

Census 2020: Population in Iowa, 1840 - 2020

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Iowa's population at the Decennial Census of 2020 was 3,190,369. This was an increase of 144,014 (4.7%) residents since the Decennial Census of 2010 (Figures 1, 2; Table 1).¹ These gains were somewhat higher than those between the 2000 and 2010 Censuses. The Census of 2010 was the first

time that Iowa had surpassed three million residents. The 2020 population was the third consecutive Decennial Census in which Iowa recorded a population gain. During the time between 1980 and 1990, Iowa had a population loss of nearly 137,000 (-4.7%) between the Decennial

Censuses. In only one other decade (1900-1910; -7,082; -0.3%) since Iowa became a U.S. territory and population was counted did Iowa show a population loss at a Census (Figures 1, 2; Table 1).

Iowa became a U.S. territory in 1838 and thus had a Decennial Census count in 1840 (43,112). Following statehood in 1846, the Iowa count in 1850 was 192,214, a 345% increase. Iowa grew relatively rapidly in percentage terms through the rest of the 1800s. Following the population loss between 1900 and 1910, Iowa grew more modestly, (except for 1980-1990) around 3% - 5% each decade. The 2020 Census increase follows this pattern of modest population gains.

The U.S. as a whole has grown more rapidly than has Iowa. In the early decades of the 1900s, the country grew 15% - 20% most decades. In more recent years, the U.S. growth has been around 10%. This last decade, however, had the U.S. at a 7.4% increase. The U.S. added 22.7 million residents between 2010 and 2020 which is similar to the country's numerical gains in many recent decades. This is the equivalent of adding around seven Iowas across the country.

The Decennial Census is mandated in the constitution in order to apportion Congress. Each state's number of representatives in Congress is determined by its population. Iowa has had four seats in Congress and will maintain those four seats for the next decade. Because of population shifts across the country, some states will gain seats in Congress and others will lose a seat for the next decade.²

Figure 1. Iowa Decennial Census Population, 1840 - 2020

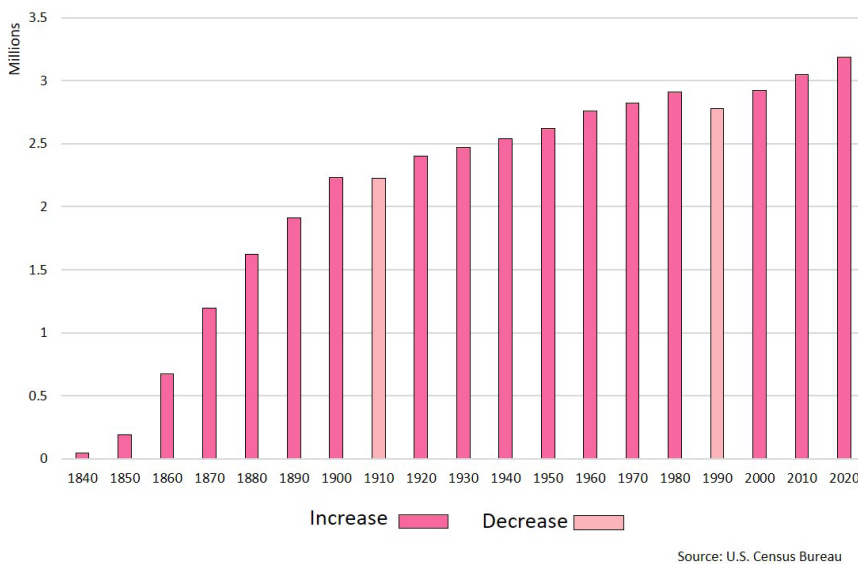
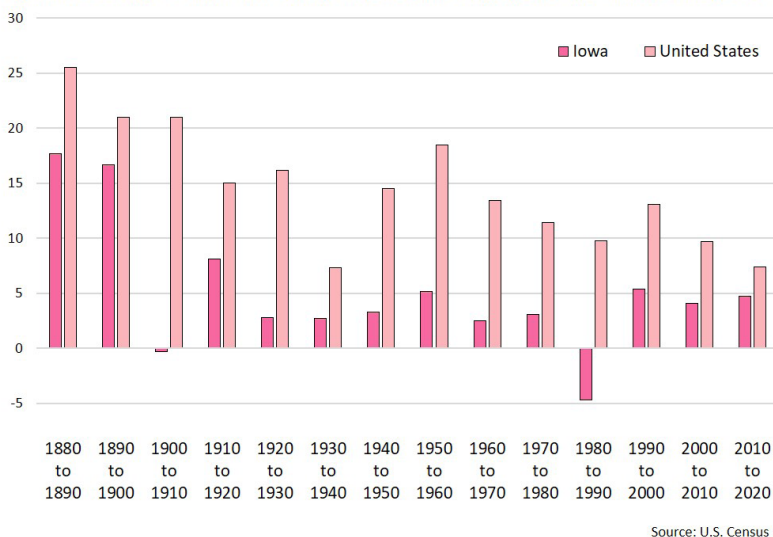


Figure 2. Decennial Census Percentage Population Change, Iowa and United States, 1880 - 2020.



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Table 1. Decennial Census Population Counts, Number and Percentage Population Change, and Percentage of U.S. Population, Iowa and United States, 1790 - 2020.¹

| Year | Iowa Population | | | | United States Population | | | |
|------|-------------------------|----------|---------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|---------|-----------------|
| | Population ² | Number | Percent | Percent of U.S. | Population ² | Number | Percent | Percent of U.S. |
| 2020 | 3,190,369 | 144,014 | 4.7 | 0.96 | 331,449,281 | 22,703,743 | 7.4 | 100.0 |
| 2010 | 3,046,355 | 119,973 | 4.1 | 0.99 | 308,745,538 | 27,320,935 | 9.7 | 100.0 |
| 2000 | 2,926,382 | 149,551 | 5.4 | 1.04 | 281,424,603 | 32,706,301 | 13.1 | 100.0 |
| 1990 | 2,776,831 | -136,977 | -4.7 | 1.12 | 248,718,302 | 22,176,103 | 9.8 | 100.0 |
| 1980 | 2,913,808 | 88,440 | 3.1 | 1.29 | 226,542,199 | 23,240,168 | 11.4 | 100.0 |
| 1970 | 2,825,368 | 67,831 | 2.5 | 1.39 | 203,302,031 | 23,978,856 | 13.4 | 100.0 |
| 1960 | 2,757,537 | 136,464 | 5.2 | 1.54 | 179,323,175 | 27,997,377 | 18.5 | 100.0 |
| 1950 | 2,621,073 | 82,805 | 3.3 | 1.73 | 151,325,798 | 19,161,229 | 14.5 | 100.0 |
| 1940 | 2,538,268 | 67,329 | 2.7 | 1.92 | 132,164,569 | 8,961,945 | 7.3 | 100.0 |
| 1930 | 2,470,939 | 66,918 | 2.8 | 2.01 | 123,202,624 | 17,181,087 | 16.2 | 100.0 |
| 1920 | 2,404,021 | 179,250 | 8.1 | 2.27 | 106,021,537 | 13,793,041 | 15.0 | 100.0 |
| 1910 | 2,224,771 | -7,082 | -0.3 | 2.41 | 92,228,496 | 16,016,328 | 21.0 | 100.0 |
| 1900 | 2,231,853 | 319,556 | 16.7 | 2.93 | 76,212,168 | 13,232,402 | 21.0 | 100.0 |
| 1890 | 1,912,297 | 287,682 | 17.7 | 3.04 | 62,979,766 | 12,790,557 | 25.5 | 100.0 |
| 1880 | 1,624,615 | 430,595 | 36.1 | 3.24 | 50,189,209 | 11,630,838 | 30.2 | 100.0 |
| 1870 | 1,194,020 | 519,107 | 76.9 | 3.10 | 38,558,371 | 7,115,050 | 22.6 | 100.0 |
| 1860 | 674,913 | 482,699 | 251.1 | 2.15 | 31,443,321 | 8,251,445 | 35.6 | 100.0 |
| 1850 | 192,214 | 149,102 | 345.8 | 0.83 | 23,191,876 | 6,128,523 | 35.9 | 100.0 |
| 1840 | 43,112 | na | na | 0.25 | 17,063,353 | 4,202,651 | 32.7 | 100.0 |
| 1830 | na | na | na | na | 12,860,702 | 3,222,249 | 33.4 | 100.0 |
| 1820 | na | na | na | na | 9,638,453 | 2,398,572 | 33.1 | 100.0 |
| 1810 | na | na | na | na | 7,239,881 | 1,931,398 | 36.4 | 100.0 |
| 1800 | na | na | na | na | 5,308,483 | 1,379,269 | 35.1 | 100.0 |
| 1790 | na | na | na | na | 3,929,214 | na | na | 100.0 |

¹Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ²Some may be revised from originally released data; na=not available

This report and others in the series is available at: <https://indicators.extension.iastate.edu/Indicators/Census/>

Notes

¹U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Censuses; <https://www.census.gov/> and <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/2020-census.html>

²<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021/2020-census-apportionment-results.html>

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