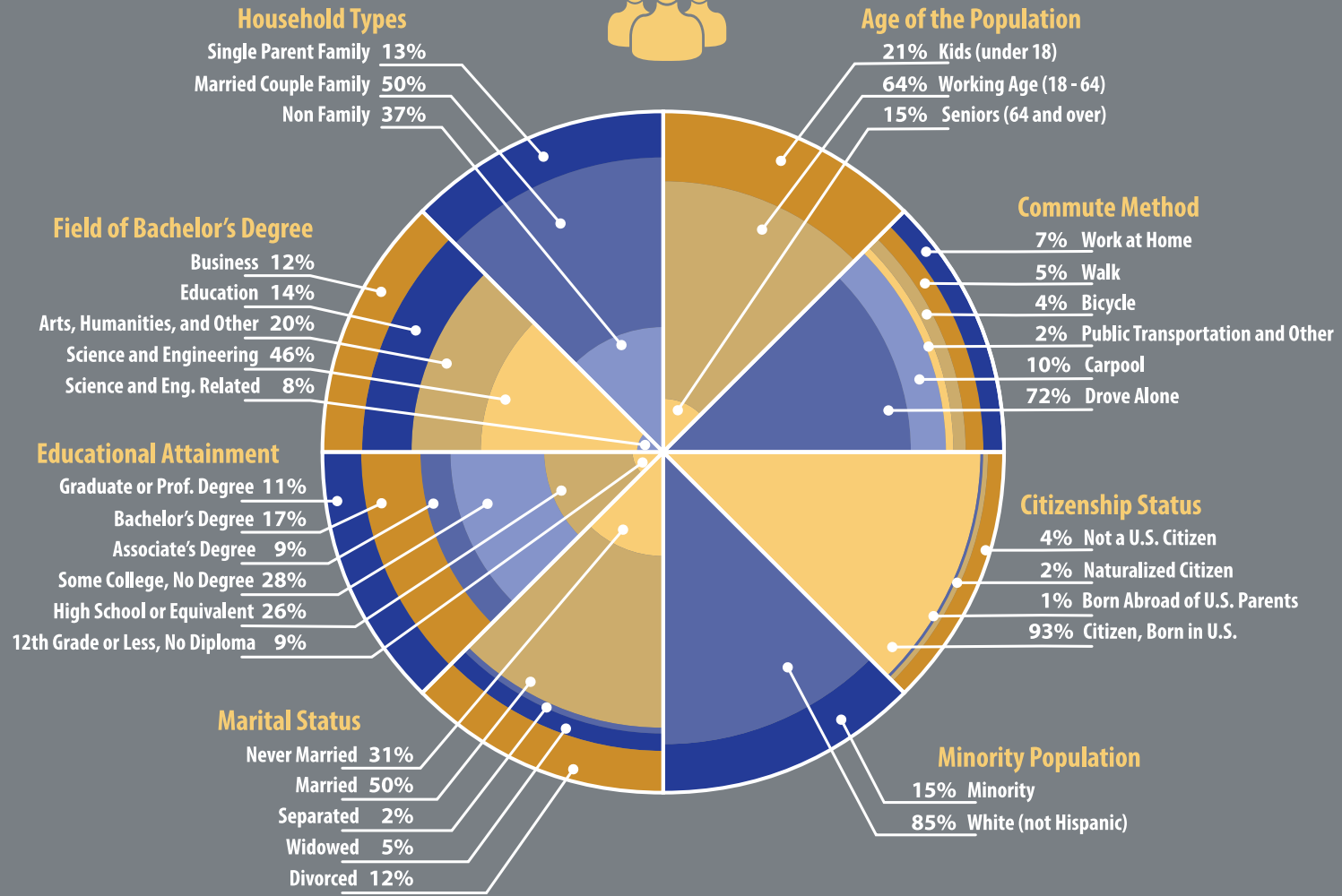


SECTION 2: WHO WE ARE

Our region's residents are as diverse as its landscape. We are students and teachers, mothers and grandfathers, farmers, nurses, and entrepreneurs. In this section, we'll explore indicators about our population's demographics.

Characteristics of the Region's Population



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Jennifer

While our region celebrates diversity, understanding our most common traits is helpful to making long-lasting and impactful decisions that strengthen our communities and the individuals living in them.



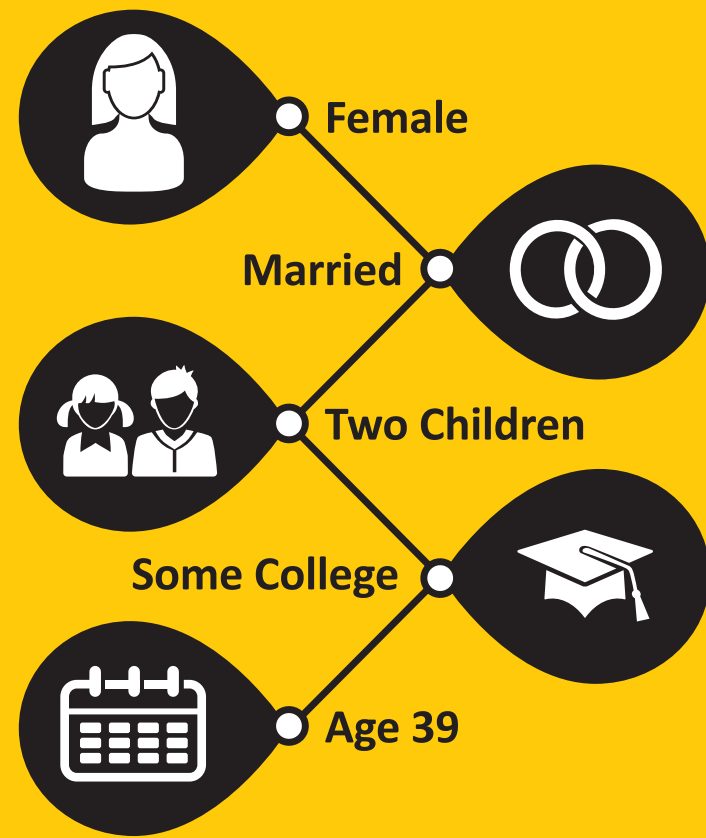
A region's diversity cannot be summed up in any one person, but averages can tell us a story. Our region's *typical* resident is named Jennifer, is 39 years old, is married, has two children, and is a high school graduate with some college education.

How did we go about determining the traits of this typical person?

Data about the economic and demographic makeup of a region can provide a broad overview of the commonalities among our region's residents. Taking several factors into consideration, the profile of an "average" resident emerges. For example, the graphic on the previous page shows us some of these common traits; we know that 50% of our region's residents over the age of 14 are married. We also know from the Social Security Administration that "Jennifer" was the most common name given to females born in Oregon in 1976; since 39 is the average age of residents in our region, 1976 is her birth year. Why a female and not a male? Because there are more women than men in the region, as shown on the age distribution chart on page 14.

Why is Jennifer important?

By understanding similar attributes, local elected officials, business leaders, nonprofit associations, and OCWCOG can use this information and similar data to make decisions in the public and private space, regarding funding priorities, development opportunities, etc. This information assists community leaders in answering questions about its residents.



Population Growth

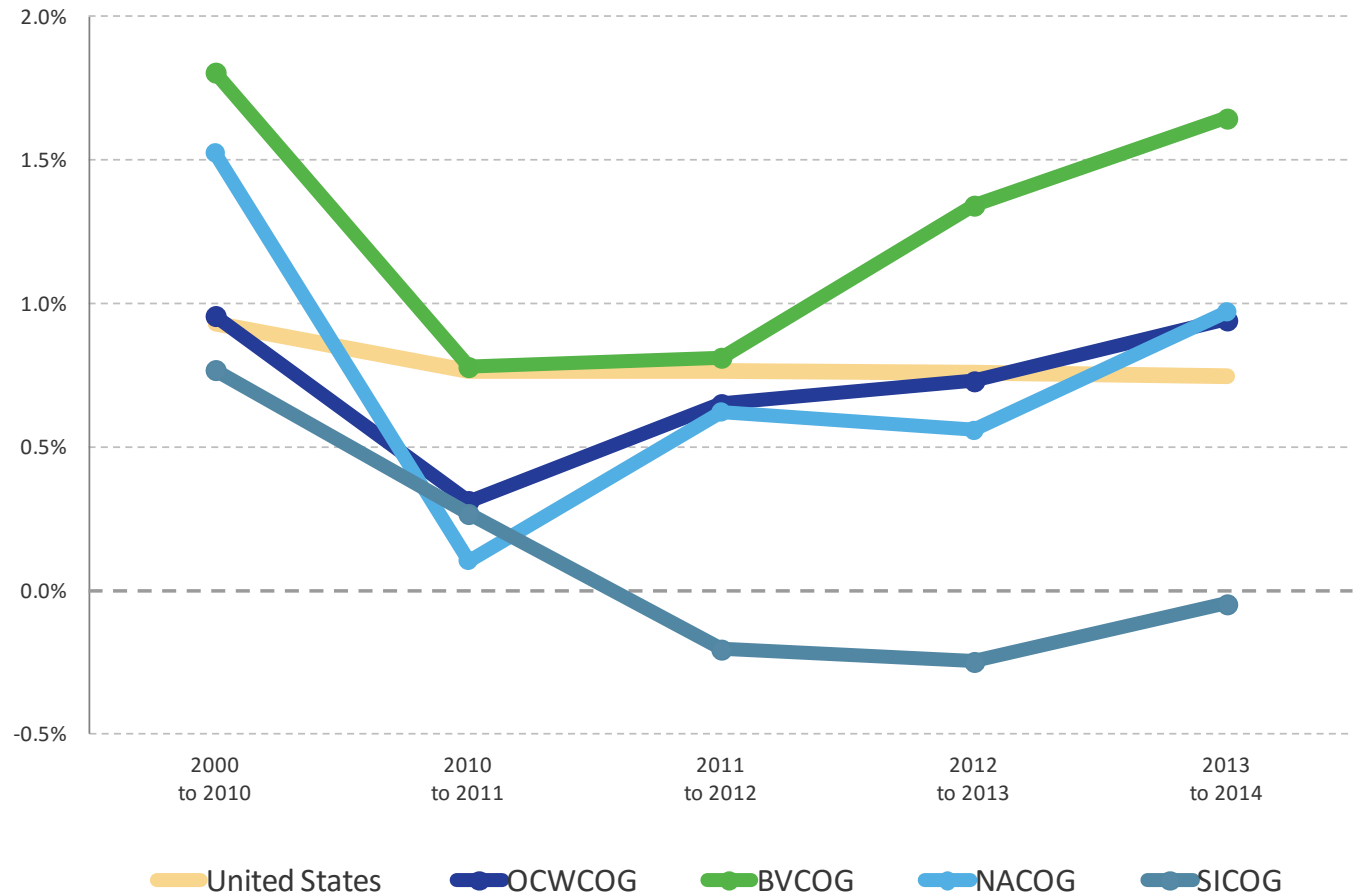
Our region has seen steady population growth over the past several decades. The annual growth from 1960 to 2014 was 1.4 percent, slightly less than the State's 1.5 percent, but above the national rate of 1.1 percent.

Growth in the region has slowed, however, as the 2010 U.S. Census reports. The annual growth rate from 2010-2014 was estimated at just 0.7 percent. This slower growth is projected to continue. According to the State of Oregon's long-term population forecasts, our region is projected to grow at an annual rate of 0.9 percent over the next ten years.

This *Annual Population Growth Rates* chart shows that among OCWCOG and its peer regions, three of the four regions have growth rates that are below the nation's, and all of them have population growth rates that are currently trending up, compared to the nation which is relatively flat. Population growth comes from natural increase (births less deaths) and migration. The majority of growth in our region comes from positive net migration.

For information about the demographics of people who are moving into our region from other places in Oregon, and beyond, see page 18.

Annual Population Growth Rates
United States and Peer Regions

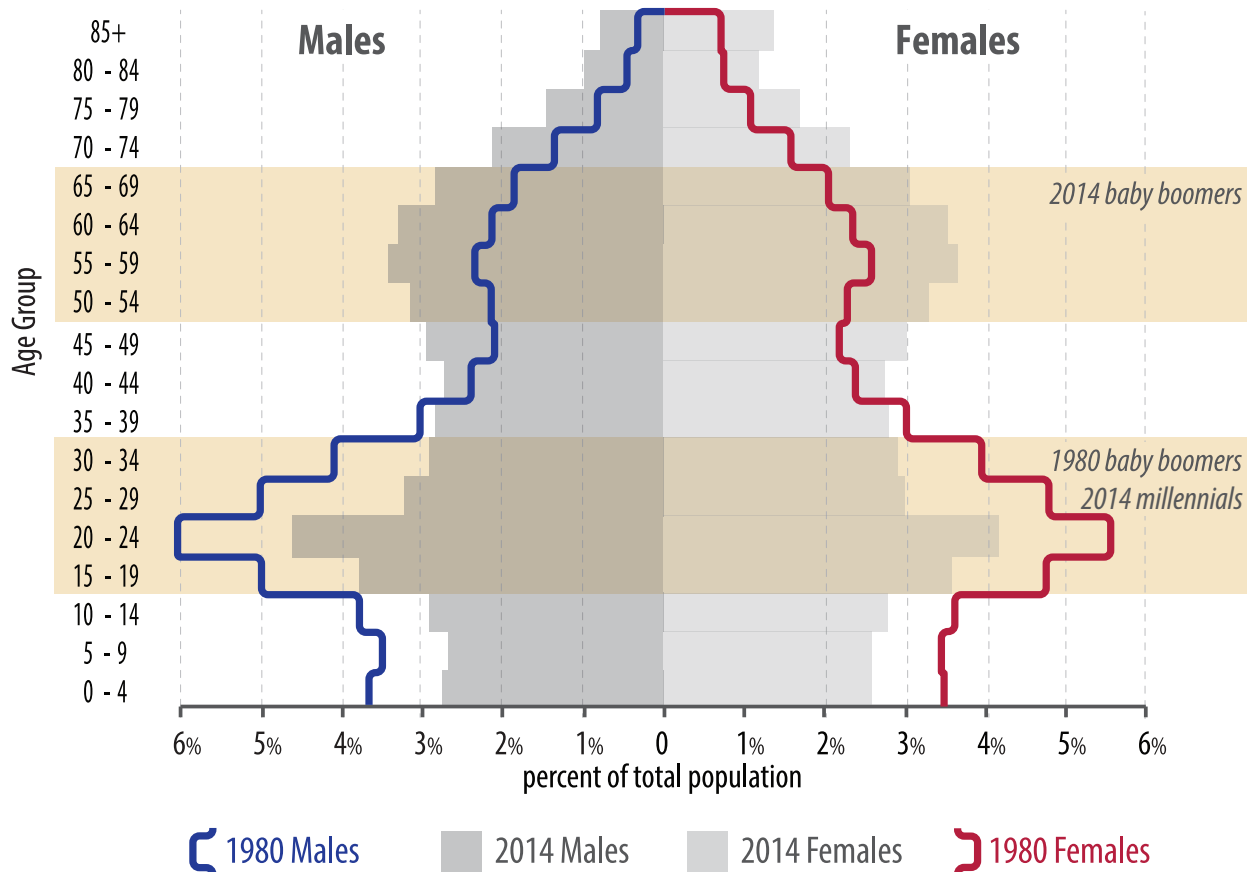


Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2014 Estimates and Portland State University 2014 Certified Estimates for Oregon Counties

Age Distribution

The region is experiencing two trends in relation to its population. First, the overall population is aging. This can be attributed in part to the large number of baby boomers (born 1946-1964) reaching their senior years. According to 2014 population estimates, they make up 26 percent of the region's population. This trend is also attributed to an influx of first- and second-wave retirees (those who have recently retired, and those who have been retired for many years).

Population Distribution: 1980 and 2014 OCWCOG Region



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau (1980 Census); Portland State University (2014 Estimates)

Second, the region attracts a large number of young adults, due in part to those moving here to attend our university and colleges. Members of the millennial generation, who are now in their college years, make up 28 percent of the region's population, according to the 2014 population estimates.

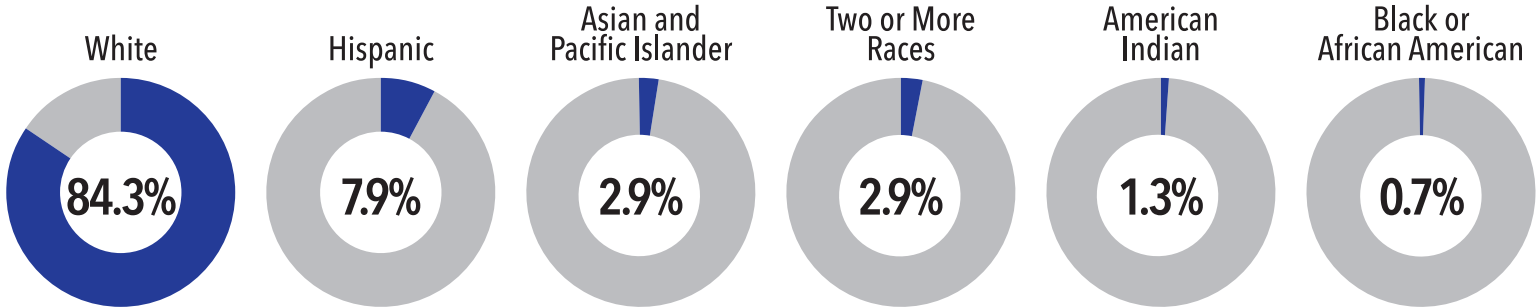
Across the region, the age distribution looks quite different from county to county. As expected, Benton County, home of OSU, has a large college-age population. In Lincoln County, almost the reverse is true, and baby boomers are the largest segment of the population. Linn County, the most populous county in the region, has a fairly balanced age distribution.

Gender Distribution

In 2014, the region's population was estimated to be 49.4 percent male and 50.6 percent female. As shown in the population pyramid on the left, the distribution of the population has changed dramatically over the last three decades as the baby boomers went from young adults to near retirement.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that in 2014, 84.3 percent of the region's population identified as non-Hispanic white, compared to 77 percent in the State overall.

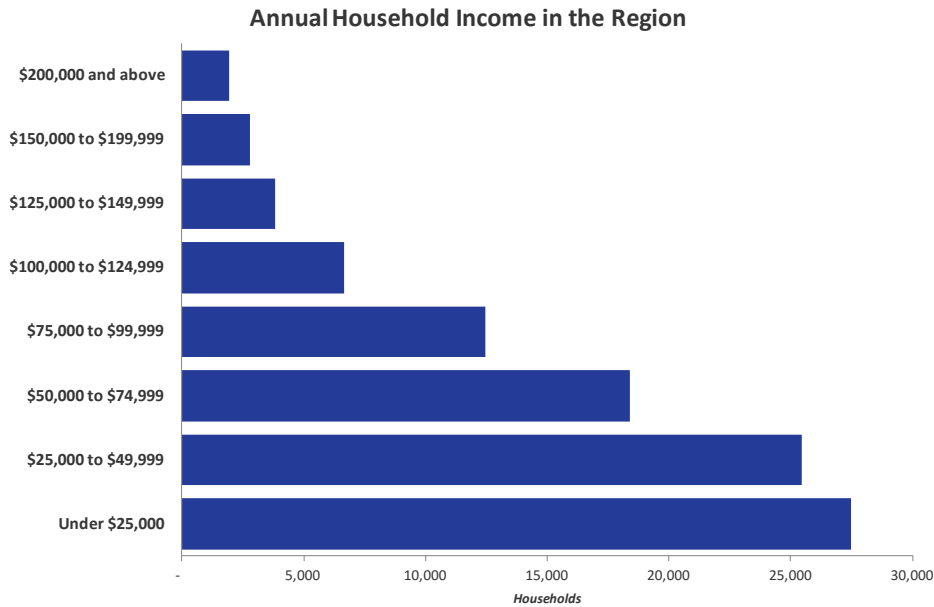
Race and Hispanic Origin of the Region's Population



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 County Estimates; Race estimates are for non-Hispanic ethnicity

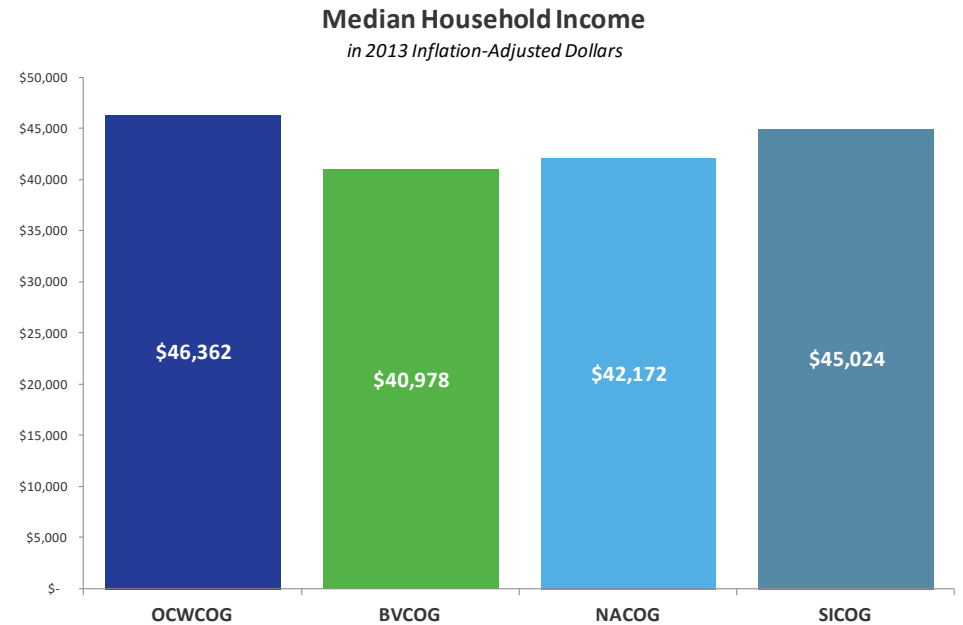
Household Income

According to Census Bureau 2013 estimates, the region's median household income is \$46,362, ranking highest among our peers. The region's median income is slightly above Southeast Idaho COG's estimated \$45,024. The peer region with the lowest median income is Brazos Valley COG at \$40,978, while Northern Arizona COG is estimated slightly higher at \$42,172. For information about how much residents in the region spend on housing, see page 69.



Income in 2013 Inflation-adjusted dollars

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, Table B19001



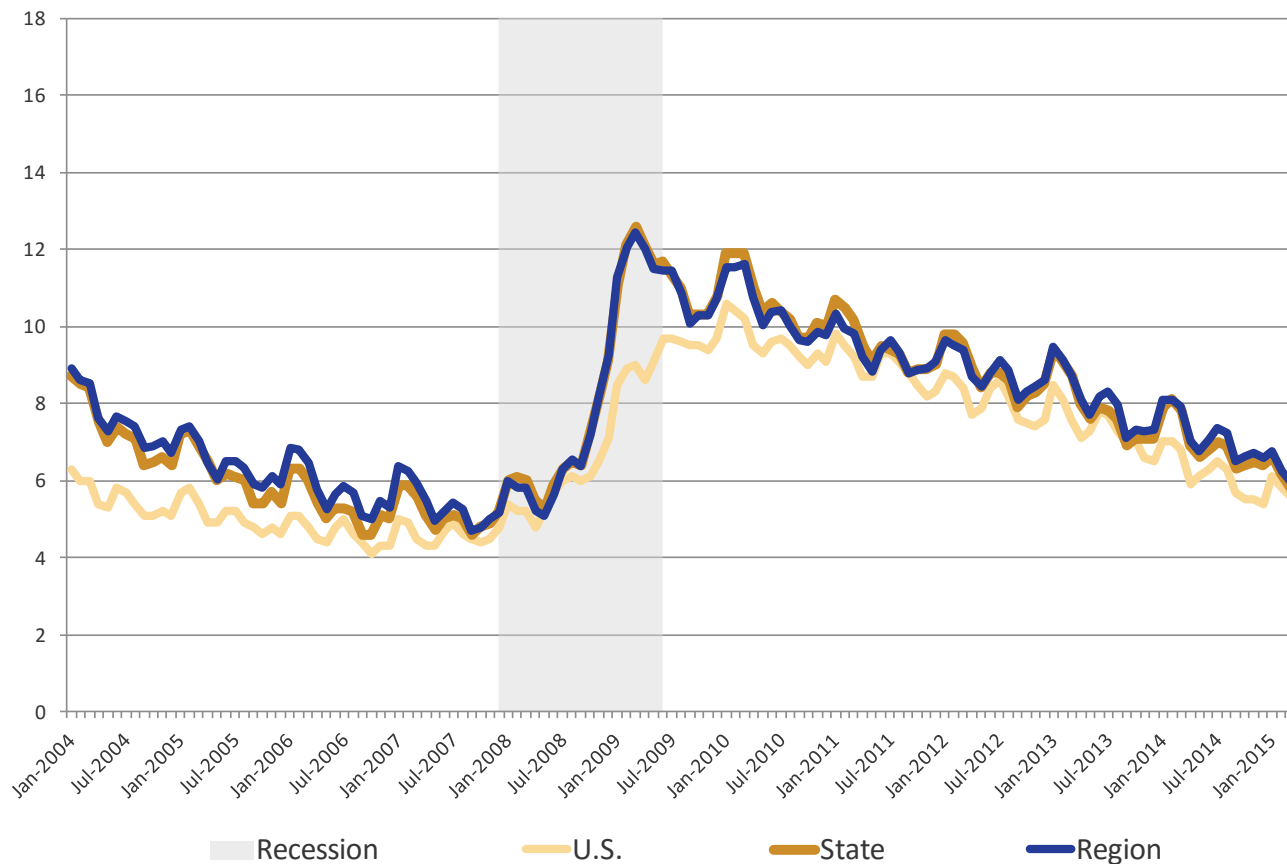
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates
Median household income calculated from income values in ACS Table B19001

Compared to our peer regions, as the Median Household Income chart above shows, our region has the highest median household income, slightly above Southeast Idaho.

Unemployment Rates

As the economy continues to recover from the recession that began in late 2007, unemployment rates are dropping. Linn County's unemployment peaked in March of 2009, at 15.4 percent. Benton County saw the least impact from the recession, peaking at 8.9 percent in July 2009, mostly due to the strong influence of OSU employment. Lincoln County, with its high employment in tourism-related jobs, had peak unemployment during the recession of 12.4 percent in March 2009. It dropped significantly after that down to 8.8 percent in September of 2009, only to pick up again and peak slightly above the recession number at 12.6 percent in January 2010. It dropped significantly after that down to 8.8 percent in September of 2009, only to pick up again and peak slightly above the recession number at 12.6 percent in January 2010.

Monthly Unemployment Rate
(Not Seasonally Adjusted)



As of April 2015, the most recent month for which data was available as of this printing, the unemployment rates in the region are 3.7 percent for Benton County, 6.4 percent in Lincoln County, and 6.4 percent in Linn County. The three counties combined give the region a 5.4 percent unemployment rate, as compared to 5.2 percent statewide.

For more community indicators, including data on public assistance programs, see page 37.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), and Current Population Survey