



DSM USA

GLOBAL DSM:

INTERNATIONAL TALENT STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS

A joint project with the Partnership for a New American Economy.



An Initiative of

**GREATER DES MOINES
PARTNERSHIP**

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 2015, the Greater Des Moines Partnership (The Partnership) and the Partnership for a New American Economy (NAE) came together to develop a pilot program aimed at promoting a regional approach to immigration issues focused on economics, workforce and the community. The purpose of the effort was to ensure that foreign-born persons have the education, preparation and connections necessary for success in order to reach their ultimate potential in Central Iowa. On September 29, 2015, the creation of the Des Moines Immigration Integration Initiative (Initiative) was announced. This effort fits within the Greater Des Moines Partnership strategy, Global DSM, specific to international talent.

The initial objectives of the Initiative were three-fold.

- **First**, provide the Greater Des Moines business community access to world-class talent by making Central Iowa a premier destination for foreign-born talent and entrepreneurs.
- **Second**, research and leverage the connection between welcoming communities for foreign-born and increased access to foreign investment and export opportunities.
- **Third**, create a strategy to support and align with Global DSM: Trade and Investment Strategy, a collaborative effort of The Partnership, Bookings Institution and JPMorgan Chase.

The Initiative’s Task Force utilized cross-sector collaboration with members consisting of government, business, education, faith, non-profit and community leaders.

The Task Force was broken into three working groups, focused by topic and member expertise, with a chair assigned to each working group. The working group breakdown was as follows:

- **Workforce and Education Working Group**
- **Business and Economic Growth Working Group**
- **Welcoming Community Working Group**

Each working group spent seven months researching, meeting with members of the community, drawing from the experience of other cities with similar efforts and partnerships across the country, brainstorming and developing their recommendations specific to their area of focus. Additionally, the working groups utilized Greater Des Moines-specific immigration research collected and produced by NAE.

The working groups operated autonomously, though not surprisingly, several of the recommendations produced overlapped when presented to the Task Force as a whole. The Task Force then spent the next several months diligently working through, revising and finalizing a general set of recommendations for the Greater Des Moines community.

The general set of recommendations is not prioritized in any order and touch on several areas, including:

- **Information Dissemination**
- **Address Gaps in Services**
- **Enhance Community Engagement**
- **Skills/Workforce Development and Career Opportunities**
- **Immigration Reform Advocacy**

The Initiative’s next steps are to disseminate these findings and recommendations, to raise awareness about immigration’s positive effects on the local and state economy and to develop specific action items aimed at accomplishing the Initiative’s recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create a Central Iowa Welcoming Center (or Hub)

Hubs are reliable places that connect the foreign-born with available resources and allow them to better engage with the community. Though brick and mortar micro-hubs exist for certain foreign-born communities, no central location serves the foreign-born in Central Iowa.

The Task Force proposes establishing a Central Iowa Welcoming Center to provide essential information and services — or links to existing services — for our foreign-born population. Following the model of a hub and spoke system, existing agencies, community groups and volunteer networks will connect and supplement the work done at the central location. The Hub will facilitate communication, collaboration and coordination among those focused on different needs and services (e.g. emergency services, resettlement agencies, education and training providers, employment services, financial education, employers, refugees and ethnic affinity groups).

Additionally, the Task Force recommends developing a “virtual Hub” providing online access to the same resources.

2. Facilitate Community and Government Engagement with the Foreign-Born

Civic engagement is key to facilitating the successful integration of new Americans. The Task Force recommends expanding engagement between the foreign-born and local government and community, as appropriate to their immigration status, readiness and interest.

Initiatives could include helping newly-naturalized Americans register to vote, providing public safety education and building trust between law enforcement and foreign-born communities.

Of special note is the need to provide basic legal aid to foreign-born residents who do not qualify to access federally-funded legal resources.

The Task Force also proposes promoting greater public awareness and celebration of naturalization ceremonies, which are poignant opportunities to remember our immigrant history and find inspiration in our shared future.

3. Identify and Promote the Use of Existing Resources

Central Iowa is home to many resources and support organizations for the foreign-born. However, communication about and among them is often lacking.

The Task Force proposes to initially document and connect with all existing resources and organizations to encourage them to be involved in the Hub as appropriate. In addition, the Task Force envisions that the Hub would provide a channel to publicize existing resources and groups as well as new resources and groups as they develop — a way for them to connect with each other.

4. Make More Effective Use and Increase Accessibility of Existing Resources to Support Skills Development

The Task Force is aware that existing resources are available to support career development in certain targeted populations, such as navigators in our community colleges. Currently, these programs are not focused on our foreign-born population and may not be accessible to them. The Task Force recommends exploring ways to connect existing resources to the foreign-born and building awareness of career paths within foreign-born communities.

5. Foster Integration of Highly Skilled/Educated Foreign-Born in the Workforce

The Task Force recognizes the wealth of knowledge and skills available to Central Iowa employers in our current foreign-born population, including our foreign student population. Matching these skill sets to employers in need of qualified workers is challenging for several reasons, including lack of knowledge about applicable immigration laws, cultural differences and how to attain necessary licensure or certification.

The Task Force recommends creating a pilot program to explore how best to meet these challenges in partnership with higher education institutions and other stakeholders.

Investigation of existing resources nationally has not revealed a comprehensive model for such a program, although some helpful organizations were identified. Lessons derived from the pilot program and further investigation of existing national resources could be utilized to develop a permanent program, if warranted.

Leveraging the existing work of Study Iowa, the Task Force also proposes developing a foreign student recruitment and retention plan to meet the unique needs and take advantage of the unique opportunity to retain students educated in Iowa.

The Task Force also recommends development of a global talent recruitment program targeting professionals in high-demand careers. The campaign should include engaging our current foreign-born talent in the effort.

6. Support Foreign-Born Entrepreneurs

The Task Force recognizes the entrepreneurial spirit in our foreign-born population and the need for more entrepreneurs in Central Iowa. The foreign-born face the same hurdles as other entrepreneurs, but also the challenges of not understanding our financial system, government structures and investment opportunities.

The Task Force recommends developing a micro-loan program specifically targeted to foreign-born entrepreneurs, which would include providing information and education to acclimate them to our systems, governments and laws.

The Task Force also proposes creating a mentor match program for foreign-born business owners. The program would be a logical expansion of existing entrepreneurial support resources, but would include education for both the mentor and the sponsored business owner to overcome cultural and other barriers to success.

7. Leverage the Educational and Workforce Assets of Foreign-Born Professionals

Often foreign-born professionals are blocked from utilizing their education and work experience gained outside the United States because of restrictive licensure regulations or a lack of understanding about transferability of skill sets.

While recognizing the legitimate need for reliable licensures and certifications, the Task Force recommends exploring ways to improve the process for re-certification of professional credentials from foreign countries.

The Task Force also proposes that services be promoted or developed to help foreign-born workers assess their skills gained abroad, learn how to transfer them to available occupations and explain their qualifications to prospective employers.

8. Educate Employers

Although foreign-born workers are a resource for employers seeking qualified workers in Central Iowa, the Task Force recognizes that their employment often entails unfamiliar challenges, including immigration laws, language proficiency and intercultural competency.

The Task Force proposes developing resources for employers to meet these challenges, including subject-matter education, peer exchange of best practices and access to organizations prepared to assist with particular concerns.

9. Increase Availability of Language Acquisition and Civic Education Programs

The Task Force recognizes that our public K-12 schools and higher education institutions are providing English language and civic education to foreign-born youth. However, more programs for other age groups are needed.

Acknowledging there are many barriers to accessing such programs (e.g., lack of transportation, child care and inconvenient timing), we recommend promoting and funding language acquisition and civic education through existing agencies and developing more effective ways to provide these programs.

The Task Force also recommends the development of career- or industry-specific language learning opportunities for prospective and incumbent workers in high-demand fields.

Additionally, the Task Force encourages language proficiency amongst all Iowa students and supports the development of a program recognizing students who can demonstrate proficiency in multiple languages by high school graduation, and ultimately verifying the skill of biliteracy for students, employers and universities.

10. Continue and Strengthen Advocacy for Immigration Reform

The Task Force recognizes that many of the challenges faced by our foreign-born residents, organizations serving them and employers in need of their talent and skills are not inherent, but rather created by our outdated immigration system. Only by updating federal law to match the economic, social and demographic needs of Central Iowa and the United States as a whole will we become the vibrant and healthy community to which we aspire.

The Task Force recommends researching and developing an immigration reform advocacy plan in collaboration with national partners.

For more information on immigration statistics specific to Greater Des Moines or Global DSM please visit DSMpartnership.com/GlobalDSM.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Greater Des Moines Partnership extends a special thanks to the Partnership for a New American Economy as well as the Des Moines Immigration Integration Initiative Task Force for their guidance in creating Global DSM: International Talent Strategy.

About the Greater Des Moines Partnership

The Greater Des Moines Partnership is the economic and community development organization that serves Central Iowa. Together with 22 Affiliate Chambers of Commerce and 5,800 Regional business Members, The Partnership drives economic growth with one voice, one mission and as one region. Through innovation, strategic planning and global collaboration, The Partnership grows opportunity, creates jobs and promotes Greater Des Moines as the best place to build a business, a career and a future. Visit DSMpartnership.com for more information.



About the Partnership for a New American Economy

The Partnership for a New American Economy brings together more than 500 Republican, Democratic and Independent mayors and business leaders who support immigration reforms that will help create jobs for Americans today. The Partnership's members include mayors of more than 35 million people nationwide and business leaders of companies that generate more than \$1.5 trillion and employ more than 4 million people across all sectors of the economy, from Agriculture to Aerospace, Hospitality to High Tech and Media to Manufacturing. Partnership members understand that immigration is essential to maintaining the productive, diverse and flexible workforce that America needs to ensure prosperity over the coming generations. Learn more at RenewOurEconomy.org.



Task Force Leadership Team

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THE FOREIGN-BORN IN DES MOINES:
A SNAPSHOT OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC
CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE FOREIGN-BORN IN THE
GREATER DES MOINES REGION¹



GREATER DES MOINES GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP)
AND TAX CONTRIBUTIONS

Foreign-born residents contributed
\$3.2 billion
to the metro area’s GDP in 2014,
accounting for 7.1% of the total GDP
in Greater Des Moines.²

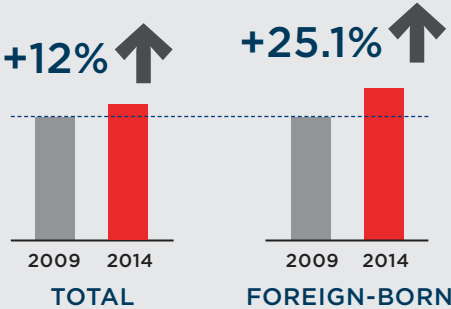
The foreign-born population of
Greater Des Moines contributed more than
\$100 million in state and
local taxes
including property, income, sales and excise taxes levied
by either the State of Iowa or by municipal governments in 2014.³

POPULATION GROWTH 2009 - 2014

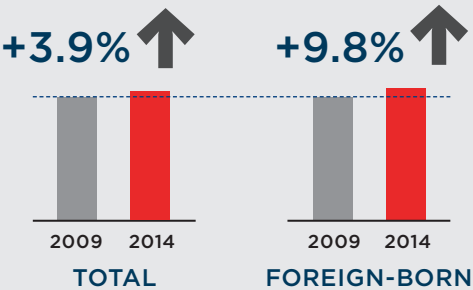
Population Trends

The total population in Greater Des Moines increased by 12%, from 545,643 to 611,291 people. During this period, the foreign-born population grew 25.1%, from 38,970 to 48,760 people.

GREATER DES MOINES

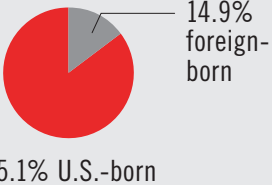


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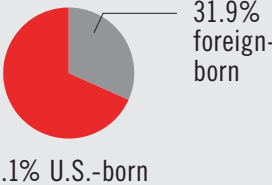


Foreign-Born Share of Population Growth

GREATER DES MOINES



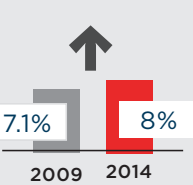
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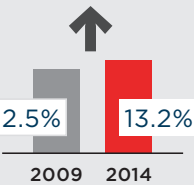
During this period, growth in the foreign-born population accounted for 14.9% of overall population growth, compared to the national rate of 31.9%.

Foreign-Born Population Share

GREATER DES MOINES



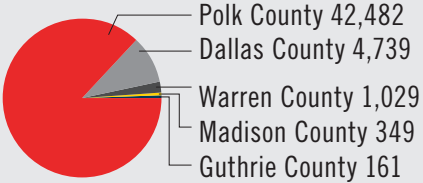
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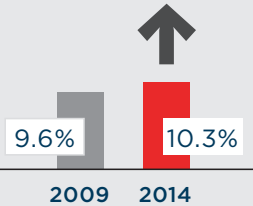
The share of the population in Greater Des Moines that was foreign-born increased from 7.1% to 8%.

DISTRIBUTION OF FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION IN GREATER DES MOINES

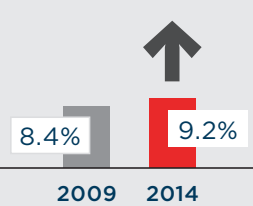
27,489 in City of Des Moines



LABOR MARKET



The share of the foreign-born within the working age population increased from 9.6% to 10.3%.



The percentage of the employed labor force that is foreign-born also rose from 8.4% to 9.2%.

The foreign-born are overrepresented, relative to their share of the population, in several key industries in Greater Des Moines.

| | |
|--|-------|
| Manufacturing | 16.1% |
| Construction | 13.4% |
| Entertainment, recreation, accommodation | 11.2% |
| Finance, insurance, real estate | 10.3% |
| Professional services ⁴ | 9.9% |
| Health care and social assistance | 9.6% |
| Military | 8.7% |
| Retail trade | 8.6% |
| General services ⁵ | 8.6% |

HIGH-TECH WORKFORCE

STEM:
Science, Technology,
Engineering and Math

By 2020, Iowa will need to fill 61,500 STEM jobs. While the foreign-born make up 8% of the overall population of Greater Des Moines, they make up 10% of all STEM workers.

10% of
all STEM
workers

FOREIGN-DIRECT INVESTMENT AND JOB CREATION

Foreign-owned enterprises create thousands of new jobs in Greater Des Moines.

Top five countries for foreign direct investment in Greater Des Moines by number of jobs created in 2011.⁶

- United Kingdom: 1,400
- Japan: 900
- France: 900
- Ireland: 900
- Netherlands: 700

EDUCATION AND LONG-TERM ECONOMIC IMPACTS

64.2 percent of the foreign-born in the Greater Des Moines area have at least a high school degree, and 20.8 percent have at least a bachelor's degree.

In fall 2014, 4,767 students attending local higher-education institutions in the region were on temporary visas.⁷

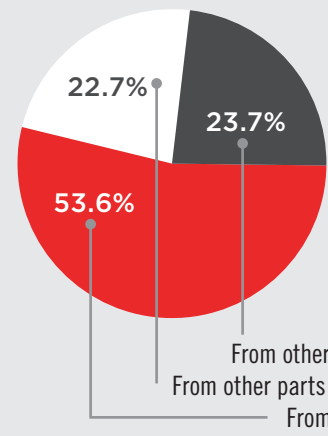
The total number of international students graduating with a bachelor's degree or higher from a four-year university in Iowa is 11,441. Attracting or retaining just half of these students in Greater Des Moines would increase the workforce candidate pool and expand the consumer base, creating 2,449 local jobs in six years⁸ and boosting the metro area's total GDP by at least \$609 million within the next 30 years.⁹

MIGRATION OF FOREIGN-BORN TO GREATER DES MOINES

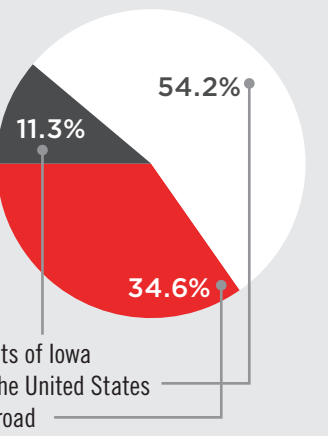
In 2009, a vast majority (88.4%) of the foreign-born had lived in Greater Des Moines for more than a year.

Among the remaining 11.6% of foreign-born residents who had lived in Greater Des Moines for less than a year — the so-called “recent arrivals” — 23.7% moved from other places in Iowa, while 22.7% came from other U.S. states and 53.6% came from abroad.

2009 RECENT ARRIVALS



2014 RECENT ARRIVALS



Recent arrivals were more likely to have come from other U.S. states in 2014 compared to 2009.

In 2014, of the 16.2% of foreign-born residents who recently arrived in Greater Des Moines, 11.3% moved from other parts of Iowa, while 54.1% came from other U.S. states and 34.6% came from abroad.

15% of the foreign-born in Greater Des Moines haven't completed a high school or college degree.

64.2% of the foreign-born in Greater Des Moines have a high school degree.

20.8% have earned at least a bachelor's degree.

Top five countries of birth for the recently-arrived foreign-born in 2014

- Iraq: 2,297
- Myanmar: 995
- Liberia: 676
- Malaysia: 653
- India: 556

Top five countries of birth for all foreign-born in the region in 2014

- Mexico: 12,256
- Iraq: 4,254
- Bosnia: 4,054
- Laos: 3,744
- Vietnam: 2,800

TOP FIVE U.S. COUNTIES WHERE THE RECENTLY-ARRIVED FOREIGN-BORN MOVED FROM

- Orange County, California: 1,931
- Delaware County, Pennsylvania: 676
- Howard County — Columbia, Ellicott City and Elkrige, Maryland: 619
- Atlanta Regional Commission — Gwinnett County, Georgia: 421
- Linn County — Cedar Rapids, Iowa: 319

The Partnership for a New American Economy brings together more than 500 mayors and business leaders united in making the economic case for streamlining, modernizing and rationalizing our country's immigration policies at the national, state and local levels.





DSM

DES MOINES, IOWA

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