



## MINNESOTA COMPASS

Measuring progress.  
Inspiring action.

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# The high quality of life in Minnesota

*Not equally shared by all*

In Minnesota, we take pride in our belief that all people have opportunities to become successful, but how well are we really doing? If you look at key statistics measuring our overall well-being, Minnesota ranks near the top in most categories. But dig a little deeper and you uncover glaring and persistent disparities.

### *Major trends*

#### **Economy and workforce**

*There is a large employment gap. As more jobs need post-secondary education, it is likely to grow even wider.*

- The proportion of adults working in Minnesota varies significantly by race, ranging from 79 percent for whites to only 59 percent for U.S. born African-Americans and 54 percent for American Indians. The 21 percentage point gap between whites and African-Americans is the largest of any state in the nation.
- As a group, 24 percent of the state's adult population of color has a B.A., compared with 33 percent of the state's non-Hispanic whites. However, the most highly educated adults are those of Asian ancestry other than Southeast Asia: 62 percent of that group has at least a B.A. This compares with 26 percent of foreign-born blacks, 25 percent of Southeast Asians, 16 percent of U.S.-born blacks, 15 percent of Hispanics, and 14 percent of American Indians.

#### **Education**

*We have huge educational disparities, and they start early, and continue.*

- Statewide, 86 percent of 3rd grade non-Hispanic white students tested proficient in reading, compared to 69 percent of Asian students, 60 percent of American Indian students and just 58 percent of black students.

#### **KEY DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS**

*Minnesota's population is getting older, more diverse, and has a widening income gap.*

By 2030, the number of Minnesotans over age 65 is expected to almost double, and older adults will comprise about one-fifth of our population.

In addition to getting older, we are becoming more diverse. In the Twin Cities, the population of color has tripled in the past twenty years—now 1 in 5 residents is a person of color. The Twin Cities immigrant population grew nearly 40 percent over the past decade.

This growing diversity is greatest among our younger residents. While just 1 in 12 of baby boomers (age 47- 65) are people of color, 1 in 4 of our children (age birth -19)—our state's future workforce, parents, and leaders—are children of color.

The tough economy has affected everyone, but especially people of color and young children. In 2010, 12 percent of Minnesota residents lived in poverty (about \$22,000 annually for a family of four), up from about 8 percent a decade ago. In the Twin Cities, more than a quarter of people of color live in poverty compared to about 7 percent of white, non-Hispanic people. And, about 16 percent of children age 4 and under lived in poverty.

Another measure of the income gap is median income. In 2010, the median income for Minnesota households was \$55,500 a year, but varied considerably by age and race. At about \$69,000, Asian households fared best, closely followed by white non-Hispanic households at \$58,000. At just under \$27,000, U.S. and foreign-born black households ranked at the bottom.

- About one-quarter of students of color test proficient in 11th grade math scores, less than half of the rate of white 11th grade students.
- While more than 4 out of 5 white, non-Hispanic students in Minnesota graduate on time, just over half of students of color do. However, the graduation rate for students of color has risen more than 10 percentage points since 2003.

## Health

*More than half of a person's health is driven by social factors. In the Twin Cities, as in the nation, there is an alarming gap by race, income and where you live.*

- People in the highest income areas (by zip code) in the Twin Cities 7-county area have an average life expectancy of 82 years, while those living in the lowest income area have an average life expectancy of 74 years.
- Life expectancy also varies widely in the Twin Cities 7-county area by race from 83 years for Asians to 61 years for American Indians.

## Housing

*There has been a persistent "homeownership gap" of more than 30 percentage points since at least the early 1990s.*

- Minnesota ranks at the bottom (49th) compared with other states in the size of its gap between white homeowners and homeowners of color.
- Homeownership rates in Minnesota currently range from 79 percent for households headed by non-Hispanic whites to about 50 percent for American Indian and Hispanic households, and less than 30 percent for households headed by African Americans.

*Find this information and more on Minnesota Compass. Minnesota Compass was developed in partnership with foundations, policymakers, nonprofit program managers, educators and other community leaders, to provide non-partisan, credible information to measure our state's well-being. Visit [www.mncompass.org](http://www.mncompass.org).*



Minnesota Compass is led by  
Wilder Research  
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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON COMPASS

### Racial equity resource directory

View a listing of racial equity programs and training providers serving faith communities, civic organizations, educational institutions, and anyone working to combat racism and increase cultural competence.

### Close the Gap

Learn how you can raise awareness and inspire action to end disparities in your community. A half-hour training video and companion guide provides step-by-step instructions for leading a training session with a community organization, workplace, or neighborhood group.

### Featured reports in the Compass library:

#### 14 Solutions that expand job and economic opportunity, and reduce Minnesota's disparities

This policy brief from the Organizing Apprenticeship Project offers solutions that expand opportunity, reduce Minnesota's racial, gender and economic disparities, and highlights equity implications of the most pressing policy issues.

#### Building a grad nation: Progress and challenge in ending the high school dropout epidemic

This report from America's Promise Alliance shows how some states and school districts are raising their high school graduation rates with scalable solutions in public schools.

#### The unequal distribution of health in the Twin Cities

A study conducted by Wilder Research looks at whether the connection between socioeconomic status and health is as obvious in the Twin Cities as has been demonstrated elsewhere in the nation.

#### Disparities in early learning and development: Lessons from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study—Birth Cohort (ECLS-B)

This study from Child Trends finds disparities between poor, at-risk children and more advantaged children as early as 9 months of age.

**Updated December 2011** with the most recent data compiled by Minnesota Compass. Data sources, years, margins of error, and additional notes are available on Minnesota Compass.