2020 CENSUS

Weeks 8 & 9: Self-Response Analysis Summary*
(May 8 – 21, 2020)

National overview

⇒ U.S. response rate (5/21): 59.8%
⇒ Increase over two weeks (since 5/7): 2.1 percentage points (slowing pace of increase)
⇒ At current rate increase, U.S. now won’t reach 2010 self-response rate of 66.5% until July

Restart of Update/Leave (U/L) Operation: Is it making a difference (yet)? On May 6, the Census Bureau began a phased restart of U/L, hand-delivering census packets to households in some rural and remote areas, all of Puerto Rico, and on many Tribal lands, as state, local, and Tribal health conditions and restrictions permit. The bureau is announcing weekly where the operation will resume the following week.

States where U/L resumed on 5/6
⇒ Majority “mail-out” tracts still had greater response rate increase than majority U/L tracts (over 2-week period)
⇒ Majority U/L tracts generally had greater increases for internet than mail/phone response

States where U/L resumed on 5/13
⇒ Majority “mail-out” tracts had slightly larger increases than majority U/L tracts (over 1-week period)
⇒ Majority U/L tracts generally had greater increases for internet than mail/phone response

Historically undercounted population groups: CUNY Mapping Service examined response rates for census tracts with pluralities of foreign-born people of color (Hispanic, Black, and Asian) from selected countries of birth, by city size and outside of cities. See the full Center for Urban Research Week 8 & Week 9 Self-Response Analysis report for findings and figures for each subgroup. Here is a high-level finding applicable to most subgroups in the analysis:
⇒ Tracts with plurality foreign-born population for the numerically largest countries of birth for Hispanics, Blacks, and Asians in the largest cities (>1 million) had the lowest response rates compared to cities of all sizes and non-city places, except for tracts with a plurality foreign-born population from the Philippines or Vietnam.

What do the lowest responding census tracts (“bottom 20%”) look like?
As more households respond to the census, the universe of census tracts with the lowest response rates (“bottom 20%”) changes. On May 21, tracts in the bottom fifth had response rates below 50.4%. Here are selected demographic/economic characteristics of census tracts that were in the “bottom 20%” based on May 21 response rates. Remember: all data reflect “2014-18 5-year ACS estimates,” not how many/what type of people or households have responded to the 2020 Census so far!

- Population in poverty: 12.5 million people (26% of population in bottom 20% of tracts)
- Black, non-Hispanic population: 12.7 million (25.1% of population in bottom 20%)
- Hispanic population: 15.1 million (30% of population in bottom 20%)
- White, non-Hispanic population: 18.7 million (37.1% in bottom 20%)
- Households with no internet: 4.4 million (24.1% of households in bottom 20%)
- Limited English Proficiency households: 1.7 million (9.2% of households in bottom 20%)

What about census tracts in the “top 20%” of response rates? Response rates of 73.3% or higher, plus ...
- Fewer people in poverty and foreign-born, and Limited English Proficiency households, than in “bottom 20%” tracts
- 77% fewer Blacks & 67% fewer Hispanics, but almost 3x as many non-Hispanic Whites, than in “bottom 20%” tracts
- Half as many households with no internet than in “bottom 20%” tracts

⇒ For a searchable map of response rates & more, please visit www.censushardtocountmaps2020.us

*Note: Tract-, county-, and city-level analyses represent average percentages. Unless otherwise noted, figures are based on response rates reported on May 21, 2020.

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