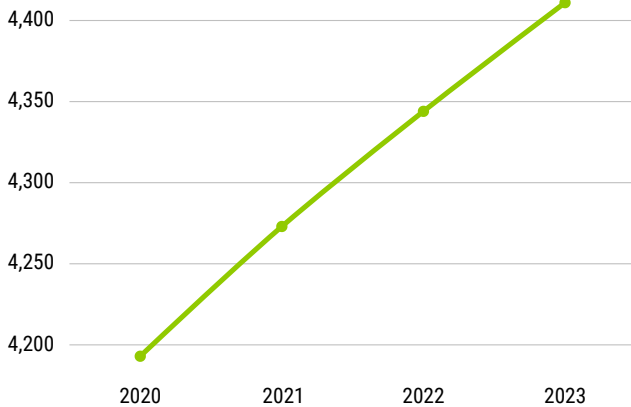


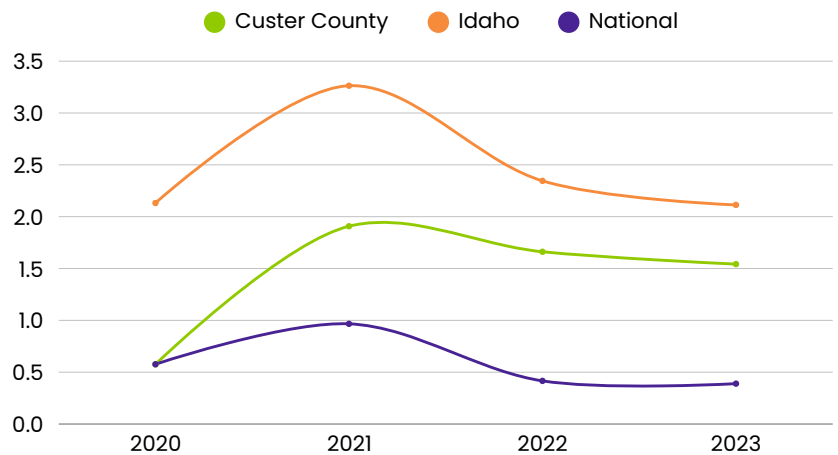
CUSTER
COUNTYPopulation
4,411

SOURCE: CUSTER COUNTY SHERIFF-IDAHO FACEBOOK PAGE

POPULATION



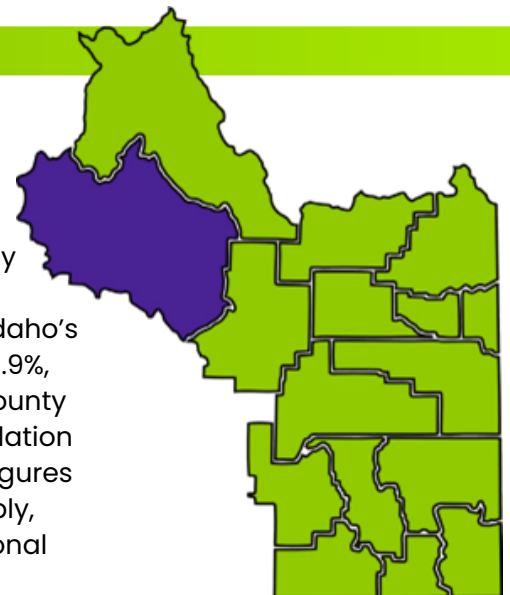
POPULATION PERCENTAGE CHANGE



U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Age and Sex." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S0101, https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2023.S0101?t=Populations+and+People&g=010XX00US_040XX00US16_050XX00US16037. Accessed on 28 Aug 2025.

CUSTER COUNTY'S POPULATION SHIFTS

Between 2020 and 2023, Custer County, Idaho experienced steady population growth, consistently outpacing national trends though generally below statewide increases. In 2020, the county's population grew by approximately 0.6%, slightly above the national growth of 0.6% but below Idaho's 2.1% increase. Growth accelerated in 2021, with Custer County rising about 1.9%, compared to 3.3% for the state and 1.0% nationally. In 2022 and 2023, the county continued modest growth of 1.7% and 1.5%, respectively, while Idaho's population growth slowed slightly and the national rate remained under 0.5%. These figures indicate that Custer County's population has grown steadily and predictably, reflecting a stable rural community with growth rates higher than the national average but below statewide trends.

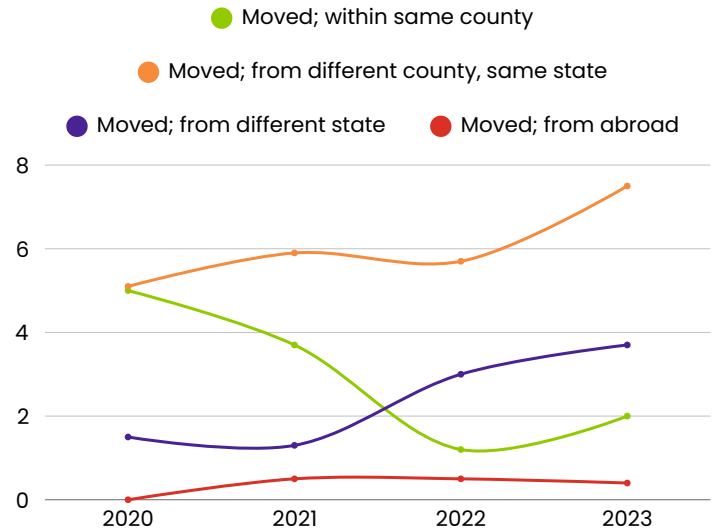


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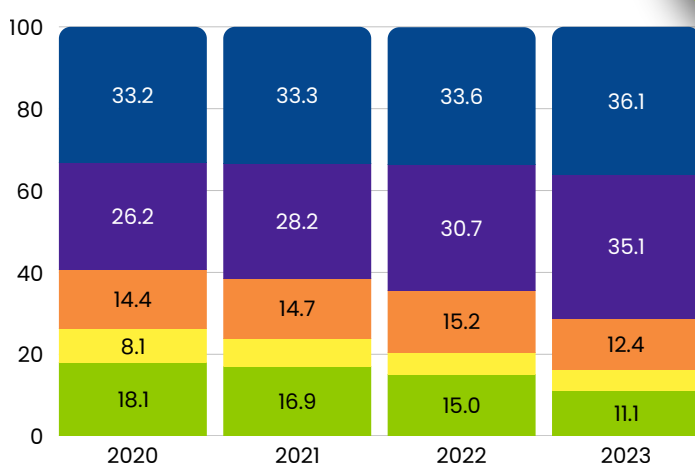
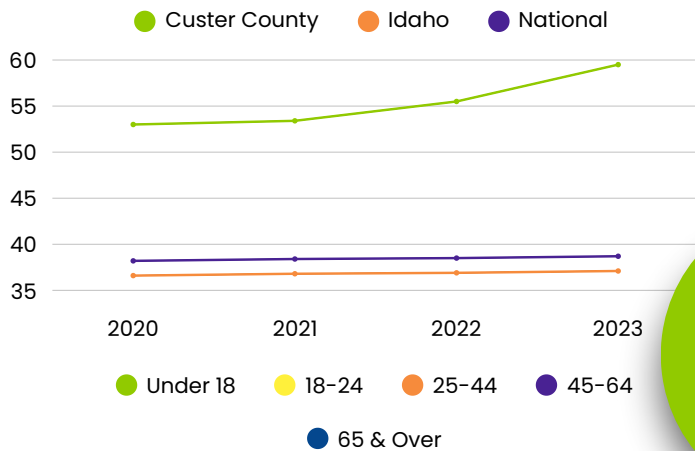
GEOGRAPHIC MOBILITY IN CUSTER COUNTY

From 2020 to 2023, Custer County's geographic mobility trends reflect a modest but noticeable shift in how residents move. Local moves within the county declined from 5.0% in 2020 to 2.0% in 2023, indicating that fewer residents are relocating within the county itself. Migration from other Idaho counties increased from 5.1% to 7.5%, showing that the county is becoming a more attractive destination for in-state movers. Migration from other states also grew steadily, rising from 1.5% in 2020 to 3.7% in 2023, suggesting that Custer County is gradually drawing more residents from outside Idaho. Moves from abroad remained minimal, around 0.4 to 0.5%. Overall, these patterns highlight that Custer County's population growth is increasingly fueled by in-state and out-of-state arrivals, while internal movement and international migration play a smaller role.



U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Geographic Mobility by Selected Characteristics in the United States." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S0701, <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2023.S0701?q=migration&g=050XX00US16037>. Accessed on 28 Aug 2025.

MEDIAN AGE



17.7%
are between 18
and 44 years old

AGE STRUCTURE TRENDS IN CUSTER COUNTY

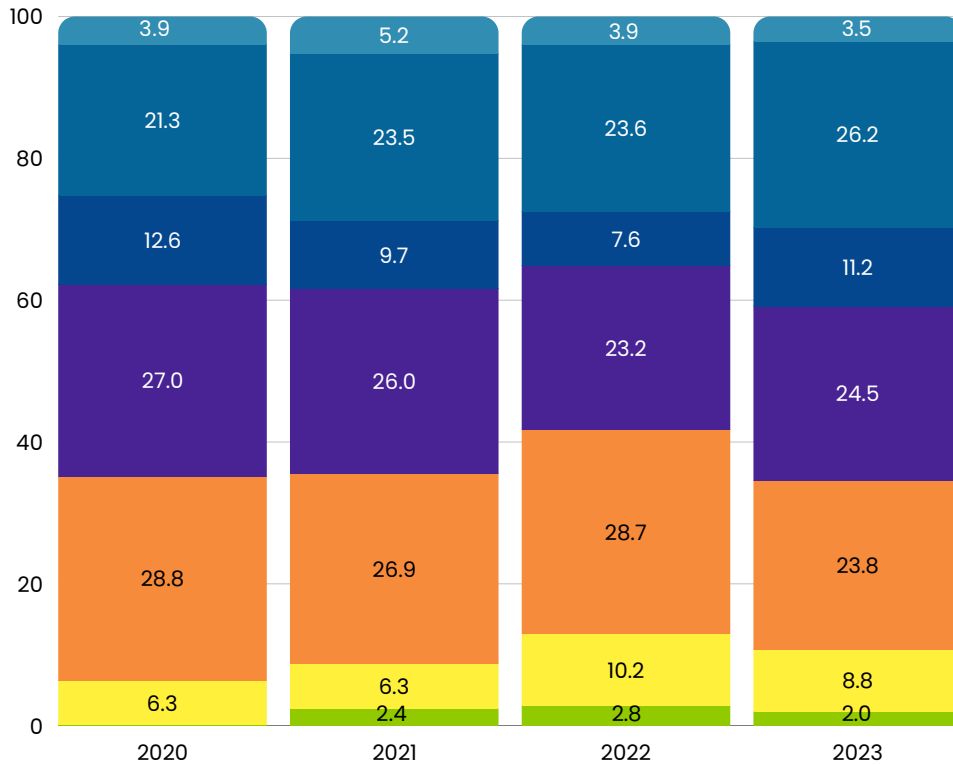
Custer County's age profile from 2020 to 2023 shows a clear trend toward an older population. The share of residents under 18 declined sharply from 18.1% to 11.1%, while young adults ages 18 to 24 also fell from 8.1% to 5.3%. Adults in the 25 to 44 age group decreased slightly overall, from 14.4% in 2020 to 12.4% in 2023, though with some fluctuation mid period. In contrast, the 45 to 64 population grew from 26.2% to 35.1%, and those 65 and older increased from 33.2% to 36.1%, underscoring a strong aging trend. Together, these shifts indicate that Custer County's population is becoming more heavily concentrated in middle-aged and senior cohorts, suggesting future challenges for workforce sustainability alongside growing demand for healthcare and retirement services.

U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Age and Sex." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S0101, https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2023.S0101?t=Populations+and+People&g=010XX00US_040XX00US16_050XX00US16037. Accessed on 28 Aug 2025.

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EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

- Less than 9th grade
- 9th - 12th grade, No diploma
- High school graduate (includes equivalency)
- Some college, No degree
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Graduate or professional degree



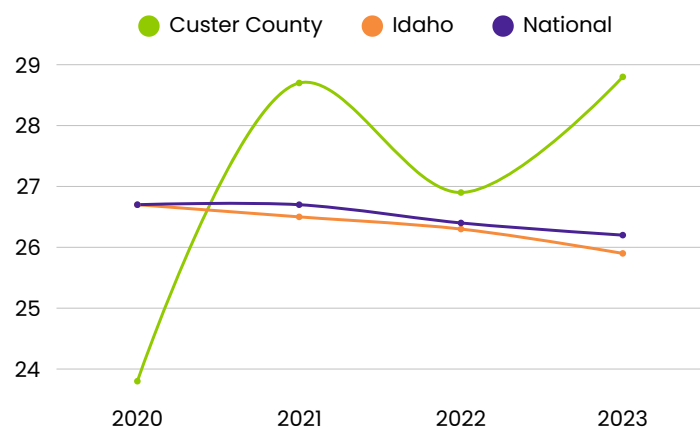
Between 2020 and 2023, Custer County's educational attainment showed both stability and gradual improvement. The share of adults without a high school diploma rose slightly in the middle years but settled at 10.8% in 2023, while high school graduates held steady around one-quarter of the population. Residents with some college but no degree remained consistent at 24% to 27%, and associate's degrees fluctuated between 8% and 13%. Bachelor's degree attainment increased notably, from 21.3% in 2020 to 26.2% in 2023, while graduate and professional degrees stayed modest at 3% to 5%. Taken together, the data highlight incremental progress toward higher education, particularly through growth in bachelor's degrees, even as a portion of the population continues to lack a diploma.



U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Educational Attainment." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1501, <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2023.S1501?t=Educational+Attainment&g=050XX00US16037>. Accessed on 28 Aug 2025.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES

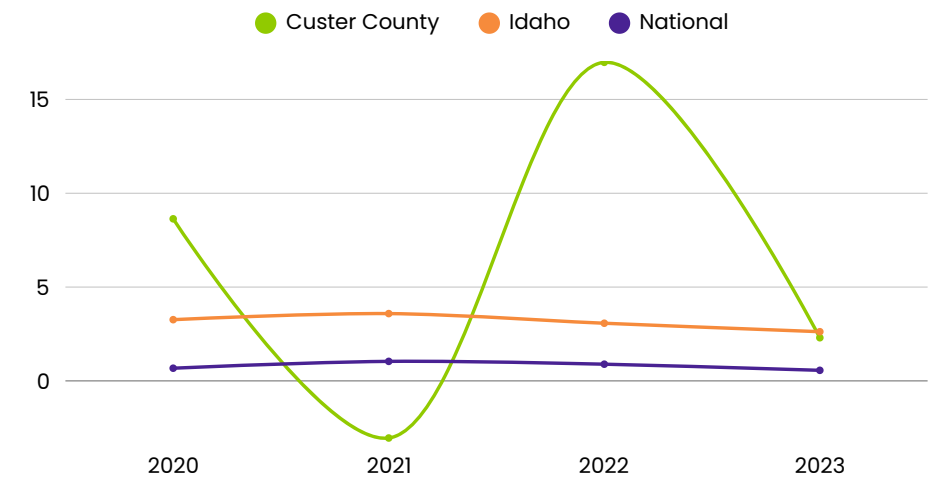
From 2020 to 2023, the percentage of Custer County residents age 25 and over whose highest level of education was a high school diploma or equivalent increased from 23.8% to 28.8%. High school graduation has become a more common level of attainment in the county and now exceeds both Idaho and national averages, which stood at 25.9% and 26.2% in 2023, respectively. This solid foundation in high school education equips residents with essential skills for workforce participation and provides a platform for further education and career advancement. At the same time, Custer County is also experiencing gains in postsecondary and technical education, reflecting a community that values continued learning and is preparing for a diverse and evolving economy. These trends underscore the county's commitment to educational achievement and its role in supporting local economic growth and opportunities for residents across all stages of life.



U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Educational Attainment." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1501, https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2023.S1501?t=Educational+Attainment&g=010XX00US_040XX00US16_050XX00US1602,16037. Accessed on 2 Sep 2025.

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JOB GROWTH



U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Selected Economic Characteristics." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP03, https://data.census.gov/tables//ACSDP5Y2023.DP03?t=Employment+and+Labor+Force+Status&g=010XX00US_040XX00US16_050XX00US16037. Accessed on 2 Sep 2025.

From 2020 to 2023, Custer County's job growth showed notable swings but remained a net positive overall. The county experienced rapid growth in 2020 (8.6%) followed by a small decline in 2021 (-3.0%).

Growth then surged again in 2022, reaching 17.0%—well above Idaho (3.1%) and the national rate (0.9%). By 2023, job growth moderated to 2.3%, slightly trailing Idaho (2.6%) but still exceeding the U.S. average (0.6%). These fluctuations reflect the dynamics of a smaller, rural labor market, yet the long-term trend underscores Custer County's resilience, adaptability, and potential for sustained economic activity.



KEY EMPLOYERS

Custer County's economy is supported by a mix of public sector employers, natural resource management, and local private enterprises. The largest employer is the U.S. Forest Service, with an estimated 100 to 249 employees, reflecting the county's strong connection to federal land management and outdoor recreation. Local education also plays a central role, with the Challis and Mackay Joint School Districts among the top employers. Key private sector contributors include Redfish Lake Lodge, Thompson Creek Mining, Mountain Village Resort, Lamb's Market, and Personal Home Care, each employing between 15 and 49 people. Additionally, Custer County government and Idaho Fish and Game provide important local and state government employment. This blend of public service, education, tourism, and resource-based industries highlights the diverse but interdependent nature of Custer County's workforce.

Top Employers	Local Government	Employment Range
U.S. Forest Service	Federal Government	100-249
Challis Joint School District	Local Government	50-99
Redfish Lake Lodge	Private	15-49
Mackay Joint School District	Local Government	15-49
Thompson Creek Mining	Private	15-49
Personal Home Care	Private	15-49
Mountain Village Resort	Private	15-49
Custer County	Local Government	15-49
Lamb's Market	Private	15-49
Idaho Fish and Game	State Government	15-49

Idaho Department of Labor. Custer County Labor Force and Economic Profile. June 2025, <https://lmi.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/CusterProfile.pdf>. Accessed 2 Sep. 2025.

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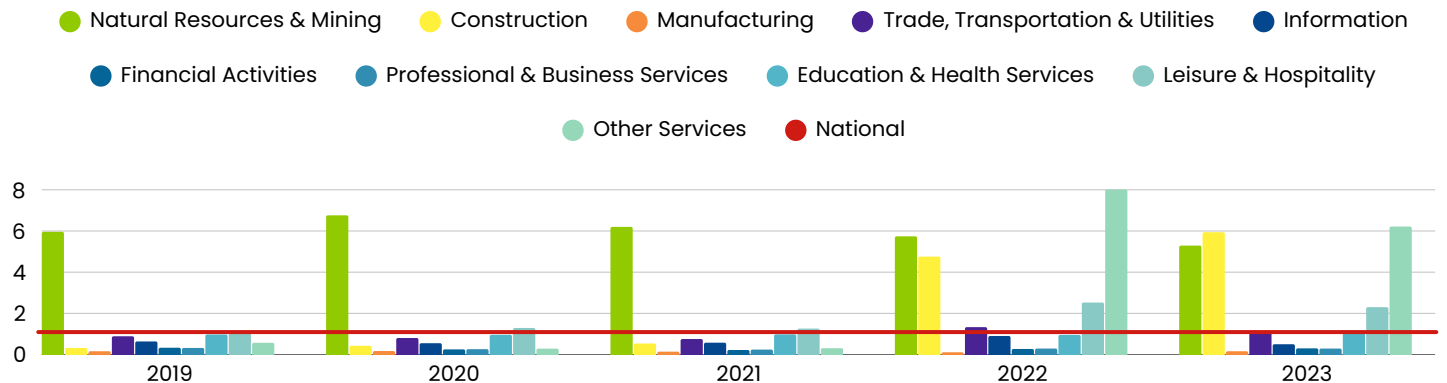
EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR

Custer County’s employment base highlights both its natural resource heritage and its growing service economy. In 2023, the largest share of jobs was in educational services, health care, and social assistance (22.4%), followed by arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services (16.8%), and retail trade (11.9%). At the same time, employment in agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining declined from 21.7% in 2020 to 11.8% in 2023, reflecting shifts in resource-based activity. Meanwhile, sectors such as construction, transportation, professional services, and finance have gradually expanded, contributing to a more balanced mix of opportunities. These trends show a county economy increasingly anchored by health care, education, and service industries while still drawing strength from recreation and its resource-driven past.



U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Selected Economic Characteristics." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP03, <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2023.DP03?t=Industry&g=050XX00US16037>. Accessed on 2 Sep 2025.

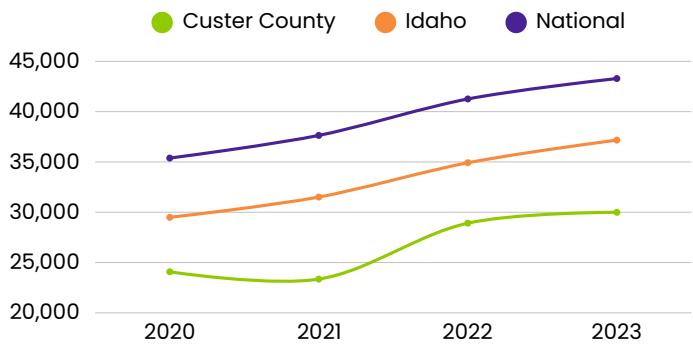
LOCATION QUOTIENT



Location quotient (LQ) compares local industry employment concentration to the national average (1.0). In Custer County, Natural Resources & Mining stands out as the dominant industry, with LQs consistently high, ranging from 5.29 to 6.76 between 2019 and 2023—showcasing the county’s deep reliance on resource-based employment. Leisure & Hospitality is another key specialization, with LQs rising from 1.09 in 2019 to peaks of 2.52 in 2022 and 2.30 in 2023, reflecting the county’s tourism and recreation strength. Construction also surged in concentration, increasing dramatically from 0.32 in 2019 to 5.94 by 2023. Trade, Transportation & Utilities remains moderately above the national average, with LQs ranging from 0.75 to 1.33. Education & Health Services stays close to parity, with values between 0.96 and 1.05. Other sectors, including Manufacturing, Information, Financial Activities, and Professional & Business Services, remain underrepresented with LQs well below 1. Overall, Custer County’s economy is anchored by natural resources, construction, and tourism, supported by modest activity in trade and health services.

Bureau of Labor Statistics. QCEW Data Files – Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2024, www.bls.gov/cew/downloadable-data-files.htm.

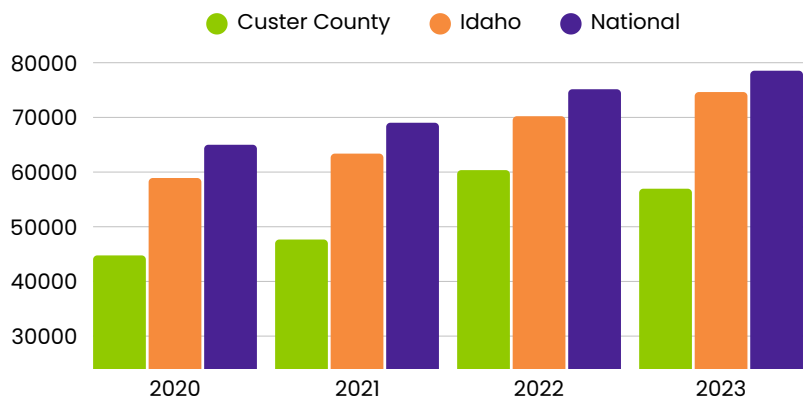
INCOME PER CAPITA



From 2020 to 2023, Custer County's per capita income demonstrated steady growth, rising from \$24,082 in 2020 to \$29,993 in 2023. While the county's income remains below both the Idaho state average (\$37,169) and the national figure (\$43,289) in 2023, the upward trend highlights gradual economic gains for residents. This increase reflects growth across local industries, particularly in natural resources, construction, tourism, and health and education services. Continued focus on workforce development and business expansion could further support income growth and enhance economic well-being in the county.

U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Selected Economic Characteristics." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP03, https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2023.DP03?t=Industry&g=010XX00US_040XX00US16_050XX00US16037. Accessed on 2 Sep 2025.

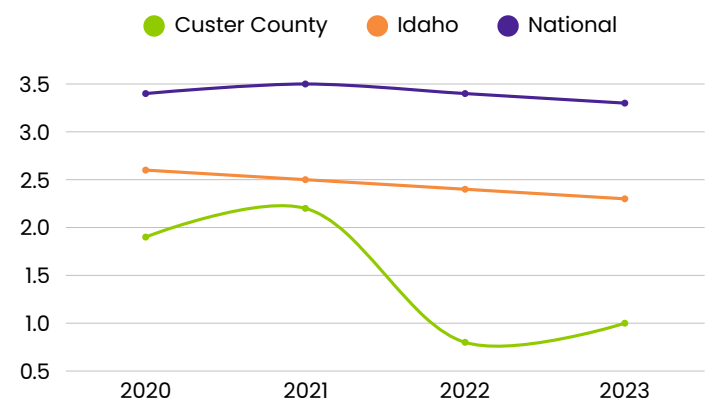
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



From 2020 to 2023, Custer County's median household income rose from \$44,757 to \$56,957, showing steady growth over the period. While still below Idaho's state average (\$74,636) and the national median (\$78,538), the increase reflects improvements in household earnings tied to sectors such as natural resources, construction, tourism, and health and education services. This trend points to gradual economic gains and growing stability for local residents, supporting the county's overall economic development.

U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Selected Economic Characteristics." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP03, https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2023.DP03?t=Industry&g=010XX00US_040XX00US16_050XX00US16037. Accessed on 2 Sep 2025.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



Custer County has maintained a consistently low unemployment rate from 2020 to 2023, ranging from 0.8% to 2.2%. In 2023, the county's unemployment stood at 1.0%, well below both the Idaho state average of 2.3% and the national rate of 3.3%. This low and stable unemployment reflects a resilient local labor market supported by key sectors such as natural resources, construction, tourism, education, and health services. The county's employment stability provides a strong foundation for continued economic growth and workforce development.

U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Selected Economic Characteristics." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP03, https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2023.DP03?t=Industry&g=010XX00US_040XX00US16_050XX00US16037. Accessed on 2 Sep 2025.

COST OF LIVING

Household Size	Living Wage	Poverty Wage	Minimum Wage
1 Adult	\$22.78	\$7.52	\$7.25
1 Adult 1 Child	\$36.04	\$10.17	\$7.25
1 Adult 2 Child	\$43.38	\$12.81	\$7.25
1 Adult 3 Child	\$55.25	\$15.46	\$7.25
2 Adult (1 Work)	\$32.62	\$10.17	\$7.25
2 Adult (1 Work) 1 Child	\$39.02	\$12.81	\$7.25
2 Adult (1 Work) 2 Child	\$43.93	\$15.46	\$7.25
2 Adult (1 Work) 3 Child	\$50.77	\$18.10	\$7.25
2 Adult	\$16.31	\$5.08	\$7.25
2 Adult 1 Child	\$21.13	\$6.41	\$7.25
2 Adult 2 Child	\$25.04	\$7.73	\$7.25
2 Adult 3 Child	\$29.77	\$9.05	\$7.25

Custer County's cost of living reflects the real financial demands faced by households across the community, with living wages significantly higher than the state's minimum of \$7.25 per hour. A single adult needs to earn \$22.78 per hour to cover basic expenses, while a single parent with three children requires a wage of \$55.25. In two-adult households with only one working adult, the living wage ranges from \$32.62 to \$50.77, depending on the number of children. Even dual-income households must earn well above minimum wage to meet essential needs and maintain financial security. While these figures highlight challenges for many working families, they also point to opportunities for growth—through increased access to quality jobs, workforce development, and local initiatives that strengthen economic stability and improve overall quality of life in the county.

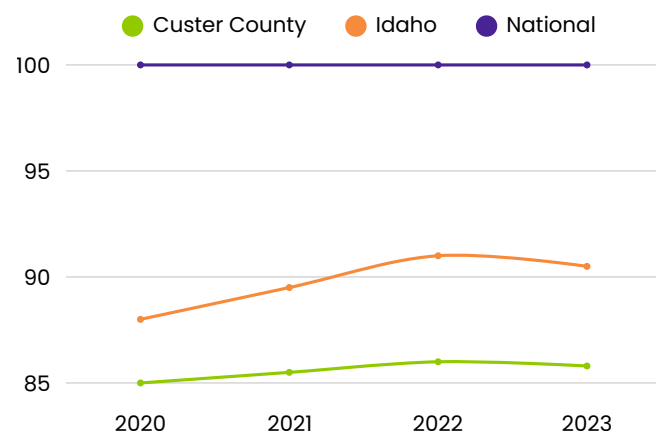
POVERTY

In 2023, approximately 11.5 percent of Custer County residents were living below the poverty line. While this rate is comparable to state and national averages, it reflects ongoing economic challenges faced by many households. The data highlights the need for continued investment in workforce development, access to affordable housing, and support services such as healthcare and education. By strengthening local programs and economic opportunities, the county can work toward greater financial stability and an improved quality of life for all residents.

Living Wage Calculation for Custer County, Idaho. Living Wage Calculator, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 10 Feb. 2025, livingwage.mit.edu/counties/16037. Accessed 2 Sep. 2025.

U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1701, <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2023.S1701?q=poverty&g=050XX00US16037>. Accessed on 2 Sep 2025.

The cost of living index for Custer County from 2020 to 2023 is estimated to range between 85.0 and 85.8, which is consistently lower than Idaho's range of 88.0 to 90.5 and well below the national baseline of 100. This suggests that Custer County offers comparatively lower living expenses, likely influenced by its rural location, smaller population, and more affordable housing costs. These figures are derived as estimates using poverty-related data from the American Community Survey and should be viewed as proxies rather than direct measures of local prices. While the estimates point to a generally lower cost of living, individuals considering relocating to Custer County should carefully evaluate specific costs such as housing, transportation, and healthcare that may vary from household to household.

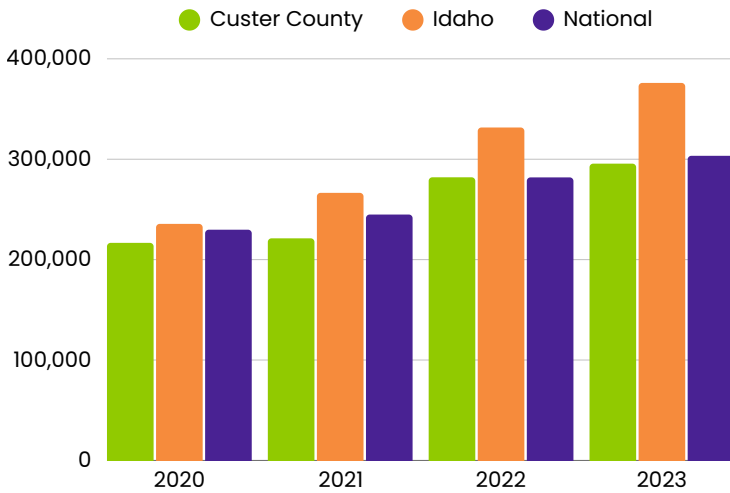


U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months. American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1701. Accessed via data.census.gov on 2 Sep 2025.

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MEDIAN HOME VALUE



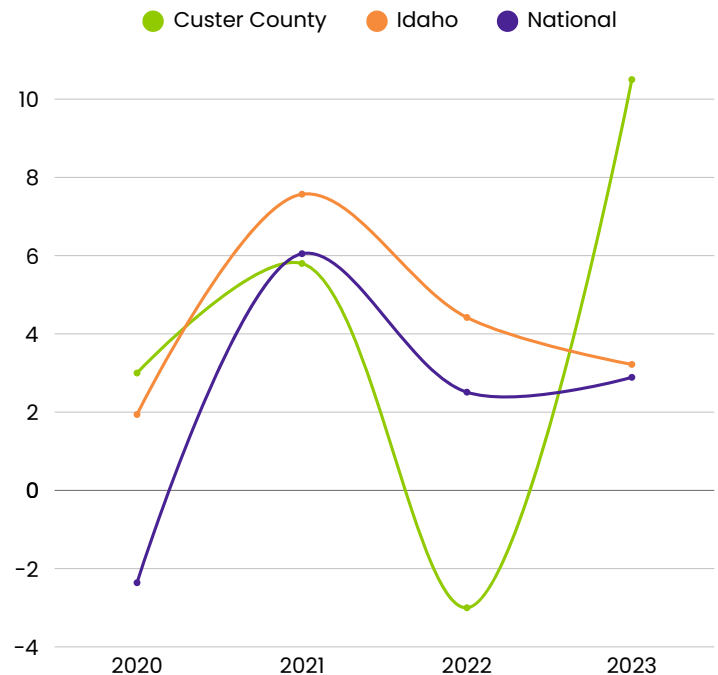
Custer County's median home value has risen steadily over the past several years, reflecting both local market dynamics and broader housing trends. In 2020, the county's median home value was \$216,700, below Idaho's \$235,600 and the national median of \$229,800. The value increased modestly to \$221,200 in 2021, followed by significant growth to \$282,000 in 2022 and \$295,600 in 2023. While still below the state and national medians, this upward trajectory highlights growing demand for housing in the county and points to a gradually strengthening local real estate market, particularly influenced by its rural location and limited housing supply.

U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce. "Median Value (Dollars)." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables, Table B25077, https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT5Y2023.B25077?t=Housing+Value+and+Purchase+Price&g=010XX00US_040XX00US16_050XX00US16037. Accessed on 2 Sep 2025.



CUSTER COUNTY GDP

Custer County's GDP has exhibited notable year-to-year variability from 2020 to 2023, reflecting both local economic conditions and broader state and national trends. In 2020, the county's economy grew 3.0%, above Idaho's 1.9% but contrasting with a national contraction of -2.4%. Growth accelerated in 2021, with GDP rising 5.8%, slightly below Idaho's 7.6% and the national gain of 6.1%. In 2022, the county experienced a decline of -3.0%, even as Idaho and the U.S. continued to expand at 4.4% and 2.5%, respectively. By 2023, Custer County rebounded sharply, posting a 10.5% increase, well above both the state's 3.2% and the national 2.9%. These pronounced swings highlight the county's relatively small and specialized economy, which can be more sensitive to changes in local industries, population shifts, and economic shocks than broader state or national averages, underscoring the importance of monitoring trends closely for planning and development purposes.



U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. Gross Domestic Product by County and Metropolitan Area, 2023. BEA 24-57, Dec. 2024, <https://www.bea.gov/sites/default/files/2024-12/lagdp1224.pdf>. Accessed 2 Sep 2025.

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