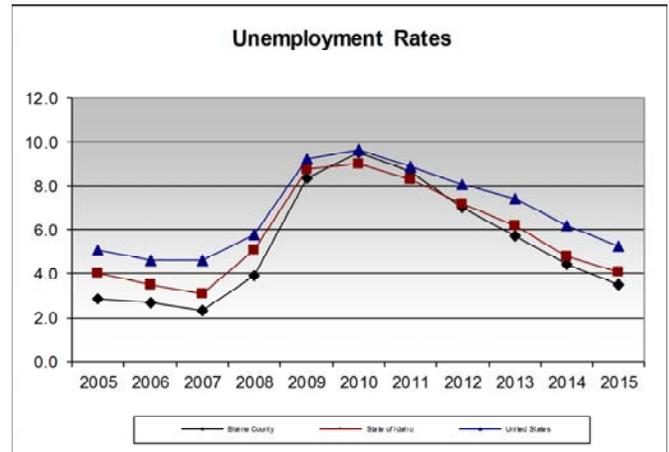
### Population

Blaine County's population rose 3.3 percent from 20,897 in 2005 to 21,592 in 2015, slow growth in the second half of the decade eroded gains during the good economic times in the first half. Hailey is the county seat and largest town at 8,134. Beautiful mountains and virtually unlimited recreational opportunities make Blaine County a destination for visitors, both domestic and international. The world famous Sun Valley Ski Resort reported 358,717 skier days during the 2014-2015 season, up 3 percent from last year. Local leaders continue to try jump starting the economy. The recession was severe, dramatically cooling building activity in upscale subdivisions and condominium projects. Ketchum, the commercial hub, has five approved hotel projects with just one starting construction in 2015. New attractions in recent years include an all-season gondola, another golf course, a Nordic ski lodge, an outdoor symphony pavilion and rodeo grounds, all enhancing tourism. Collaborative marketing is expected to bring more visitors to the area. New direct flights from major cities and regional jets should increase access, mostly supported by local option tax.



### Labor Force & Employment

Blaine County's workforce has suffered from the construction and housing slump that hit many tourism and high-growth areas across the nation. The unemployment rate was fairly stable during the early part of the last decade. The continued expansion sent the rate plunging to 2.3 percent in 2007 before the recession pushed it up to 9.6 percent in 2010. Spring and fall recreation and conferences have eased some of the seasonal slumps. Most jobs are in the relatively lower-paying hospitality and retail sectors so the labor pool continues to be constrained by a lack of affordable housing. Efforts by communities to require affordable housing or to build their own have not fully solved the problem. The high cost of living more than offsets wages that are typically higher than elsewhere in Idaho. A significant number of workers commuted to the county for higher-paying construction and

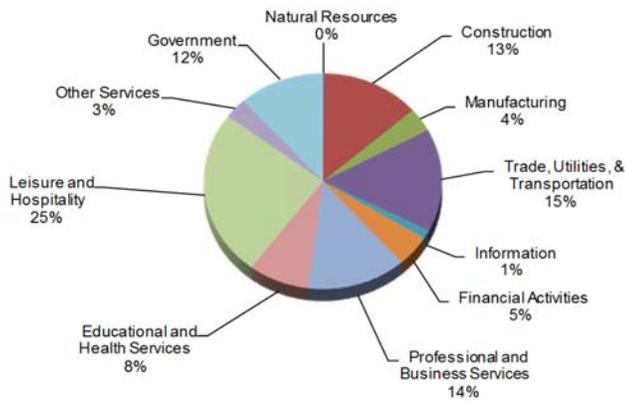


landscape jobs before the Great Recession and those numbers are slowly returning. A new airport was planned and then put on indefinite hold by the Federal Aviation Administration. Sun Valley has been approved as the first Nordic Olympic and Paralympic training site in the United States, the only one specific to Nordic skiing. Recently, it also was awarded designations for alpine, Nordic, freestyle, freeskiing and snowboarding.

Labor Force	Oct 15	Oct 16
Civilian Labor Force	11,851	11,744
Total Employment	11,470	11,407
Unemployed	380	337
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.2	2.9
State of Idaho % Unemployed	4.0	3.8
U.S. % Unemployed	5.0	4.9

Labor Force	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Civilian Labor Force	14,067	14,167	13,677	13,726	13,348	11,948	11,870	11,722	11,601	11,482	11,879
Unemployment	398	382	321	540	1,116	1,141	1,030	824	666	511	416
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.8	2.7	2.3	3.9	8.4	9.6	8.7	7.0	5.7	4.4	3.5
Employment	13,669	13,785	13,356	13,186	12,232	10,806	10,840	10,898	10,935	10,971	11,463

## Nonfarm Payroll Jobs for 2015



## Wages & Income

Wages in Blaine County are significantly higher than other counties in the region and the state because of the high cost of living mostly attributed to high real estate prices. The county's natural beauty and diverse recreational opportunities attract the affluent. Per capita income in 2014 remained the highest in Idaho—82 percent greater than the nation's per capita income and 128 percent more than Idaho's, up 4 percent over the year. Covered average wages decreased by 1.3 percent from 2014 to 2015, as a result of the education and health services sector wages dropping 16 percent. Average employment growth was driven by construction and professional and business services, both still not recovered to pre-recession levels. The outlook is for service sector growth with corresponding lower wages.

Major Employers
Atkinson's Market
180 Connect
Power Engineers
Rocky Mountain Hardware
St. Luke's Wood River Medical Center
Sun Valley Lodge aka Sinclair Company
Webb Landscape, Inc.

Occupational Wages*	Median Wage
Public School Teachers (annual wage)	\$44,928
Social Workers*	\$24.42
Registered Nurses*	\$26.98
Legal Secretaries*	\$14.36
Bookkeepers	\$21.36
Cashiers	\$9.14
Motel Housekeeping	\$10.37
Chefs*	\$16.87
Landscapers	\$13.88
Construction Labor	\$13.29
Electricians, Journeyman*	\$26.24
Automotive Mechanics	\$28.75

Source: Occupational Employment & Wage Survey, 2015

\*Add a premium of 20-30 percent due to cost of living

\* Additional occupational wage data can be found on the Idaho Department of Labor website at [lmi.idaho.gov](http://lmi.idaho.gov).

Covered Employment & Average Annual Wages Per Job for 2005, 2014 & 2015	2005		2014		2015	
	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages
Total Covered Wages	13,466	\$32,880	11,913	\$40,199	12,419	\$39,689
Agriculture	126	\$22,632	105	\$33,442	115	\$32,045
Mining	33	\$35,537	22	\$41,467	*	*
Construction	2,359	\$36,811	1,293	\$41,086	1,571	\$43,023
Manufacturing	489	\$46,858	428	\$54,464	438	\$54,887
Trade, Utilities & Transportation	2,186	\$31,187	1,859	\$33,744	1,891	\$34,356
Information	313	\$31,650	146	\$43,129	160	\$42,552
Financial Activities	761	\$48,996	563	\$56,470	557	\$52,275
Professional and Business Services	1,817	\$44,653	1,481	\$57,638	1,591	\$58,701
Educational and Health Services	765	\$33,551	1,069	\$62,534	1,043	\$52,541
Leisure and Hospitality	2,909	\$17,166	3,031	\$22,140	3,129	\$21,864
Other Services	440	\$27,793	454	\$34,768	452	\$35,218
Government	1,269	\$35,208	1,461	\$42,479	1,450	\$43,587

Per Capita Income	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Blaine County	\$61,984	\$70,212	\$71,960	\$76,421	\$64,787	\$61,541	\$68,937	\$76,790	\$80,348	\$83,573
State of Idaho	\$29,815	\$31,945	\$32,952	\$32,854	\$31,392	\$32,050	\$33,544	\$34,846	\$35,641	\$36,734
United States	\$35,904	\$38,144	\$39,821	\$41,082	\$39,376	\$40,277	\$42,453	\$44,266	\$44,438	\$46,049

Information provided by Bureau of Economic Analysis



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