

KANSAS

August 2021

Census data determines the allocation of federal and other funds to vital social programs, guides redistricting, and informs research. Therefore, an accurate census that captures historically undercounted populations¹ is crucial for our democracy. Since 2016, a collaborative of philanthropic funders has worked to align and pool funding to build and strengthen the infrastructure needed to support a fair and accurate count.

The Democracy Funders Collaborative's Census Subgroup, which is the steering committee for the census funder collaborative, engaged ORS Impact as a partner to develop state-level reports that provide an overview of philanthropic efforts to promote the 2020 Census within and across the 50 states, as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. This report provides a summary of census efforts for the State of Kansas based on review of secondary data, and interviews with key actors involved (n=1).

¹We have opted to use the term "historically undercounted populations" in our narrative, but the term is interchangeable with "hard to count," which we use when our informants opted to do so



OVERVIEW GOING INTO 2020 CENSUS

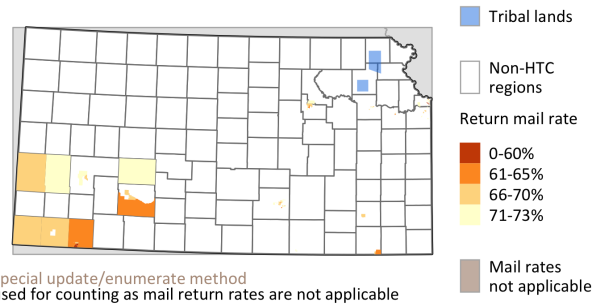
2,908,776

TOTAL POPULATION

282,519

TOTAL POPULATION LIVING IN HISTORICALLY UNDERCOUNTED CENSUS TRACTS

HISTORICALLY UNDERCOUNTED TRACTS BY COUNTY

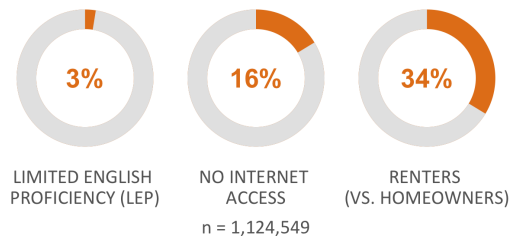


Population

Past analyses of Census data have consistently shown differences in self-response rates based on household or individual characteristics, indicating that certain populations are at higher risk of being undercounted. The following graphs show the distribution of selected populations within the state that have historically been more likely to be undercounted. Data for all maps and graphs provided by CUNY Graduate Center via the Census 2020 Hard to Count/Response Rate map at www.CensusHardToCountMaps2020.us.

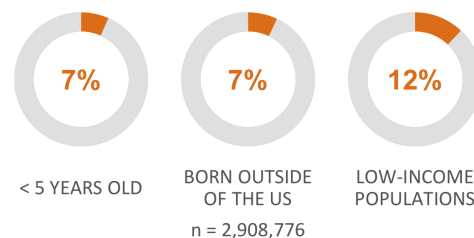
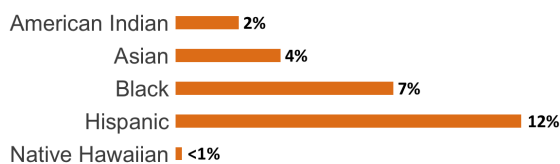
HOUSEHOLDS

Percent of total number of households in the state that have the following characteristics:



INDIVIDUALS

Percent of total number of individuals in the state that have characteristics of historically undercounted populations:

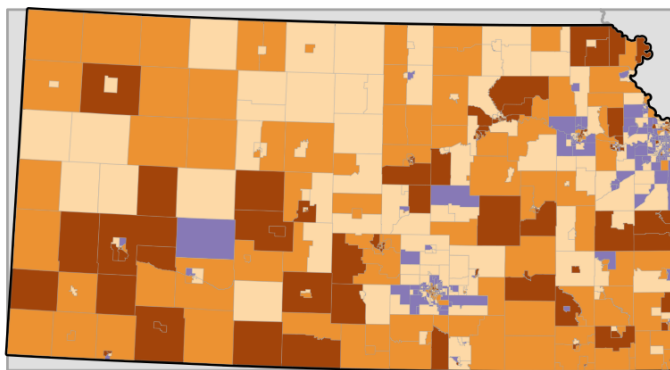




OVERVIEW OF CENSUS SELF-RESPONSE RATES

YEAR	SELF RESPONSE	CHANGE
2020	69.8%	-0.2
2010	70.0%	

CENSUS TRACTS WHERE 2020 CENSUS RETURN RATE WAS LOWER THAN 2010



- No comparable 2010 rate
- 2020 rate < 2010 rate by 10+ points
- 5-10 points below
- Up to 5 points below
- 2020 rate at or above 2010



STRUCTURE OF CENSUS OUTREACH

The governor formed a statewide Complete Count Committee (CCC) and appointed individuals to engage in 2020 Census Get Out the Count (GOTC) efforts in Kansas. At the same time, the Kansas Health Foundation awarded a large grant to the League of Kansas Municipalities (LKM) to engage their 300 members in the 2020 Census outreach effort. The mini grants were awarded by LKM to their member cities who could either do the outreach themselves or subcontract with faith- and community-based organizations to work on the census outreach in local communities. LKM hired a coordinator to work with the cities to talk about why the census is important to their communities.

The Kansas Health Foundation partnered with the United Methodist Health Ministry Fund to award mini grants to organizations that were working in southwest Kansas, where there is a heavily Latinx population. These two foundations coordinated their efforts and met often with representatives from the statewide CCC, the regional Census Bureau representative, and the grantees from both foundations.

This effort was new and was not built on any existing structure from the 2010 Census. The Kansas Health Foundation started working on the census in 2018 and issued their grant in February 2019.

Table 1: Key actors involved in Census Efforts²:

Actor	Role
Kansas Health Foundation	Funder and coordinator of the partnership
United Methodist Health Ministry Fund	Funder that worked primarily in southwest Kansas
League of Kansas Municipalities	Grantee and coordinator of the member cities and municipalities

FUNDING FOR CENSUS OUTREACH

The Kansas Health Foundation granted \$80,000 in mini grants directly to cities. Additionally, they granted \$519,000 to LKM to regrant to member cities. The foundation also funded part of the staff support for the state CCC, with the state supporting the other part. These funds were distributed across the state with the exception of the Kansas City metropolitan area, which was funded by other funders. Out of 105 counties in the state, 102 counties were covered by LKM and their grantees' 2020 Census GOTC effort.

²Data reflects the Census Bureau's last update of self-response data (published in January 2021), which differs from the CUNY maps that use data from October 2020

Table 2: Funding for 2020 Census Outreach³

Funding Source and Amount	Funding Purpose
Philanthropy: \$599,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Kansas Health Foundation granted \$80,000 in mini grants directly to cities • Kansas Health Foundation granted \$519,000.
State Government: n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The state government did not allocate any funding to census outreach efforts.
In-kind contribution: Unknown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many organizations contributed staff time and other resources to census efforts within the state.

DESCRIPTION OF 2020 CENSUS OUTREACH

The COVID pandemic created many challenges for grantees, prompting changes in strategies for census outreach. Originally the outreach effort was in person and statewide. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, however, the collaborative focused on heat maps identifying undercounted communities to be targeted for outreach. These communities were predominantly low income and also included a large Southeast Asian community in Wichita.

Investment in a website and social media campaign supported 2020 Census communications. The door-knocking activities stopped when COVID-19 started. Organizers relied heavily on social media, radio (especially Spanish radio), and print. They also used Chinese news sources and other Asian media in Wichita. Much of the work was focused on distributing factual material to contradict prevalent misinformation. They also had to focus on advocacy to combat misinformation around the census’s citizenship question, which was challenging.

³Funding data should be taken as estimates. We included data from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and Census Equity Fund (CEF) grants where applicable; other figures are estimates provided by key informants



LESSONS LEARNED

- **Building strong relationships early on helped set the stage for successful adaptation to the COVID-19 pandemic.** The Kansas Health Foundation and United Methodist Health Ministry Fund have a long history of working together, which resulted in a successful collaboration on the 2020 Census. Several factors led to this successful collaboration. One such factor is United Methodist Health Ministry Fund's hiring of a project director to work with nine counties. She was from the community, was trusted by local residents, and had a history of working with community organizations. It is harder to measure what impact LKM had with their grantees. Additionally, some of their member cities did not want to participate.
- **Other challenges also hampered efforts.** The Kansas Health Foundation had hoped to collaborate with other funders; however, there was only one other statewide funder that was not focusing on the statewide census effort. The lack of communication and coordination from the state CCC was challenging. It would be beneficial in the future to have one statewide project director who works directly with the community organizations instead of going through an intermediary.

LOOKING FORWARD

At this point it is difficult to gauge how much of the infrastructure built for the 2020 Census will endure since there was no direct relationship between the state and the cities. The statewide members of the CCC were appointed by the governor; some of them are active in their community and some are not. It is not clear how much infrastructure was really developed, and there are currently no plans for the collaborative to engage in a redistricting effort.



DATA SOURCES

Representatives from the Kansas Health Foundation participated in interviews for this report.