

Place matters:

Trends from Minnesota Compass

MAY 21, 2025

ALLISON LIUZZI

PROJECT DIRECTOR | MINNESOTA COMPASS



Compass Points 2025



Compass Points 2025 Place Matters

Minnesota Compass looks at key measures on a number of topic areas to help policymakers and nonprofit, business, and community leaders identify, understand, and act on issues that affect lives and communities.

What does place-based data tell us about Minnesota?

Our quality of life can vary depending on where we live, even within the same state. Where we live matters. Where we work matters. Where we build communities matters. All of these "wheres" matter to our well-being. So, even though Compass Points gives us an annual pulse of how Minnesota is doing as a state, it's important to dive into the data that reflect our particular community, region, or neighborhood.

Minnesota Compass has pulled together some trends to show how the Twin Cities metro region and greater Minnesota vary—or are similar—on quality-of-life levels.

Minnesota's economy is strong overall, but not felt equally

- Record-high number of jobs in 2024
 - Highest economic productivity
 - One of nation's highest workforce participation rates, especially in the Twin Cities
- High inflation has effectively led to a drop in median household income. The impact has been felt harder in greater Minnesota.



Children are struggling

- Minnesota students have not recovered from pandemic disruptions.
 - Dramatic drop in 8th grade math proficiency
 - 3rd grade reading proficiency has plateaued
- Greater Minnesota has a greater share of young children screened before Kindergarten. It is also home to a smaller share of infants born at low birth rate although all regions are trending worse.

Safety indicators differ



The Twin Cities experienced an increase in crime rates from 2019-2022, but saw a return to pre-pandemic levels in 2023.

Greater Minnesota experienced a small increase in crime in 2023, but continues a decade-long downward trend.

Minnesotans are educated and engaged

Adults holding a bachelor's degree or higher:

Greater MN: 44%
Twin Cities: 55%

Minnesota has one of the highest voter turnout rates in the nation (74% in the 2024 election).

- Help their neighbors: 44%
- Attend arts and cultural events: 57%
- Volunteer: 42%

SOURCE: <https://www.mncompass.org/compass-points-2025>

Things in Minnesota have gotten **better**.



4-year postsecondary graduation rate

Adults with a bachelor's degree

Jobs

Economic output (GDP)

Homeownership gap by race

Greenhouse gas emissions

Traffic injuries and fatalities

Highways in poor condition



SOURCE: <https://www.mncompass.org/compass-points-2025>

Things in Minnesota have **stayed the same**.

Arts and culture attendance

Creating and performing art

Volunteerism

Neighbors helping neighbors

Crime rate

Health care coverage

High school graduation rate

2-year postsecondary graduation rate

Proportion of adults working

Poverty rate



SOURCE: <https://www.mncompass.org/compass-points-2025>

Things in Minnesota have gotten **worse**.



Cost-burdened households
Homelessness
Low birthweight
Adults with diabetes
Adult obesity

Early childhood screening
3rd grade reading
8th grade math
Connection to caring adults
Feelings of safety at school
Median household income
Voter turnout



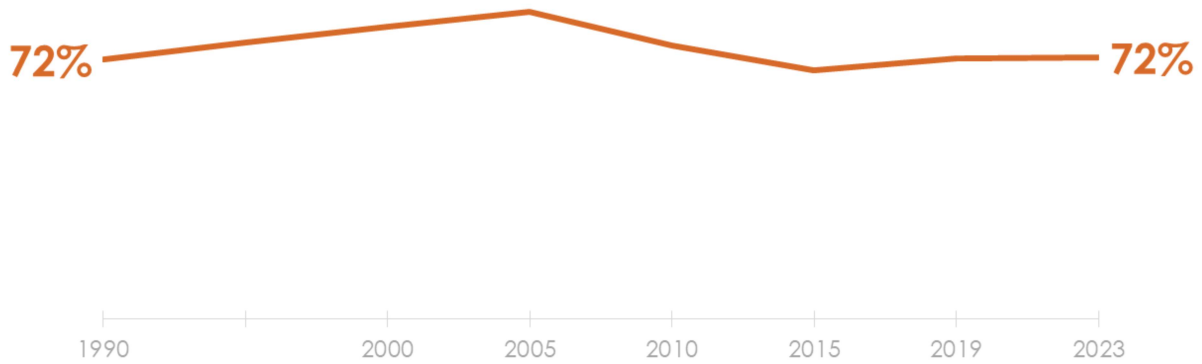
SOURCE: <https://www.mncompass.org/compass-points-2025>

Place matters

St. Paul and Minneapolis



Statewide, homeownership rates have remained steady in recent years



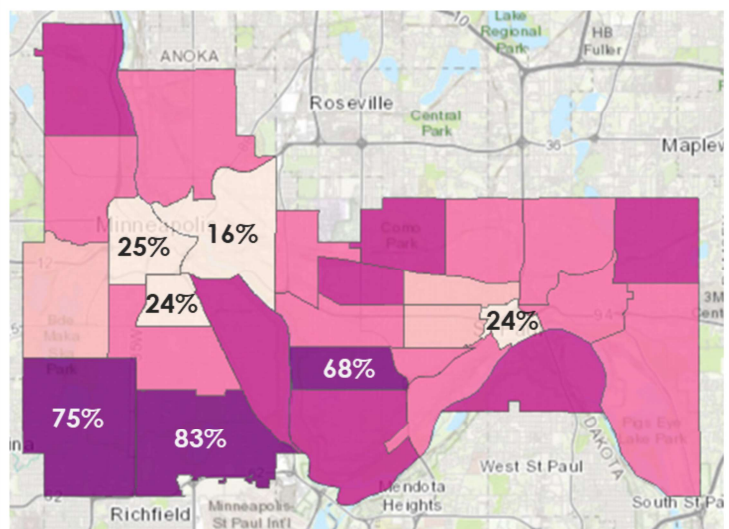
7

[mncompass.org](https://www.mncompass.org)



SOURCE: <https://www.mncompass.org/chart/k189/homeownership-gap#1-6923-d>

Homeownership in St. Paul and Minneapolis (2019-23)

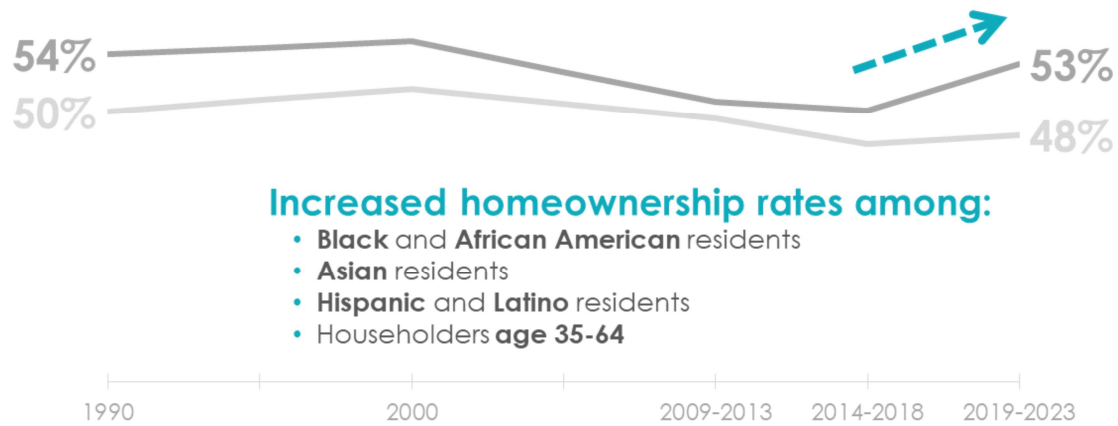


8

[mncompass.org](https://www.mncompass.org)

SOURCE: <https://www.mncompass.org/profiles/neighborhoods/minneapolis-saint-paul>

Homeownership rates in **St. Paul** and **Minneapolis** are diverging



9

[mncompass.org](https://www.mncompass.org)

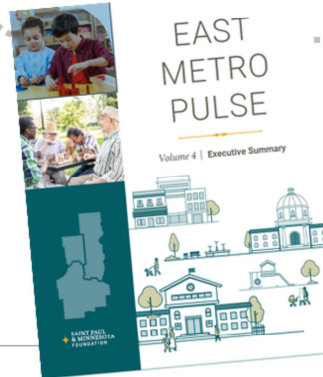
SOURCE: <https://www.mncompass.org/chart/k189/homeownership-gap#7-7464-d>



**Stephanie
Peterson**

Director of Learning,
Saint Paul and Minnesota
Foundation

*Renters were more likely
to call the East Metro
just a place to live,
rather than a place
they belong.*



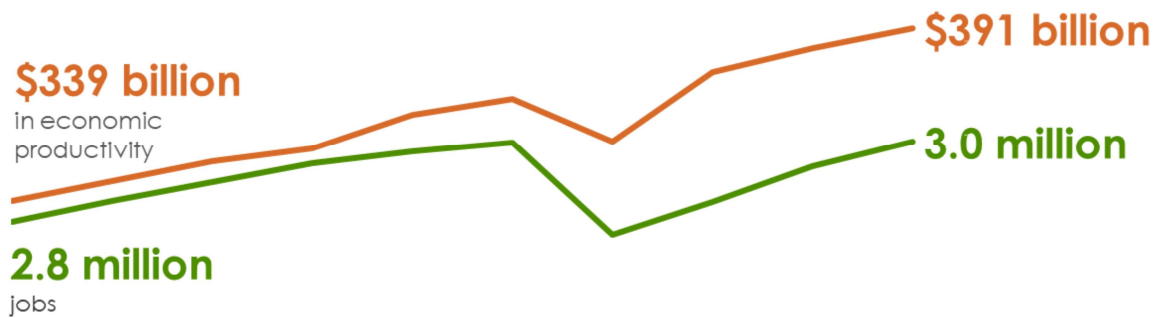
SOURCE: <https://spmcf.org/what-we-do/east-metro-pulse-report>

Place matters

Twin Cities and Greater MN



Minnesota's economy has grown over the last decade.



12

[mncompass.org](https://www.mncompass.org)

SOURCES:

GDP: <https://www.mncompass.org/chart/k173/economic-output-gdp#1-13767-g>

Jobs: <https://www.mncompass.org/chart/k279/jobs#1-5594-g>

*The Twin Cities is **better** than Greater MN.*



Economic output is twice as high.



There are twice as many **jobs**.



Median household income is \$22,000 higher.

SOURCES:

Economic output (GDP): <https://www.mncompass.org/chart/k173/economic-output-gdp#1-13767-g>

Jobs: <https://www.mncompass.org/chart/k279/jobs#1-10347-g>

Median household income: <https://www.mncompass.org/chart/k202/median-income#1-4805-g>

*Greater MN is **better** than the Twin Cities.*



Cost of living is lower.



Job openings have grown faster.



Wages have also grown faster.

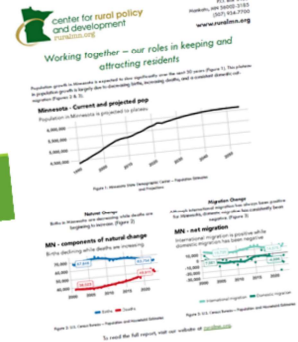
SOURCE:

State of Rural 2025: <https://www.ruralmn.org/the-state-of-rural-2025/>



Kelly Asche
Senior Researcher,
The Center for Rural Policy
and Development

Commit to **Minnesota**,
not just your region.



SOURCES:

State of Rural 2025: <https://www.ruralmn.org/the-state-of-rural-2025/>

Time to work together: Our roles in keeping and attracting residents:

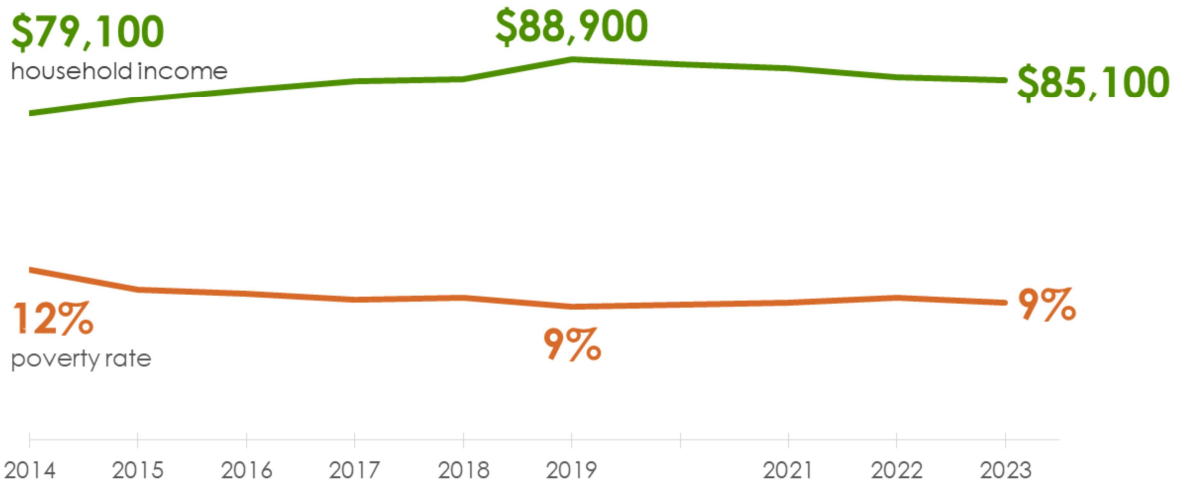
<https://www.ruralmn.org/time-to-work-together-our-roles-in-keeping-and-attracting-residents/>

*The Twin Cities is **better** than greater MN.*

*Greater MN is **better** than the Twin Cities.*

Who's winning and who's losing?

Our families have not recovered from the pandemic.



17

[mncompass.org](https://www.mncompass.org)

SOURCES:

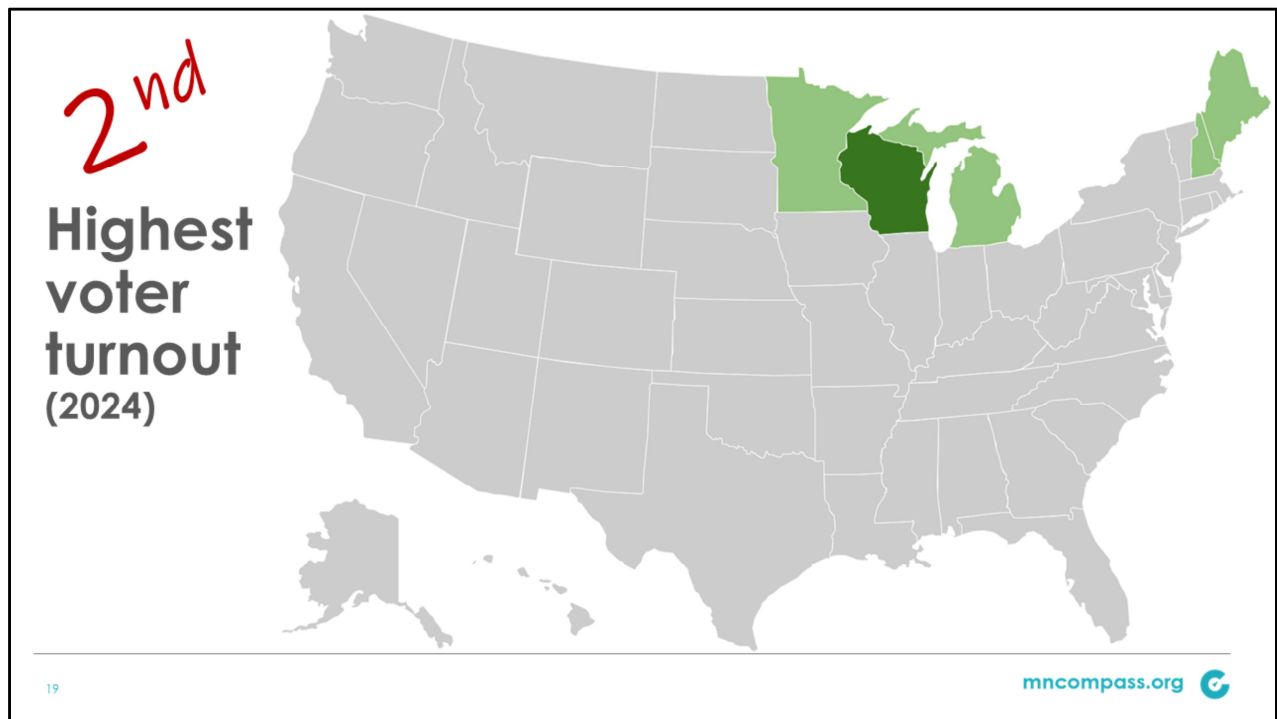
Median household income: <https://www.mncompass.org/chart/k202/median-income#1-6799-g>

Poverty: <https://www.mncompass.org/chart/k203/poverty#1-6764-g>

Place matters

Minnesota and other states





SOURCE: <https://www.mncompass.org/chart/k180/voter-turnout-0#1-12799-g>

Minnesotans are highly engaged in community



8th

arts and culture
attendance
(57%)



6th

neighbors helping
neighbors
(64%)



3rd

volunteerism
(42%)

SOURCES:

Arts and culture attendance: <https://www.mncompass.org/chart/k556/arts-culture-attendance#1-13222-g>

Neighbors helping neighbors: <https://www.mncompass.org/chart/k513/neighbors-helping-neighbors#1-12697-g>

Volunteerism: <https://www.mncompass.org/chart/k182/volunteerism#1-4296-g>



**Jamie
Kalakaru-Mava**

Senior Program Officer –
Creative Placemaking &
Communications,
LISC Twin Cities

*When we invest in
**community-rooted
arts and culture,**
we invest in a
more inclusive prosperity.*

LISC

21

SOURCES:

<https://www.lisc.org/twin-cities/our-work/neighborhood-vitality/creative-placemaking/>

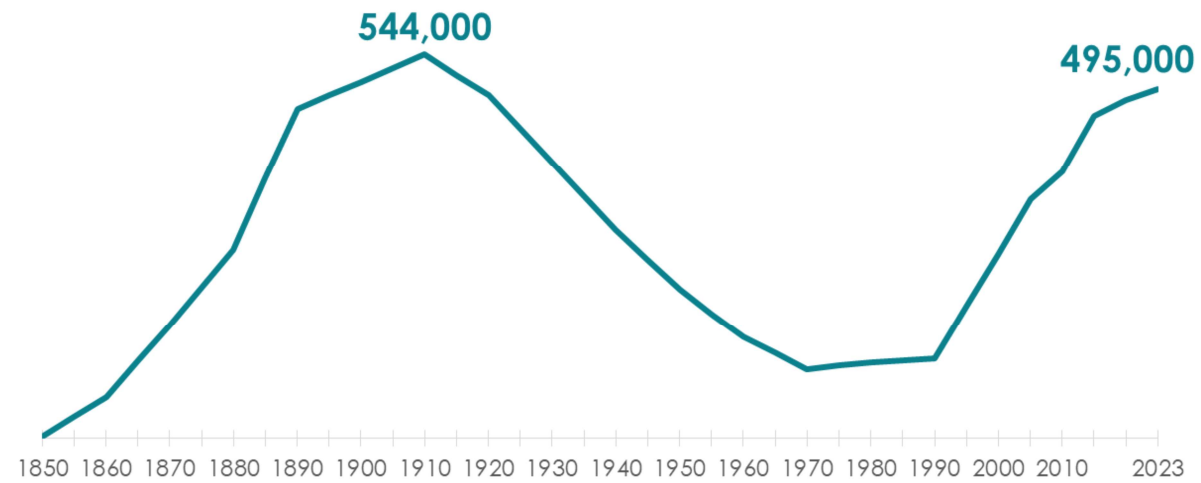
Quote: <https://www.lisc.org/our-stories/story/creative-approach-place/>

Place matters

*Minnesota and
our international community*



Minnesota's foreign-born population may be approaching another peak

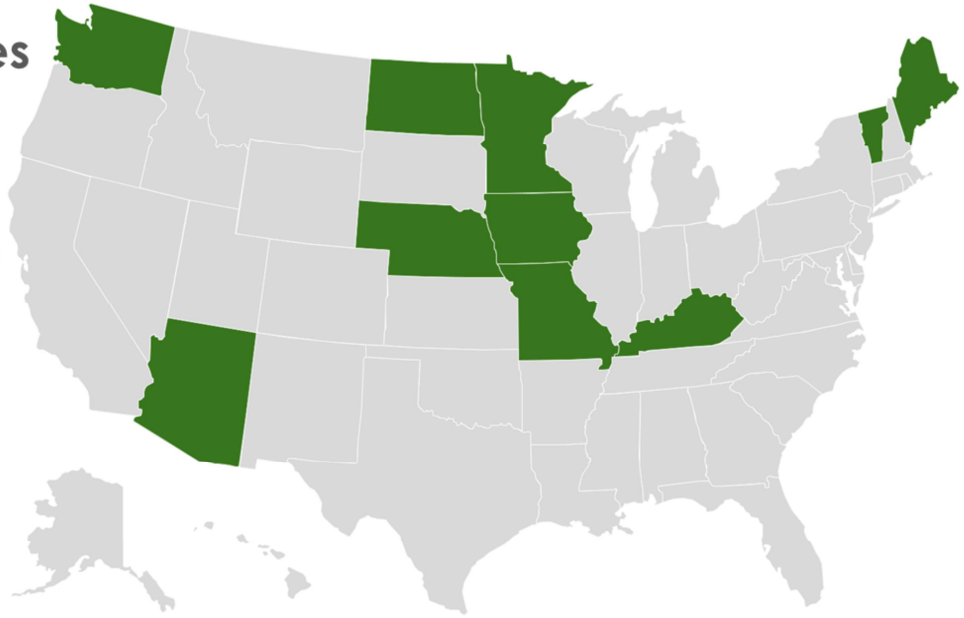


23

[mncompass.org](https://www.mncompass.org)

SOURCE: <https://www.mncompass.org/chart/k264/population-trends#1-10779-d>

**Top 10 states
for primary
refugee
arrivals
per 100,000
residents
(2024)**



24

mncompass.org

SOURCE: Refugee Processing Center (<https://www.wrapsnet.org/admissions-and-arrivals/>)

1 in 5
kids in Minnesota
is a child of an
immigrant.



SOURCE: <https://www.mncompass.org/chart/k265/age#7-5605-g>



Rawhi Said
Program Director,
Mayo Clinic College of
Medicine and Science

*Providing the opportunity
to have a fair and equal
playing field —
that's where my passion lies.*

Community
health

Community
outreach

Workforce and
leadership
development

SOURCE: <https://www.mcknight.org/news-ideas/four-minnesotans-recognized-as-2021-virginia-mcknight-binger-unsung-heroes/#rawhi>

Place matters

Community conditions

Social and economic factors

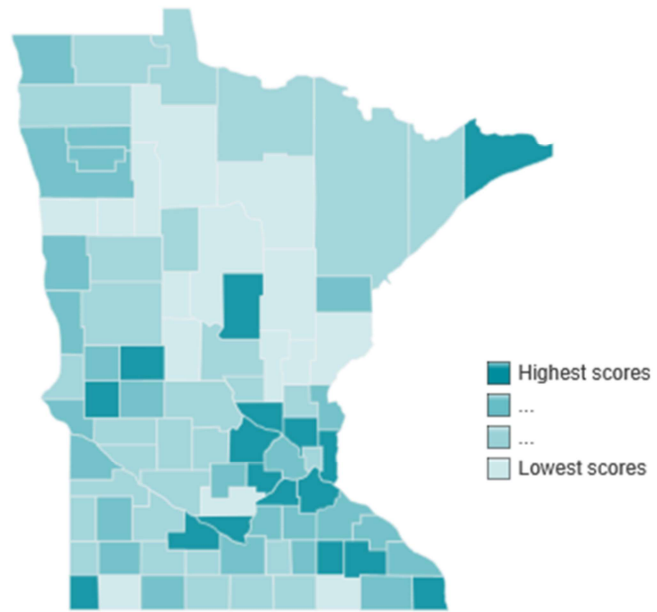
Education, income, employment, safety, social support

Health infrastructure

Health promotion, harm reduction

Physical infrastructure

Housing, transportation, environment, climate, civic and community resources



28

 County Health
Rankings & Roadmaps

SOURCE: University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps 2025. www.countyhealthrankings.org

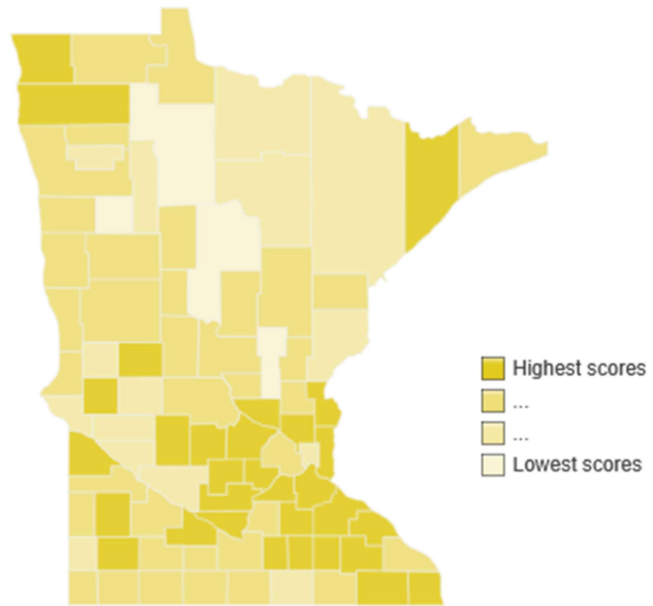
Health and well-being

Quality of life

*Physical health, mental health,
life satisfaction*

Length of life

Lifespan



29

 County Health
Rankings & Roadmaps

SOURCE: University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps 2025. www.countyhealthrankings.org

Each dot represents one of **Minnesota's 87 counties**

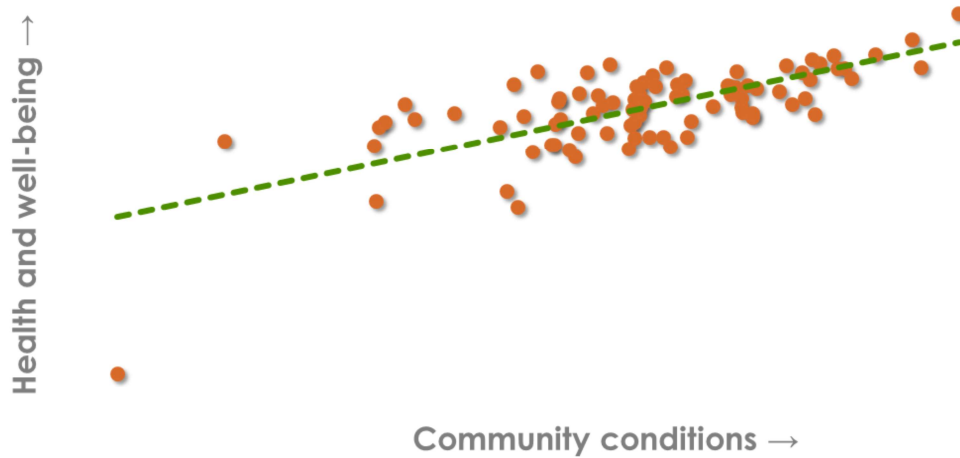


30

 County Health
Rankings & Roadmaps

SOURCE: University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps 2025. www.countyhealthrankings.org

As community conditions **improve** in Minnesota's counties, health and well-being also tends to **improve**



31

 County Health
Rankings & Roadmaps

SOURCE: University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps 2025. www.countyhealthrankings.org

Place matters & Good data matter

Minnesota Compass is supported by a collaborative of funders



SOUTHWEST INITIATIVE
FOUNDATION



Northwest
Minnesota
FOUNDATION



Wells Fargo
Foundation



Mardag Foundation

A family legacy. A part of



BUSH FOUNDATION



MINNEAPOLIS
FOUNDATION



SAINT PAUL
& MINNESOTA
FOUNDATION



Greater Twin Cities
United Way



THE
MCKNIGHT
FOUNDATION



Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota
FOUNDATION

33

Thanks to today's sponsors

- Blandin Foundation
- First Bank & Trust Community Fund
- Southwest Initiative Foundation





MINNESOTA COMPASS IS A
PROJECT OF WILDER RESEARCH

Minnesota
Compass



Connect with me!



Come find me!



allison.liuzzi@wilder.org



Connect on LinkedIn

www.wilderresearch.org

www.mncompass.org