

Bosnian Minnesota

This brief is about Bosniak / Bosnian Minnesota as a people-page. The CLAS ten language block says Serbo-Croatian (Bosnian). That is operations. It is how the building batches a notice. It is not the name of the household in the lobby.

History and place

Origins and the Founding of a People

Bosniak peoplehood is older than 1992 and older than the refugee file. South Slavic speakers in the Dinaric and Bosnian lands lived under medieval kingdoms, Ottoman centuries (from the 15th century), Austro-Hungarian rule after 1878, royal and then socialist Yugoslavia, and the 1992 independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Islam in this land is Ottoman-era and European. That sentence is literacy. It is not a piety rank.

History for the meeting

Bosniak, Croat, and Serb in Bosnia are not three languages you can hear from across a lobby. They are political names on a mutually intelligible South Slavic speech. The 1990s war made the names lethal. The desk that treats them as flavor has already failed the household.

What people brought

What people brought: family, coffee, a language with a literature, Islam as heritage for most Bosniaks (sometimes as daily order, sometimes as a name without a public mark), Catholic and Orthodox streams in adjacent households, and a memory of neighbors who became a front. What they met in Minnesota: an English form, a language block that says Serbo-Croatian (Bosnian), and often one interpreter labeled “former Yugoslav.”

There is no Bosniak nation-state in the simple sense the checkbox wants. Dayton wrote a state with two entities and three constituent peoples. Do not referee that constitution in a waiver meeting. Listen if they name home.

The Geography of the Bosnian World

Homeland is Bosnia and Herzegovina — Sarajevo, Tuzla, Zenica, Banja Luka, Mostar, Bihać, and other towns, the eastern enclaves. Srebrenica is a place-name and a crime. Do not put it on a small-talk map.

Homeland

The 1992–1995 war produced camps and exile in Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Germany, Austria, Scandinavia, and then the United States. St. Louis became a large U.S. Bosnian hub. Chicago, New York, and other cities hold communities. Minnesota received a notable resettlement in the mid and late 1990s. Minnesota is not St. Louis. Do not copy a Missouri story onto this desk and call it local.

Minnesota

In Minnesota: Twin Cities pattern. Islamic Community of Bosniaks in Minnesota has been a named Minneapolis door. Greater Minnesota households exist because work and kin exist. Do not assume one neighborhood. Do not assume the person in front of you has been back. Do not assume they want to go.

Minnesota and Bosnian History

Minnesota received a notable Bosnian resettlement in the mid and late 1990s. That is why this page has to be as complete as the Hmong and Somali intelligences — because this department will meet this community on waivers, child welfare, health care, cash, food, aging, and employment, including the elder who still needs the language and the adult child who does not think of themselves as a refugee.

Places

Places, not a blob: Twin Cities; a Minneapolis Bosniak civic and religious life some families name; Greater Minnesota when work pulled people. Do not invent a Little Sarajevo on a case note. Ask this family where they live.

Partners

Partners: Islamic Community of Bosniaks in Minnesota; mosques and churches families actually name; resettlement-era voluntary agencies as history, not a current partner list; CECLC as a department door — not the whole community.

Bosnian staff are not unpaid interpreters and not the community. Identity is not a staffing plan. A Bajram greeting is optional professional courtesy. It does not make you the expert.

Culture and everyday life

People, place, and perspective

This brief is about Bosniak / Bosnian Minnesota as a people-page. The CLAS ten language block says Serbo-Croatian (Bosnian). That is operations. It is how the building batches a notice. It is not the name of the household in the lobby.

Who this is

Bosniak names the Muslim peoplehood of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Bosnian can also mean a citizen of a state that Dayton wrote as three constituent peoples — Bosniak, Croat, Serb. Croatian and Serbian households in Minnesota are adjacent. They may share a mutually intelligible language. They do not share this war story by default. Ask. Do not file them here because the interpreter catalog used a hyphen.

Who this is not

This is not a Census “white” mash and not a Balkan blob. It is not Somali Islam with a different flag. It is not Russian, not Albanian, not Kosovar, not Ukrainian. Shared continent is not shared culture. Shared Islam is not shared culture. A full mosaic is not a stereotype. A stereotype is when this page becomes the person in the lobby.

How to read this

There is no Minnesota Compass cultural-community count for Bosnian. That absence is a finding, not a reason to invent 40,000. Between 1993 and 2003 more than 2,300 primary Bosnian refugees resettled in Minnesota; they were part of about 140,000 Bosnian and Herzegovinian refugees who came to the United States (MSP Magazine, looking back at Minnesota's refugee history). Primary placement is not the community. Secondary migration happened. Date the number you use. A rate is not the person.

The diversity inside this people is the point. A Srebrenica widow, a man who will not name the camp, a Catholic Croat neighbor who speaks the same language and not the same memory, a less-observant Bosniak who drinks coffee and does not keep Ramadan, a woman who covers, a woman who does not, a U.S.-born nurse who uses English with friends and Bosnian with an elder — share a language family and do not share a Tuesday.

Always defer to the person in front of you. This page is a hypothesis you still test on this family.

1992–1995, Srebrenica, Dayton — Foundational Event

If the Great Migration is the foundational demographic event of modern Black America, and 1991 of Somali Minnesota, 1992–1995 is the foundational event of Bosnian Minnesota.

Foundational events

Yugoslavia broke. Bosnia and Herzegovina declared independence. War followed: siege of Sarajevo, ethnic cleansing, camps, mass rape as a method of war, and on 11 July 1995 the genocide at Srebrenica — more than 8,000 Bosniak men and boys killed after a UN “safe area” failed. That is public record (ICTY, International Court of Justice). It is literacy for the desk. It is not a speech you give the family. Do not ask a survivor to narrate the pit.

Who you meet

Dayton, December 1995, stopped the shooting and froze a political map. Camps and temporary protection in Europe came first for many. U.S. resettlement followed in the mid and late 1990s. Minnesota's primary-refugee arrivals between 1993 and 2003 were more than 2,300. Secondary migration after that is real and not a Compass cell.

The desk in 2026 does not only meet that first wave. It meets their children — U.S.-born, English-dominant with peers, still translating for a parent who will not tell the war to a stranger and still cannot get the right language in the lobby. If you only know “refugee,” you will miss them.

Family

Family is larger than a nuclear English form. Elders often speak. Kumovi — godparent ties — can be as binding as blood in some households. Who cares for a child, an elder, or a disabled adult may be a network the waiver checkbox does not have a box for.

Who is in the household

War and exile also broke families. Missing men. Split siblings. A neighbor who is now the household. Camp years and then a U.S. apartment. Ask who should be in the room. Do not reconstruct a family tree as icebreaker.

Who speaks

Women's labor — factory, care work, professional second generation — sits next to a household in which an elder man may still be named as head. Both can be true in the same room.

Do not use 1995 as a family personality. Do not skip mandated reporting and call it culture. Minnesota law still stands.

Bosniak / Bosnian — the heart of a people

To be Bosniak in Minnesota is to be a European Muslim people whose public mark is often quieter than Somali Minnesota, carrying a war the United States watched on television and then filed under the 1990s. In this building it sits inside another fact: many Bosnian Minnesotans are white in a U.S. racial order that will delete 1995 and call them assimilated, or Muslim in a room that treats everyone the same that will copy the Somali page and get the covering, the mosque, and the language wrong.

In this state

Bosnian can mean the language, the passport, or the people-name. Bosniak is the ethnic name for the Muslim peoplehood. Use what this family uses. Do not lecture them on the difference as a greeting.

This guide is a working orientation. Individual variation always supersedes group generalization.

Core Concepts

Language as a political name. Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian — mutually intelligible, not interchangeable as identity. Book what they ask. "Former Yugoslav" is a closed door with a polite label.

Islam as heritage for most Bosniaks

Often less publicly marked than Somali Minnesota. Do not assume hijab. Do not assume five daily prayers in the lobby. Do not assume the absence of a mark means the absence of faith — or of trauma.

Family and kumovi

Who is in the room. Who signs.

Coffee

Hospitality is a virtue. You still keep medical and legal time.

Memory

Srebrenica and the siege are in the room for some people whether they speak them or not. You do not extract the memory. You do not deny it. You do not platform denial.

Face

Direct refusal may be costly, or it may be blunt. Ask whether they agree. Do not take a smile as consent.

Religion and Healing

Islam for most Bosniaks — Sunni, Ottoman heritage, a European Muslim history. Practice in Minnesota ranges from daily order to a name on a form. Hijab is not the default public mark. Do not copy the Somali

religion chapter onto this page. Do not assume mosque is the case plan. Do not assume Friday prayer sets the appointment grid the way it might for another household. Ask.

Streams

Catholic Croat and Orthodox Serb streams exist in the broader language. Christmas dates differ. A “Bosnian” interpreter for a household that names itself Croatian or Serbian may still be the wrong political door even when the words are understood. Ask.

Practice

Do not make an imam, a priest, or a pastor the case plan unless this family asked. Church or mosque can be the information channel. It is not “the community.”

Illness meaning after war may not be the DSM sentence. PTSD, unexplained pain, sleep, and alcohol sit in the same clinic as ordinary Minnesota chronic disease. You can hold both. You do not interrogate the pit to complete a field.

Greetings

Elders first. A handshake is common in many Bosnian Minnesota rooms — European-style, not a Somali right-hand rule you import. Some observant Muslim Bosniaks will not shake hands across gender. Follow this room. Nod if a hand is not offered. Do not force one. Do not make a lesson of it.

Titles

Merhaba, dobro jutro, zdravo, selam — follow what they offer. English “hello” is ordinary in the second generation. Say the name. Ask how to say the -i rà

This room

Do not open with the war. Do not open with “I have a friend from Bosnia.” Do not import the Black nod or Somali As-sal ðu +ö Æ ykum as the default here. This is not those grammars unless this person uses them.

Naming Conventions

South Slavic: given name, then family name. -i r æB ×f’ endings are common (Hodži rÂ &Vvövi rÂ † læ’ , Petrovi r — examples of a pattern, not a roll call). The r —2 æ÷B ÷ F–öæ Â FV6÷ ation. Ask how to say it. Do not joke. Do not anglicize it on the file without being asked.

How to file

Women may or may not take a husband’s family name in U.S. records. Ask how to file. Do not “correct” a mother and child who do not share a last name as a fraud signal until you have a reason.

Given names may be Bosnian, South Slavic Christian, Arabic-origin, or English in the second generation. The form that demands first-middle-last and a hyphen will invent a person if you force it.

Pronounce it. Ask. Write what they say.

Dates of Significance

Ramadan and Bajram (Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha) for many Bosniak households. Lunar. Date them each year. They are operations for fasting, appointments, and an elder who will not drink water in your lobby. They are not a festival you attend as consultation.

Calendar

Catholic Christmas (December 25) and Orthodox Christmas (January 7) in adjacent Croat and Serb streams — and in mixed families. Ask. Do not put “Balkan holiday” on a case note.

11 July — Srebrenica Genocide Memorial Day. Literacy for the desk. Not a day off the work. Not a prompt to ask who they lost.

1 March is Independence Day for some. Dayton’s anniversary is not a greeting. A calendar click is literacy. It is not community engagement.

Etiquette

Coffee is hospitality. Bosnian coffee is not a delay tactic. Accept a little if offered. You still keep medical and legal time. Name the conflict instead of punishing the cup.

In the home

Shoes off in some homes. Elders first. Direct speech is not always rudeness here; courtesy-yes is not always agreement either. Ask whether they agree with the plan. Confirm in the language they use.

Time

Do not walk into a living room and hunt for war photographs as professional development. Do not comment on pork, alcohol, or covering as a piety audit.

On-time for appointments. Traffic and multi-household logistics are real. So is a no-show when the plan was never agreed. Ask. Confirm.

Language and Communication

Bosnian, Croatian, and Serbian are mutually intelligible with political names. The differences that matter on Tuesday are the name the household claims, the script, and whether the interpreter will walk in as “former Yugoslav.” That label is a closed door with a polite hyphen.

Language

Script: Latin for Bosnian and Croatian; Cyrillic for much Serbian. Book what the household asks. CLAS ten writes Serbo-Croatian (Bosnian) on the language block. That is notice. It is not the interpreter. Staff who answer the number must be ready; the interpreter request must still name the variety.

Second-generation English is common. Elders may not have it. A long answer may be story. A short English yes may be exhaustion or courtesy. Do not take a smile as consent.

Do not make a Bosnian coworker the interpreter.

LGBTQ

Queer and trans Bosnian Minnesotans exist. Conservative family, mosque, and church climates can mean silence or exile. Some people live a public English life and a private Bosnian life.

This person

You use the name they use. You do not out them to an elder as cultural humility. Minnesota's Human Rights Act still applies.

So does the duty not to treat a whole people as a family-values exhibit or as automatically secular because they are European Muslims.

Hair, Dress, and Body

Do not assume hijab. Many Bosniak women in Minnesota dress like other European-origin Minnesotans. Some cover. Ask the woman, with gender match if she wants it.

Dress

Do not rank covering as piety, oppression, or assimilation. Traditional dress is public at weddings and commemorations, not a daily uniform. Do not ask if they "still wear the costume."

Do not touch hair. This is not the CROWN Act chapter and not the Somali hijab chapter. Follow this person.

Music

Sevdah / sevdalinka is the named urban song tradition. Coffee-house and wedding music, ilahija in some religious rooms, and popular turbo-folk that some families love and some families disdain — all live here.

Variation

A playlist is not engagement. Do not ask a survivor for a soundtrack of Sarajevo under siege.

A funeral is not staff entertainment. Second-generation rooms will have American pop. Follow this room, not a souvenir.

Sports

Soccer is common public sport. Club names from home can be identity and can also be a war map you do not referee.

Not the whole person

Basketball and ordinary school sport are real in the second generation. Sport clubs are not language access and not a case plan.

Do not assume the kid plays. A Saturday league is not how you reached the elder.

Literature

Written South Slavic literature is old — older than the refugee file, older than Dayton. Oral sevdah and family narrative sit next to novels the building may have heard of and many it has not.

Literacy in the lobby

Second-generation English is a literature too. You do not need to quote a Nobel.

You need to know this is not a people without letters, and that the name of the language is political. The English form may still be unreadable to the parent who reads Latin Bosnian.

Art

Coffee culture, calligraphy, embroidery, contemporary Minnesota work. Ste v6' æB Ö÷7 VR &6†—FV7GW&R &R homeland history, not a Heritage Month table.

Guest

Guest. A festival is not consultation. A commemorative exhibit is not a case plan.

Do not put a wedding photograph on a unit display. This is not a souvenir people.

Conflict, War, and the State

1992–1995, Srebrenica, camps, Dayton, dispersal, and a United States that resettled people and then mostly stopped saying the name — that is the political event.

The badge

Genocide denial is current politics in the region and in some diaspora rooms. Do not platform it. Do not “hear both sides” of a genocide in a lobby.

A DHS badge is not automatically help. Do not use 1995 as a personality. Do not ask a veteran or a widow to narrate killing for your professional development. Mandated reporting still exists. So does the duty not to treat a whole community as a trauma score.

Adjacent Peoples — Do Not Mash

Not Albanian. Not Kosovar by default. Not Macedonian. Not Russian. Not Ukrainian. Not Somali. Not “Muslim” as a file. Not “former Yugoslav” as a people.

Adjacent doors

Croatian and Serbian Minnesota households are adjacent. They may share the language and not the war story. If the household is Croatian, book Croatian and do not make them narrate Srebrenica. If Serbian, book Serbian; do not platform denial; do not assume they want this page.

Some households are mixed. Ask this household. Never one Balkan module.

Counts, Dated

Minnesota Compass has no Bosnian cultural-community profile. That is a finding. Do not invent 40,000.

Counts

MSP Magazine, looking back at Minnesota’s refugee history: between 1993 and 2003, more than 2,300 primary Bosnian refugees resettled here, part of about 140,000 Bosnian and Herzegovinian refugees who came to the United States. Primary placement is not the community total. Secondary migration is real.

ACS ancestry cells exist in some vintages; date a controlling source before you cite one. This page will not guess.

What the count is not

CLAS ten includes Serbo-Croatian (Bosnian) on the standing language block. That is operations volume, not a census.

A missing rate is not permission to skip language access. A young second generation is not proof the elder can run an English exception form.

Doors and Sources

CLAS ten language block: Serbo-Croatian (Bosnian). Islamic Community of Bosniaks in Minnesota (Minneapolis). MSP Magazine on Minnesota's refugee history (primary-refugee count, dated). ICTY and ICJ public record on Srebrenica. Dayton as political fact.

Public doors

CECLC is a door, not the whole community. Learn on your own time. Do not make a Bosnian colleague your unpaid tutor.

Learn on your own time

Pay the partner this household names. Report back. Guest.

Services, opportunity, and participation

Education

There is no Compass education rate on this page. Do not invent one. Interrupted schooling from siege, flight, and camps is structure for some first-wave adults — not a personality and not illiteracy in Bosnian.

School and language

A parent who speaks fluent Bosnian and limited English is not illiterate. The English-only IEP is the gate. Put the language they ask for on the interpreter line. Latin script is not the same as English literacy. Cyrillic in a Serbian-identifying household is a different written door.

Second-generation educational mobility is real. So is an elder who still cannot run an exception form in English. Date a Minnesota figure when a controlling source exists. Until then: pattern, not a fake percent.

Other Considerations

Unvarnished, because Minnesota Nice is how a room that treats everyone the same deletes facts.

Named harms

Genocide denial in Bosnia and in diaspora politics is current, not archival. Do not platform it in a lobby. Do not “both-sides” Srebrenica to keep a meeting calm. Literacy is not a debate club.

PTSD, unexplained pain, sleep, and alcohol use sit in this diaspora's clinical literature. Alcohol is not a joke

and not a Muslim impossibility. Islam and drinking can exist in the same extended family. You follow law. You still see a person, not a bottle with an ethnicity. LGBTQ Bosnians exist. Conservative family, mosque, and church climates can mean silence. You use the name. You do not out someone to kin and call it culture.

Do not mash this page with Somali Islam, FGC, or Maay. Those are other intelligences. Second generation is American. They may still need language for an elder. An English IEP that never reached the parent is still a gate.

Staff who share this community may add facts. They do not get to delete a fact because it is hard to say.

Health

War trauma is structure for some first-wave adults and for some children who grew up inside someone else's silence. PTSD, depression, unexplained pain, and somatic complaint are patterns named in Bosnian diaspora clinical literacy. This page does not invent a Minnesota rate. Date a figure when a controlling source exists. Do not skip screening because "they don't talk about that."

Access

Alcohol use is part of the unvarnished picture for some households — men more often in the stereotype, not a rule. Do not treat a Bosniak Muslim as impossible for a substance-use screen. Do not treat a screen as a nationality.

Believe reported pain. Do not ask them to narrate the pit to make the pain credible. Gender match may be requested in maternal and intimate care. Offer it.

Do not fold this history into Tuskegee, into Somali FGC, or into a generic "refugee trauma" slide that erases Srebrenica as a specific crime.

Work, Markets, and Government

Work, trades, small business, care, professional second generation, public employment. There is no Compass income or poverty rate on this page. Do not invent one. Pattern: people work. Pattern: an elder may still need the language the coworker does not get paid to provide.

Work

Bosnian staff inside the department are not unpaid interpreters and not the community. Identity is not a staffing plan.

Staff

Relationship may precede a signature. That is not permission to skip a notice. It is a reason the first visit may not be the decision.

Health-care and Human-service Encounters

Language label. Latin or Cyrillic. Who is in the room. Trauma without interrogation. Unexplained pain. Alcohol. An elder who needs Bosnian and an adult child who does not think they need an interpreter until the form gets legal.

Language

Confirm what they ask to book. Offer gender match. Ask who should hear. Do not make staff the interpreter.

The meeting

Believe reported pain. Do not open with the war. Mandated reporting still exists.

Connections to human services

Workplace culture and service delivery are both candidates.

Language: the block says Serbo-Croatian (Bosnian). That is notice. An interpreter labeled “former Yugoslav” who is the wrong political name, or the wrong script, is a closed door with a polite label. Book what the household asks. Gender match may be requested in maternal and intimate care.

War as icebreaker: never. 1995 is literacy for the desk, not a speech and not a rapport trick. Do not ask a survivor to narrate the pit.

Names: ask how to say the -i rà Do not treat a spelling variant as fraud by default.

Hour caps, exception processes, and life-sharing matches without language are not culturally neutral. An English IEP for an elder is a gate.

Child welfare and disability: trauma is not a risk score. Mandated reporting still exists. So does the duty not to treat a whole community as a personality.

Notices and comment: an eList and an English PDF is not how this community was reached. Empty follow-up calls are theater.

Workforce: Bosnian staff are not the interpreter pool and not the community.

One Balkan blob is a closed gate. Adjacent Croatian and Serbian households are not this war story by default. Not Albanian, not Kosovar, not Russian, not Somali.

Legislation, funding, rule: you cannot advocate for a channel you will not study. This cultural intelligence exists so the 40% has a household in it — not a paternalistic program designed in a building that never learned the difference between a language block and a people.

Continue the connection

- **Equity Analysis Toolkit** — program page </learn/equity-toolkit>
- **Community engagement and connections** — program page </learn/community-connections>
- **Learning and resources** — program page </learn>