

Demographics and population forecast

Sam Wolkenhauer, labor economist
July 22, 2025



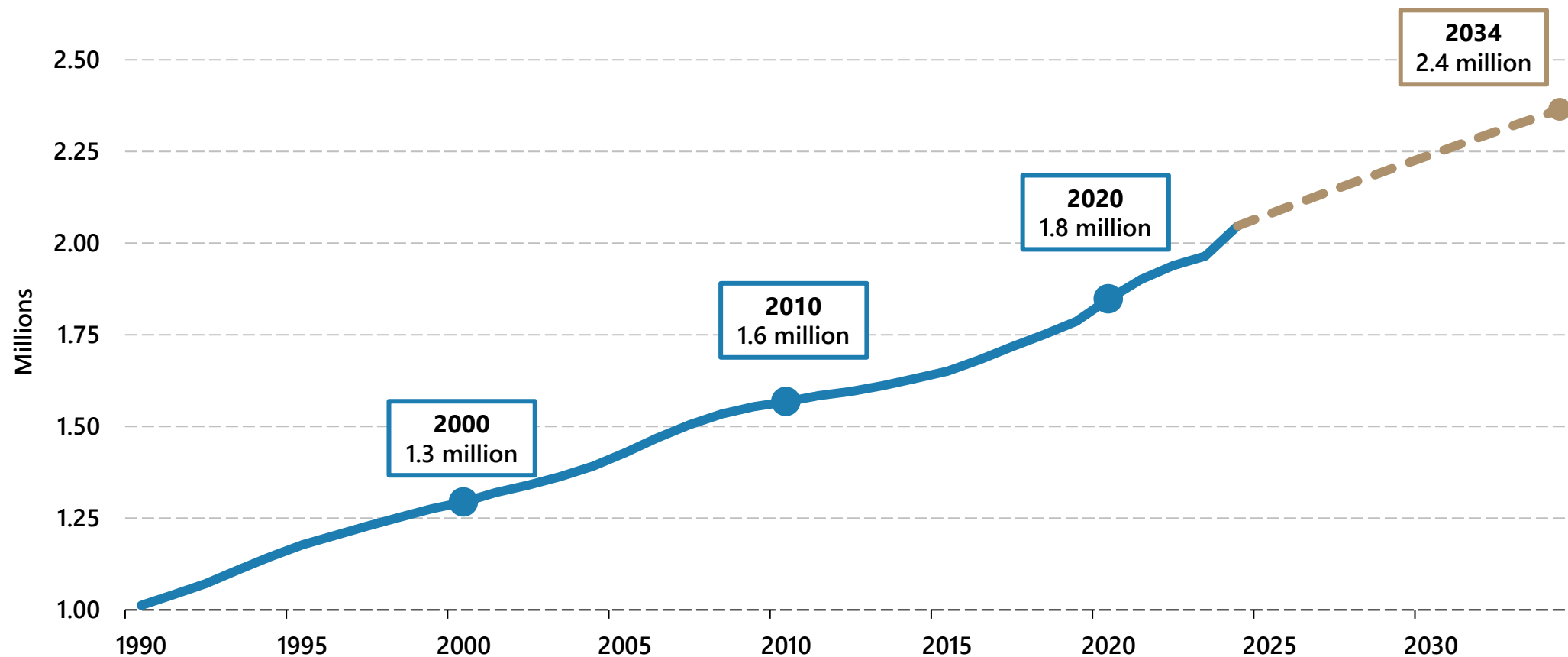
Background: Population forecasts

- Ten-year forecast based on most recent U.S. Census Bureau datasets (Current: 2024 – 2034)
- Forecasts for all Idaho counties with 5-year age blocks (15-19 years, 20-24 years and more)
- Based on updated demographic indicators (birth rates and mortality rates)
- Includes estimates of potential labor pool based on demographic composition

Other topics:

- Aging and workforce availability
- Family size

High level: Idaho's population

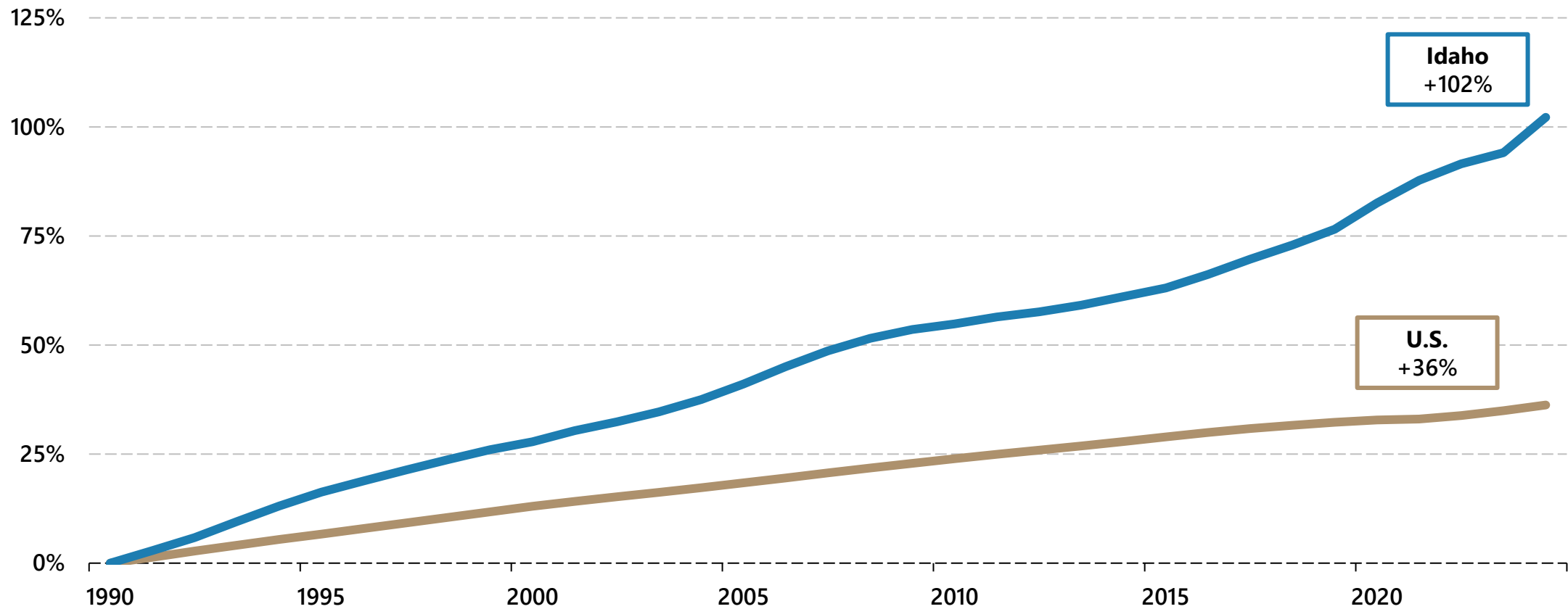


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Idaho Department of Labor

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Growth rate comparison

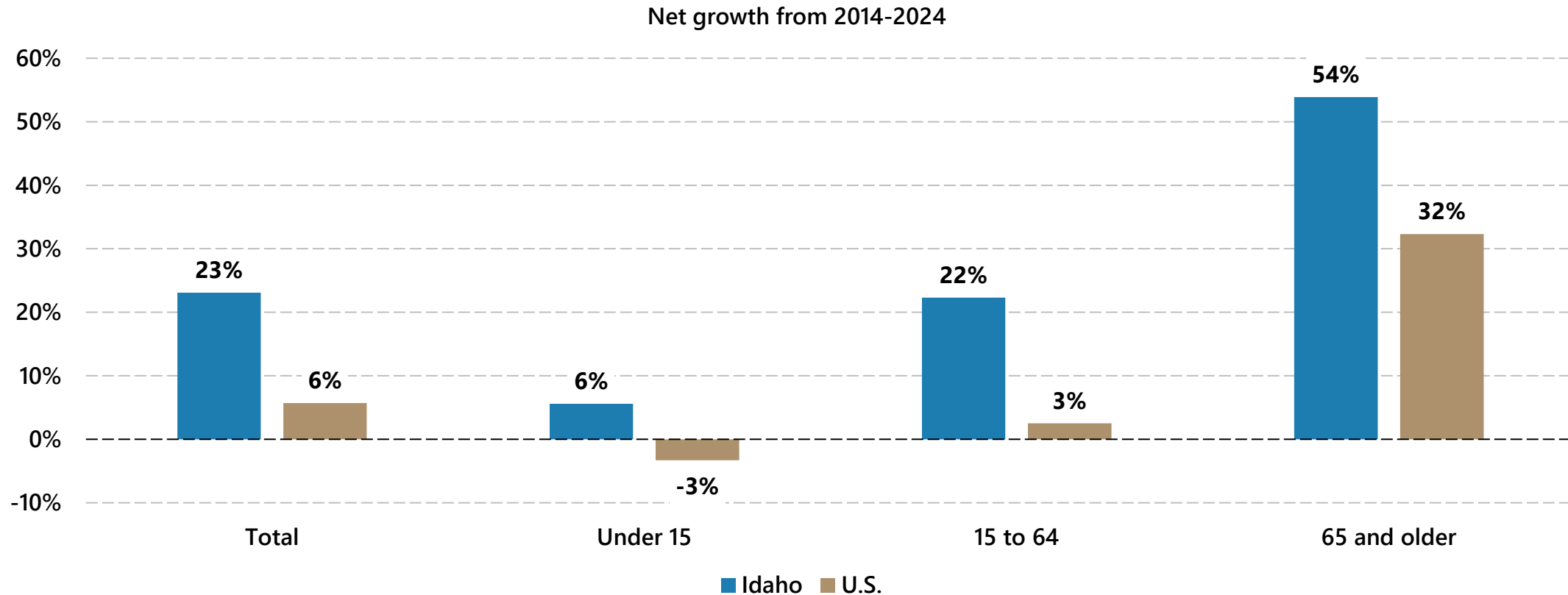


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Idaho Department of Labor

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Comparative growth by age group



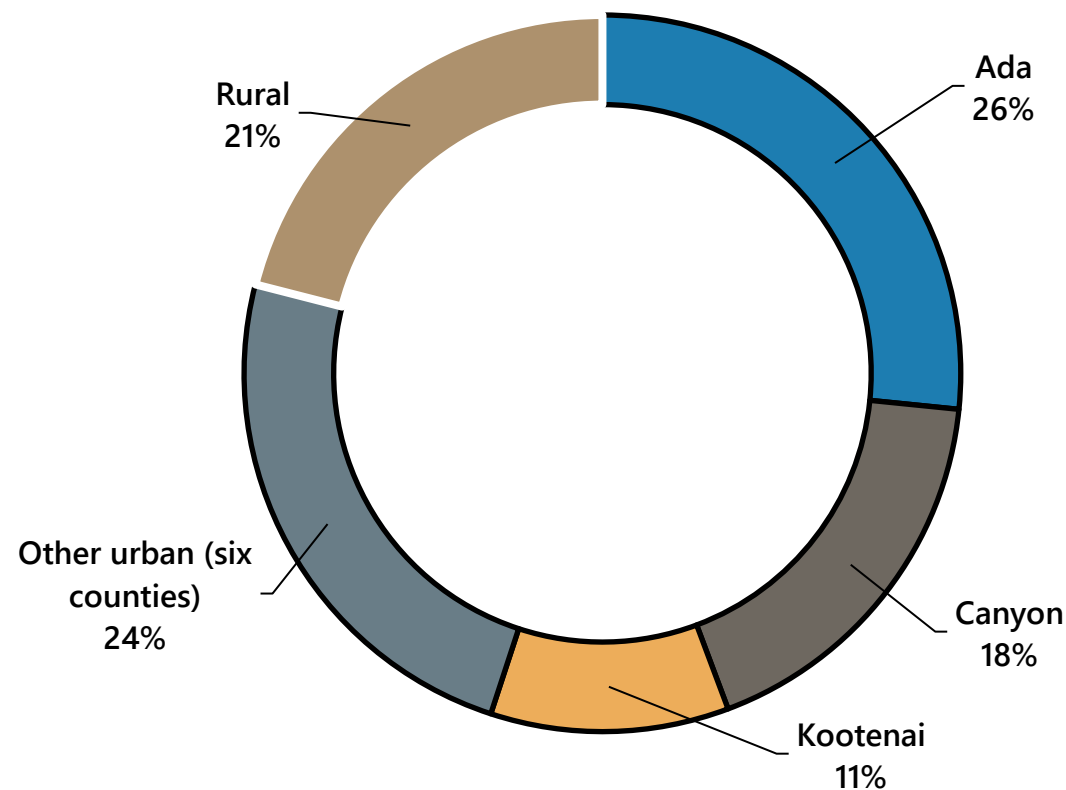
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Idaho Department of Labor

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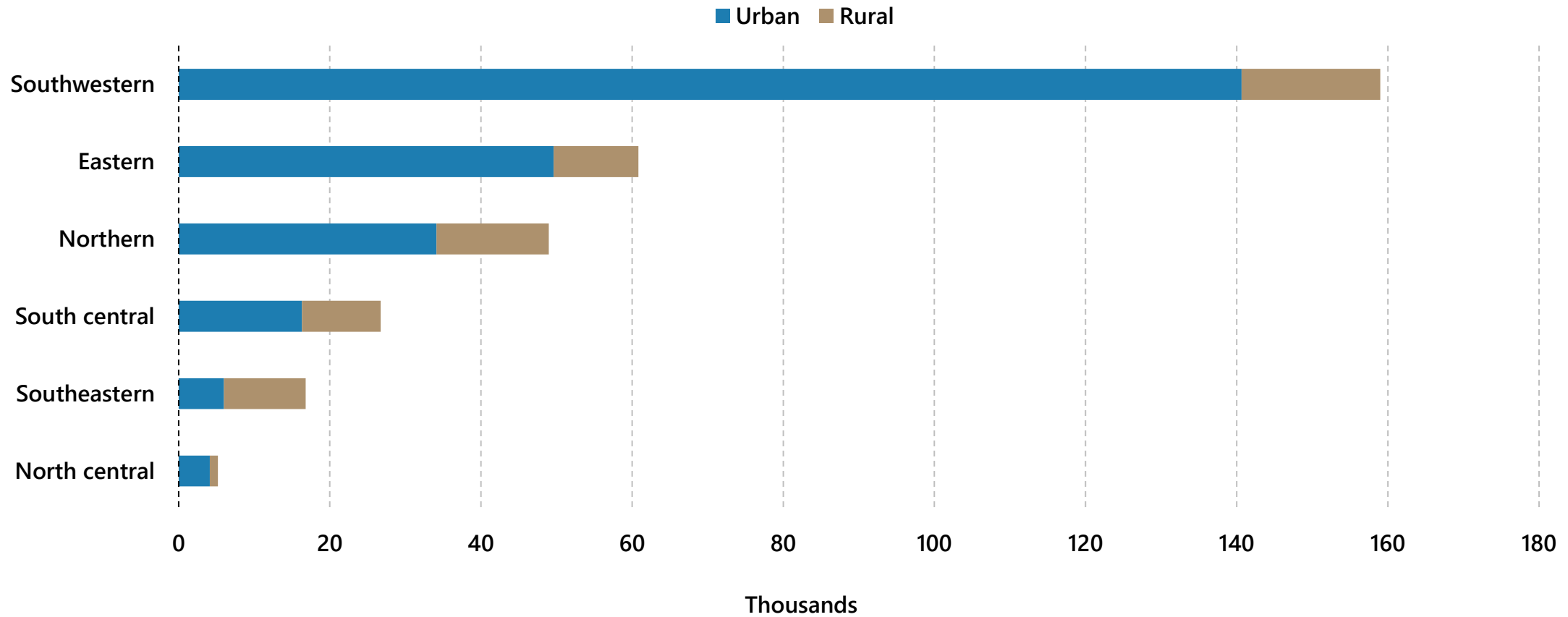


Distribution of Idaho's growth

- 79% of growth is projected in urban counties
- Over half is projected in just three counties
- About 44% is expected in the Boise Metropolitan Area (Ada and Canyon)



Regional growth projections, 2024-2034

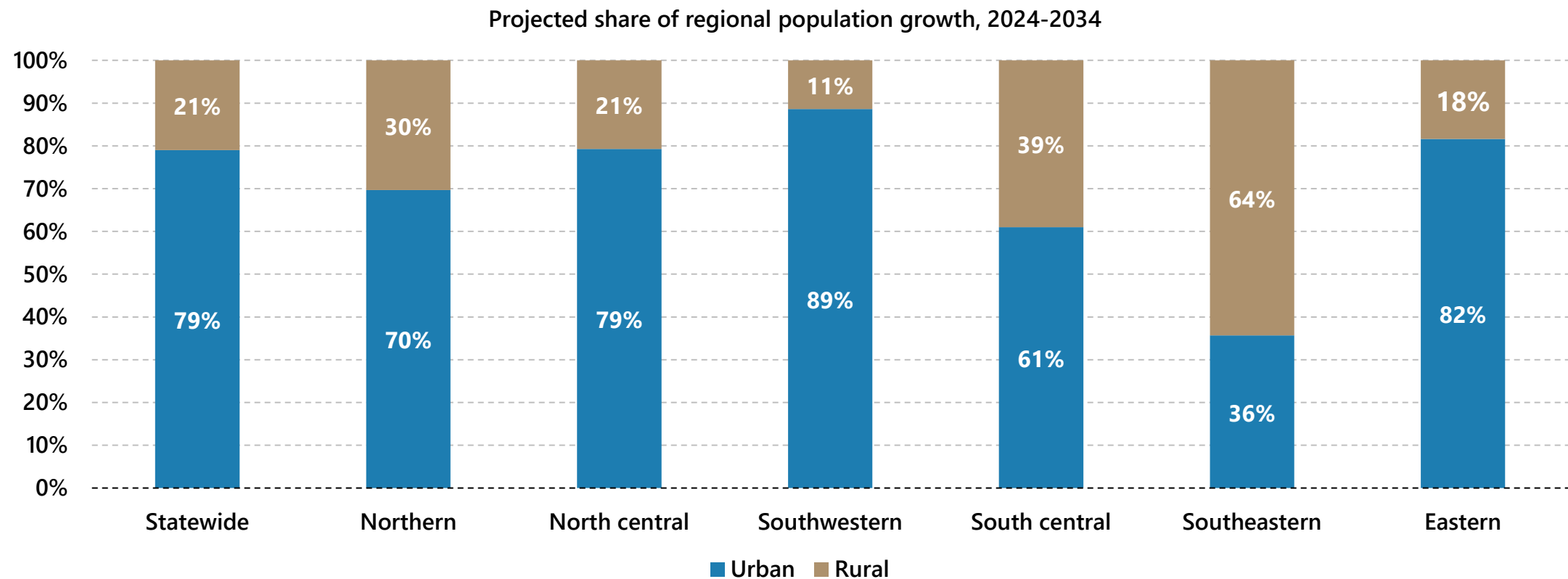


Source: Idaho Department of Labor

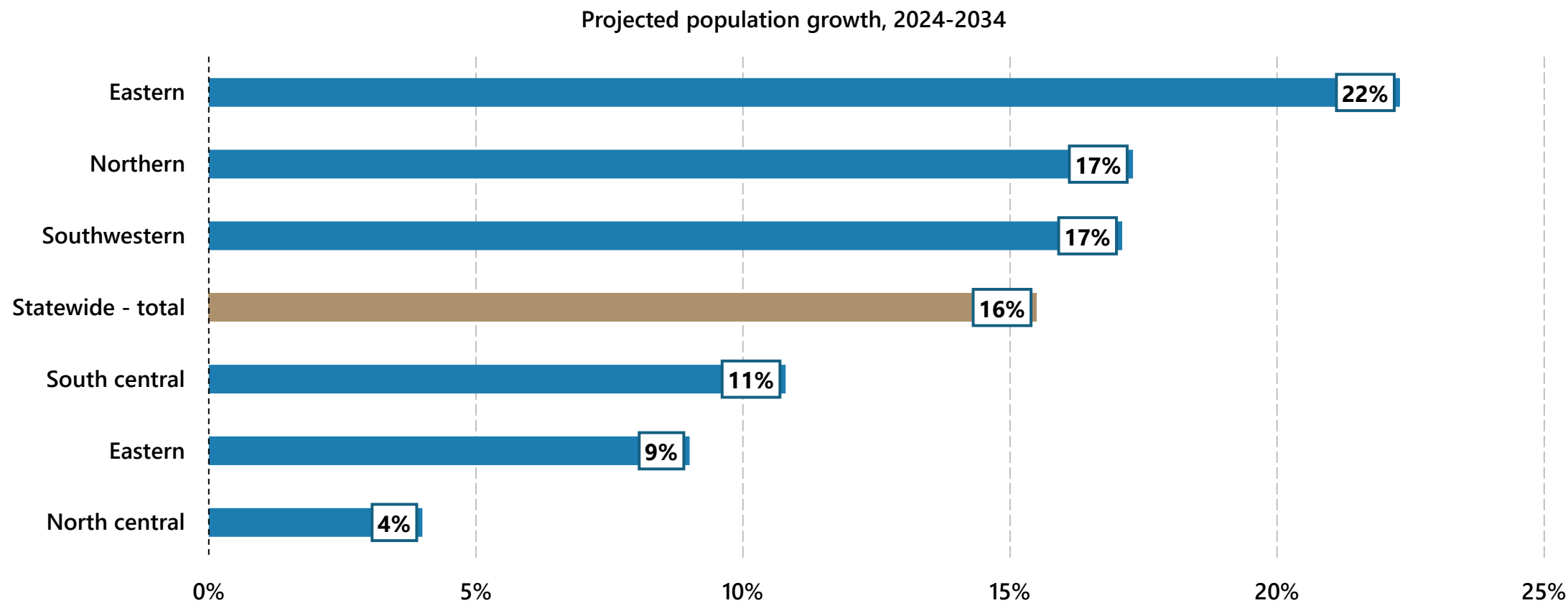
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Urban-rural splits



Growth rate comparison

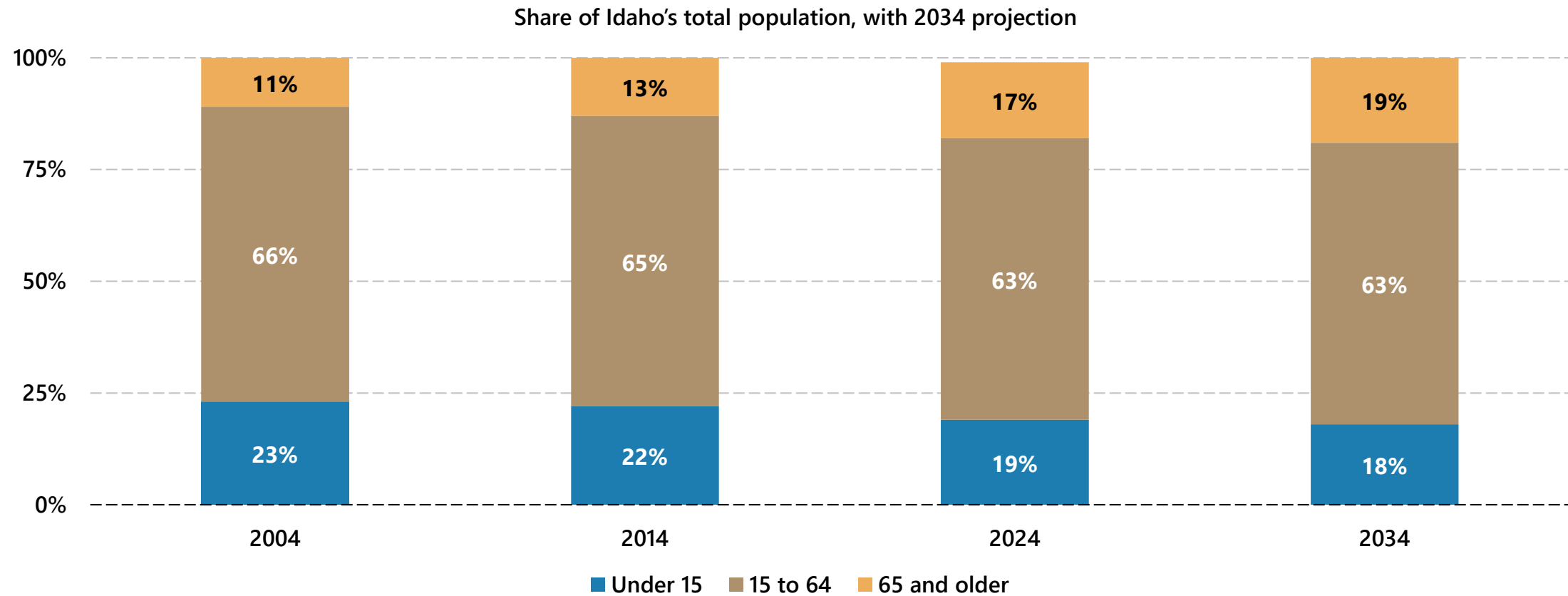


Source: Idaho Department of Labor

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Shifting age composition



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Idaho Department of Labor

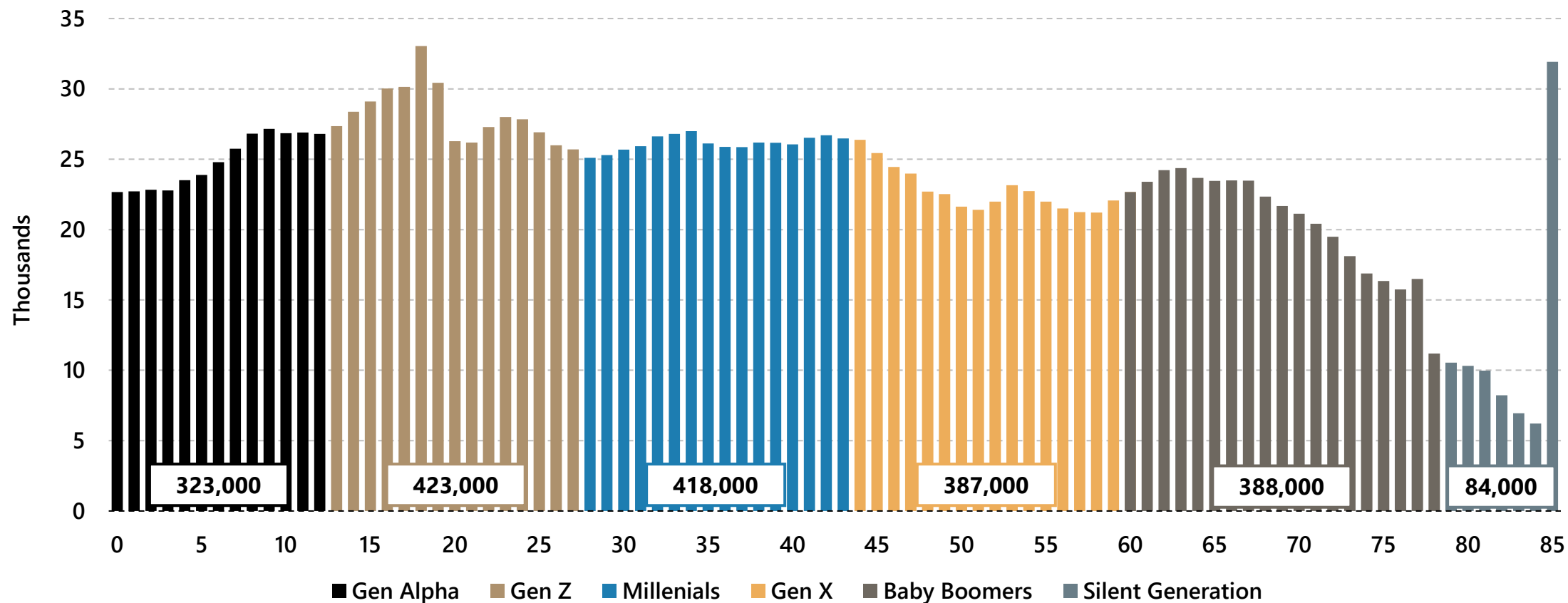
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Summary: Population forecast

- Idaho's rapid growth is expected to continue, reaching almost 2.5 million by 2034.
- Idaho is expected to grow four times as fast as the nation (15.5% vs. 3.9% expected growth).
- Growth is expected to be concentrated in urban counties (79% of projected growth).
- Southwestern Idaho (Boise) accounts for the most growth but is not the fastest growth.
- Aging patterns are expected to continue, with the over 65 population growing three times as quickly as the youth population.

Idaho's population structure



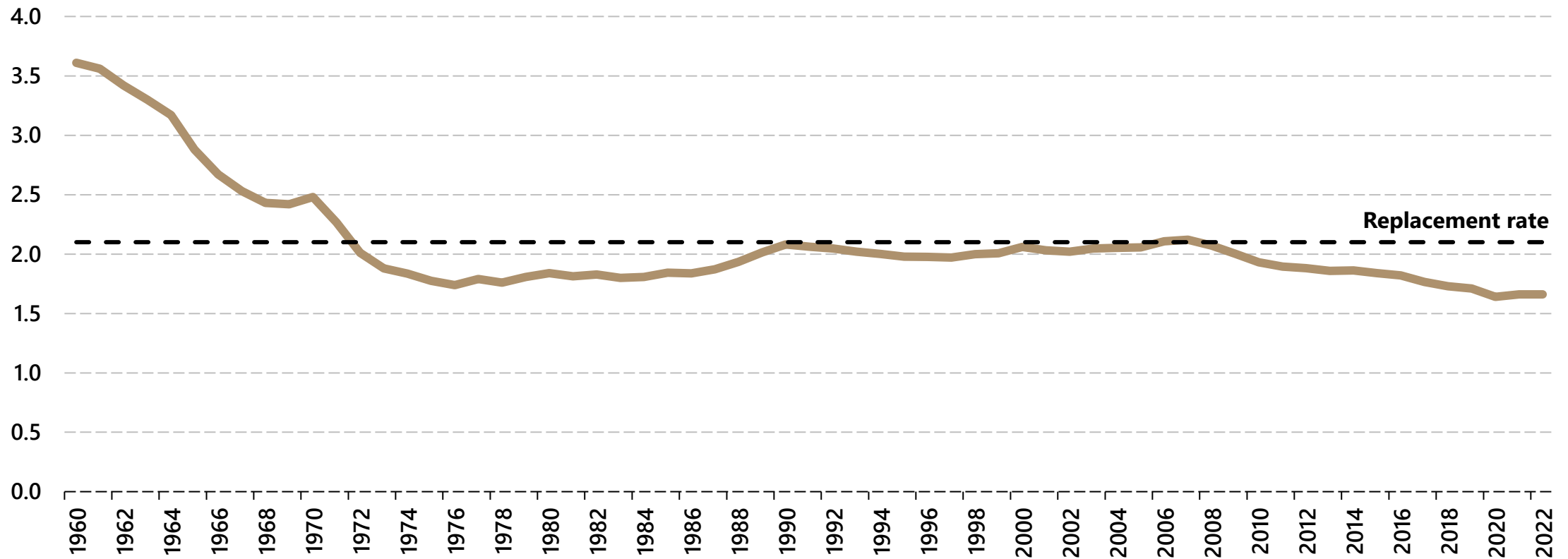
Source: National Center for Health Statistics

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Declining birth rates

Total fertility rate: U.S.

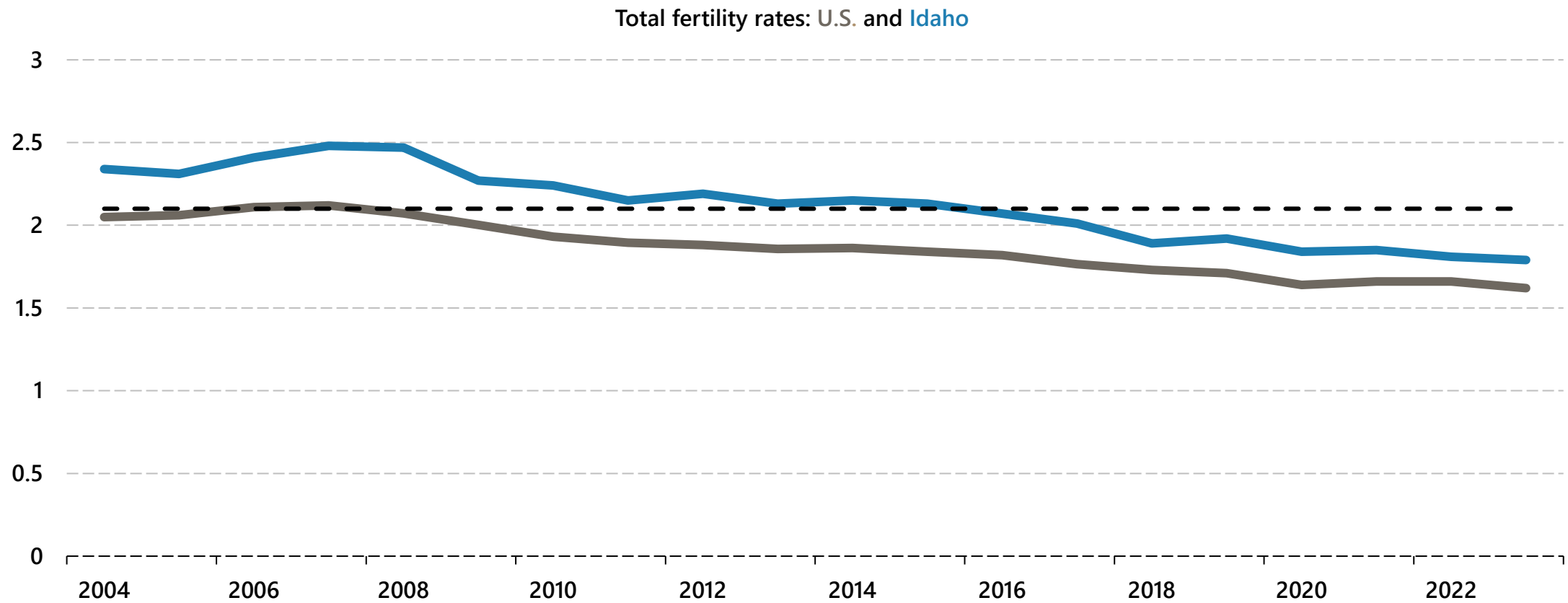


Source: National Center for Health Statistics

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Birth rate comparison



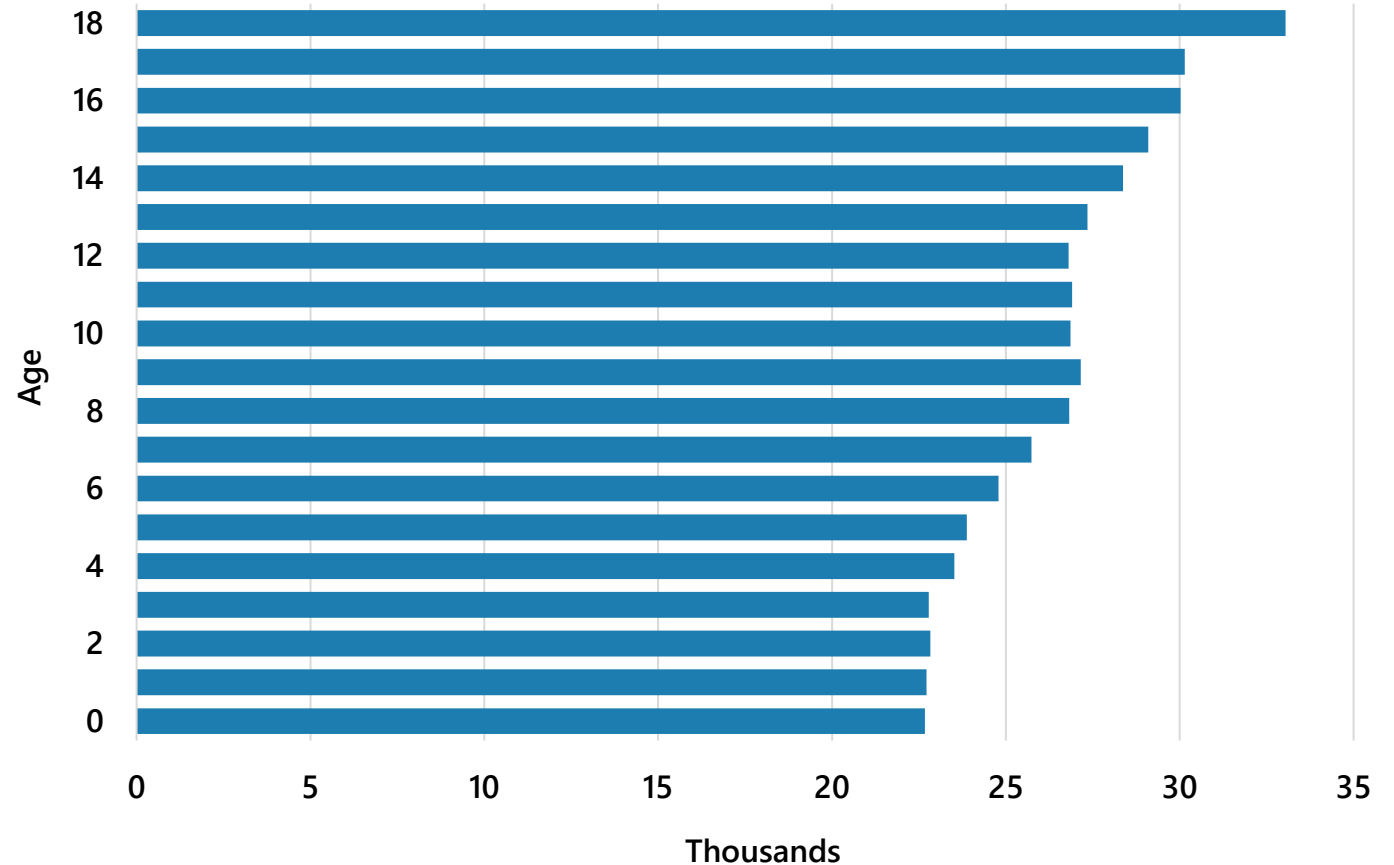
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Idaho Department of Labor

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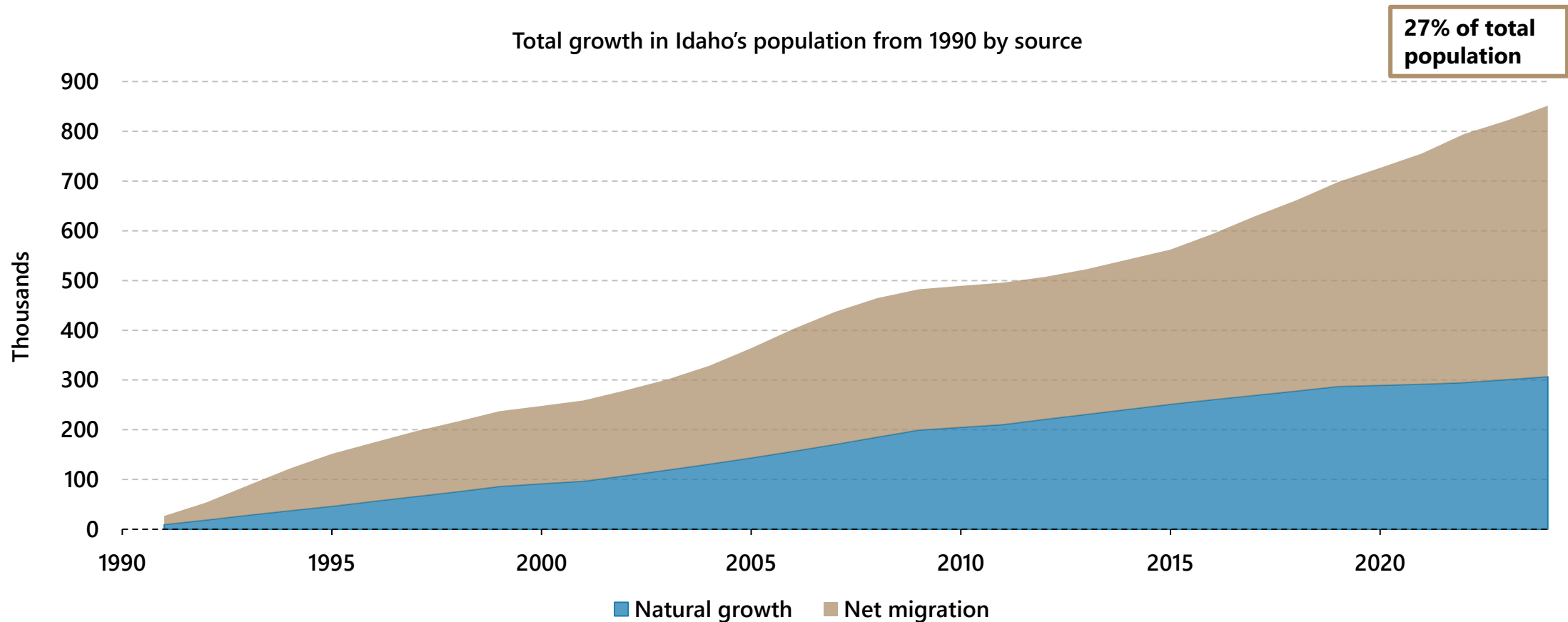


Idaho's youth population

- The peak of Idaho's youth population is currently 18.
- Peak births occurred in 2007-08.
- This means that we are currently in the year where inflow into the labor force is beginning to decline.
- There are only 68% as many infants in Idaho as there are 18-year-olds.



Contributions to population growth

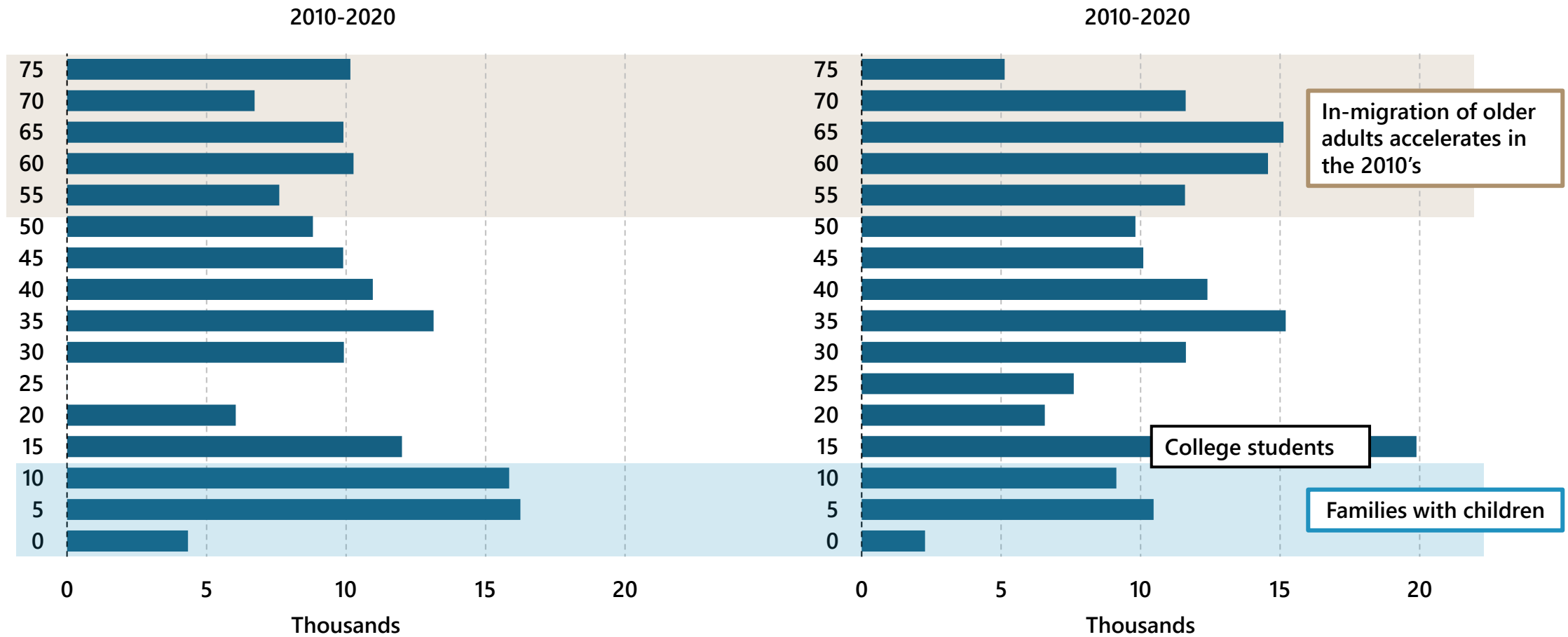


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Idaho Department of Labor

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Net migration to Idaho by age

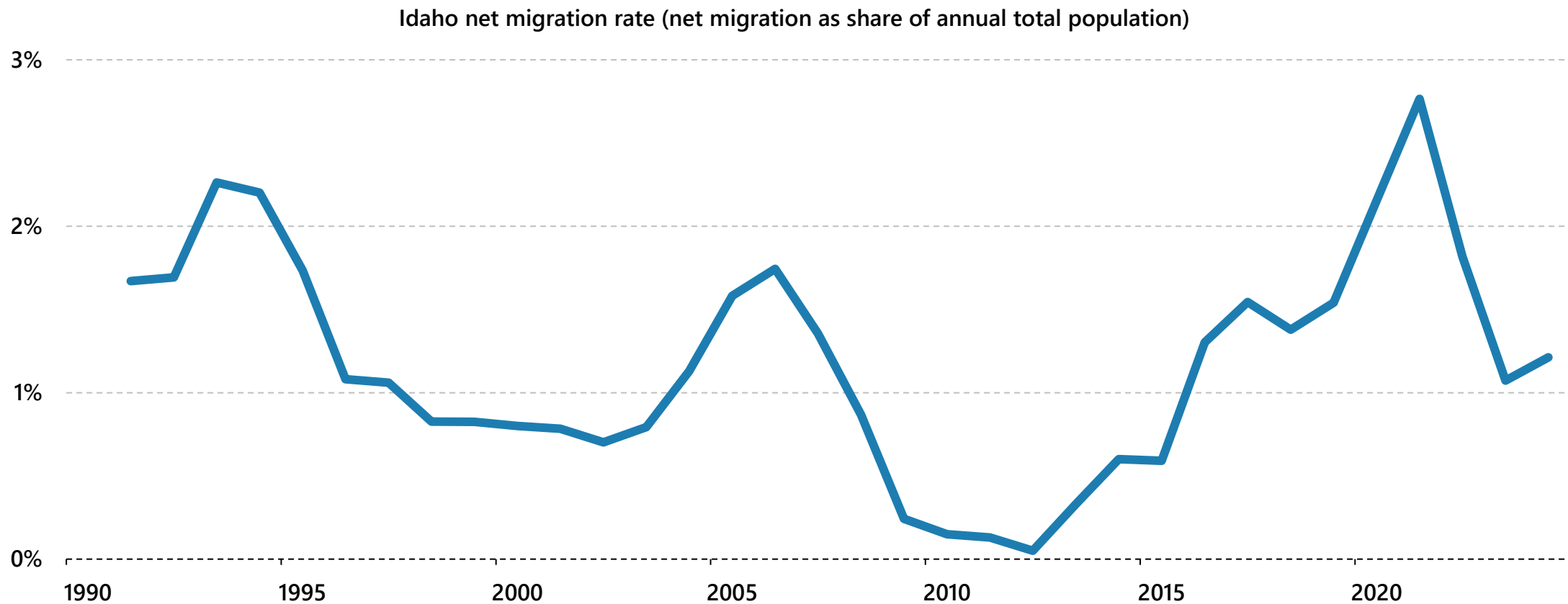


Source: University of Wisconsin Applied Population Lab, based on Census Microdata

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Idaho's net migration rate

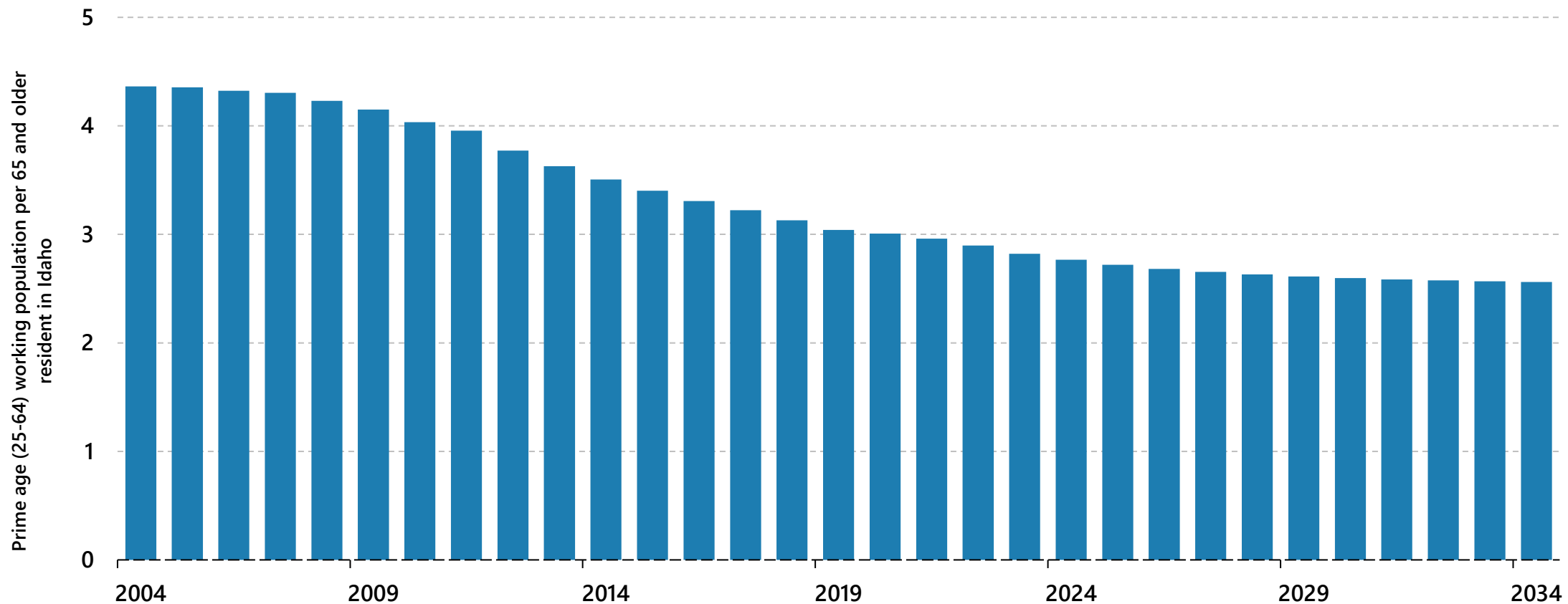


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Idaho Department of Labor

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Falling demographic ratios



Source: Idaho Department of Labor

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Conclusion: The people of Idaho

- Idaho is not immune to the broader aging of the United States. Birth rates are falling, and our retiree population is growing faster than other age groups.
- Idaho has a better starting position than most states. Birth rates began falling later, and we have a relative surplus of younger residents due to families that moved here over the decades.
- Migration of new residents contributes significantly more to population growth than births.
- The current youth population (Gen Alpha) is significantly smaller than predecessor generations (Gen Z, Millennials).