

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA MORRIS

Center for Small Towns



“Believing in a bright, prosperous future for small communities.”

A Brief Review: Population in Minnesota Cities and Townships

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Visit Our Web Site: <http://www.centerforsmalltowns.org>

The 2000 Census provides the source of data for this brief report.

Size in 2000	Number of Cities	% of Total Cities	Total Population	% of Total Population
<i>Under 500 people</i>	375	43.9%	82,492	2.1%
<i>500 – 1,000</i>	146	17.1%	104,522	2.7%
<i>1,000 – 1,500</i>	59	6.9%	72,021	1.8%
<i>1,500 – 2,500</i>	66	7.7%	131,209	3.3%
<i>2,500 – 5,000</i>	81	9.5%	284,897	7.3%
<i>5,000 – 10,000</i>	43	5.0%	311,483	7.9%
<i>10,000 – 25,000</i>	50	5.9%	817,345	20.8%
<i>Over 25,000</i>	33	3.9%	2,124,484	54.1%
<i>Total</i>	853		3,928,453	

Table 1. Number and Population of Cities by Size in Minnesota

The 4% of cities with a population of over 25,000 people contain 54% of all people that reside in cities across the state of Minnesota. The 44% of cities with a population less than 500 people contain just 2% of the total population. There are many, many small cities – as the table above shows. There are 727 cities of under 5,000 persons spread across the Minnesota landscape, and 33 cities with more than 25,000 persons. The ratio of small cities to large cities is approximately 1:22, meaning for each city of more than 25,000 persons, there are 22 under 5,000.

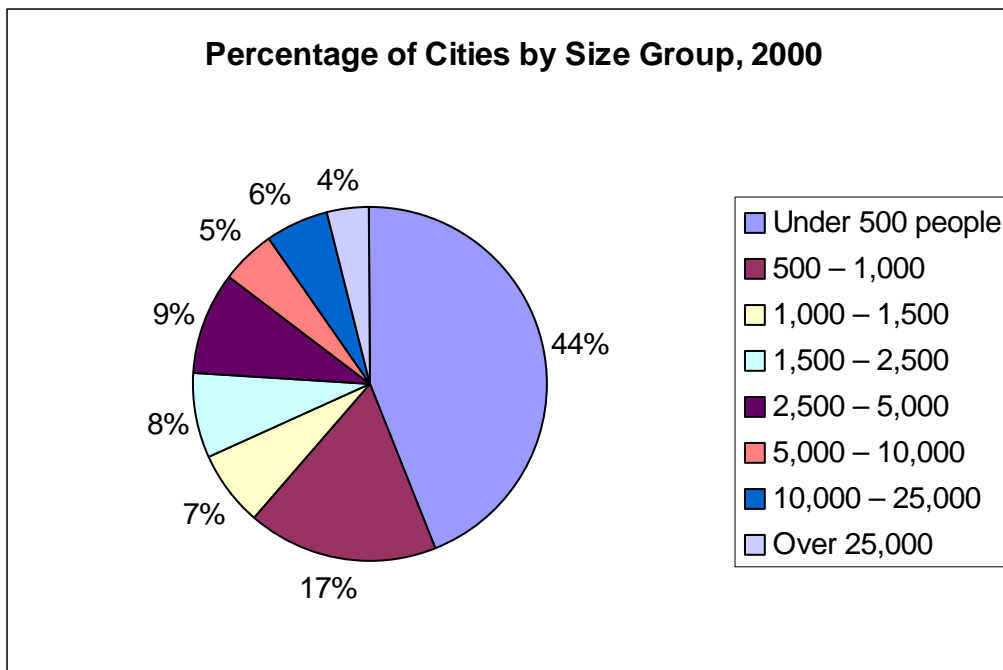


Chart 1. Percentage of Cities by Size, 2000

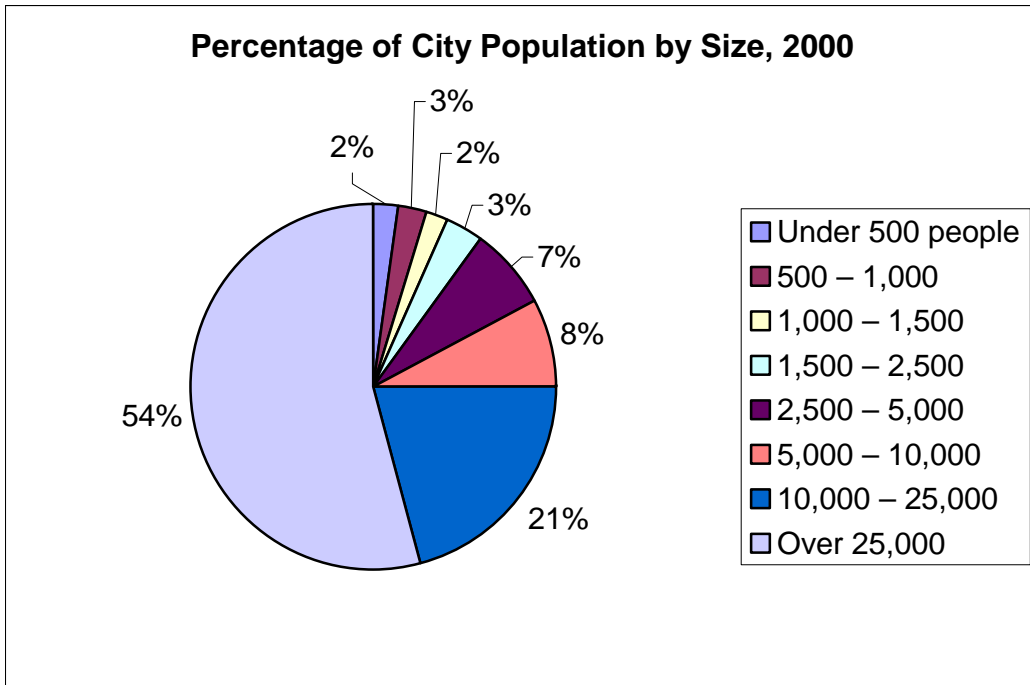


Chart 2. Percentage of City Population by Size, 2000

Size in 1990	Average Pop. Change	% Cities Gaining Pop.	% Cities Gain >10%	% Cities Lose >10%
<i>Under 500 people</i>	3.4%	50%	27%	25%
<i>500 – 1,000</i>	11.6%	61%	35%	8%
<i>1,000 – 1,500</i>	18.2%	78%	47%	3%
<i>1,500 – 2,500</i>	11.8%	76%	44%	3%
<i>2,500 – 5,000</i>	16.3%	75%	50%	3%
<i>5,000 – 10,000</i>	21.0%	82%	49%	4%
<i>10,000 – 25,000</i>	19.7%	77%	43%	0%
<i>Over 25,000</i>	11.9%	85%	46%	0%
Total	9.7%	62%	36%	14%

Table 2. Cities Gaining and Losing Population in 2000 by Size in Minnesota

Across Minnesota, about half of the cities with a population under 500 people grew between 1990 and 2000. Around three of every four cities with a population of more than 1,000 persons witnessed a population gain since 1990. Approximately half of all cities with a population greater than 1,000 saw a gain of more than 10%. One quarter of cities with a population under 500 people lost more than 10% of their population since 1990. The largest average population change of 21% is found in cities with a population between 5,000 and 10,000.

Size in 2000	Number of Townships	% of Total Townships	Total Population	% of Total Population
<i>Under 500 people</i>	1,239	69.1%	292,575	30.7%
<i>500 – 1,000</i>	339	19.0%	236,713	24.9%
<i>1,000 – 1,500</i>	102	5.7%	125,543	13.2%
<i>1,500 – 2,500</i>	69	3.9%	132,457	13.9%
<i>2,500 – 5,000</i>	38	2.1%	132,456	13.9%
<i>5,000 – 10,000</i>	3	0.2%	20,586	2.2%
<i>10,000 – 25,000</i>	1	0.1%	11,293	1.2%
<i>Over 25,000</i>				
<i>Total</i>	1,791		951,623	

Table 3. Number and Population of Townships by Size in Minnesota

Unlike cities, a large percentage of the township population is found in the smaller sized areas. In the North West area, 51% of the township population lives in the 85% of townships which have less than 500 people.

Area	Population in City (%)	Population in Township (%)
Minnesota	3,929,453 (80%)	951,623 (19%)
West Central Minnesota	117,552 (55%)	97,575 (45%)
North West Minnesota	83,343 (44%)	103,962 (56%)

Table 4. Total City and Township Population

One intriguing finding is that in North West Minnesota more people live in townships than cities – 103,962 (56%) in townships and 83,343 (44%) in cities. Additionally, in North West Minnesota, a small number of people live in Unorganized Townships that are neither incorporated cities nor organized townships. Approximately 9,000 people live under these jurisdictions.

Area	Avg. % Pop. Change	
	Cities	Townships
Minnesota	9.7%	4.0%
West Central Minnesota	5.4%	2.8%
North West Minnesota	0.3%	-0.9%

Table 5. Average Population Growth for Cities and Townships

Both cities and townships witnessed a population change lower than the state average in both West Central and North West Minnesota. Gains were experienced by all entities except for townships in the North West region.

	1990	2000	% Pop. Change
Minneapolis	368,383	382,618	3.9%
St. Paul	272,235	287,151	5.5
Duluth	85,493	86,918	1.7
Rochester	70,745	85,806	21.3
Bloomington	86,335	85,172	-1.3
Brooklyn Park	56,381	67,388	19.5
Plymouth	50,889	65,894	29.5
Eagan	47,409	63,557	34.1
Coon Rapids	52,978	61,607	16.3
Burnsville	51,288	60,220	17.4

Table 6. Largest Cities in Minnesota

	1990	2000	% Pop. Change
Tenney	4	6	50%
Funkley	15	15	0
Ronneby	58	16	-72.4
Kinbrae	18	21	16.7
Barry	40	25	-37.5
Louisburg	42	26	-38.1
Hillman	45	29	-35.6
Leonard	26	29	11.5
Strathcona	40	29	-27.5
Wolf Lake	35	31	-11.4

Table 7. Smallest Cities in Minnesota

The ABC's of Minnesota Small Towns

