



POPULATION BRIEF

Trends in the Western U.S.

The State of Idaho

By Don E. Albrecht

Overview

Rural development is the process by which the lives of individuals and families living in rural areas are improved. Effective rural development necessarily involves several components that include 1) good jobs that provide individuals and families the opportunity to earn and maintain a livable income; 2) a chance to complete an education and have lifelong opportunities to learn and improve one's circumstances; 3) and the opportunity to live a reasonably long and healthy life. Communities that effectively meet these conditions are likely to retain existing residents and attract new residents and thus experience population growth.

Additionally, effective rural development means that opportunities to obtain high-quality employment, complete an education, and live a long and healthy life must be available to all residents of the community, rather than only to certain segments of the population.

The first step in advancing an effective rural development program is to carefully assess baseline conditions. In response, the Western Rural Development Center (WRDC) is providing a set of population briefs that provide some of this baseline information. Each population brief will assess one of the components of rural development listed above. This brief examines population changes in Idaho. Each brief will explore overall conditions, and then examine the extent to which opportunities are available to all segments of the population by making comparisons on race/ethnicity, gender, family structure or geography. The geographic component will provide comparisons between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas and will compare

the west with the remainder of the United States. Further, population briefs for each of the 13 states comprising the western region are developed that provide more detailed information on rural development issues. Data for these population briefs are obtained from the United States Census.

Growth in Idaho: Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan

The population in the State of Idaho increased by 55.4 percent growing from 943,035 in 1980 to 1,466,465 in 2006. Of the 50 states, this was the 9th highest percentage increase. An examination of Figure 1 shows that population growth was especially prominent in the Boise-Nampa Metropolitan Area. In this five-county metropolitan area, the population increased from 280,035 in 1980 to 567,640 in 2006, an increase of 102.7 percent. In the 26 years between 1980 and 2006, the Idaho population increased by more than 500,000; over one-half of this growth (287,605) occurred in the Boise-Nampa Metropolitan Areas. Each of the other five metropolitan areas in the state (Coeur d'Alene, Idaho Falls, Lewiston, Preston [which is part of the Logan, Utah metro area] and Pocatello) also had significant population growth. Growth was most prominent in Coeur d'Alene (Kootenai County), where the population increased from 57,770 in 1980 to 131,507 in 2006, a 127.6 percent

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increase. The 32 nonmetropolitan counties had a combined population growth of 25.6 percent, increasing from 408,466 in 1980 to 513,163 in 2006. However, there was extensive variation among these counties. In two counties (Blaine and Teton) the population more than doubled. Both of these counties have attracted extensive amenity-related growth, as Blaine County is the home of Sun Valley, while Teton County borders on the Grand Teton National Park. In contrast, the population declined in seven counties (Bear Lake, Butte, Caribou, Clearwater, Lewis, Minidoka, and Shoshone). Among nonmetropolitan counties, the most extensive numerical increases were in Twin Falls County (where the population increased by 18,648) and Bonner County (where the population increased by 17,112; see Table 1).

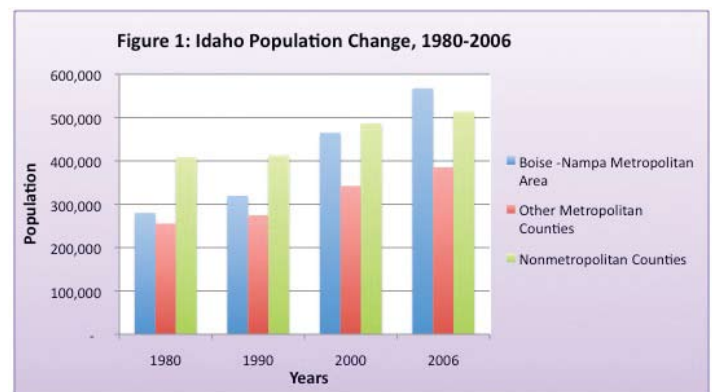


Figure 2 shows the population concentration around Boise and the generally sparse population throughout the rest of the state. Both the rapidly growing counties and the declining counties are distributed throughout the state (Figure 3).

Minority Population Growth

In 1980, over 94 percent of the residents of Idaho were White. In the following two decades, the population became much more racially and ethnically diverse. In particular, the Hispanic population increased by 178 percent; growing from 36,560 residents in 1980 to 101,594 residents in 2006. Although

their numbers were much smaller, the Black, Native American and Asian populations grew at a much faster rate than the White population. Consequently, by 2000, the proportion of the Idaho population that was White was reduced to 89 percent (see Figure 4).

Income, Poverty and Education

Figures 5 through 9 provide information on the distribution of income, poverty levels and education among various segments of the Idaho population. The median household income in Idaho was \$34,373 in 2000. Among states in the Western

Region, only Arizona, New Mexico and Montana had lower average household incomes. From Figure 5 it is apparent that White and metropolitan households have incomes that are higher than minority and nonmetropolitan households. For White metropolitan residents the average household income was \$37,608, compared to \$27,101 for the average minority household in a nonmetropolitan county. Differences by race/ethnicity are even more pronounced when examining poverty levels (Figure 6). While 10.5 percent of White metropolitan households and 12.4 percent of White nonmetropolitan households are

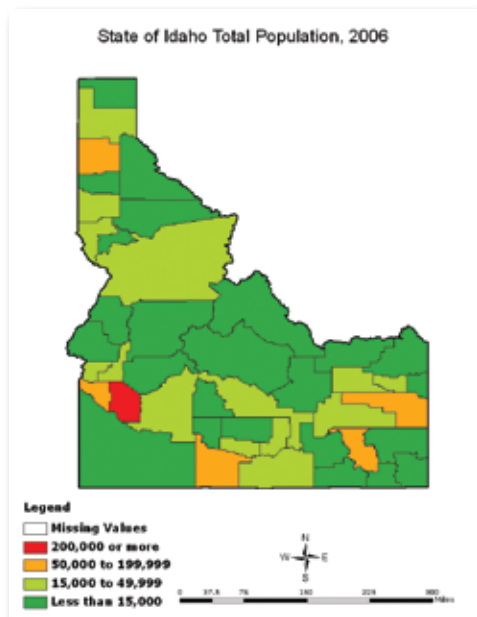


Figure 2

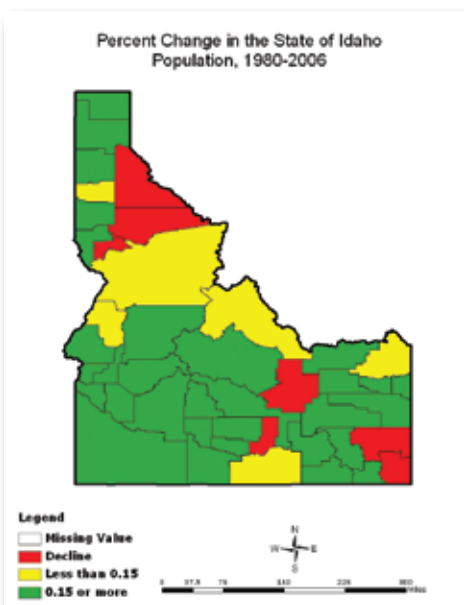


Figure 3

	1980	1990	2000	2006	Change 1980 - 2006	
					Total	Percent
State Total	943,935	1,006,749	1,293,953	1,466,465	522,530	55.4
Metropolitan Areas						
Total	535,469	594,239	807,044	953,302	417,833	78.0
Boise - Nampa						
Total	280,035	319,596	464,840	567,640	287,605	102.7
Ada County	173,036	205,775	300,904	359,035	185,999	107.5
Boise County	2,999	3,509	6,670	7,641	4,642	154.8
Canyon County	83,756	90,076	131,441	173,302	89,546	106.9
Gem County	11,972	11,844	15,181	16,558	4,586	38.3
Owyhee County	8,272	8,392	10,644	11,104	2,832	34.2
Coeur d'Alene						
Kootenai County	57,770	69,795	108,685	131,507	73,737	127.6
Idaho Falls						
Total	81,284	88,750	101,677	116,980	35,696	43.9
Bonneville County	65,980	72,207	82,522	94,630	28,650	43.4
Jefferson County	15,304	16,543	19,155	22,350	7,046	46.0
Lewiston						
Nez Perce County	33,220	33,754	37,410	38,324	5,104	15.4
Logan, Utah						
Franklin County	8,895	9,232	11,329	12,494	3,599	40.5
Pocatello						
Total	72,265	73,112	83,103	86,357	14,092	19.5
Bannock County	65,421	66,026	75,565	78,443	13,022	19.9
Power County	6,844	7,086	7,538	7,914	1,070	15.6
Nonmetropolitan Counties						
Total	408,466	412,510	486,909	513,163	104,697	25.6
Adams County	3,347	3,254	3,476	3,485	138	4.1
Bear Lake County	6,931	6,084	6,411	6,167	-764	-11.0
Benawah County	8,292	7,937	9,171	9,347	1,055	12.7
Bingham	36,489	37,583	41,735	44,051	7,562	20.7
Blaine County	9,841	13,552	18,991	21,501	11,660	118.5
Bonner County	24,163	26,622	36,835	41,275	17,112	70.8
Boundary County	7,289	8,332	9,871	10,831	3,542	48.6
Butte County	3,342	2,918	2,899	2,781	-561	-16.8
Camas County	818	727	991	1,088	270	33.0
Caribou County	8,695	6,963	7,304	6,996	-1,699	-19.5
Cassia County	19,427	19,532	21,416	21,365	1,938	10.0
Clark County	798	762	1,022	920	122	15.3
Clearwater County	10,390	8,505	8,930	8,324	-2,066	-19.9
Custer County	3,385	4,133	4,342	4,180	795	23.5
Elmore County	21,565	21,205	29,130	28,114	6,549	30.4
Fremont County	10,813	10,937	11,819	12,369	1,556	14.4
Gooding County	11,874	11,633	14,155	14,404	2,530	21.3
Idaho County	14,769	13,783	15,511	15,762	993	6.7
Jerome County	14,840	15,138	18,342	20,130	5,290	35.6
Latah County	28,749	30,617	34,935	35,029	6,280	21.8
Lemhi County	7,460	6,899	7,806	7,930	470	6.3
Lewis County	4,118	3,516	3,747	3,756	-362	-8.8
Lincoln County	3,436	3,308	4,044	4,522	1,086	31.6
Madison County	19,480	23,674	27,467	31,393	11,913	61.2
Minidoka County	19,718	19,361	20,174	19,041	-677	-3.4
Oneida County	3,258	3,492	4,125	4,176	918	28.2
Payette County	15,722	16,434	20,578	22,595	6,873	43.7
Shoshone County	19,226	13,931	13,771	13,180	-6,046	-31.4
Teton County	2,897	3,439	5,999	7,838	4,941	170.6
Twin Falls County	52,927	53,580	64,284	71,575	18,648	35.2
Valley County	5,604	6,109	7,651	8,836	3,232	57.7
Washington County	8,803	8,550	9,977	10,202	1,399	15.9

living in poverty, the proportions are much higher for minority households (22.8 percent in metropolitan counties and 26.8 percent in nonmetropolitan counties). Especially troubling are poverty rates by household structure. As shown in Figure 7, over 30 percent of female-headed households are living in poverty, compared to less than 10 percent of married-couple households. These figures are of concern because the number of female-headed households has increased dramatically in recent decades.

Figures 8 and 9 present information on educational attainment levels by Idaho adults. Overall, 82 percent of Idaho adults have completed high school. Seven of the 13 states in the Western Region have higher high school completion rates (Alaska, Colorado, Montana, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming). Also, 17.4 percent of Idaho adults have a college degree. Among western

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states, only Arizona and Nevada have a lower percentage of college graduates than Idaho. Figure 8 shows that more than 85 percent of White adults have completed high school. In comparison, barely one-half of minorities have a high school degree. Similarly, nearly 20 percent of White adults have a college degree, while less than 10 percent of minorities have completed college.

Health

Idaho tends to have high birth rates and fertility rates, but the proportion of babies born to unmarried women is the second

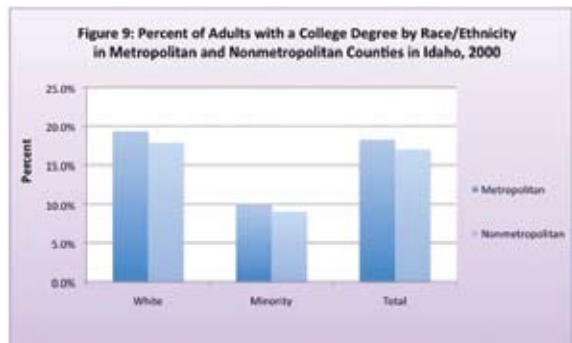
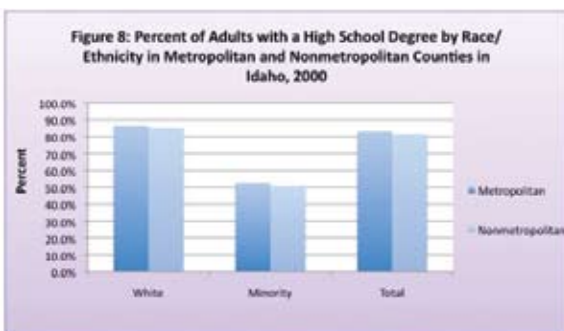
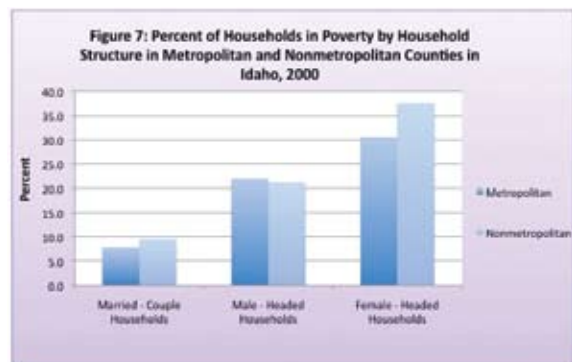
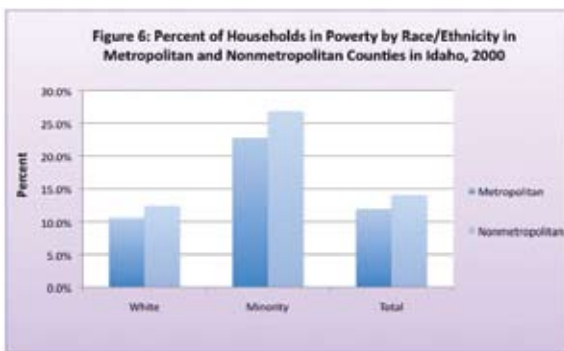
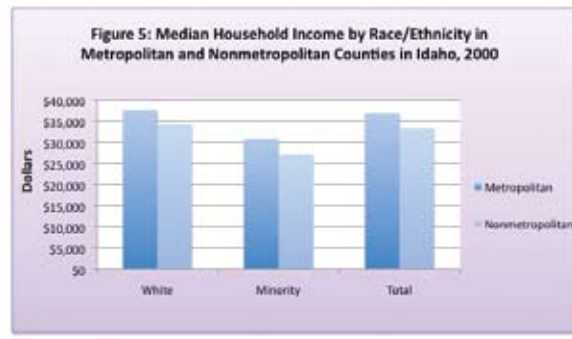
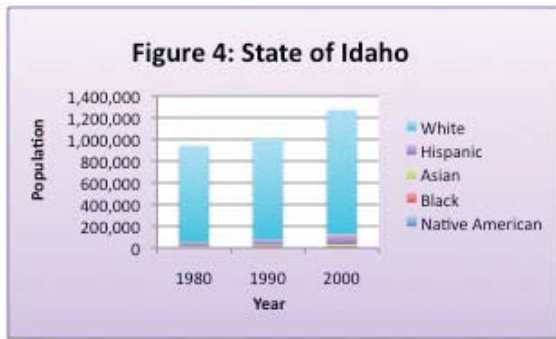
lowest of the 50 states. Of concern, Idaho has the lowest ratio of practicing physicians to population in the nation and the proportion of persons without health insurance is much higher than the national average.

Conclusion

The problems faced by Idaho policy makers and development specialists are very diverse. In several high amenity areas, population growth is extremely rapid, while several other rural areas are experiencing population declines. Concerns about education and health care are vexing, especially among minority populations.●

About the Author

Don E. Albrecht is the Director of the Western Rural Development Center. don.albrecht@usu.edu 435.797.9732



About the Briefs

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Don E. Albrecht, Director

Betsy H. Newman, Publication Specialist

Trish Kingsford, Senior Staff Assistant

Whitney Mortensen, P/T Staff Assistant

The Population Briefs provide information on the population trends in the western U.S. They are intended to provide both basic information and, when combined with the data tables on the WRDC website, more detailed information for further analysis and application.

The series of Population Briefs will include population trends in the western U.S. related to minorities, natural amenities, education, employment/labor, health, fuel usage, and more. Each topic will include a regional overview and then one brief focused on each of the 13 states in the WRDC's region. The briefs will also include data, where available, related to the population trends in the four western U.S. Territories.

The Population Briefs are available in PDF format on the WRDC website (<http://wrdc.usu.edu>) under 'Publications' and in paper format through the WRDC offices via email to wrdc@usu.edu.

Data

Data for this series is obtained from the U.S. Census of Population for 1980, 1990, 2000, and, where available, 2006. Data is reported for all persons for whom race/ethnicity was reported.



The Western Rural Development Center (WRDC) is one of four regional centers funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Services (CSREES) to strengthen the capacity of local citizens to guide the future of their rural communities. Each of the four Centers link the research and extension capacity of regional land-grant universities with local decision-makers to address a wide range of rural development issues.

The WRDC also receives substantial support from several Utah State University units including Cooperative Extension, the Agricultural Experiment Station and the College of Natural Resources.

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There is a Population Brief for each of the 13 states in the Western Region, and when available, one brief on each of the four U.S. Territories in the region.

To access the state briefs visit 'Rural Resources' on the WRDC website at <http://wrdc.usu.edu>.

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