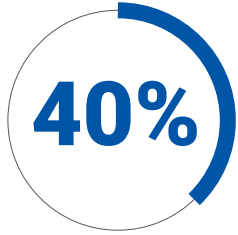


# REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS IN CENTRAL IOWA



Refugees and immigrants face many challenges that prevent them from moving out of poverty and living a quality life in central Iowa. Many of these challenges are being addressed through the work of OpporTUNITY, the Refugee Alliance of Central Iowa, and Ethnic Community Based Organizations.



40 percent of Iowa's population growth since 2010 has come from immigration.

The Gazette, 2018

**474,274**  
Polk County Population

ACS 5 year estimates 2014-2018

**9%** Refugees and immigrants in Polk County

## TOP CHALLENGES REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS FACE

- Lack of English language skills
- Cultural differences
- Health issues/navigating health care
- Transportation
- Child care

USCRI and Catholic Charities

**\$1 billion**

In 2018, 51,855 Refugees and immigrants in the Des Moines Metro Area accounted for \$1 billion in spending power and contributed \$362.3 million in tax receipts.

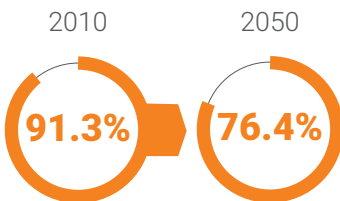
[www.newamericaneconomy.org](http://www.newamericaneconomy.org)

## REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS POPULATION GROWTH

**175,137** people in Iowa (6 percent of the state's population) were immigrants in 2018. 156,625 people in Iowa (5 percent of the state's population) in 2018 were native-born Americans who had at least one immigrant parent.

American Immigration Council

Since 2010, Iowa's populations have had the following growth:



In 2010, Iowa's population was 91.3% white non-Hispanic, which is estimated to decrease to 76.4% in 2050, according to projections from the State Data Center.

The Gazette, 2018

## JOBS FOR NEW REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS

Refugees and immigrants often work in service occupations and manufacturing or transportation fields, which pay lower wages.

**1 in 4** foreign born people work in service occupations

**1 in 5** foreign born people work in manufacturing or transportation fields

INDUSTRY	POLK COUNTY TOTAL	REFUGEE & IMMIGRANT TOTAL
Management, business, science, and art occupations	<b>44.3%</b>	<b>24.4%</b>
Service occupations	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>26.4%</b>
Sales and office occupations	<b>23.5%</b>	<b>14.8%</b>
Natural resources, construction and maintenance occupations	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>9.8%</b>
Production, transportation, and material moving	<b>12%</b>	<b>24.6%</b>

ACS 5 year estimates 2014-2018

**99.1%** of primary refugees arriving in the U.S. receive a comprehensive health assessment.

### Most common health referrals:

- Dental care
- Primary care
- Vision care