

# MICHIGAN

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 populations<sup>1</sup> 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 Michigan based on review of secondary data, and interviews with key actors involved (n=3).

<sup>1</sup>We 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

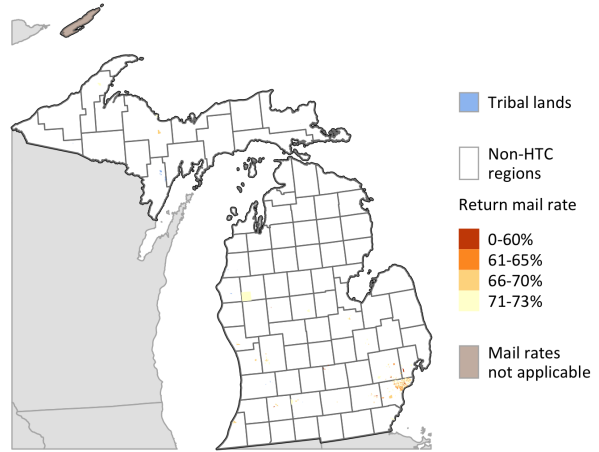
**9,957,488**

TOTAL POPULATION

**804,619**

TOTAL POPULATION LIVING IN HISTORICALLY UNDERCOUNTED CENSUS TRACTS

## HISTORICALLY UNDERCOUNTED TRACTS BY COUNTY



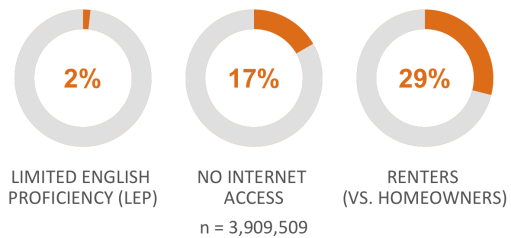
Special update/enumerate method used for counting as mail return rates are not applicable

## 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](http://www.CensusHardToCountMaps2020.us).

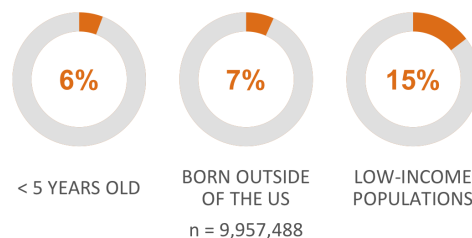
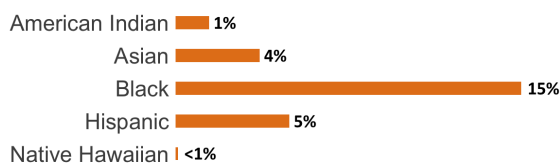
### HOUSEHOLDS

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



### INDIVIDUALS

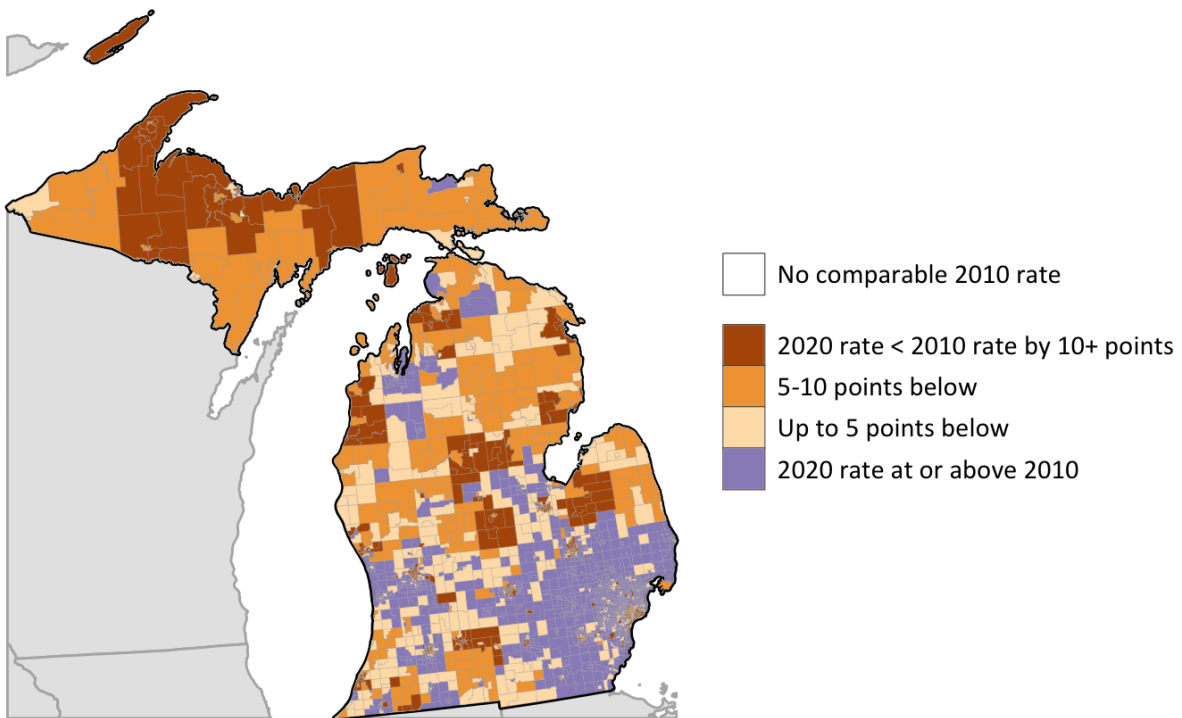
Percent of total number of individuals in the state that have characteristics of historically undercounted populations:



# OVERVIEW OF CENSUS SELF-RESPONSE RATES

YEAR	SELF RESPONSE	CHANGE
<b>2020</b>	<b>71.3%</b>	<b>+3.6</b>
2010	67.7%	

CENSUS TRACTS WHERE 2020 CENSUS RETURN RATE WAS LOWER THAN 2010



## STRUCTURE OF CENSUS OUTREACH

Census efforts in Michigan were organized by a coalition of nonprofit and philanthropic actors within the state, beginning in 2017, and later in partnership with the State Complete Count Committee once it formed in mid-2019. Stemming from these early conversations came the realization that in order to have the best probability of a complete census count within the state, which was vital for ensuring the flow of federal resources to the state, it would be necessary to organize a statewide response to encourage participation of historically undercounted groups. In the years leading up to the 2020 Census, the Michigan Nonprofit Association, a group representing hundreds of nonprofits across the state, and the Council of Michigan Foundations, a group representing state philanthropic funders, worked to build the infrastructure that would ultimately support a statewide campaign. Early on in the campaign, the Michigan Nonprofit Association focused on educating nonprofit partners within the state to recruit them to the effort. Concurrently, the Council of Michigan worked on educating funders across the state to encourage them to become involved. Ultimately, these efforts coalesced in the Census 2020 Michigan Nonprofits Count Campaign (Nonprofits Count). A coalition of hundreds of regional and local nonprofits formed to support the effort, while over 40 state foundations contributed resources and expertise to support the work.

The Nonprofits Count campaign used a “hub and spoke” model to structure and organize 2020 Census efforts, identifying an anchor organization within the different regions of the state to spearhead census efforts. These organizations in turn funneled support and resources to local organizations to conduct outreach to specific historically undercounted communities. Overall, Nonprofits Count identified 13 regional hubs and 12 community action agencies to serve in this coordinating role. The regional hubs were primarily larger nonprofits or community foundations generally located around major population centers within the state, while the community action agencies were typically nonprofits that spearheaded outreach in more rural areas. The Michigan Nonprofit Association provided oversight to the overall effort.

Due in part to advocacy from nonprofit and philanthropic actors, the state government formed a State Complete Count Committee and allocated state funding to support census efforts. Many of the resources allocated by the state supported a public awareness campaign, “Be Counted Michigan 2020,” using a wide range of media to engage the general public about the census, but the state resources also supported the Nonprofits Count campaign.

Local complete count committees were active in local efforts as well. In particular, the Detroit Complete Count Committee was very active in engaging historically undercounted groups within the city metro, with city government and local philanthropy allocating significant resources to this effort.

Table 1: Key actors involved in Census Efforts<sup>2</sup>:

Actor	Role
<b>Michigan Nonprofit Association</b>	Organized nonprofit efforts within the state, and was active in coordinating with the State Complete Count Committee
<b>Council of Michigan Foundations</b>	Mobilized funders across the state and leveraged funding to support 2020 Census efforts
<b>State Complete Count Committee</b>	Organized efforts on behalf of the state, including a public awareness campaign using multiple media

## FUNDING FOR CENSUS OUTREACH

Overall, an estimated \$20,870,000 dollars of philanthropic and government funding supported census efforts in Michigan.

Table 2: Funding for 2020 Census Outreach<sup>3</sup>

Funding Source and Amount	Funding Purpose
Philanthropy: <b>\$4,135,000</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 40 foundations in the state contributed an estimated \$4 million to the efforts of the Nonprofits Count Campaign, with much of the funding going toward regional hubs and community action agencies for regranting.</li> <li>• The national Census Equity Fund contributed \$135,000 to efforts in the state, with most funding going to support efforts in the Detroit area.</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup>Data 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

<sup>3</sup>Funding 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

<p>State/City Government: <b>\$16,600,000</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall, the state government contributed \$16 million to support 2020 Census efforts. \$6 million of the funding went to support the Nonprofits Count Campaign, while the remainder went to support a communications campaign and local complete count committees and governments.</li> <li>• The city of Detroit allocated \$600,000 to census efforts within the city.</li> </ul>
<p>In-kind contribution: <b>Unknown</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An unknown amount of in-kind contributions of corporate, nonprofit, and government staff time and materials also supported efforts in the state.</li> </ul>

# DESCRIPTION OF 2020 CENSUS OUTREACH

**Regional hubs and community action agencies were central to organizing census outreach efforts in Michigan.** The Nonprofits Count Campaign organized its efforts via regional hubs, which were often centered around population centers in the state. These regional partners leveraged their networks to identify local partners that would be well positioned to engage local communities around the census to encourage participation. The community action agencies played a similar role in more rural areas of the state. Once local partners were identified, the hubs provided mini-grants to local groups to undertake outreach efforts. Overall, the hubs engaged over 260 local nonprofit organizations around census outreach efforts.

**Coupling on-the-ground outreach with a multimedia communications campaign enhanced census outreach efforts.** The state appropriated around \$5 million to support a broad-based census multimedia campaign, with messaging tailored to specific groups across the state. The Nonprofits Count Campaign worked with a communications company as part of this effort and conducted message testing to ensure the effectiveness and appropriateness of the campaign messages. In addition, funding went to support a state group, New Michigan Media, that was able to leverage a network of ethnic and culturally specific media outlets across the state to get the word out to specific groups about the census.

**Data from the previous census informed the targeting of 2020 Census outreach efforts.** By looking at previous data, actors in the state were able to identify areas of historically undercounted populations.

**The hub structure allowed for strong coordination among nonprofits within the state.** This was particularly important when responding to the disruptions related to COVID-19 or when there was a need to share information widely across the universe of organizations involved in census efforts within the state.

**Nonprofits on the ground used a wide range of tactics to engage with local residents around the census. In-person strategies were more common early on in the campaign.** When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, there was a need to pivot to alternative means of engagement. Groups were creative in finding new ways to connect during the pandemic, including engaging with residents at food banks, mechanic shops, and other

places where people still gathered. In addition, they pivoted to digital means of communication, using social media, phone calls, and text banking to get in touch with local residents.

## LESSONS LEARNED

- **The hub structure was effective.** It allowed for strong communication and coordination at the state level while also offering autonomy to local groups to conduct their own efforts in the way that they thought would be effective.
- **Collaboration between the state government, nonprofits, and philanthropy enhanced the effectiveness of efforts.** Broad-based participation among different sectors in the state allowed for greater reach of census efforts because different actors were better situated to engage with different audiences in the state.
- **Starting early was critical.** Allowing time for planning and advocacy to groups across the state helped ensure funding was available to support efforts.

## LOOKING FORWARD

There is hope that the relationships built can be leveraged to future efforts. Many new relationships were built between philanthropy, government, and nonprofits. The hub model used for the 2020 Census could potentially be leveraged for other civic engagement efforts within the state.



## DATA SOURCES

Representatives from the following organizations participated in interviews and/or contributed information for this report:

- Michigan Nonprofit Association
- Michigan Council of Foundations
- Detroit Census Campaign