

PopBites

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Estimates of immigrant populations in Minnesota

Ascertaining the number of immigrants in Minnesota is a “best guesstimate” process, but estimates of new residents are needed by both service providers and policy makers. Until data from the 2000 Census is released, an accurate count of subpopulations in Minnesota is impossible. Most immigrants are concentrated in

the Twin Cities metropolitan area and Olmsted county (Rochester). However, many Hispanics work at food processing plants and live in greater Minnesota. Because of the difficulty of estimating these populations, the numbers provided here are statewide estimates only.

Several agencies collect data that can be used to derive estimates, including the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Refugee Services at the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the Internal Revenue Service and the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning. Because this data is often released one to two years after it is collected, knowledgeable individuals who deal with international immigrants were contacted for their insights on the numbers of new Minnesotans.

International newcomers are highly mobile and statistically elusive. Subpopulations that stand out physically from the majority of Minnesotans are often overestimated, and the high estimate of a particular immigrant group can range as much as 2.5 times the low estimate.

This report estimates the population of those ethnic groups that have arrived in recent years: Somalis, other East Africans, West Africans, Hmong, other southeast Asians, Hispanics, Russians, Yugoslavians, and Tibetans. In addition, a range is given for these estimates, and the actual number of immigrants probably falls within this range. Finally, these numbers are estimates, they have wide confidence intervals, and they should be used with extreme caution.

Published by the State Demographic Center at Minnesota Planning, this issue of *PopBites* summarizes findings from Barbara Ronningen's working paper that describes estimates of immigrant populations in Minnesota. Upon request, *PopBites* will be made available in alternate format, such as Braille, large print or audio tape. For TTY, contact Minnesota Relay Service at 800-627-3529 and ask for Minnesota Planning. To receive a copy of *PopBites* or for other population information, contact the Minnesota State Demographic Center Helpline at 651-296-2557 or via e-mail at helpline@mnplan.state.mn.us.



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STATE
DEMOGRAPHIC
CENTER

658 Cedar St.
St. Paul, MN 55155
651-296-3985
Fax 651-296-3698
www.mnplan.state.mn.us

Ethnic Group	Estimate	Range
Somalis	6,000	+ or - 1,500
Other East Africans	2,000	+ or - 500
West Africans	2,500	+ or - 500
Hmong	60,000	+ or - 3,000
Other Southeast Asians	20,000	+ or - 3,000
Hispanics	125,000	+ or - 15,000
Russians	6,000	+ or - 1,000
Yugoslavians	1,600	+ or - 300
Tibetans	500	+ or - 100