The U.S. Census Bureau estimates the population of states, counties, and the country as a whole each year between the Decennial Censuses. The estimates are for July 1st of each year. Iowa’s population estimate for July 1, 2015 was 3,123,899, an increase of 77,030 (2.5%) from the 2010 Decennial Census population of 3,046,355 (Table 1, Figure 2). The nation as a whole grew 4.1% during the same period. In most decades, the rate of growth of Iowa’s population has been slower than that of the nation.

Among Iowa’s counties, 28 are estimated to have gained population since the 2010 Decennial Census. Polk County had the largest increase (37,076) of any county followed by gains of more than 13,000 in both Johnson and Dallas Counties. Linn County grew nearly 8,700 and Scott and Story Counties each increased by more than 6,000. Iowa’s overall growth rate (2.5%) was equalled or exceeded by 12 counties. Four (Johnson, Polk, Story, Warren) exceeded five percent growth but the highest growth, by far, was in Dallas County (21.2%), more than double the rate for next highest Johnson County (Table 1, Figure 1).

More than two-thirds (71) of the counties are estimated to have lost population since 2010. Although some of these counties had relatively small declines, for others the losses were more substantial. Twenty-two counties declined by at least 400 people. The estimated decrease for Cerro Gordo and Clinton Counties is more than 1,000 for each.

In general, the percentage loss for some of these counties was relatively modest, in the range of two percent or less. Twenty-three counties, however, had at least three percent loss. Adair, Adams, Audubon, Emmet and Fremont Counties each exceeded five percent declines (Table 1, Figure 1).

The population estimates for 2015 generally are showing a continuation of gain and decline trends noted over the last several decades of the Decennial Census. Between 2000 and 2010, 33 counties gained population while 66 noted a loss. A small majority of counties (54) experienced a population increase between 1990 and 2000. The decade of 1980 to 1990 was especially hard on Iowa’s population. During that time, Iowa lost 4.7 percent of its residents (-137,000) with 92 counties showing population loss (Figure 2).

The annual population estimates are produced using administrative records to estimate births, deaths, and migration, the core components of population change, for each county. Because the estimates are made with administrative records rather than direct household surveys as with the Decennial Census, they should be used and interpreted with caution. In general, they likely show the relative direction and strength of population change rather than exact numerical tallies. In addition, each new annual release of estimates also includes revisions of the series for the years following the most recent decennial count. Thus, the estimates are not permanent and are open to revision.
### Table 1. Estimated Population in Iowa’s Counties, 2000 - 2015

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**... and justice for all**

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