



**THIRD ANNUAL  
IDAHO PUBLIC  
POLICY SURVEY**



**BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY**

**SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

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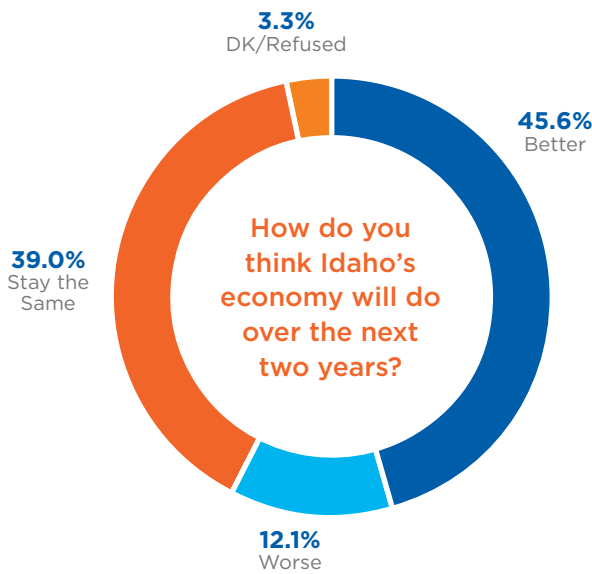
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# The Idaho Economy

A strong and vibrant economy matters a great deal to those who live and work in Idaho. Economic issues such as jobs and wages occupied the second highest position on Idahoans' list of important issues facing the state and nearly one-third of respondents (32.2%) rated the importance of the legislature addressing jobs and the economy as a 10 on a scale of 1-10.

Attitudes about the state's economic future are on an upward trend with 45.6% of respondents saying they think Idaho's economy is going to get better over the next two years, an increase of +2.2% over a year ago and a total increase of nearly six percentage points over the past two years. Another 39% think it will stay the same, while only 12.1% think it will worsen over that time period.



Idahoans are divided, however, on what that future Idaho economy ought to look like. 56.8% of respondents agree that the state's economy of the future should focus on growing new industries like technology and computer sciences, encouraging innovation, and an entrepreneurial culture. A little more than one-third (34.4%) of respondents agreed instead that the future Idaho economy should focus on its historical strengths in natural resources. These figures are consistent with the results when this question was asked two years ago.

## Attitudes about Idaho's future economy

The Idaho economy of the future should focus on growing new industries like technology and computer sciences, encouraging innovation and an entrepreneurial culture

56.8%

34.3%

The Idaho economy of the future should focus on its historical strengths in natural resources, like agriculture, timber and mining

8.9% DK/Refused

Even so, large majorities of Idaho residents continue to view natural resources like agriculture, mining, and timber as being of great importance to the state's economy. Indeed, 49.3% of respondents said these kinds of natural resources were extremely important, while another 35.6% said they were very important.

The results of this year's survey revealed interesting insights into public sentiment concerning mining, in particular. Four in five respondents (80.4%) believe mining in Idaho can be done in an environmentally responsible manner, with over 55% of respondents strongly agreeing with that statement. Further, when presented with a choice between having mining in Idaho in order to reduce reliance on foreign products versus relying on trade to import minerals, Idahoans favor mining in the state by a two-to-one margin, with 61.2% in favor vs. 29.5% who prefer to rely on international trade.

## Idahoans' attitudes about mining

84.9%

say natural resources like agriculture, mining, and timber are extremely or very important to Idaho's economy

80.4%

agree mining in Idaho can be done in an environmentally responsible manner

61.2%

think Idaho should lead the way by mining for critical minerals here