

# 2020 CENSUS

## STATE-BY-STATE REPORTS

# NEW HAMPSHIRE

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 New Hampshire based on review of secondary data, and interviews with key actors involved (n=2).

<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

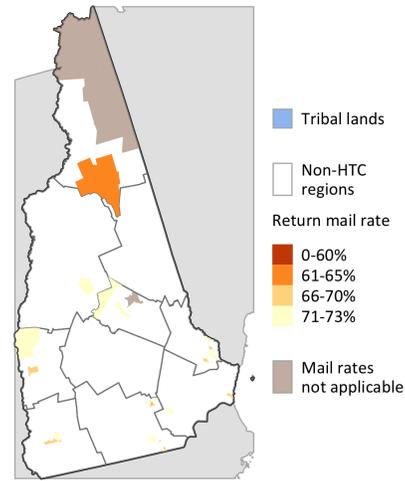
**1,343,622**

TOTAL POPULATION

**163,101**

TOTAL POPULATION LIVING IN HISTORICALLY UNDERCOUNTED CENSUS TRACTS

## HISTORICALLY UNDERCOUNTED TRACTS BY COUNTY



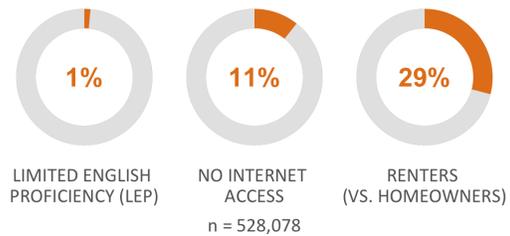
Special update/enumerate method used for counting as mail return rates are not applicable

## 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).

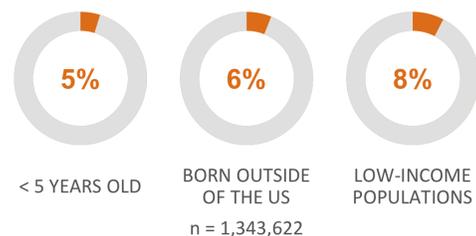
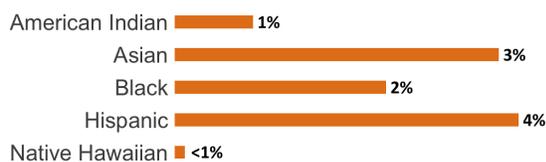
### HOUSEHOLDS

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:

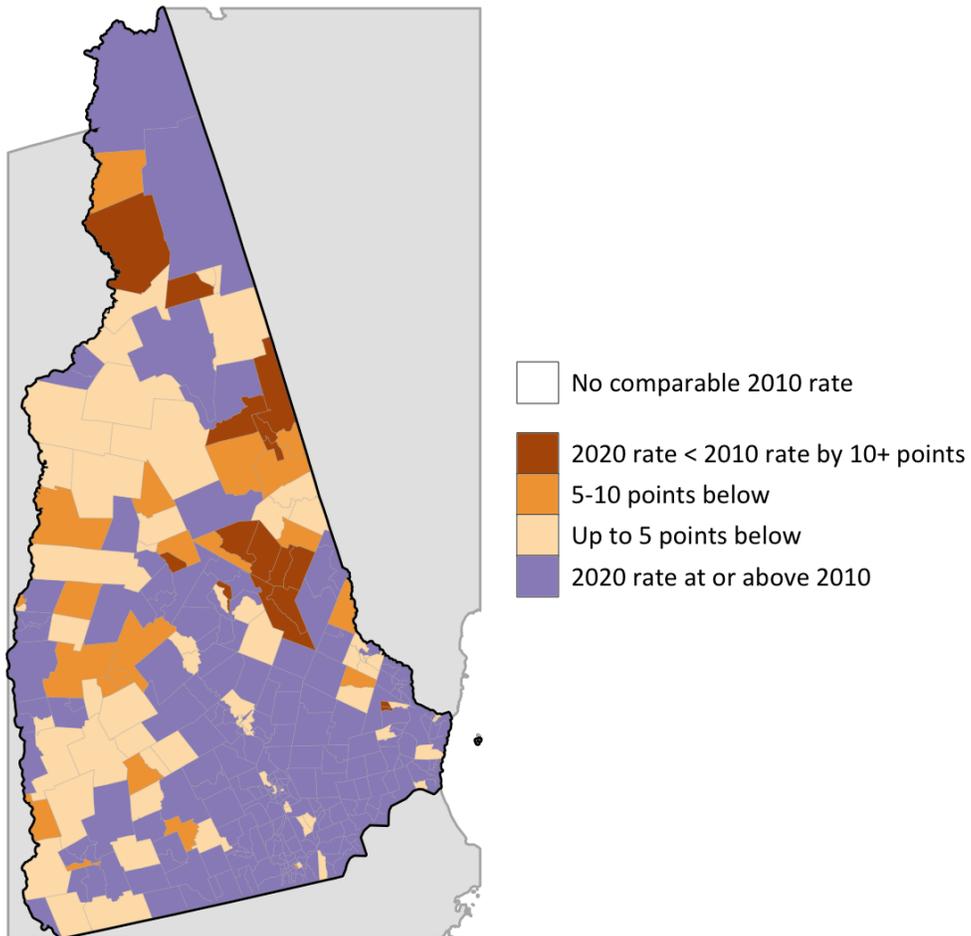




# OVERVIEW OF CENSUS SELF-RESPONSE RATES

YEAR	SELF RESPONSE	CHANGE
<b>2020</b>	<b>67.1%</b>	<b>+2.7</b>
2010	64.4%	

CENSUS TRACTS WHERE 2020 CENSUS RETURN RATE WAS LOWER THAN 2010



## STRUCTURE OF CENSUS OUTREACH

In 2018, the Republican-led state government of New Hampshire assigned the Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI), housed at the governor's office, to act as a State Complete Count Committee but chose not to allocate state government funding toward 2020 Census outreach efforts. Concerned by the gap in state funding, philanthropic organizations organized under the New Hampshire Funder's Forum began conversations to fill the funding gap through a state philanthropic pooled fund. The funder coalition, led by the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, ultimately decided to devote resources to two parallel efforts. One stream, led by the Granite United Way of New Hampshire, provided mini-grants of \$1,500–\$2,000 to 10 community-based organizations to conduct outreach to historically undercounted populations. The other stream involved collaboration with the State Complete Count Committee led by OSI and local complete count committees across the state. Seeking to ensure alignment of efforts across the state, the funder groups hired a consultant from the New Hampshire Women's Fund to serve as a coordinator for the State Complete Count Committee, local complete count committees, and the mini-grant program to ensure a unified, statewide effort. Although the Funder's Forum had worked together in the past, the census represented the first action that united those organizations toward a common goal.

Six local complete count committees all over New Hampshire were heavily involved in the census work, taking a localized approach to outreach to historically undercounted populations. These more local efforts worked with mayors, city councilors, and aldermen to find ways of engaging the local population around the census. Most local complete count committees around the state were able to leverage local government resources and partnership for their efforts, although some had more difficulty in this regard. For example, the Manchester Complete Count Committee was almost entirely volunteer led and had few resources to draw on to conduct their efforts.

Although the partnership among OSI, the local complete count committees, and the funder group was the largest census effort within the state, there were also other efforts active within the state. Some local complete count committees also undertook their own local efforts outside of the overall state structure. For example, the City of Nashua created its own separate census campaign, working with their local complete count committee to make promotional videos.

Another important census-related effort was led by the New Hampshire Progress Alliance, which provided funding to community-based organizations, particularly those working with immigrants to promote the census. In a separate effort, the New Hampshire Progress Alliance worked with the broader coalition to do outreach to local immigrant- and refugee-serving organizations involved in the broader coalition to mitigate fears of a connection between immigration enforcement and the census. New Hampshire Progress Alliance granted \$30,000 in funding to these organizations in an attempt to get a higher count from these communities, which make up a small percentage of people of color in a quickly diversifying state.

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

Actor	Role
<b>New Hampshire Funders Forum</b>	Philanthropic groups that pooled funding to support efforts within the state
<b>New Hampshire Charitable Foundation</b>	An important community foundation in the state that provided the funding for the consultant to coordinate census efforts across the state
<b>Granite United Way</b>	Managed mini-grant program and coordinated complete count committee efforts for the city of Manchester
<b>Office of Strategic Initiatives</b>	Served as the head of the State Complete Count Committee
<b>New Hampshire Progress Alliance</b>	Launched a separate campaign to provide grants to Latinx-, refugee-, and immigrant-serving organizations

## FUNDING FOR CENSUS OUTREACH

Overall, philanthropic funders contributed approximately \$50,000 to 2020 Census efforts.

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

Funding Source and Amount	Funding Purpose
Philanthropy: <b>\$50,000</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Hampshire Funder’s Forum, along with the New Hampshire Progress Alliance, contributed funding for 10 mini-grants to 10 organizations via the Granite United Way, New Hampshire Progress Alliance</li> </ul>
State Government: <b>\$0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not applicable</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>In-Kind Contributions: <b>Unknown</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many activities to support the census were in-kind donations of staff time, often combined with other program outreach efforts such as emergency food distribution (e.g., placing flyers within food boxes), or text messaging and phone banking to disseminate census messages while also encouraging people to vote</li> </ul>
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## DESCRIPTION OF 2020 CENSUS OUTREACH

**The local complete count committee undertook a broad messaging effort**, publicizing the 2020 Census on their website and mobilizing government agencies to get the word out.

**The centerpiece of outreach to historically undercounted populations was a mini-grant program run by the United Way.** Grants were available to engage with specific undercounted populations, including those in rural areas with limited broadband or cell phone access, college students, immigrants and refugees, young children, and older adults.

**Organizations receiving mini-grants used a wide range of engagement strategies that were heavily shaped by the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.** These included social media engagement, text campaigns, yard signs, and direct phone calls. As the COVID-19 pandemic became more severe, food distribution and socially distanced tabling events were also commonly used for engagement. There was some national media outreach that reached the state, but no federal funding supported New Hampshire-tailored media efforts, including local media outlets. In some cases, resources were also leveraged to fund a jumbotron with messages in Spanish and English in bilingual communities. Mini-grant funds even provided funds to the US Census field operations for repurposing census job recruitment yard signs into hundreds of English and Spanish census messages and to purchase 10 canopy tents for socially distanced Mobile Questionnaire Assistance sites across the state.

**Tactics were tailored to the needs of local communities.** Local community organizations serving specific populations used culturally appropriate strategies that included ensuring communications and materials could be conducted in the appropriate language. For example, community groups serving Nepalese populations used local community leaders to get the word out to their community through regionally organized webinar events. In allocating grants, the coalition tapped into the nonprofit network to identify smaller, community action-oriented organizations to conduct census messaging.

**Data informed targeting of outreach efforts.** The New Hampshire Funder’s Forum used the 2010 Census to identify areas and groups that had been historically undercounted. This included low-income communities located primarily in Nashua and Manchester, areas with limited broadband and cell phone access, areas with large populations of immigrants and refugees, and college students, children, and older adults. All mini-grants were distributed to organizations according to their ability to conduct outreach to these groups.

**Local geographic and contextual factors also played a role in shaping outreach tactics.** The northern part of the state is mostly rural; two-thirds of the population resides in the bottom half of the state. The northern part of the state contains many vacation houses, with residents coming in and out of the state according to the season. In addition, there is also limited access to broadband and cell service, further complicating outreach efforts in northern New Hampshire. At the same time, a recent influx of immigrant groups into some rural areas of the state has begun to shift regional demographics. The coalition sought to take these factors into account when deciding on the right outreach approach in different areas.

## LESSONS LEARNED

- **The strategy of using mini-grants was effective and helped get resources to local leaders to conduct effective outreach strategies.** Although the level of coordination statewide could have been better, the rapid pivot in outreach strategies required by the COVID-19 quarantine orders was made possible because local communities, government entities, and nonprofit organizations were able to innovate and transform to digital and other no- or low-contact means to reach hard-to-count populations.
- **There was a lack of unified communication strategy, which hindered efforts.** One major challenge was the lack of a unified communications strategy, because no funding was allocated for paid media. There were also challenges in tailoring messaging from the federal level to the local nuances of communities in New Hampshire. Selecting the right messengers is helpful; however, more communication infrastructure could have enhanced efforts in the state. Despite this lack of coordinated media, organizers successfully reached out to New Hampshire business and local government through earned media promotion through *NH Business Review*, *Business NH Magazine*, *Town and City* magazine (the New Hampshire Municipal Association's house organ), and NHPR (state public radio station) through the Business and Industry Association and other media and organizational publications.
- **Increased levels of resources would have allowed for more outreach.** If the state legislature had chosen to appropriate funds, outreach could have been increased.

## LOOKING FORWARD

Those involved in the New Hampshire Funder's Forum proposed that the closer relationship and engagement with nonprofits funders used for the 2020 Census may serve as a model for funders moving forward. There is also a chance that the network could be leveraged to strengthen state policy around social services and work on funding for the 2030 Census.



## DATA SOURCES

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

- New Hampshire Women's Fund
- New Hampshire Charitable Foundation