

A Profile of Iowa's Population by Age, Race, and Ethnicity in 2007

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This report examines the composition and distribution of Iowa's population by detailed demographic characteristics such as age, race, and Hispanic origin. Data for this report were obtained from population estimates released by the Population Division of the U.S. Census Bureau and from related reports prepared by the State Data Center of Iowa. The U.S. Census Bureau develops annual estimates of the population using a combination of administrative records and modeling techniques. The most recent estimates detail characteristics of the population as of July 1, 2007.

Overview

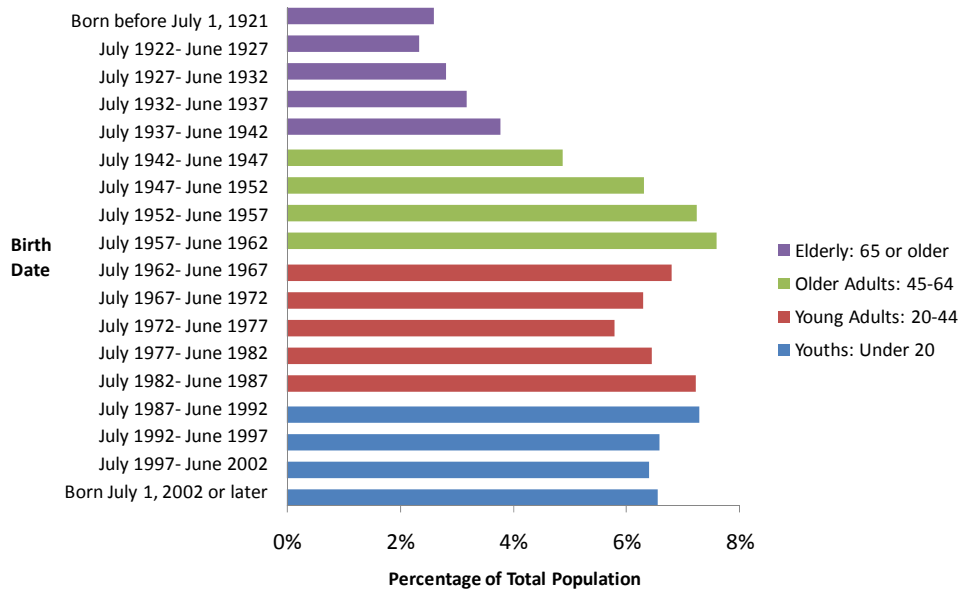
The age, racial, and ethnic characteristics of Iowa's population are topics of frequent public discourse, relating to issues such as declining enrollment levels in public schools, the percentage of labor force members who are approaching retirement age, and changes associated with growing racial and ethnic diversity. This section introduces a general framework for characterizing Iowa's population by age, race, and Hispanic origin. Subsequent sections of this report examine recent changes in the size of these demographic groups and their distribution within the state.

Population by Age

Half of all Iowa residents were over 38 years of age in 2007, compared to a median age of 36.6 years for the United States. Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of Iowa's population by age in five-year intervals and by broad age group. For descriptive purposes, this report uses four age groupings defined as follows: youths under 20 years of age; young adults aged 20 to 44 years; older adults aged 45 to 64 years; and elderly persons who are age 65 years or older.

Figure 1

Distribution of Iowa's Population by Birth Date and Age Group, as of July 1, 2007



Population by Hispanic Origin and Race

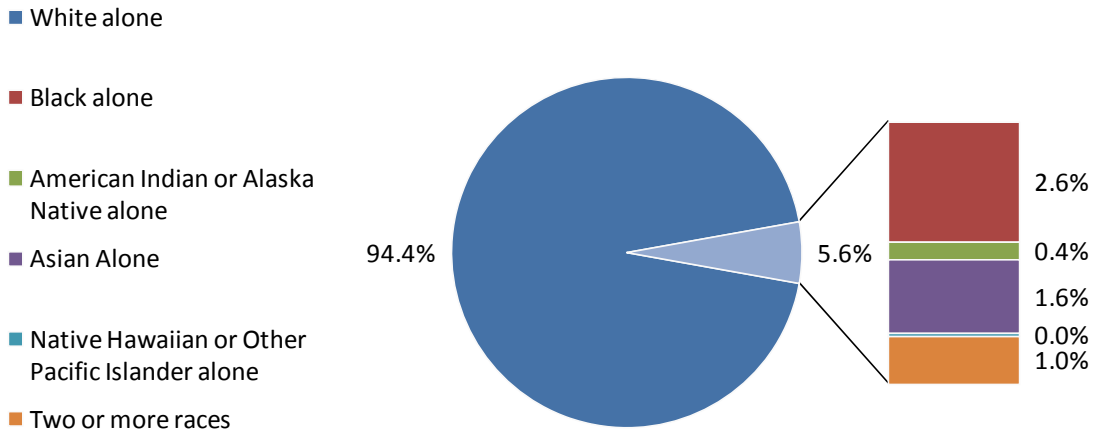
Iowa's overall level of racial and ethnic diversity is relatively low compared to the United States. Non-Hispanic white persons represented more than 90 percent of Iowa's total population in 2007, while they accounted for only 66 percent of the total population in the United States.

For purposes of this report, non-Hispanic whites are referred to as the *majority* population group in Iowa. The *minority* population includes all Hispanic persons and all race groups other than white. It is important to note that the Census Bureau defines Hispanic origin as an ethnicity and not a race, so persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race. In 2007, persons of Hispanic origin represented 4 percent of the state's total population, up from 2.8 percent in the year 2000.

In defining race, the Census Bureau uses six categories: white alone; black alone; American Indian or Alaska native alone; Asian alone; Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander alone; and two or more races. The groups defined with the word "alone" include individuals who reported belonging to that single, particular race group. The "two or more races" group includes individuals who reported belonging to more than one race group. Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of Iowa's population by race in 2007.

Figure 2

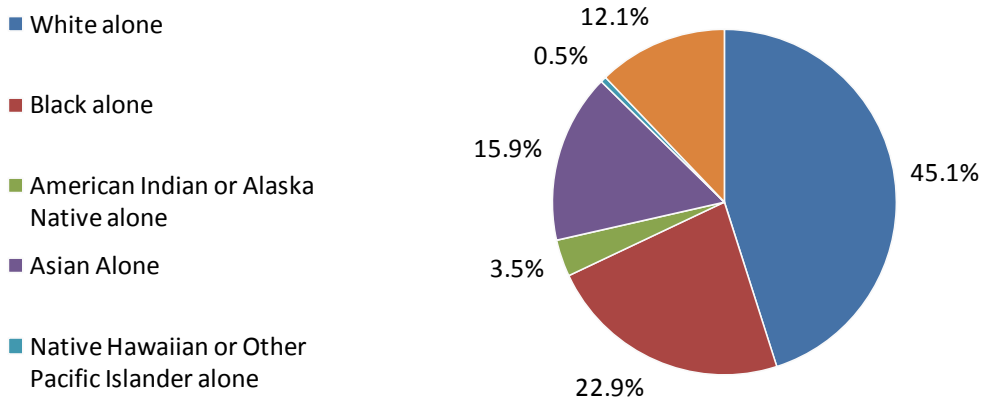
Percentage of Iowa's Total Population by Race, 2007



Since the year 2000, Iowa's total population has grown by 61,664 residents. Persons of Hispanic origin accounted for 60 percent of the net gain in Iowa's population¹. By race group, the net gains were distributed as follows: 45 percent white alone, 23 percent black alone, 14 percent Asian alone, and 16 percent other race(s). The distribution of new residents by race group is illustrated below in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Percentage of Iowa's Net Population Gain by Race, 2000-2007



¹ The Census Bureau defines Hispanic origin as an ethnicity and not as a race.

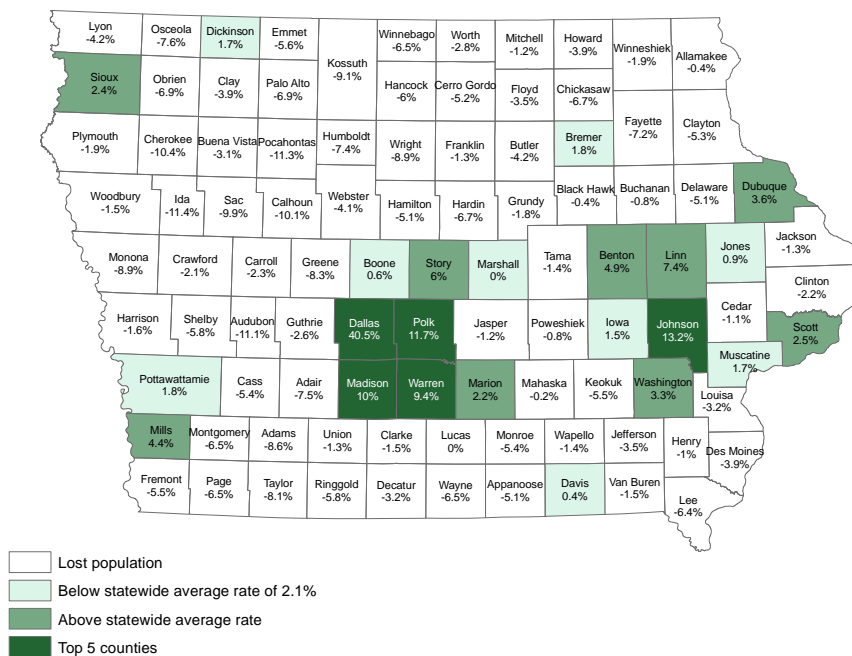
Total Population Change, 2000-2007

According to U.S. Census Bureau estimates, Iowa's population reached 2,988,046 residents on July 1, 2007. The state's total population has grown by 2.1 percent since the year 2000. Iowa ranked 41st among states in its rate of total population growth between 2000 and 2007. The overall population growth rate for the United States was 7.2 percent.

Recent population gains within the state have been unevenly distributed. The population declined in 76 of Iowa's 99 counties between 2000 and 2007. Growth rates by county ranged from a loss of 11.5 percent in Ida County to a gain of 40.5 percent in Dallas County. Figure 4 illustrates the recent rates of total population change by county.

Figure 4

Rates of Total Population Growth, 2000-2007



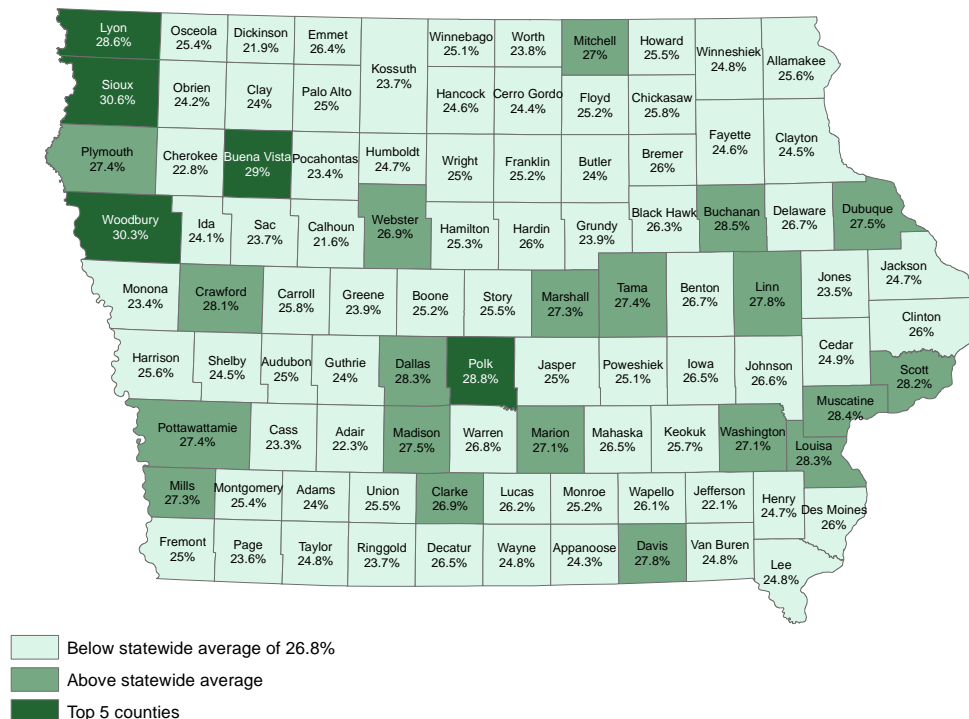
Youth Population

Iowa had 800,818 residents who were under 20 years of age in 2007, a figure 27,000 lower than in the year 2000. Iowa's youngest age group, which includes children under the age of 5, actually increased in size by 7,500 persons during that time. The population of school aged children declined, with net losses distributed as follows: -11,650 in the 5 to 9 age group; -14,100 in the 10 to 14 age group; and -8,900 in the 15 to 19 age group.

At 26.8 percent in 2007, the under-20 youth population represents more than a quarter of the state's total population. The youth percentage by county in 2007 ranged from a low of 21.6 percent in Calhoun County to a high of 30.6 percent in Sioux County. Figure 5 displays each county's percentage of the total population under age 20.

Figure 5

Percentage of the Total Population Under 20 Years of Age, 2007



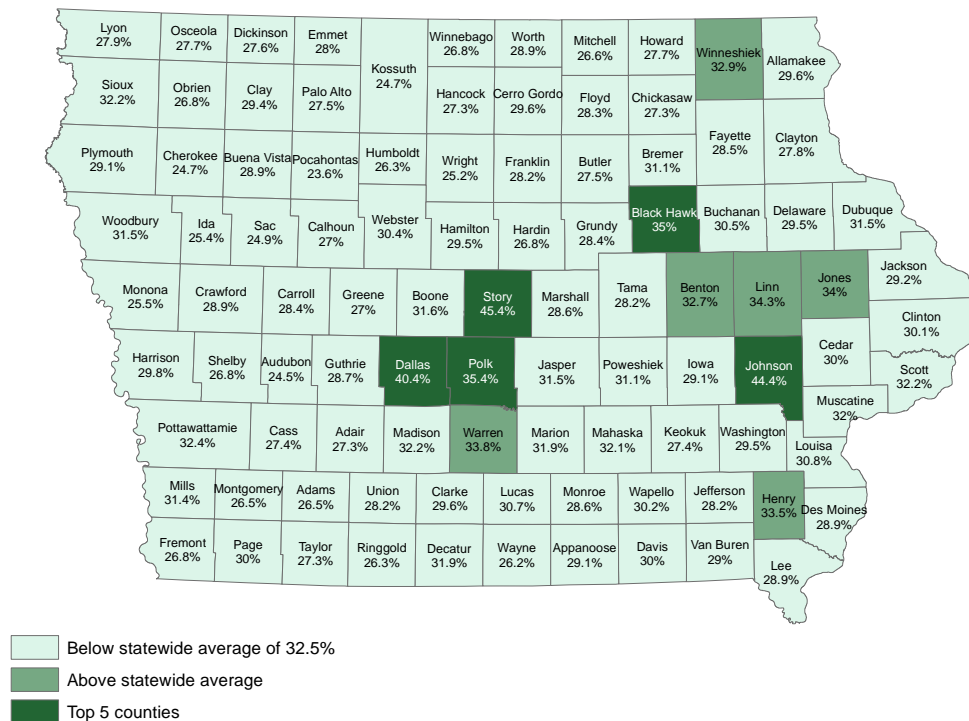
Young Adult Population

Iowa had 972,153 residents between the ages of 20 and 44 years in 2007. The number of persons in this age group shrank by nearly 40,000 between 2000 and 2007. Part of the loss was due to net out-migration of young adults; however, there were generational forces at work as well. The number of young persons who “aged in” to the young adult group was smaller than the number who “aged out” to an older cohort group during the seven year time period. This was a national phenomenon: young adults slipped from a 37 percent share of the U.S. population in 2000 to a 34.7 percent share in 2007.

Young adults represented 32.5 percent of Iowa’s total population in 2007. Only 11 of Iowa’s 99 counties exceeded the statewide average percentage. Relative concentrations of young adults are apparent in counties with large universities or colleges. Story County had the highest fraction of young adults at 45.4 percent. Pocahontas County had the lowest fraction at 23.6 percent. Figure 6 displays the percentage of the total population between the ages of 20 and 44 years by county in 2007.

Figure 6

Percentage of the Total Population 20 to 44 Years of Age, 2007



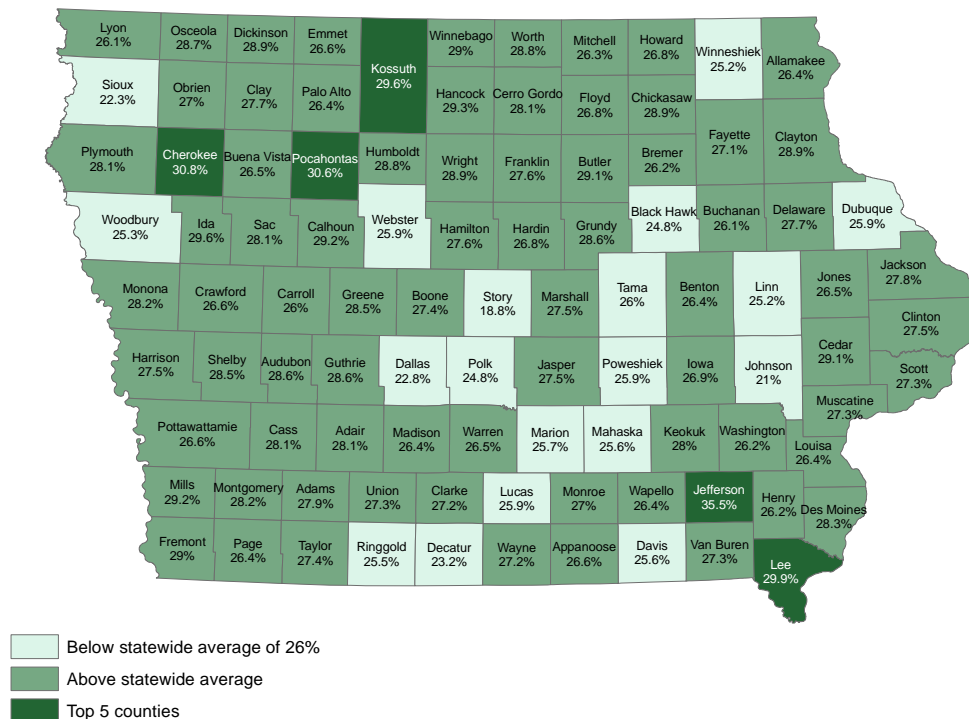
Older Adult Population

Iowa had 776,627 residents between the ages of 45 and 64 years in 2007. This age group, which now includes most members of the so-called “Baby Boom” generation, swelled in size by more than 126,000 persons between 2000 and 2007. Nationally, this age group grew by 24 percent between 2000 and 2007. The older adult group’s share of the total U.S. population increased from 22 percent to 25.4 percent. This group’s share of the total population in Iowa was slightly higher than the national average at 26.0 percent.

Jefferson County led among all counties with 35.5 percent of its residents in the 45-64 age group. Story County, at 18.8 percent, had the lowest fraction of residents in the older adult population group. Figure 7 displays the percentage of residents in the older adult population group by county in 2007.

Figure 7

Percentage of the Total Population 45 to 64 Years of Age, 2007



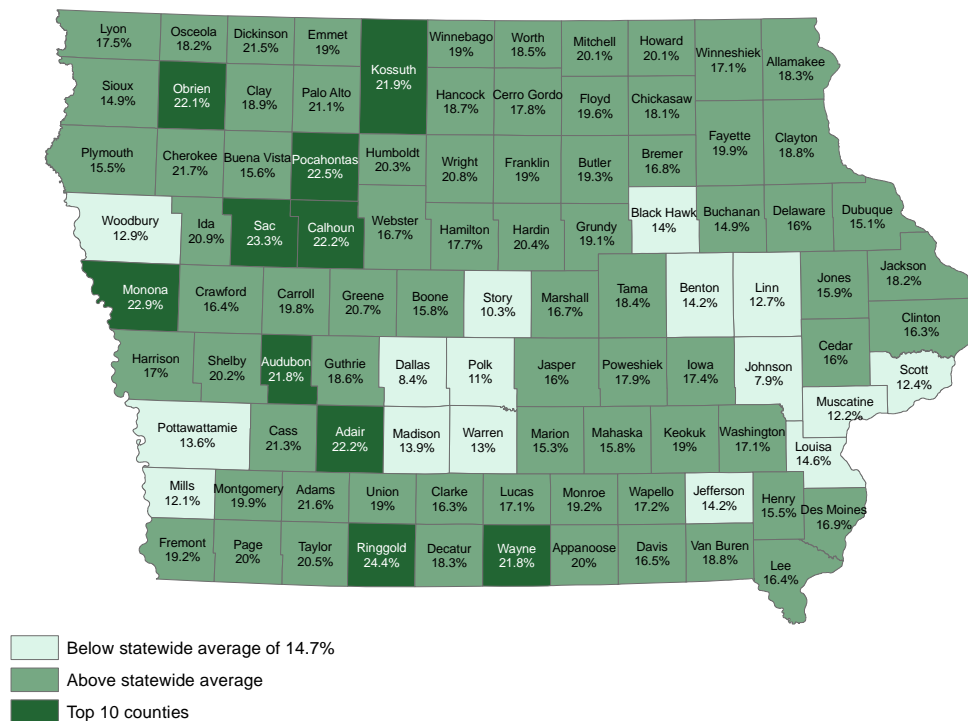
Elderly Population

Iowa's elderly residents, ages 65 years or older, numbered 438,448 in 2007. The size of this group in 2007 was relatively unchanged from its size in the year 2000 with a net increase of just over 2,200 persons. This group represented 14.7 percent of the state's total population in 2007. The elderly share of the population in Iowa was higher than the national average of 12.9 percent.

In general, Iowa's elderly residents comprise a larger share of the population in rural areas compared to more urbanized areas. The average percentage of elderly residents in Iowa's non-metropolitan counties was 17.8 percent compared to 12.2 percent in metropolitan counties. Ringgold County had the highest percentage of elderly residents at 24.4 percent, while Johnson County had the lowest at 7.9 percent. Figure 8 displays the percentage of the total population ages 65 years or older by county.

Figure 8

Percentage of the Total Population Age 65 Years or Older, 2007



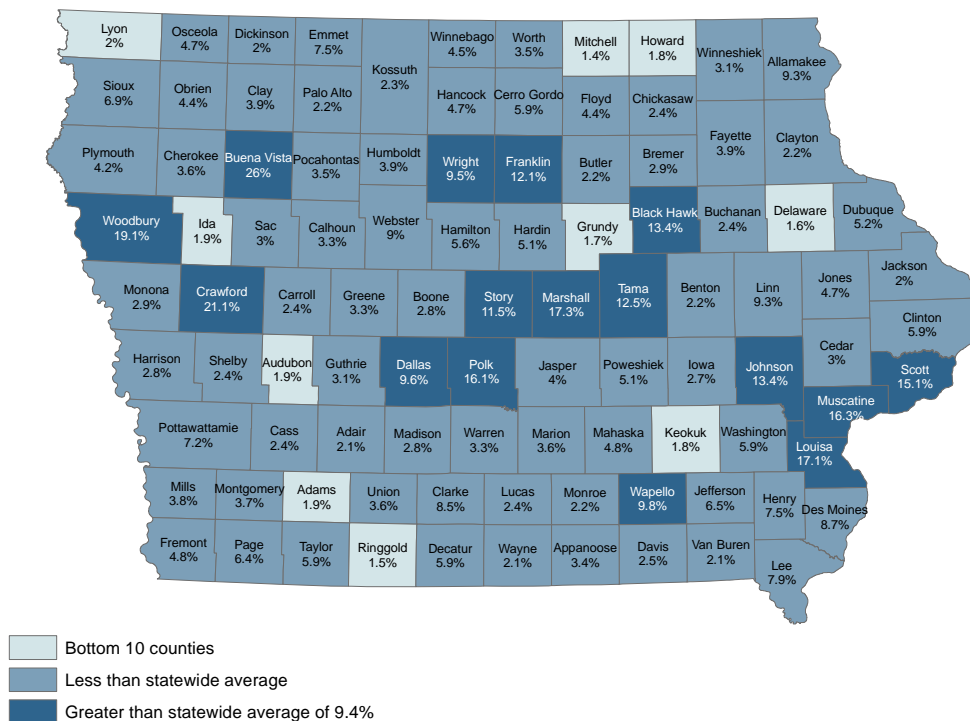
Minority Population Size

The minority population includes all persons who are either non-white, Hispanic or Latino, or both. Iowa's largest minority group is the Hispanic population, which included an estimated 119,734 persons in 2007. The Hispanic population includes persons of any race. Iowa's second largest minority group is the black population, which includes persons whose race was black alone or black in combination with any other race, regardless of their Hispanic or Latino origin. The size of the black population was estimated at 93,465 persons in 2007. Non-Hispanic white residents represent the majority population group in Iowa, accounting for 90.6 percent of the state's total population.

Among Iowa's counties, Mitchell County had the lowest fraction of minority residents at 1.4 percent of the total population in 2007. Buena Vista's 26 percent minority population ranked highest among all counties. Figure 9 displays the minority population percentages for all counties in 2007.

Figure 9

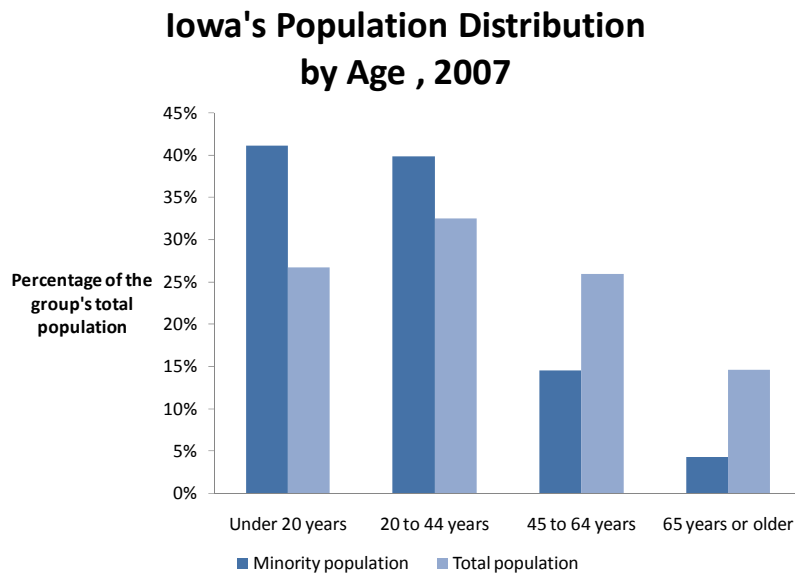
Minority Percentage of the Population, 2007



Minority Population by Age

The age distribution of Iowa's minority population differs considerably from the overall age distribution for the state. More than 41 percent of minority residents were under the age of 20 in 2007, compared to about 27 percent for Iowa's total population. An additional 40 percent of minority residents were between the ages of 20 and 44, compared to just 33 percent of the state's total population. Minority residents between the ages of 45 and 64 accounted for less than 15 percent of the total minority population in Iowa, while residents in this age group accounted for 26 percent of Iowa's total population. Minority group members over the age of 65 represented less than 5 percent of the total minority population, compared to nearly 15 percent for the total population. These values are summarized in Figure 10 below.

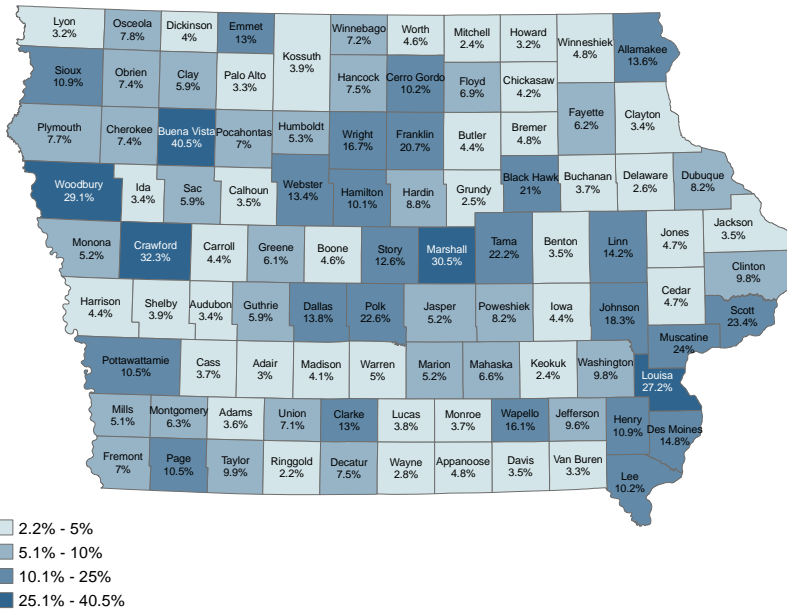
Figure 10



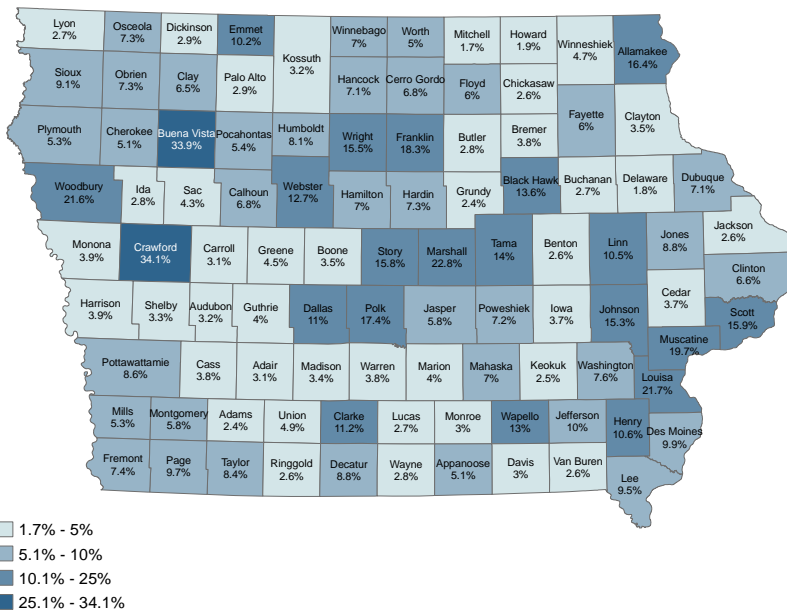
The relatively youthful minority population is contributing to a much higher level of diversity among Iowa's younger generations. The following maps in Figures 11 through 14 demonstrate the diversity levels by county for the under-20, 20-44, 45-64, and 65 and older age groups. For each age group, the map displays the minority population size as a percentage of the total population in that age group in 2007.

Figures 11-12

Minority Percentage of the Population Under Age 20, 2007

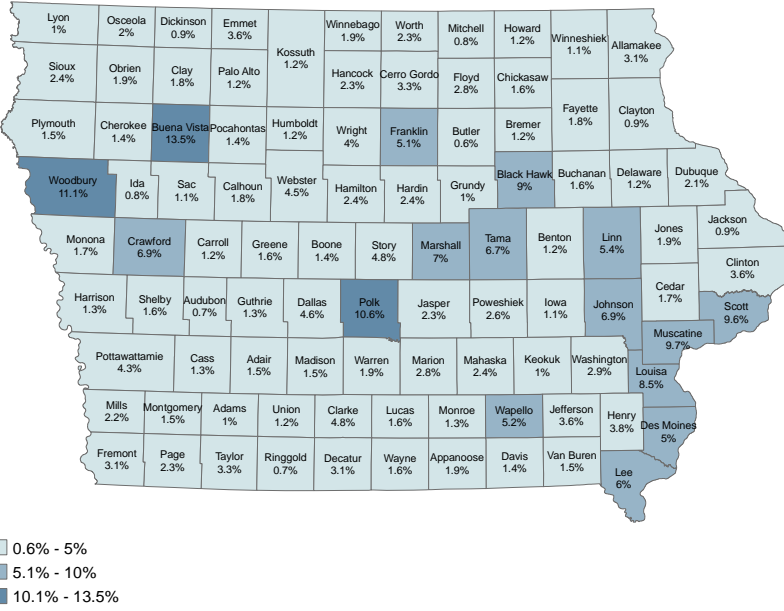


Minority Percentage of the Population Ages 20-44, 2007

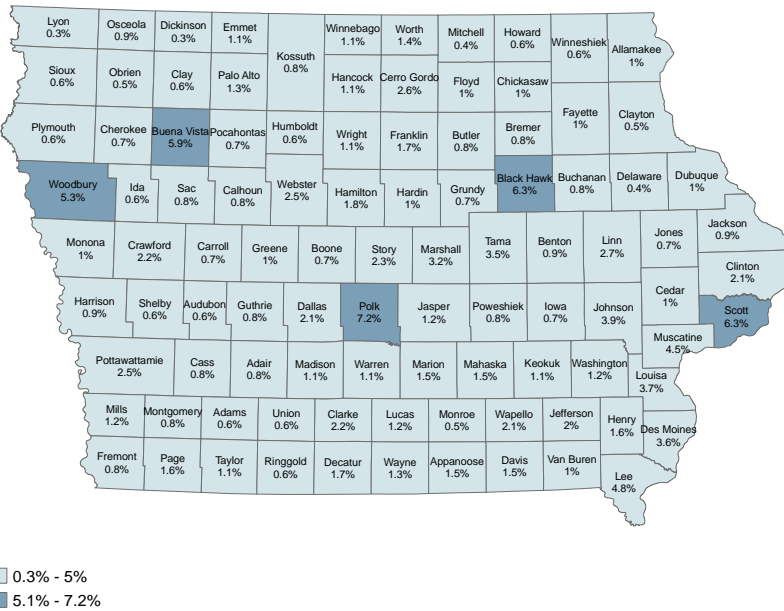


Figures 123-14

Minority Percentage of the Population Ages 45-64, 2007



Minority Percentage of the Population Ages 65 or Older, 2007

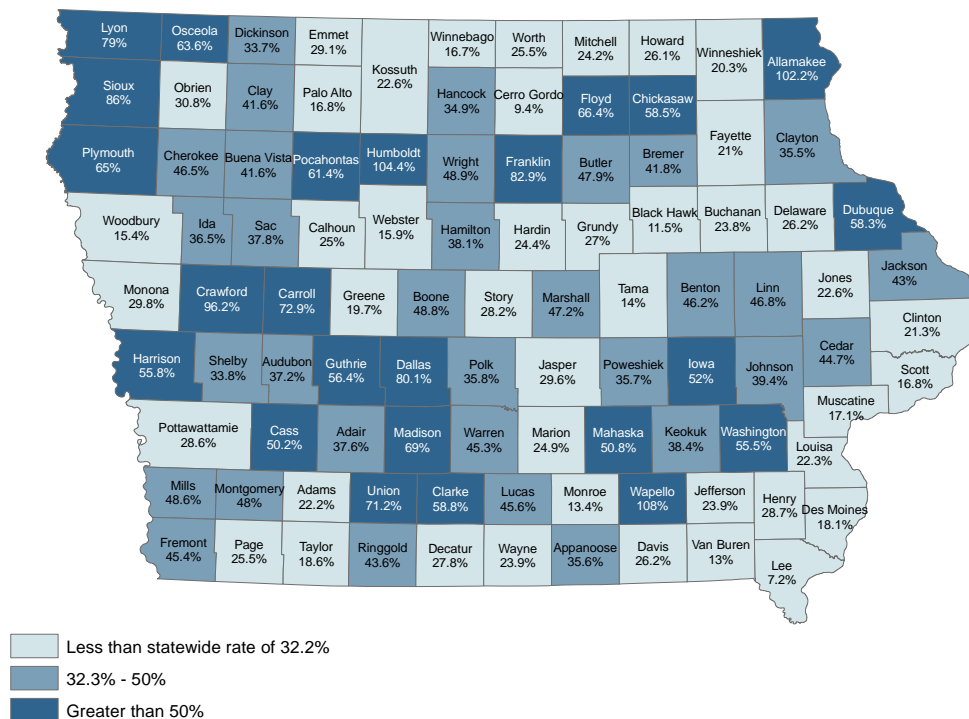


Minority Population Growth

Iowa's total minority population grew by more than 32 percent between April 1, 2000 and July 1, 2007. The number of non-white and/or Hispanic residents increased by 68,000 to reach nearly 280,000 in 2007. Almost one quarter of Iowa's 99 counties experienced growth rates exceeding 50 percent in their minority population. In Wapello County, Humboldt County, and Allamakee County, the minority population more than doubled. Figure 15 displays minority population growth rates by county for the 2000 to 2007 period.

Figure 15

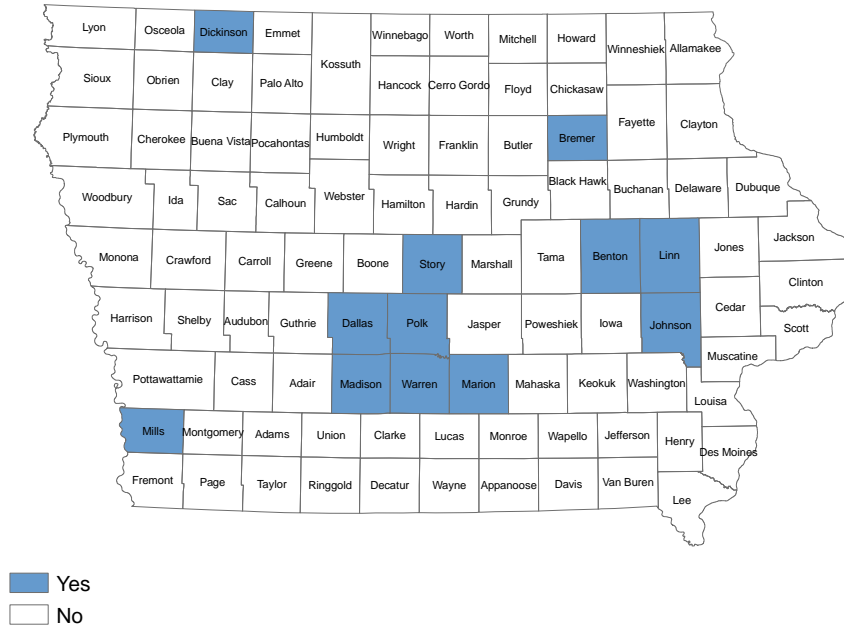
Rate of Minority Population Change, 2000-2007



Iowa's minority groups represent an important source of population growth throughout the state. During the 2000 to 2007 period, 76 of Iowa's 99 counties experienced net population declines, yet all of them experienced growth in their minority population groups. Of the 23 counties that grew, five experienced minority population gains that more than offset declines in their non-Hispanic white populations. In all, minority population gains exceeded non-Hispanic white population gains in 87 of 99 counties, as illustrated in Figure 16 below.

Figure 16

Counties With White Non-Hispanic Population Growth Exceeding Minority Population Growth, 2000-2007



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