



# State of Rural Minnesota Report 2017



center for **rural policy**  
and development

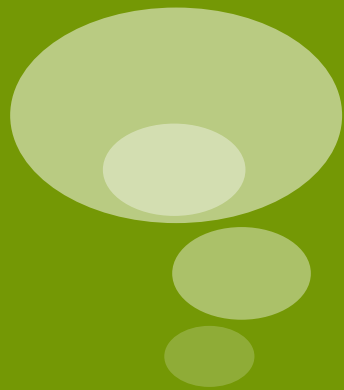
*Seeking Solutions for Greater Minnesota's Future*

# Introduction



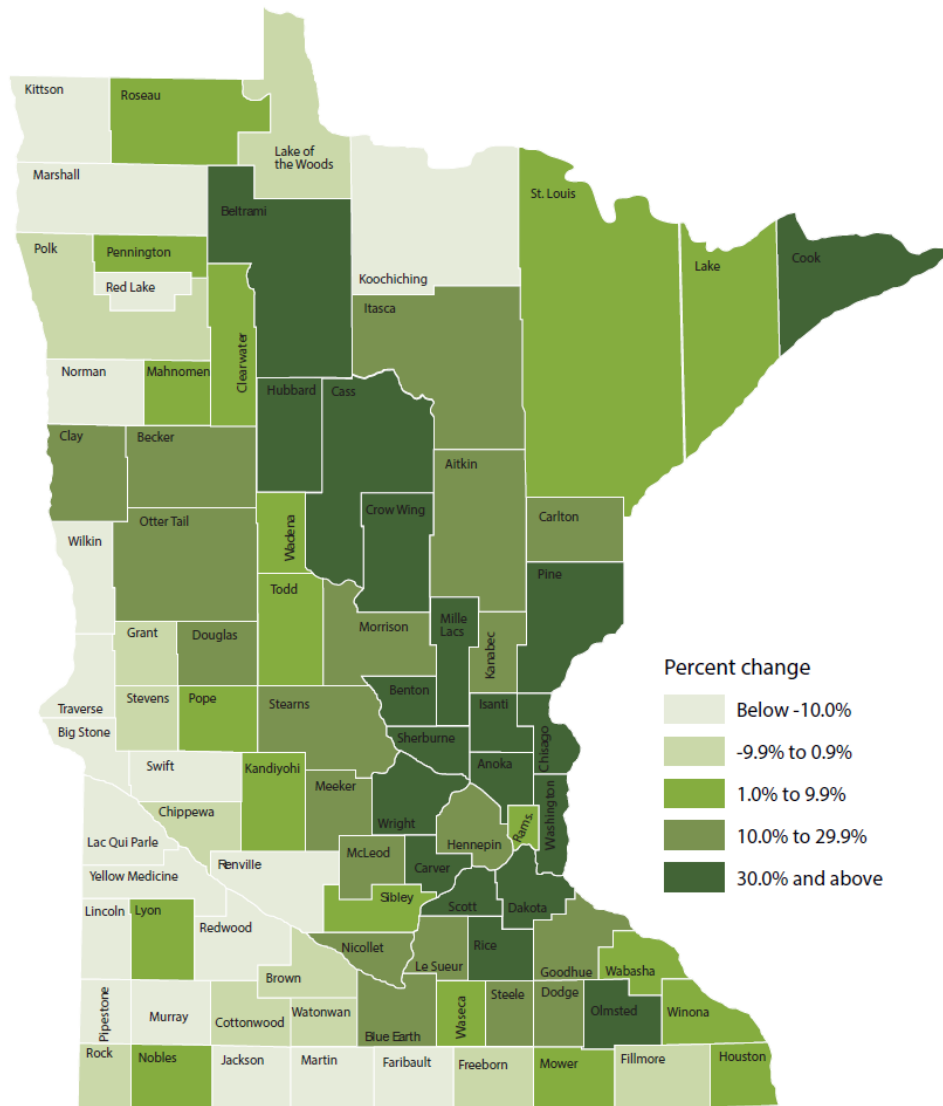
**In 1997, a group of rural Minnesota advocates came together to create a rural policy “think tank” that would provide policy makers, rural advocates and concerned citizens with an objective, unbiased and politically “unspun” examination of contemporary rural issues.**

- ✓ Based in Greater Minnesota, serving Greater Minnesota.
- ✓ A non-partisan, non-profit policy research organization.
- ✓ Dedicated to providing Minnesota’s policy makers with an unbiased evaluation of issues from a rural perspective.
- ✓ The Center is recognized as a leading resource for rural policy research and information.



Top issues in  
**Demographics**

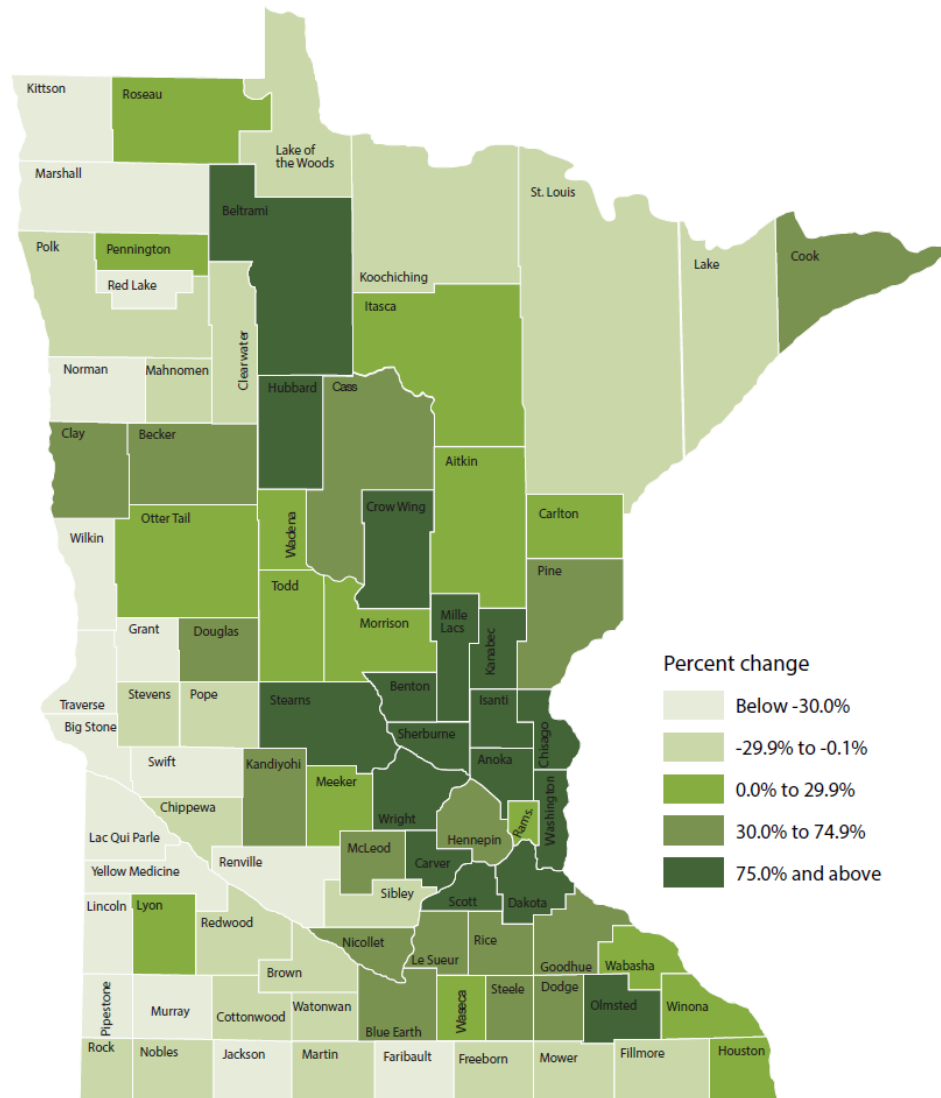
# Population change, 1990-2014



- From 1990 to 2014, the state's population grew by approximately 1 million people, to 5.5 million.
- The most dramatic growth was seen in the Twin Cities suburbs, while growth in the Central Lakes region reflects the number of retiring Baby Boomers. Scott, Carver, and Wright counties more than doubled in population.
- A third of counties lost population during this time period.

Data source:  
U.S. Census Bureau,  
Population Estimates Program  
© Center for Rural Policy and Development

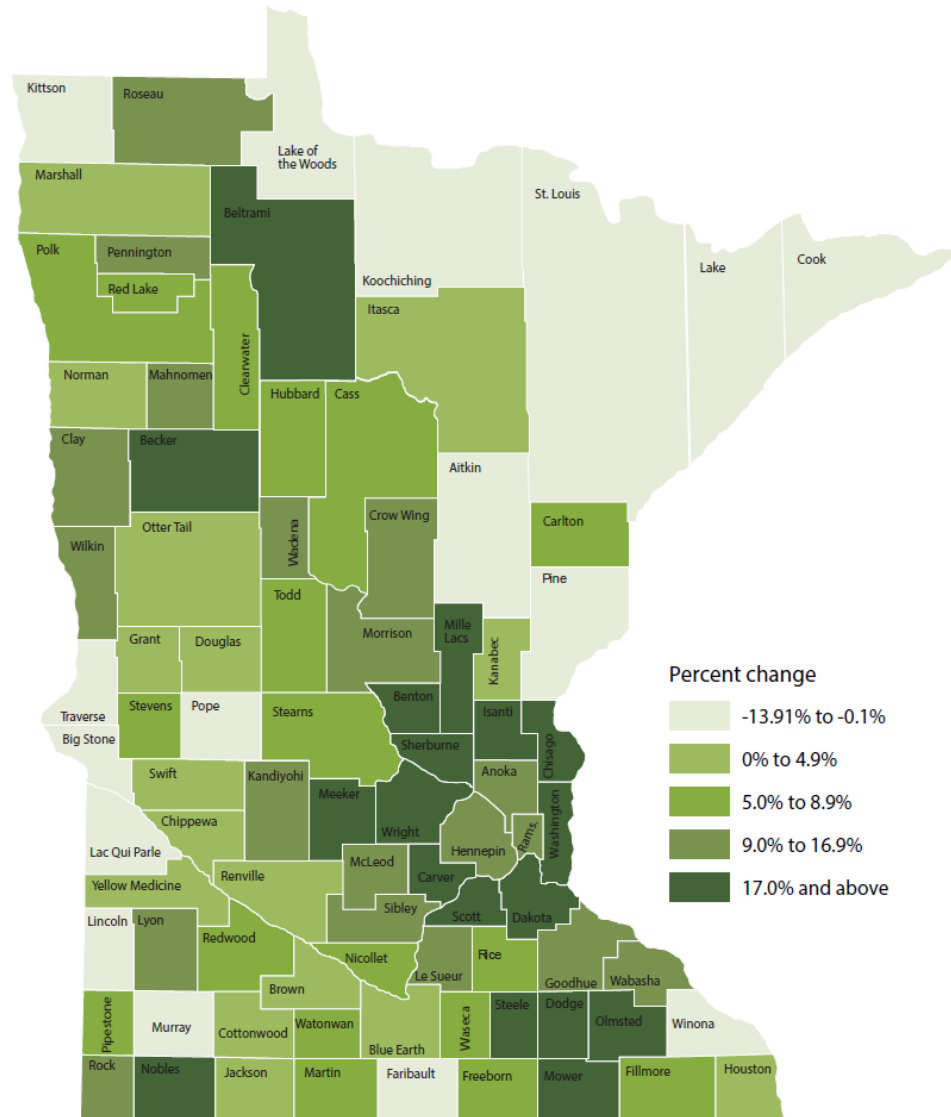
# Long-term population change, 1960-2014



- The change in population since 1960 reflects the long-term shift from the agricultural counties to the urban and suburban cores of the Twin Cities, St. Cloud and Rochester. Sherburne County, positioned between St. Cloud and the Twin Cities, has seen the most growth, increasing by 609%.
- Note the growing population up through central and west central counties as well.

Data source:  
U.S. Census Bureau,  
Population Estimate Program  
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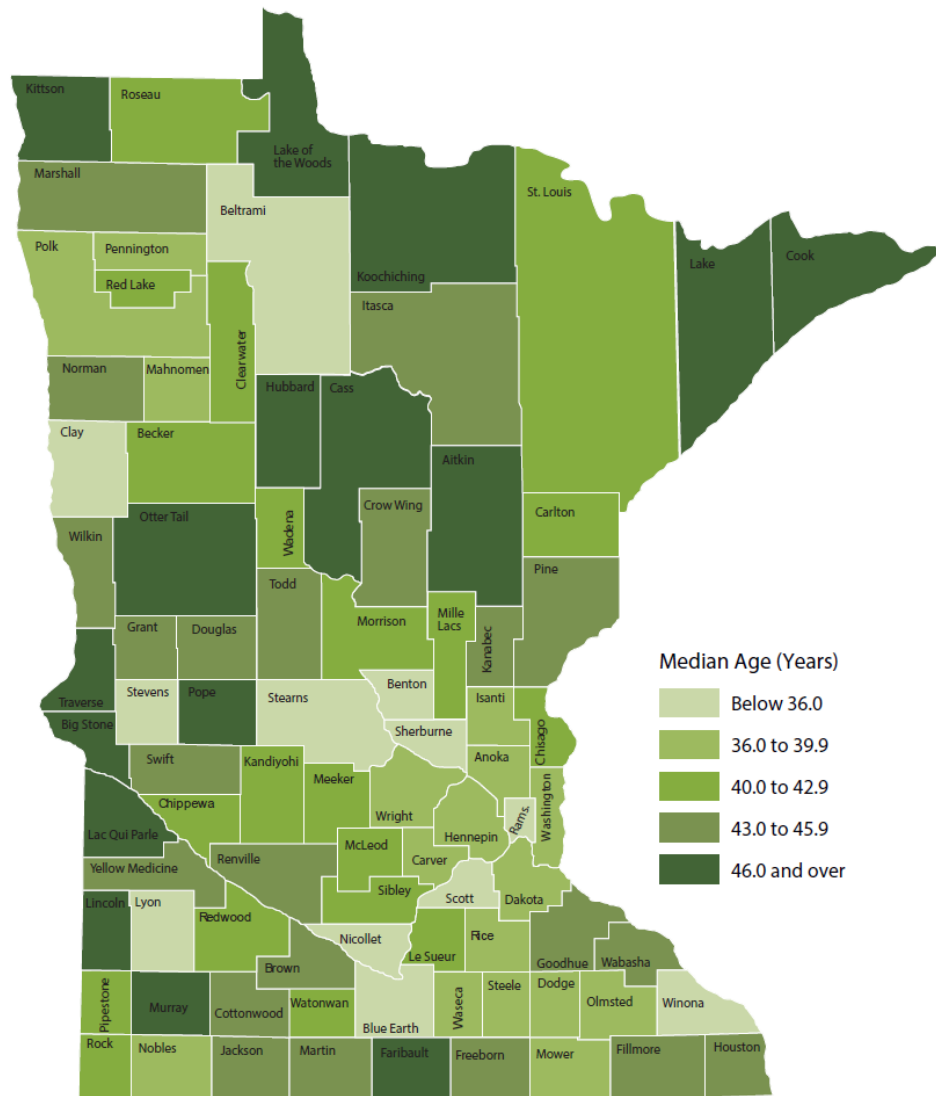
# Projected population change, 2015-2045



- Population growth for 2045 is projected to be much more widespread than it was for 2035.
- While the highest growth will still be in the Twin Cities suburbs, Rochester, Owatonna, Bemidji, and Worthington are also expected to see high growth.
- Minorities and Millennials will likely drive this growth.

Data source:  
Minnesota State Demographic Center  
© Center for Rural Policy and Development

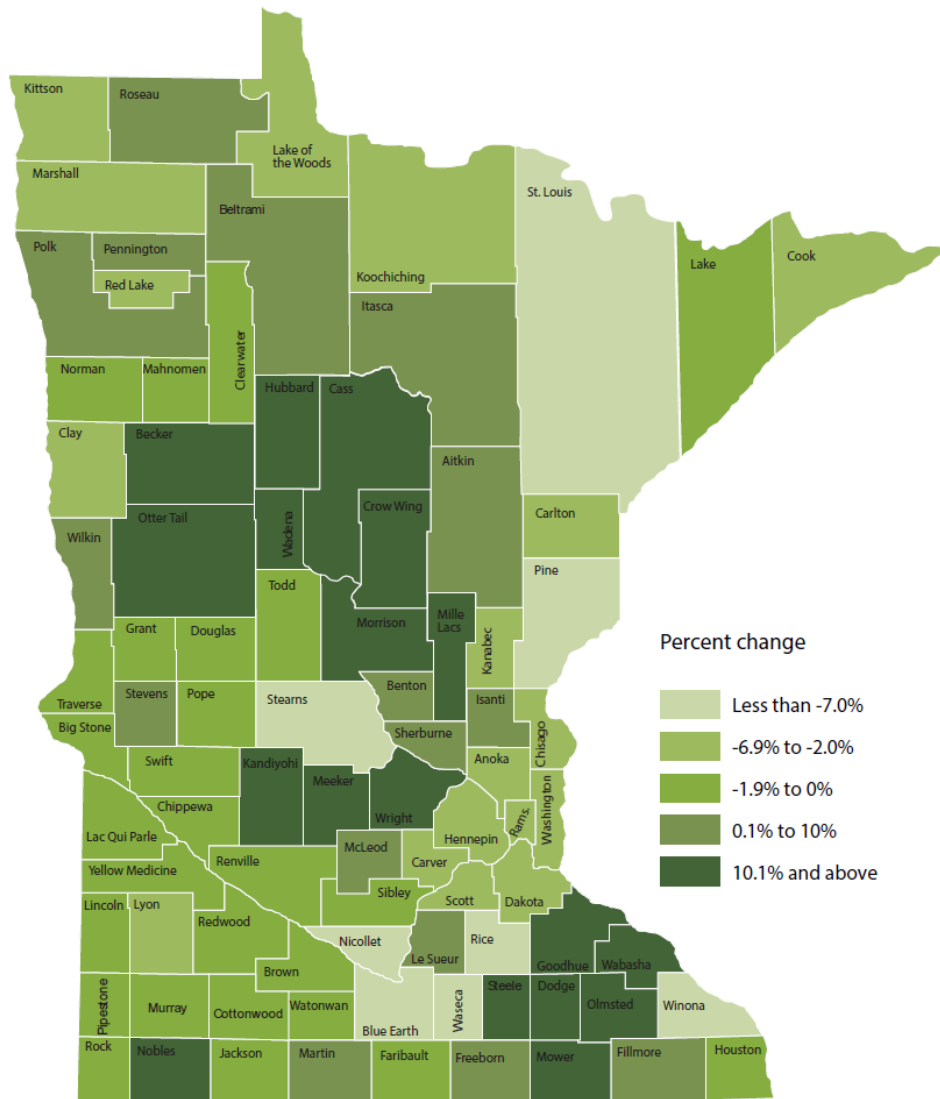
# Median Age, 2014



- Fast-growing counties with young families and counties with large institutions of higher education and/or large minority populations tend to have the lowest median ages.

Data source:  
U.S. Census Bureau  
© Center for Rural Policy and Development

# Projected population change, age 19 and under, 2015–2045

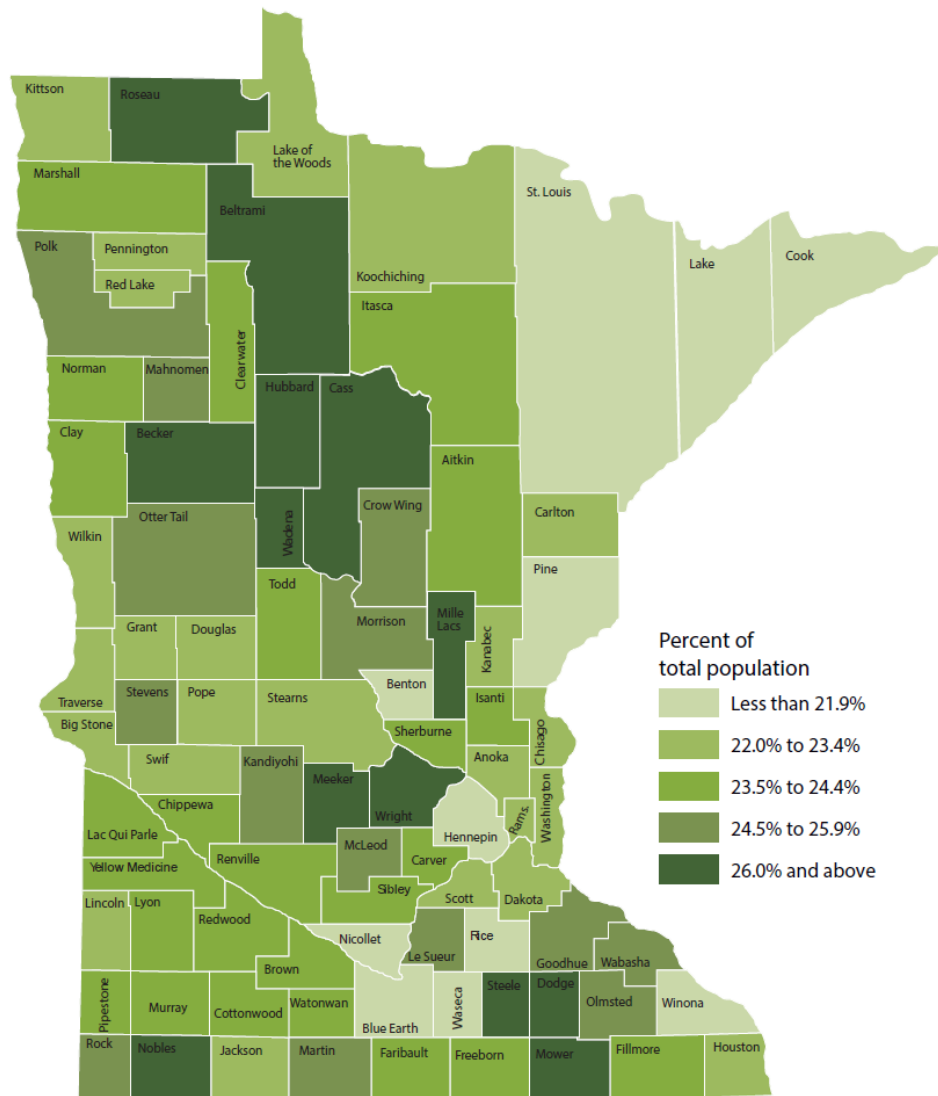


- The State Demographic Center is projecting that by 2045 the population age 19 and under will grow fastest in central and southeastern counties.

Data source:  
Minnesota State Demographic Center  
© Center for Rural Policy and Development



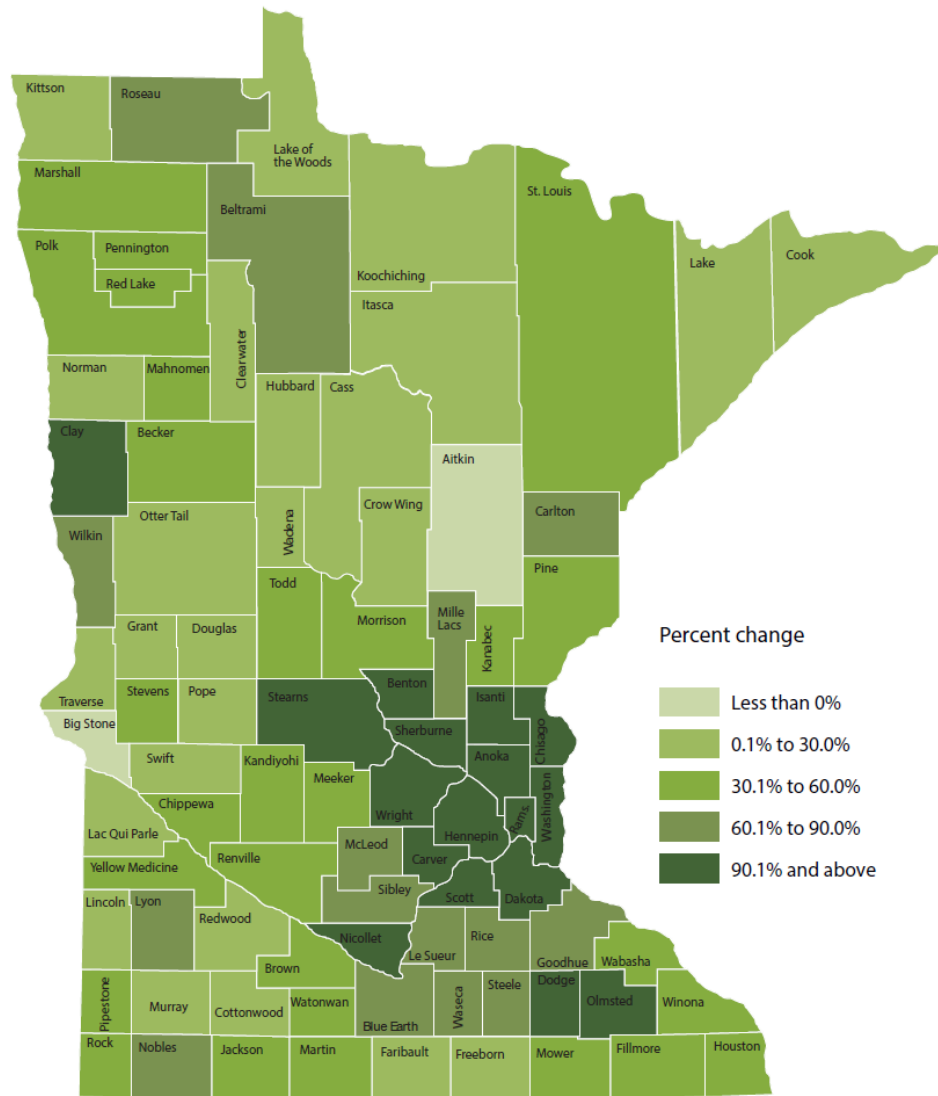
# Projected population age 19 and under, 2045



- Population projections show the major demographic shift the state is currently undergoing. The State Demographic Center projects that in 30 years the largest concentrations of under-20s will be in Greater Minnesota due to growing minority populations.

Data source:  
Minnesota State Demographic Center  
© Center for Rural Policy and Development

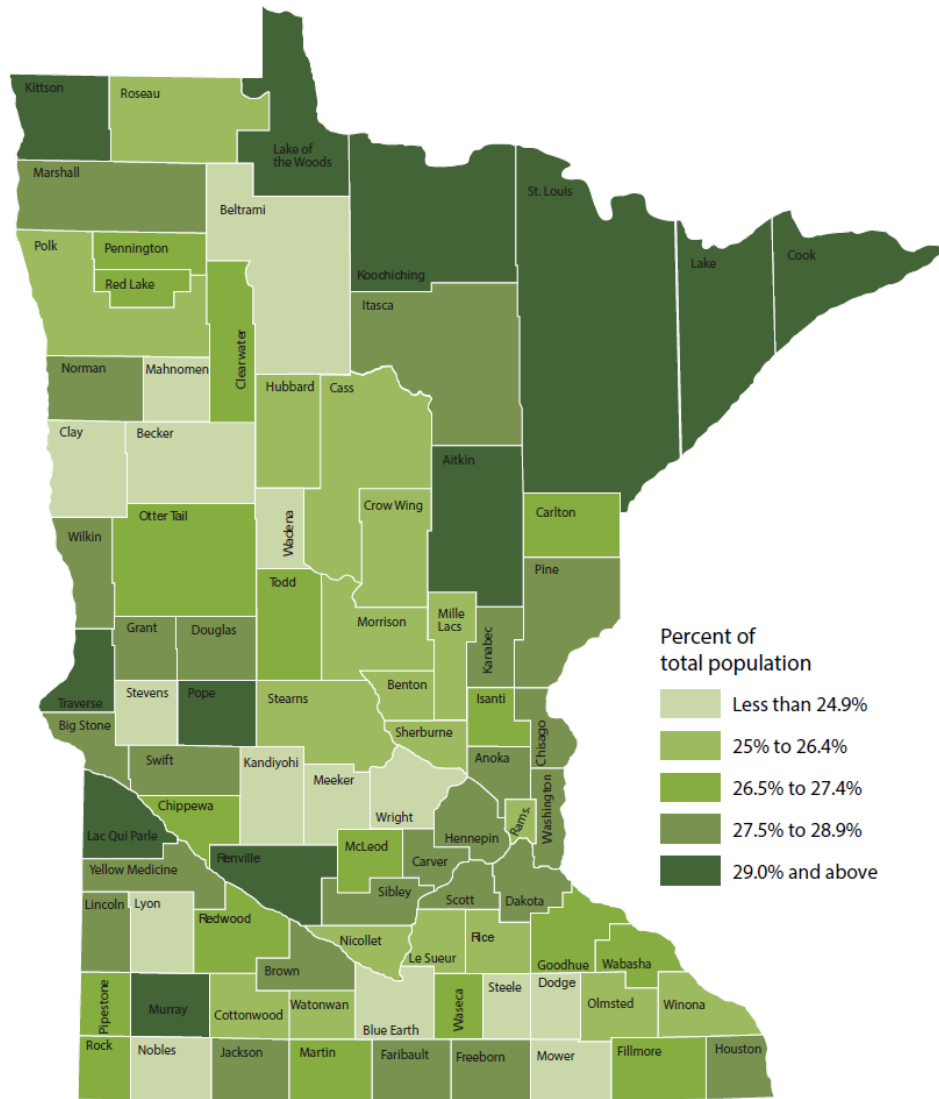
# Projected population change age 65+, 2015–2045



- The core urban counties in the state are expected to see significant growth in their senior populations over the next 30 years.
- Rural counties, which already have a large over-65 population, will see slower growth or a decline.

Data source:  
U.S. Census Bureau  
MN State Demographic Center  
© Center for Rural Policy and Development

# Projected population age 65+, 2045



- Looking out over the next 30 years, the State Demographic Center projects a very different age landscape compared to the past.
- While college counties will continue to have smaller senior populations, only the most rural counties will have the largest groups of seniors, followed by the Twin Cities and suburbs.

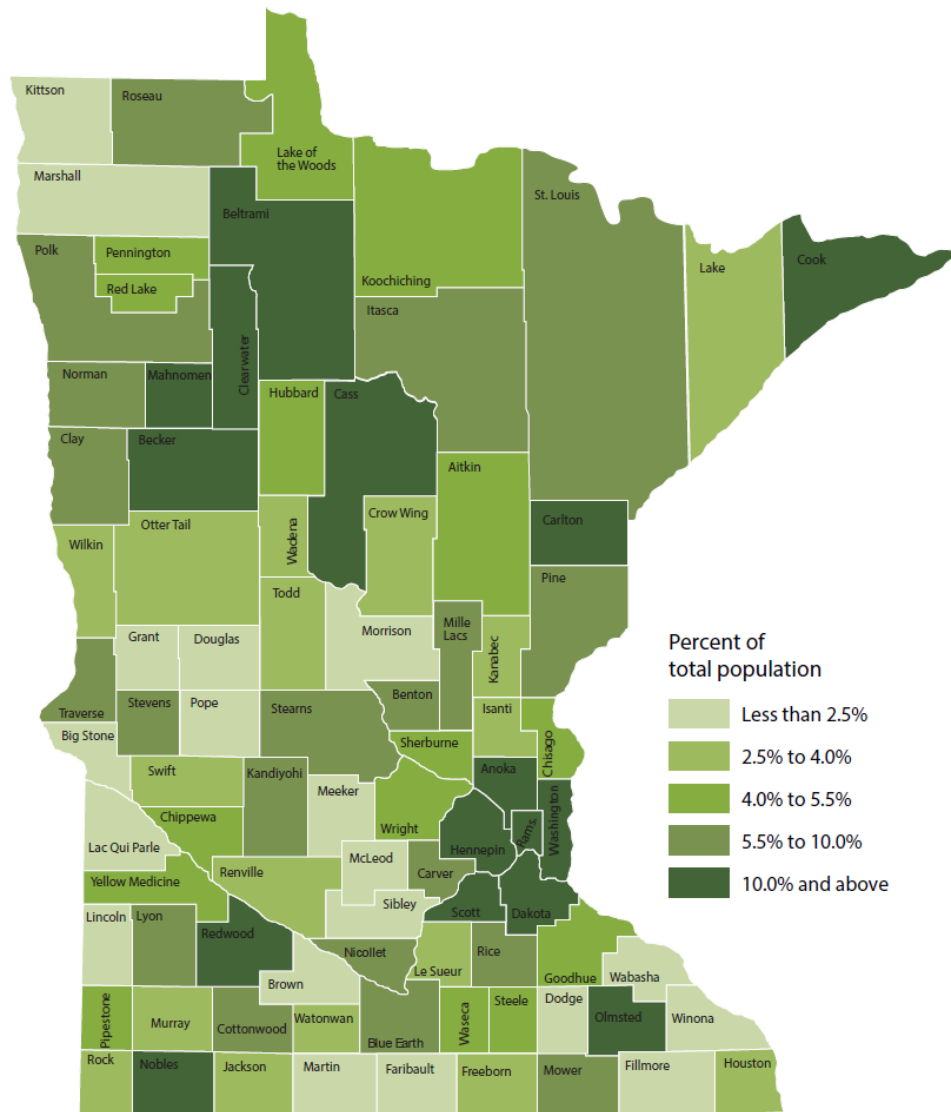
Data source:  
U.S. Census Bureau  
MN State Demographic Center  
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County	Decrease in white population	Increase in minority population	Change in total population
Aitkin	-209	497	288
Anoka	-4,570	34,600	30,030
Beltrami	-122	5,200	5,078
Cass	-605	1,537	932
Clearwater	-271	499	228
Dakota	-11,005	40,482	29,477
Goodhue	-460	1,308	848
Hennepin	-146,761	160,001	13,240
Itasca	-424	1,407	983
Mahnomen	-1,338	1,479	141
Rice	-422	3,801	3,379
Steele	-826	988	162

Twelve counties experienced population growth between 1990 and 2014 due to growth in their minority populations (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). Most of them are rural.

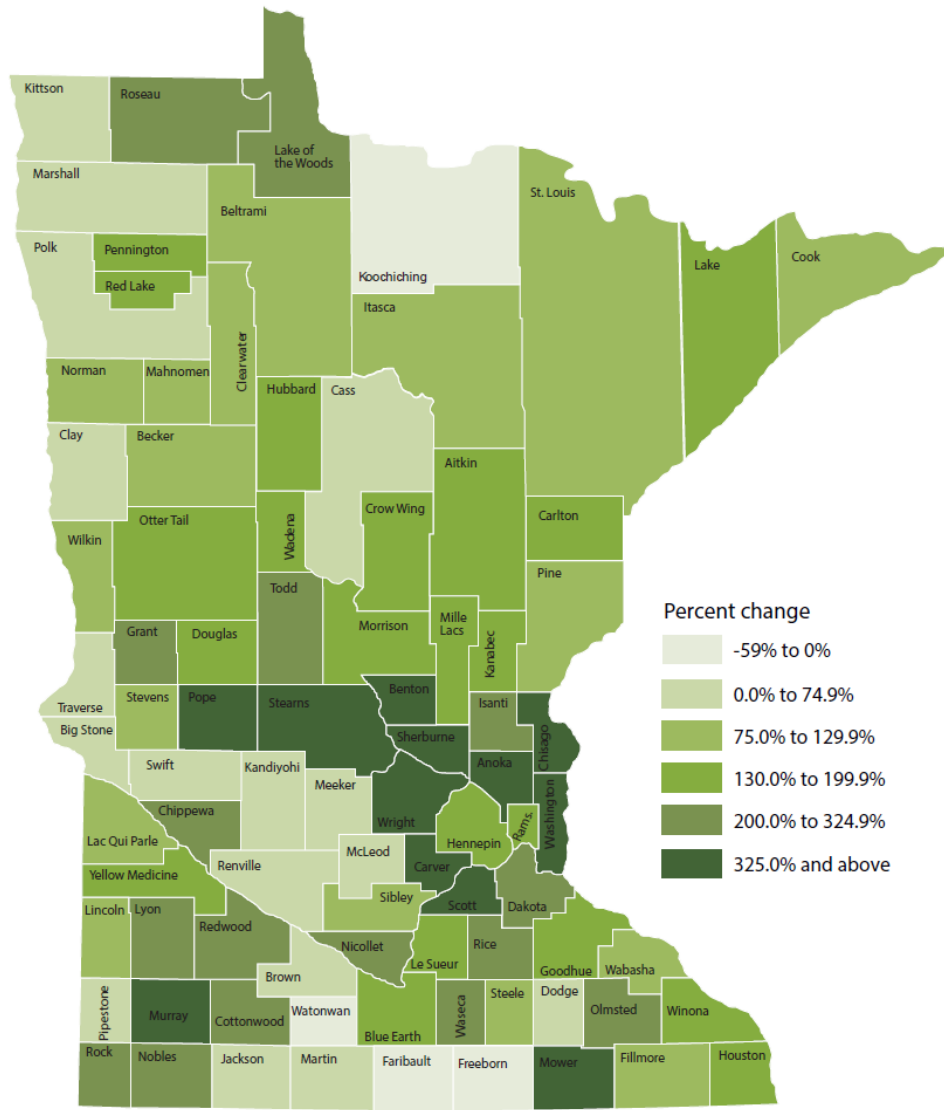
# Distribution of people of color, 2014



- While the vast majority of Minnesota's population is still Caucasian, the state's population of color has grown from 6.3% of the population in 1990 to an estimated 14.2% in 2014.
- Counties in the north tend to have large Native American populations; Latinos and Somalis make up the largest minority groups in western and southern Minnesota.

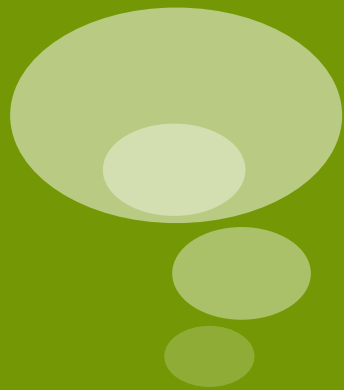
Data source:  
U.S. Census Bureau  
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# Growth in minority population, 1990-2014



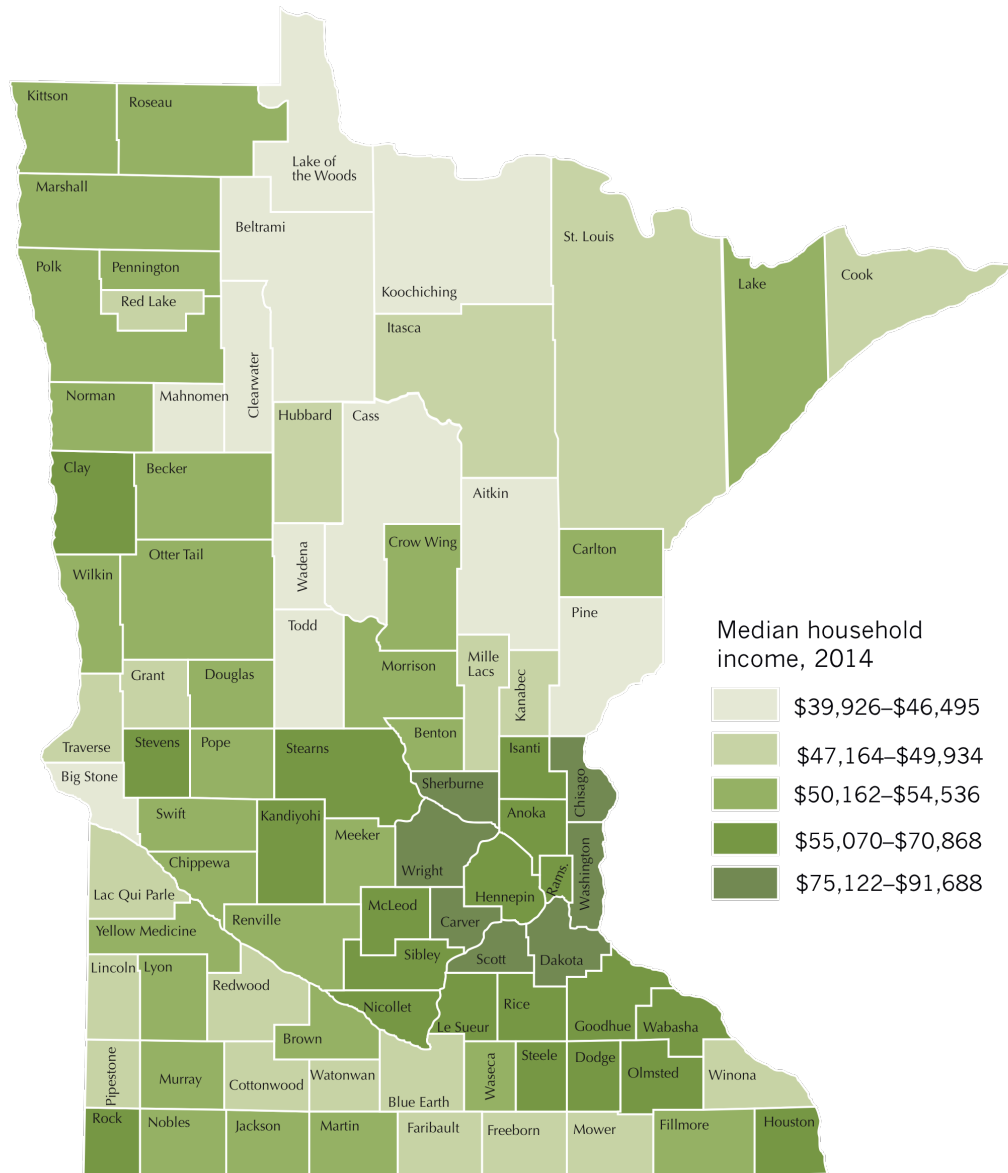
- Northern counties have seen little change as their Native American populations remain relatively stable compared to other minority groups in the state.
- Numerous western and southern counties saw dramatic growth with the in-migration of Latinos, Laotians, Somalis, Sudanese, Hmong and other groups.
- However, some of the highest growth has been in the Twin Cities suburbs.

Data source:  
U.S. Census Bureau  
© Center for Rural Policy and Development



Top issues in  
**Economics**

# Median household income, 2014



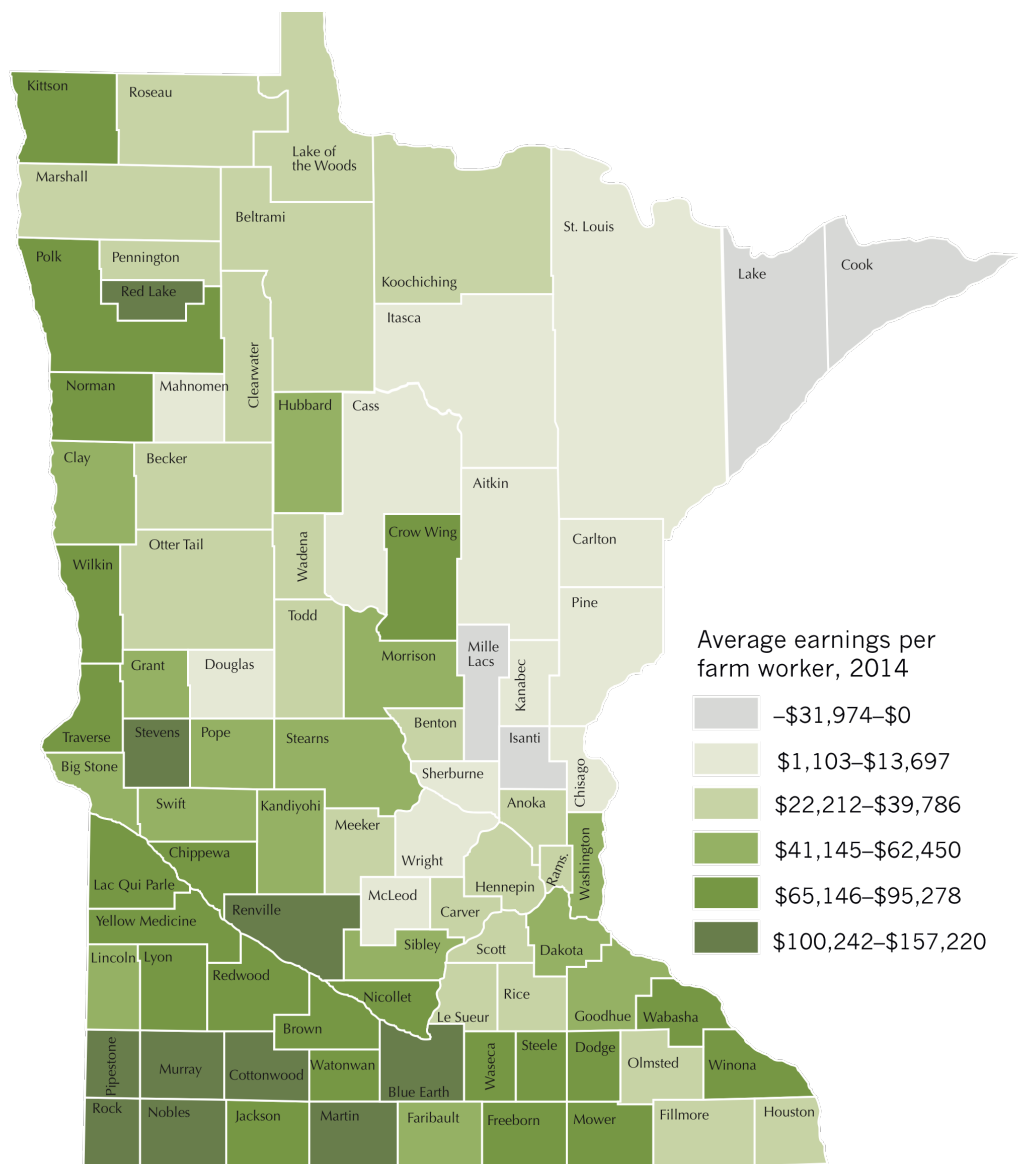
U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates

- In 2014, Minnesota's estimated median household income was \$61,473.
- In Minnesota, incomes are highest around the Twin Cities metro area, especially in the suburban counties that ring the core cities.
- Scott County had the highest estimated median household income, at \$91,688, while Mahanomen County recorded the lowest, at \$39,926.





# Average earnings in farming, 2014

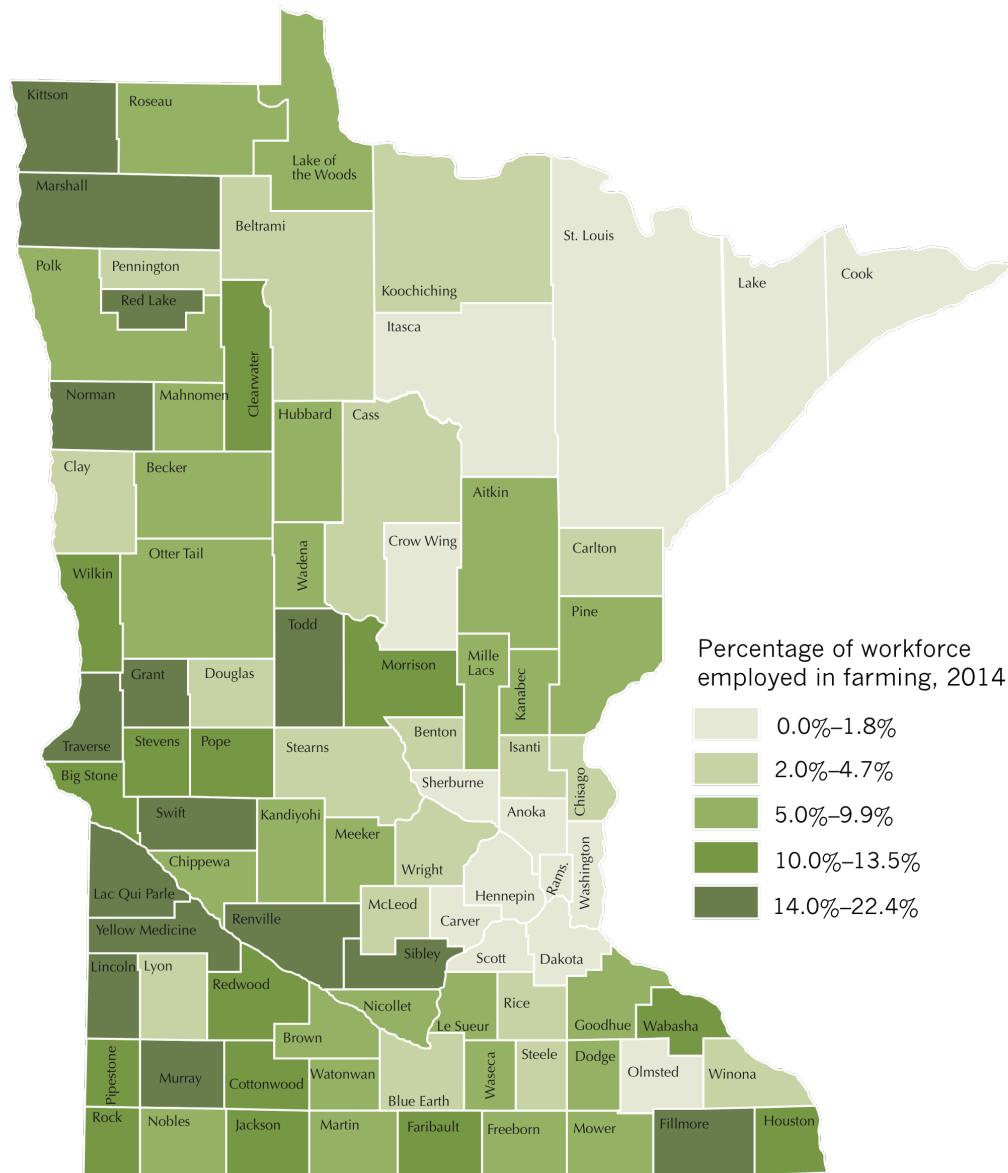


U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

- Farming has had a strong presence in Minnesota historically and continues to do so today. The counties with the strongest agricultural economies are apparent.



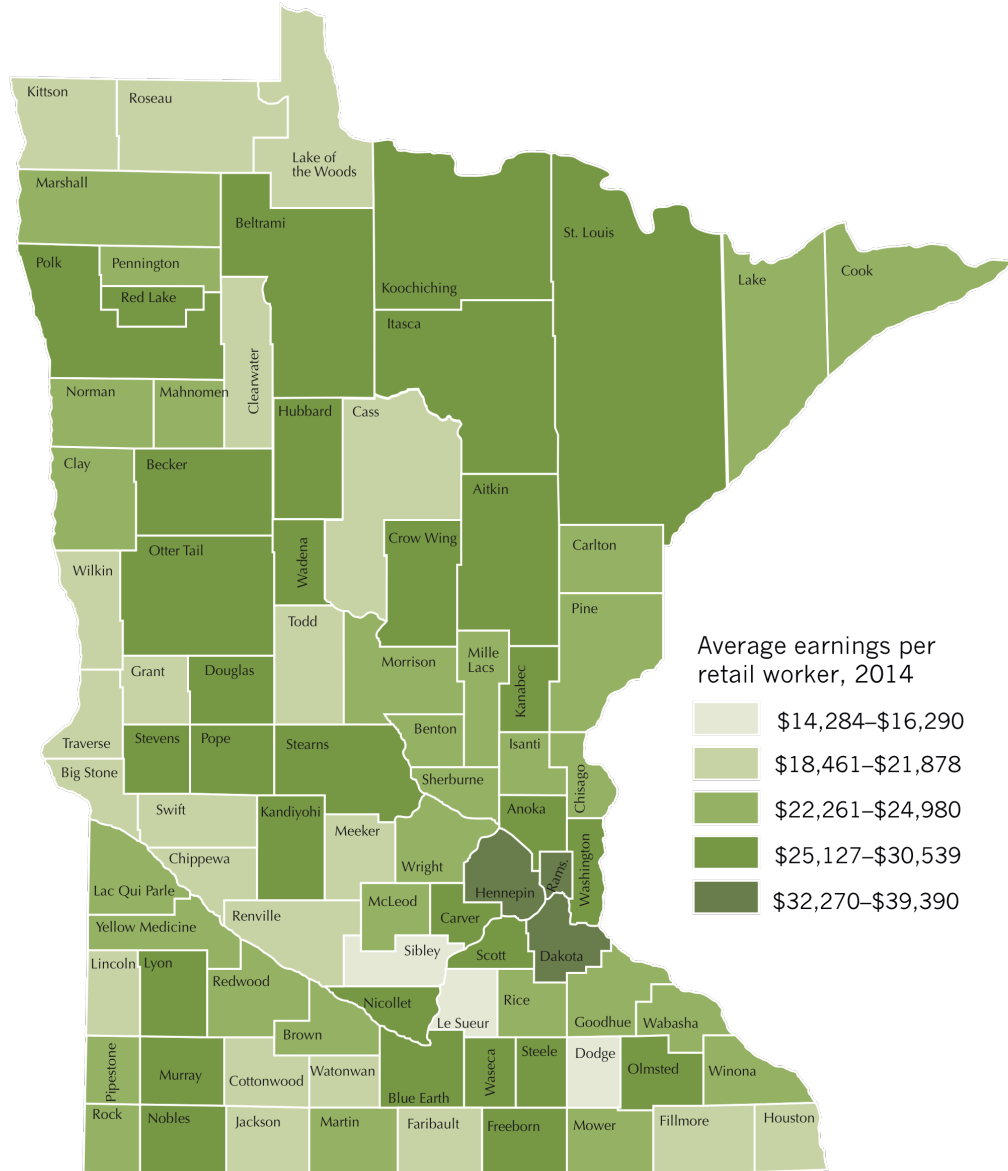
# Workforce in farming, 2014



U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

- About 2.2% of Minnesota's workforce is employed directly in farming, but that figure varies significantly across the state. Marshall County had the highest percentage of workforce working directly in farming, at 22.4% in 2014, indicating a significant impact on the county's and region's economy.

# Average earnings in the retail sector, 2014

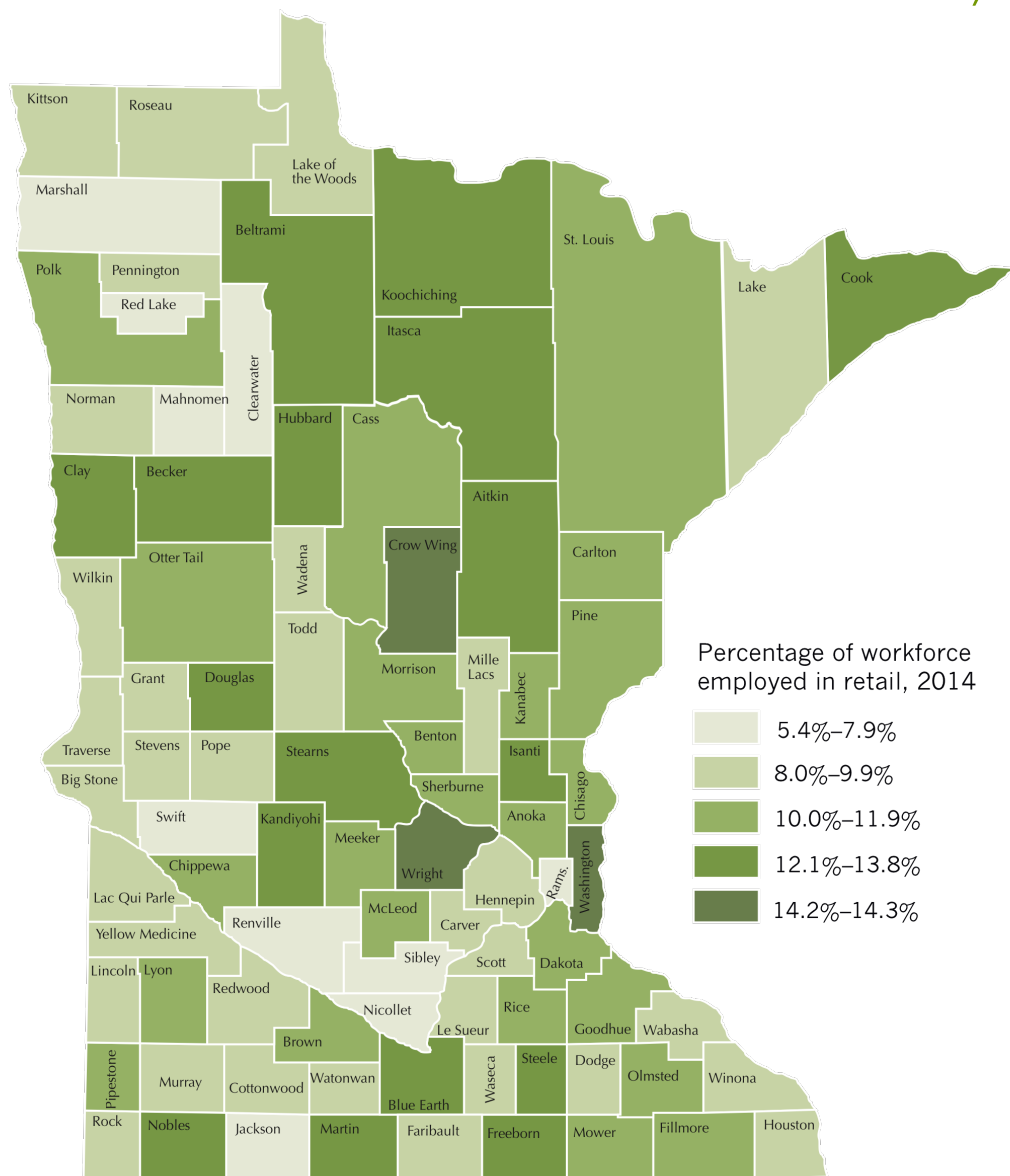


U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

- Earnings from retail tend to be some of the lowest of any industry. The highest earnings from retail cluster around the Twin Cities. The average earnings from retail for the state in 2014 were \$30,568. These figures, however, do include both full- and part-time workers.



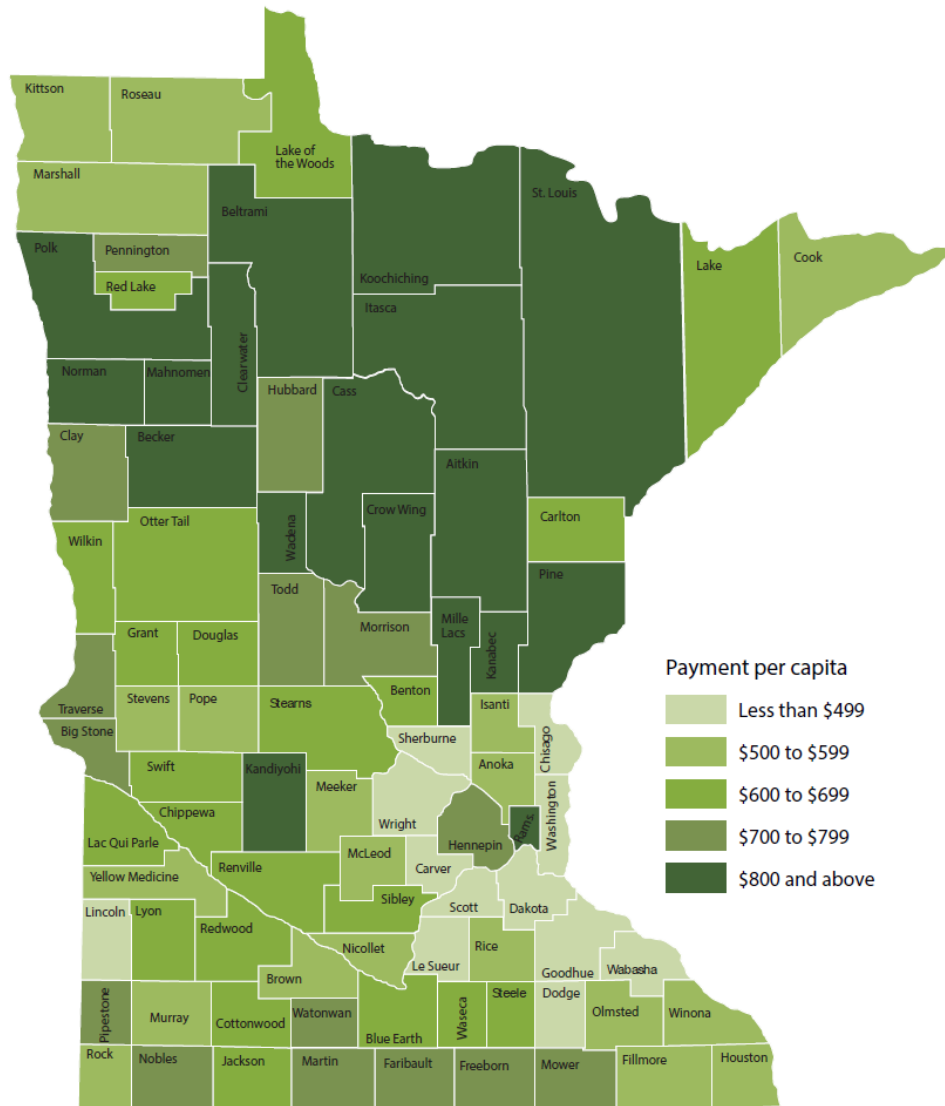
# Workforce in the retail sector, 2014



U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

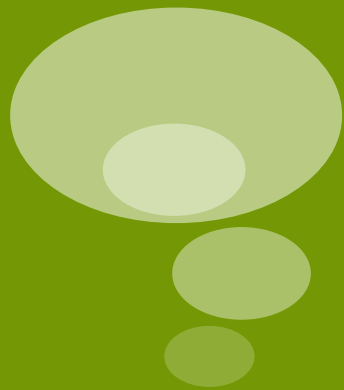
- In Minnesota, approximately 9.9% of the workforce worked in the retail sector in 2014. Those counties that appear to have larger retail sectors tend to be either population centers or resort areas.

# Public assistance payments per capita, 2013



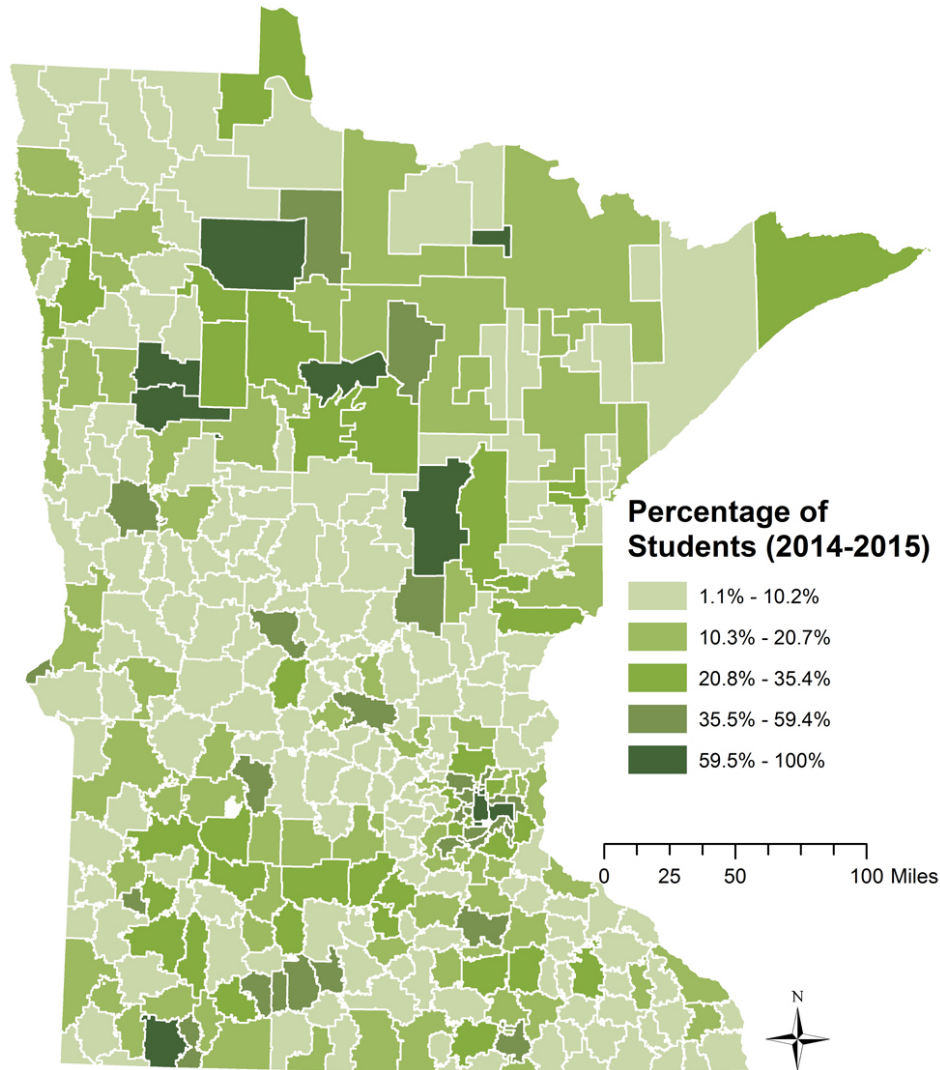
- The average public assistance payment for Minnesota was \$686 in 2013.
- ✓ For the purposes of this report, public assistance includes family assistance, SNAP (food stamps), general assistance, supplemental security payments and other income maintenance benefits. It does not include medical payments or farm program payments.

Data source:  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
Bureau of Economic Analysis  
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Top issues in  
**Education**

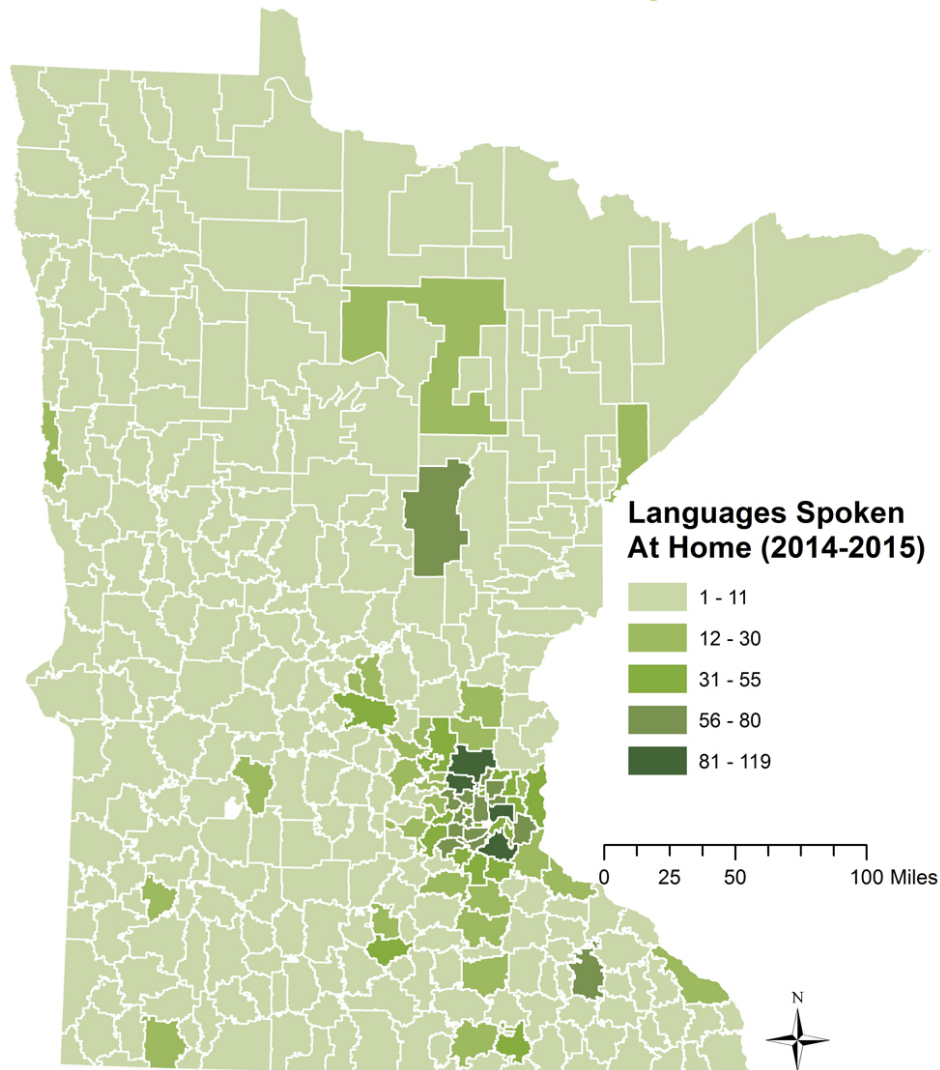
# Students of color, 2014-2015 school year



Data Source: Minnesota Department of Education  
Prepared by: Department of Geography, Minnesota State University, Mankato  
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- The diversity of students continues to rise in the core Twin Cities districts and in suburban districts. While most of rural Minnesota remains white, a growing number of pockets of diversity can be found around the state. Native American students make up this population in the northern districts, while southern districts are largely home to immigrants of Latino, African and Asian origin.

# Languages spoken at home, 2014-2015 school year

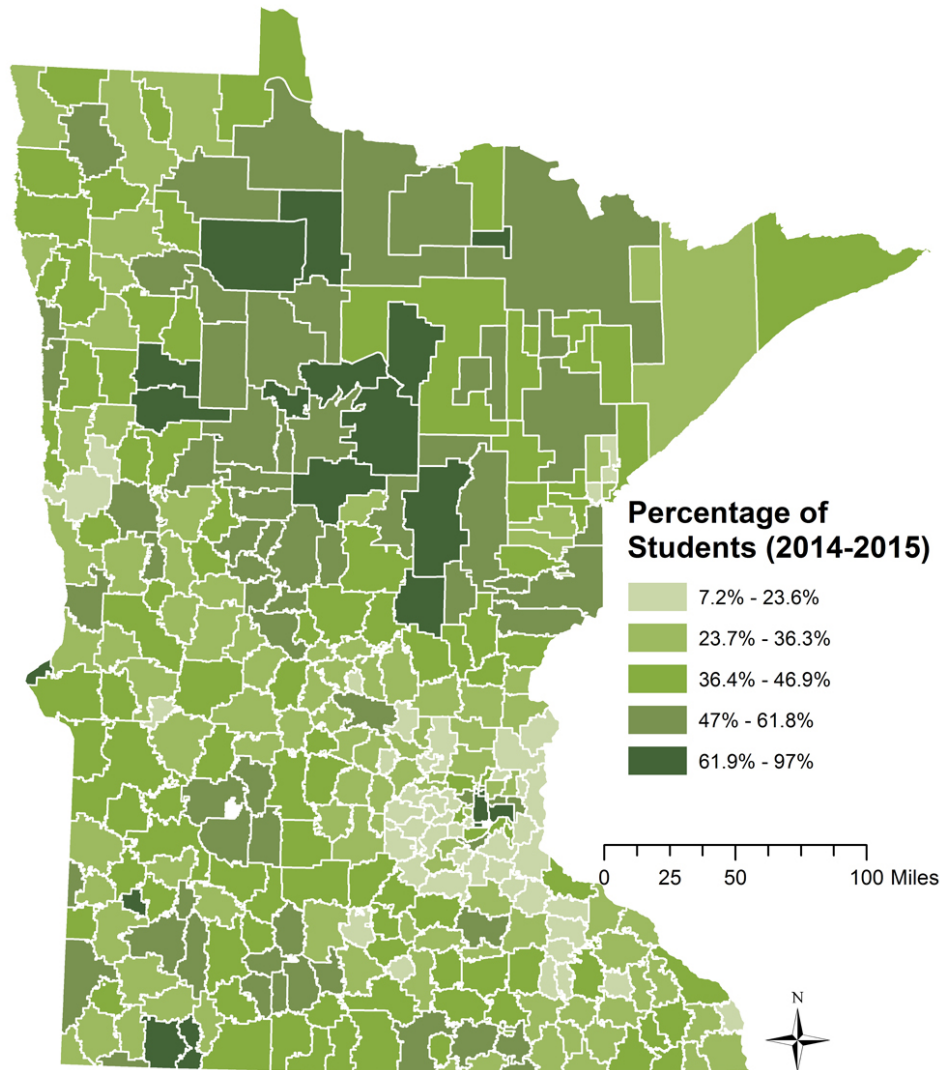


Data Source: Minnesota Department of Education  
Prepared by: Department of Geography, Minnesota State University, Mankato  
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- Understanding the variety of languages spoken at home is important for effective curriculum design. St. Paul, Anoka-Hennepin, Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan and Osseo had the largest numbers of different languages.



# Free lunch eligibility, 2014-2015



- For the state of Minnesota, 39% of students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch in the 2014-2015 school year. Since recipients' families must meet certain income guidelines to qualify, free and reduced-price lunch can be a good proxy for poverty rates.

Data Source: Minnesota Department of Education  
Prepared by: Department of Geography, Minnesota State University, Mankato  
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# Our research: Articles

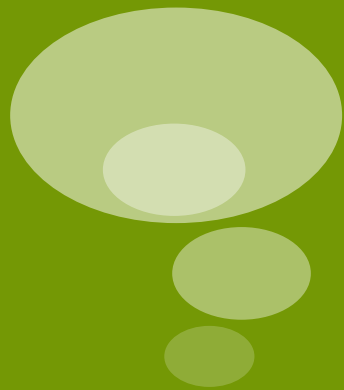


- A Quiet Crisis: Minnesota's Child Care Shortage
  - The number of providers offering in-home family child care is dropping at a disturbing rate, and growth in child care centers will not make up the difference in much of Greater Minnesota.
- Bringing broadband to rural Minnesota
  - Discussing the basics of bringing broadband to Greater Minnesota and some of the points of debate."
- Diversity in rural wealth
  - Besides financial wealth, there are a number of other types of capital that rural communities hold and should be using.
- The coming workforce squeeze
  - Reviews the numbers, the impact, and potential answers to today's workforce squeeze what communities should keep in mind when it comes to attracting workers.
- Rural grocery stores by the numbers
  - Demographics in Greater Minnesota have been hard on local grocery stores. Between 2000 and 2013, Greater Minnesota lost 14% of its grocery stores.

# Our research: Infographics and fact sheets



- A Quiet Crisis: Minnesota's Child Care Shortage
  - Facts on how the child care shortage is playing out around the state.
- Broadband 101
  - A glossary of broadband terms, plus what communities and policy makers can do to encourage broadband development.
- What communities should keep in mind about the coming workforce squeeze
  - Facts on what's happening, the short- and long-term impacts, and potential solutions.
- Rural grocery stores by the numbers
  - What the problem looks like and new ways to think about an old model.



Thank You!

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