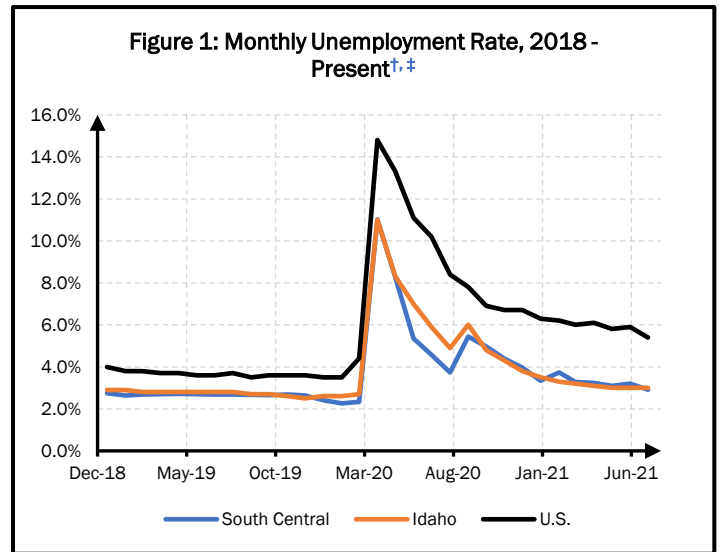


July's unemployment rate fell to its lowest level since the pandemic

Friday, August 20, 2021

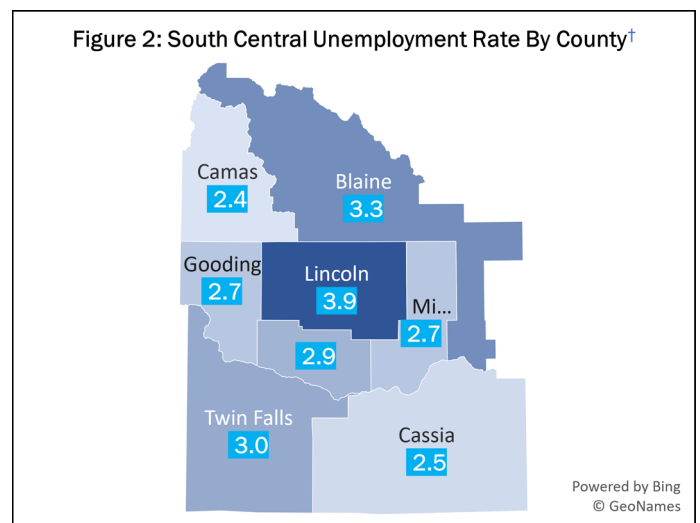
1. REGIONAL OVERVIEW

The preliminary unemployment rate in South Central Idaho fell to its lowest level since the beginning of the pandemic. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate during July was estimated at **2.9%**, down by 0.3 percentage points from the previous month. This decline can be attributed to gains in employment which offset June's decline. From June to July, seasonally adjusted employment increased by 222 (0.2%) to 98,901, while the total labor force declined by 75 (-0.1%) to 101,871. This implies that the number of unemployed people actively seeking employment declined by 297 (-9.1%) to 2,970. Looking at year-over-year changes, July's labor market statistics suggest that the region is continuing a strong recovery momentum. The unemployment rate in region 4 has dipped below the Idaho state's average - which has remained unchanged at **3.0%** since May- after 5 consecutive months. South Central's unemployment rate experienced a similar change to the national average. The national unemployment rate in July was estimated at **5.4%** (a 0.5 percentage point decline), with the number of unemployed down by 791,336 to 8.7 million.



2. COUNTY, CITY, AND INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

Last month's labor market changes across the Magic Valley were somewhat uniform, northern counties experienced the greatest improvement than their southern counterparts. Twin Falls county experienced the highest job gain of 135 (0.3%), while Cassia county saw a 0.4% decline in employment. Lincoln County had the highest rate at 3.9%, followed by Blaine county at 3.3%. Although only two counties recorded employment rates higher than the state average, none were above the national average. Camas county had the lowest rate at 2.4%. From June to July, the rate of unemployment decreased by at least 0.2 basis points in all counties except for Blaine county. Lincoln county experienced the largest drop of 0.6 basis points. In comparison, the current unemployment rates amongst counties are still higher than their pre-pandemic levels for all counties, especially in Camas and Lincoln counties. Looking across cities, the level of unemployment was the highest in Twin Falls City at 3.2%, down 0.4 percentage points from the previous month. Seasonally unadjusted



nonfarm payroll employment for the Twin Falls MSA increased by 0.4% to 48,400¹. The majority of these employment gains were in the goods-producing supersector.

3. LOOKING FORWARD

Current data shows that the labor markets are continuing on a recovery path, although the pace has begun to slow down. Idaho's economy added **1,094** jobs, increasing employment gains above pre-pandemic levels by 10,344. South Central Idaho's labor market recovery is back on track after temporarily reversing trajectory, with the local economy adding an estimated **222** jobs. This means that South Central Idaho's employment is about 356 jobs below its pre-pandemic level. Due to the uncertainty that still surrounds the Covid pandemic, the path ahead remains susceptible to volatility. Figure 3 shows that July's total online vacancy ads in the region declined from the previous month. The region's labor market remains tight, as the number of vacancies per available worker has continued to increase². The degree of labor market tightness was about 80% - meaning that there are about 0.8 vacancies for every unemployed worker actively searching for work. Figure 3 also suggests that job vacancy duration is increasing, about 68% of vacancies in July were unfilled from the previous months. The leading sectors with the highest hiring difficulty were health care and social assistance, retail trade, and manufacturing.

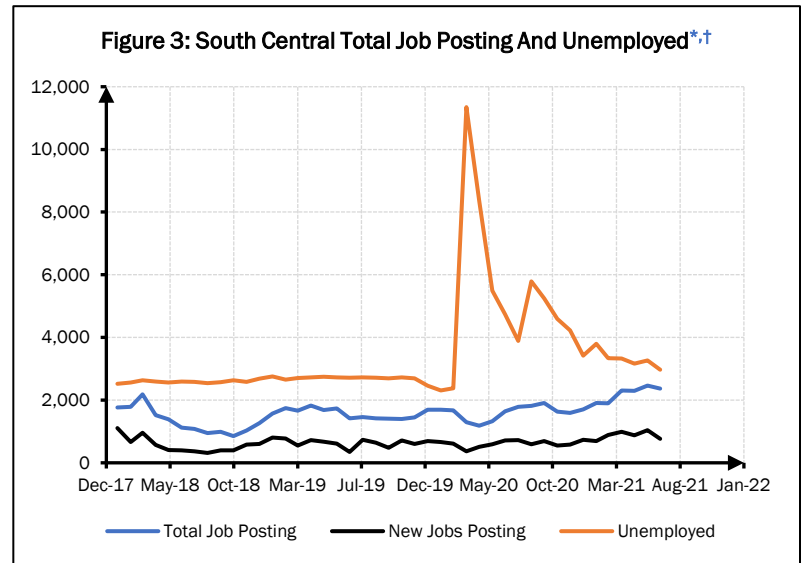


Table 1 South Central Idaho Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment (June to July 2021) †

	Civilian Labor Force	July 2021 (Preliminary)			Changes from June 2021	
		Unemployment	Unemployment Rate (%)	Employment	Labor Force Change	Unemployment Change ² (Basis Points)
United States ¹	161,347	8,702	5.4	152,645	0.2%	-0.5
State of Idaho	902,921	26,717	3.0	876,204	0.1%	0.0
South Central	101,871	2,970	2.9	98,901	-0.1%	-0.3
Counties						
Blaine	12,921	424	3.3	12,497	0.7%	0.1
Camas	700	17	2.4	683	0.6%	-0.5
Cassia	12,276	307	2.5	11,969	-0.7%	-0.2
Gooding	8,271	223	2.7	8,048	-0.1%	-0.2
Jerome	12,199	350	2.9	11,849	0.1%	-0.3
Lincoln	2,725	107	3.9	2,618	0.7%	-0.6
Minidoka	11,515	308	2.7	11,207	-0.6%	-0.2
Twin Falls	41,264	1,234	3.0	40,030	-0.1%	-0.4
Labor Market Areas						
Burley MicSA	23,791	615	2.6	-0.7%	-0.7%	-0.2
Hailey MicSA	16,346	548	3.4	0.7%	0.7%	0.0
Twin Falls MSA	53,463	1,584	3.0	0.0%	0.0%	-0.4
Cities						
Twin Falls	24,070	771	3.2	23,299	-0.2%	-0.5

NB: ¹ In thousands, ² Calculations based on percentage point change.

Table 2
South Central Idaho Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment, July 2021 Over-the-Year Change †

	Labor Force Change	Unemployment Change ² (Basis Points)
United States ¹	0.8%	-4.8
State of Idaho	1.8%	-2.9
South Central Idaho	1.1%	-2.4
Counties		
Blaine	4.9%	-4.9
Camas	3.2%	-3.1
Cassia	0.0%	-1.4
Gooding	1.0%	-1.3
Jerome	0.9%	-1.3
Lincoln	4.5%	-2.3
Minidoka	-0.3%	-1.4
Twin Falls	0.7%	-2.6
Labor Market Areas		
Burley MicSA	-0.2%	-1.4
Hailey MicSA	4.8%	-4.4
Twin Falls MSA	0.7%	-2.3
Cities		
Twin Falls	0.4%	-3.1

DATA SOURCES

- (*) Labor Insights - Burning Glass Technologies
- (†) Idaho Department of Labor
- (‡) U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

FOOTNOTES

-
- ¹ Nonfarm pay roll data is only for the Twin Falls MSA which includes Twin Falls and Jerome counties. Since this data is not seasonally adjusted, caution should be used when making inferences about changes in the data.
 - ² Online job posting data does not include the entire universe of vacancies in the region since some job openings are not posted online. Therefore, this data is only used as a proxy for available jobs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Bonang Seoela, Regional Economist, Idaho Department of Labor • 420 Falls Ave., Twin Falls, ID 83301 • (208) 332-3570 ext. 3820 • bonang.seoela@labor.idaho.gov • Labor Market Information website: lmi.idaho.gov