

# Population Change in Cities, 2010-2014

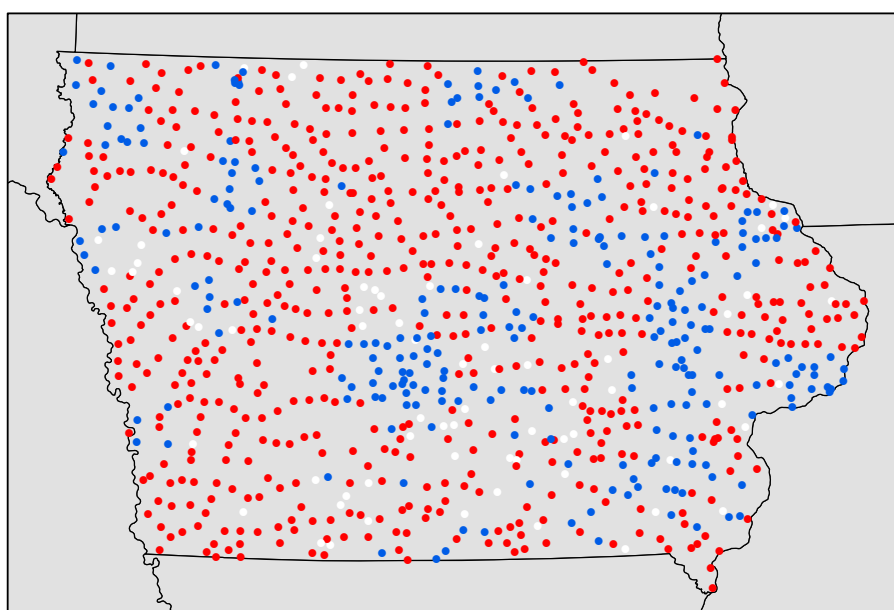
## 627 of Iowa's 946 Cities Experiencing Population Loss

Iowa had a total population of 3,046,869 residents on April 1, 2010. By July 1, 2014, the state had added 60,257 residents for a new total population of 3,107,126. Iowa's population growth rate of 2 percent during this period lagged the national average growth rate of 3.3 percent.

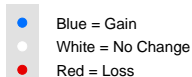
Iowa's recent population gains have accrued to fewer than one third of its cities. Only 246 of the state's 946 incorporated cities have added population during the decade so far. Of the remaining cities, 73 had no change in their population and 627 have lost population. Figure 1 illustrates the locations of cities with gains or losses.

This report describes trends in population change among Iowa's cities by size and proximity to metropolitan areas. The analysis summarizes annual population estimates data from the U.S. Census Bureau, which measure population change since the 2010 Census.

Figure 1



Population Growth in Iowa's Cities, 2010-2014



## 2010-2014 Distribution of Statewide Change by City Size

As of the 2010 Census, Iowa had ten cities with 50,000 or more residents. Another 28 cities in Iowa had 10,000 to 49,999 residents; 95 cities had 2,500 to 9,999 residents; 324 cities had 500 to 2,499 residents; and 489 cities had fewer than 500 residents.

Iowa's ten largest cities contained 29 percent of the state's population in 2010. These cities captured 46 percent of statewide growth from 2010-2014. West Des Moines had the largest population gain among these cities, adding more than 6,600 residents. Iowa City was second with more than 5,500 new residents. Waterloo and Sioux City experienced population losses.

Cities ranging from 10,000-49,999 residents contained 19 percent of the state's population in 2010. Together, these cities garnered nearly half of Iowa's population gains from 2010-2014. Ankeny ranked first in the group and led all other cities in Iowa with a gain exceeding 8,200 residents. Waukee was second in the group, gaining more than 3,900 residents. Population losses were estimated for 12 of the group's 28 cities. Clinton had the largest estimated loss, followed by Mason City and Fort Dodge. Losses in those three cities exceeded 600 residents.

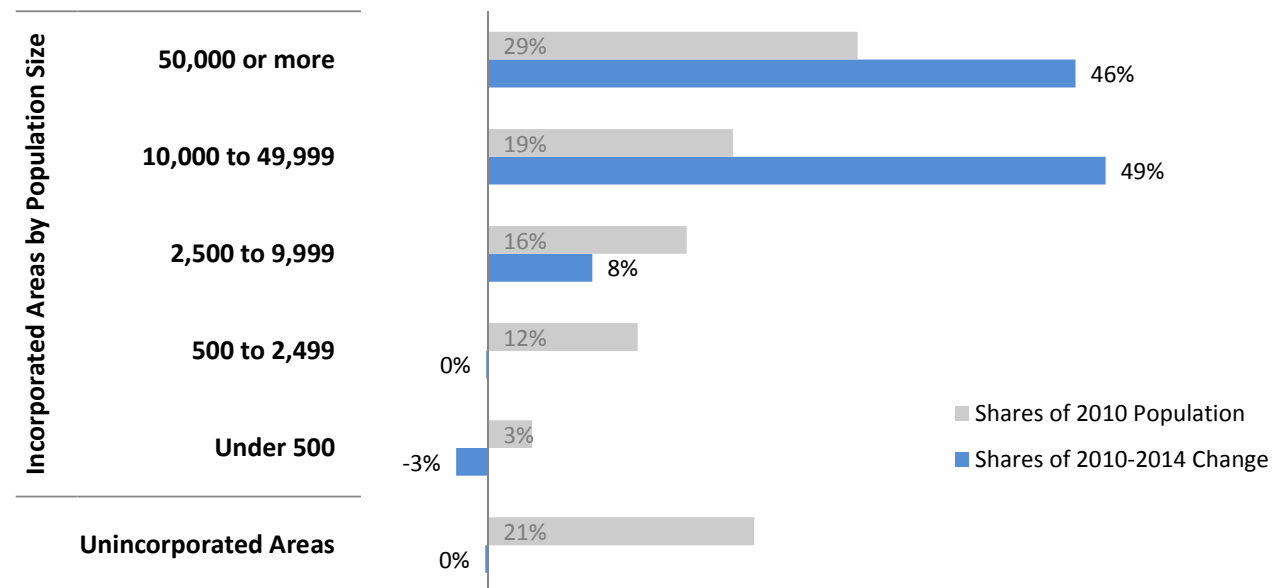
Cities with 2,500 to 9,999 residents captured eight percent of statewide population growth from 2010-2014, which fell short of their initial 16 percent share of Iowa's 2010 population. Grimes had the largest gain with more than 1,500 new residents, followed by Bondurant with 946 new residents. Webster City ranked last in the group with an estimated loss of 282 residents.

Cities with 500 to 2,499 residents began the decade with a 12 percent share of the state's population. As a group, these cities had a net loss of 86 residents. Tiffin had the largest gain with an estimated 497 new residents. Audubon had the largest loss, with population decline of 141.

Cities with fewer than 500 residents contained just three percent of Iowa's population in 2010. Their combined net loss of 1,514 residents was equivalent to a negative three percent share of the statewide gains from 2010-2014.

Iowa's unincorporated areas, which contained 21 percent of the state's population in 2010, lost an estimated 136 residents from 2010-2014. Figure 2 summarizes the percentage shares of statewide population change by city size group.

Figure 2. Percentage Shares of Statewide Population Change by City Size, 2010-2014



## 2010-2014 Rates of Population Change by City Size

Iowa's ten largest cities grew by an average rate of 3.1 percent from 2010-2014. West Des Moines had the highest growth rate within this group at 11.7 percent. Sioux City ranked last in this group, with a slight loss of 0.2 percent.

Cities with 10,000 to 49,999 residents grew by an average rate of 5.0 percent; however, the gains for this group accrued primarily within metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs). Inside MSAs, cities of 10,000 to 49,999 residents grew by 10.5 percent. Outside of MSAs, such cities experienced an average loss of 0.8 percent. Waukeer, which had the fastest rate of growth among all Iowa cities, led this group with a gain of 28.3 percent. Fort Madison ranked last in the group with a decline of 2.6 percent.

Cities with 2,500 to 9,999 residents grew by an average rate of one percent. Within MSAs, the average growth rate was 4.5 percent. Cities outside MSAs declined by 0.9 percent. Bondurant ranked first in the group with a growth rate of 24.5 percent. Missouri Valley ranked last in the group with a decline of 5.1 percent.

The overall population living within Iowa's smaller cities of 500 to 2,499 residents remained essentially unchanged during the period, although location within a MSA was again

Waukeer was Iowa's fastest-growing city from 2010-2014, with a population growth rate of 28.3 percent.

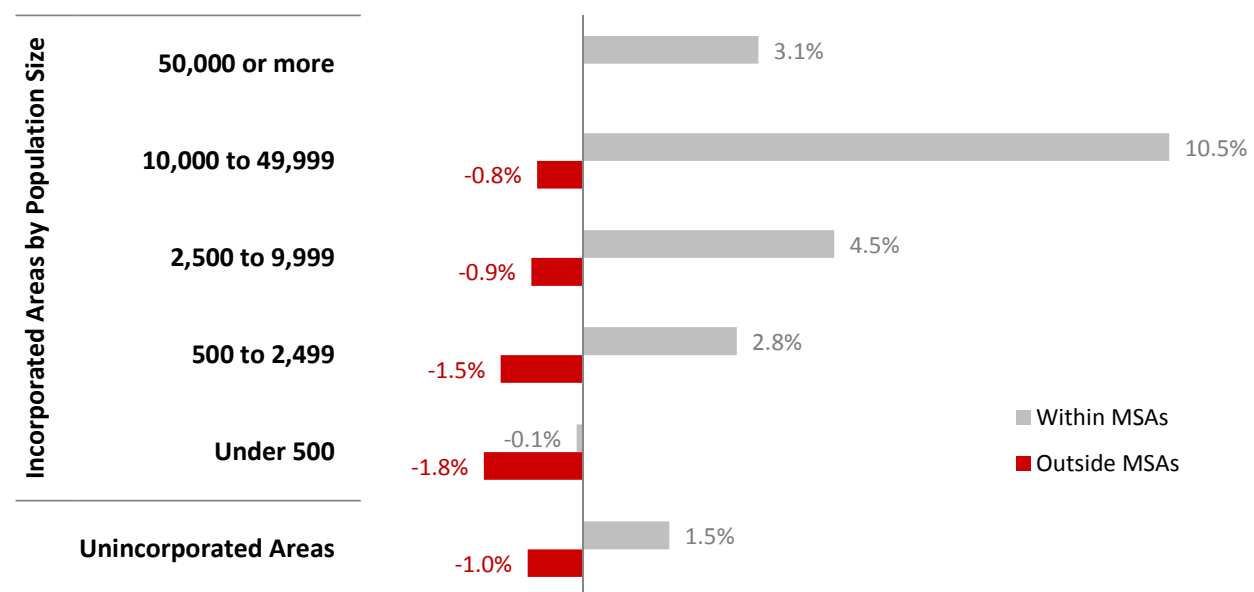
advantageous. Cities within MSAs grew by an average rate of 2.8 percent, while cities outside MSAs declined by 1.5 percent. Tiffin ranked first in this size group, growing by 25.5 percent. Exira ranked last, declining by 7.4 percent.

Cities with fewer than 500 residents posted an average population loss of 1.4 percent. Only 83 of the 489 cities in this group had population gains. Those within MSAs declined by 0.1 percent and those outside MSAs declined by 1.8 percent.

The population in Iowa's unincorporated territories remained nearly unchanged, declining less than one tenth of one percent overall. Within MSAs, these areas grew by 1.5 percent. In counties outside MSAs, these areas declined by 1.0 percent.

Figure 3 illustrates the average recent rates of growth or decline for cities by population size group and MSA status.

Figure 3. Percentage Rates of Population Change by City Size and Metropolitan Status of County, 2010-2014



## Summary

Annual population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau help cities to benchmark their performance in retaining and attracting new residents. This report investigates population growth in Iowa's cities from April 1, 2010, to July 1, 2014.

Thus far, only 246 of Iowa's 946 cities have gained population in the current decade. The likelihood of population growth generally increased with city size. Only 17 percent of cities with fewer than 500 residents grew, compared to 31 percent of cities of 500-2,499 residents, 42 percent of cities with 2,500-9,999 residents; 57 percent of cities with 10,000-49,999 residents; and 80 percent of cities with 50,000 or more residents.

Location within a metropolitan statistical area also greatly improved a city's odds for growth from 2010-2014. Over half (51 percent) of all cities located within a MSA experienced population growth, while just 17 percent of cities outside MSAs gained in population. Cities located outside MSAs and having fewer than 500 residents fared the worst, with just 14 percent experiencing growth. Cities located inside MSAs with 10,000 to 49,999 residents fared the best, with all 12 cities in this group adding population.

## About the Data

The U.S. Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program produces annual estimates of the population for cities, counties, and states. The data reflect the estimated resident population on July 1st of each year since the most recent decennial census..

In deriving its population estimates, the Census Bureau does not distinguish between documented and undocumented residents; thus, the estimates produced for any city, county, or state include all residents regardless of their immigration status.

The population estimates are based upon a combination of administrative data sources, survey data, and modeling procedures. Data sources include recorded births and deaths, tax returns from the Internal Revenue Service, Medicare enrollments, net movements of the Armed Forces population, building permits, changes in group quarters populations, and data from the American Community Survey.

With each annual data release, the Census Bureau revises and updates the entire time series of estimates beginning on April 1, 2010.

### Iowa Population Reports

#### Iowa Community Indicators Program

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