

Texas Counts Pooled Fund

UPDATE

Friends,

We always knew that the 2020 Census in Texas would be a marathon – a long-haul challenge that would test our communities like few before. Yet, even in the face of COVID-19, we see our neighbors stepping forward to build our state's future together.

With the Federal government's extension on the Census timeline, we have almost six months of enumeration left and an even better chance to reach a complete and accurate count. As our partners in this vital work, we want to share with you the milestones we've reached to make Texas count in 2020.

COVID-19 *and the* TEXAS COUNTS POOLED FUND GRANTEES

As the Texas Counts Pooled Fund began disbursing awards, most of our grantees were geared up and motivated to engage their communities. Many involved person-to-person contact and large events to drum up excitement and spread the word about the importance of the 2020 Census. In light of COVID-19, this direct outreach has become impossible and runs contrary to public health guidance. To support our grantees, we notified grant recipients on March 17th that we supported them making the programmatic and operational changes necessary to their grant scope, without penalization, to ensure the health and well-being of their staff and communities. We also offered support and ideas to help them pivot their census engagement activities.

Extended CENSUS TIMELINE

In mid-April, the US Census Bureau announced they would be extending the census timeline from July 31st until the end of October and they halted the opening of some field offices, delayed door to door enumerators and the Update Leave outreach. Below are the updated timelines for these initiatives:

- Field Operations: Resume June 1, 2020
- Self-Response Phase Revised: March 12-October 31
- Group Quarters E-Response Enumeration Revised: April 2 - September 3
- Update Leave Revised: June 13 - July 9
- Nonresponse Follow-up (NRFU) Revised: August 11 - October 31

In response to these updates by the Bureau, we have **extended the grant period** for all projects under the Texas Counts Pooled Fund to **October 31st**, with the reporting deadline extended to November 30th. Below are a couple of highlights of work undertaken by our grantees.

Our grantees have responded with appreciation for these measures to help increase their likelihood of promoting participation in the census. Some shared all the great work they have done to date, here are a couple of highlights!

CASE STUDIES *and* SUCCESS STORIES



Austin Voices and Education for Youth (AVEY) is a non-profit that mobilizes the community to improve public education and expand opportunities for students and families by building successful schools and strong neighborhoods through partnership with community leaders, young people, parents, and educators. In partnership with the Austin Complete Count Committee, AVEY had originally planned to host community events and set up multiple mobile kiosks with partners across Austin to help a number of causes, including: people fill out their census online. In light of COVID-19, they cancelled 2 events that would have reached 1,000 people. But their new outreach strategy has helped them reach more than their original target.

- o Food Pantry distribution including census material: reaching 1,600 families this month
- o Phone banks: their Family Resource Center social workers have been calling all their case-managed families and helping to walk them through the census by phone. They are also coordinating with teachers and school staff in north Austin to communicate the importance of the census directly through the school.
- o Virtual meetings with schools, non-profits and neighborhood partners in three areas of north Austin to continue to coordinate and encourage census efforts.
- o Additional efforts to include coordinating with schools to include posters and messaging at targeted apartment complexes promoting the census. When deemed safe, they will follow up with block leaders trained on census to visit these apartment complex's for in person assistance.

ARISE Adelante is a non-profit in the Rio Grande Valley that promotes the personal development and empowerment of the immigrant community through educational programs that strengthen their organized community and civic participation. Originally, ARISE had planned door-to-door canvassing, Colonia census engagement activities and school events. As a result of COVID-19, their canvassers have taken to the phones to engage their community in one on one interviews to walk participants through the Census as well as some of the activities highlighted below. Already, ARISE has reached 5,000 people in their community through a variety of activities:

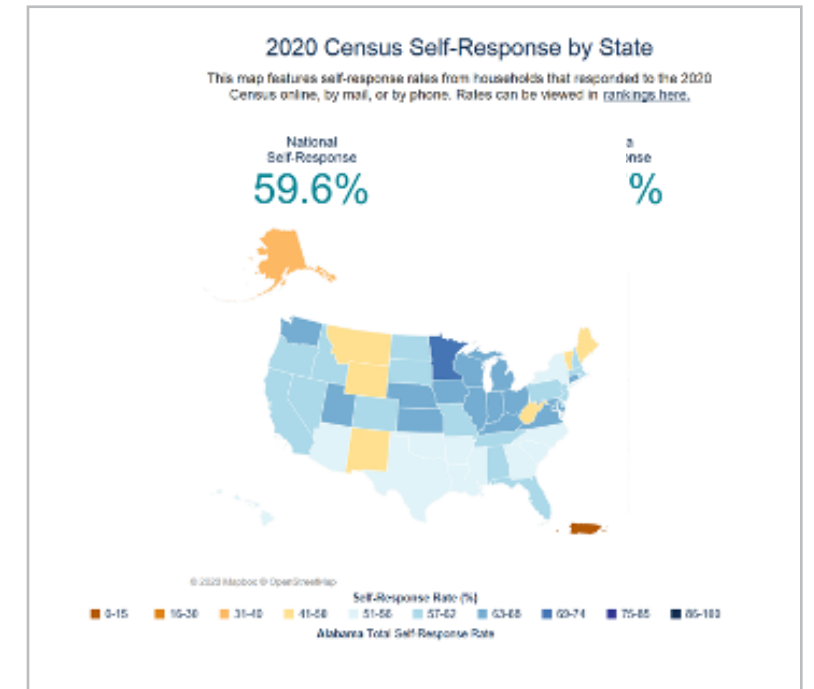
- o Driving to multiple remote Colonias with mobile billboards and pre-recorded announcements with census information and call center contact info. They plan to continue these efforts over the summer, and begin to engage in person when deemed safe.
- o Providing census material with distribution of school lunches.
- o Multiple Spanish radio advertisements and interviews.
- o Social Media Image Challenges with prizes that help local businesses affected by COVID-19.



CENSUS RESPONSE RATES *as of 5/15/20*

The numbers are rolling in and to date: 54.2% of Texans have self-responded to the census, compared to 59.6% for the total country. Texas ranks 40th out of all states for their response rates, with Minnesota coming in 1st (at 69.7%) and New Mexico last (at 47.1%).

Suburbs are seeing some of the higher response rates, such as Rockwall County (Dallas) and Fort Bend County (Houston) which have surpassed 65% census participation. Amarillo, San Angelo, Lubbock, and El Paso also have higher response rates than the state. The Texas city with the highest response rate, Mountain City, ranks 79th among cities nationwide with an 85.9% response rate.

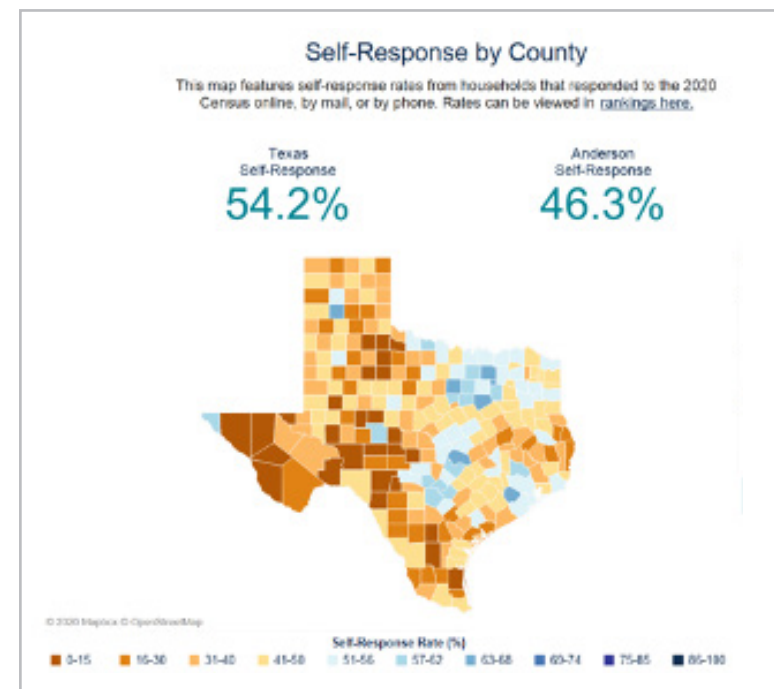


Source: US Census Bureau, 2020 Census Self-Response by State

Lower response rates in Texas can be attributed to several characteristics that make our state hard-to-count (HTC) – namely, low-income neighborhoods where individuals are difficult to reliably locate and contact and a lack of broadband access in both urban and rural areas. Other attributing factors include:

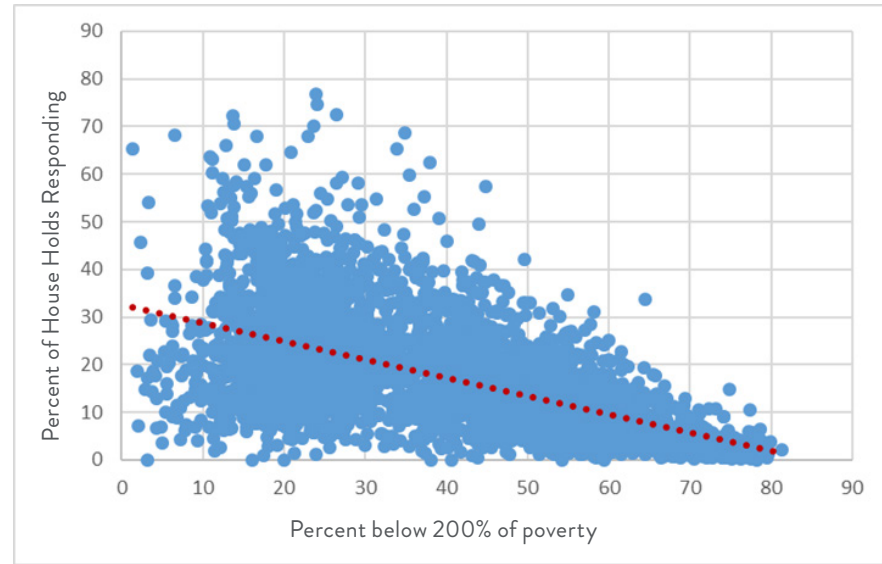
- o A high rate of “Update Leave” households
- o Housing units that do not have mail delivered to the physical location
- o Housing units where the mail delivery information for the housing unit cannot be verified, have experienced lower response rates.

As part of the Census Bureau’s operational plan, the “Update Leave” follow-up has been postponed until mid-June. Until then, these households will not receive any communication regarding the census. Therefore, counties with higher populations of Update Leave will have lower census participation until the Census Bureau begins that portion of their operational plan. Charts below illustrate the correlation between select HTC characteristics and response rates in Texas.

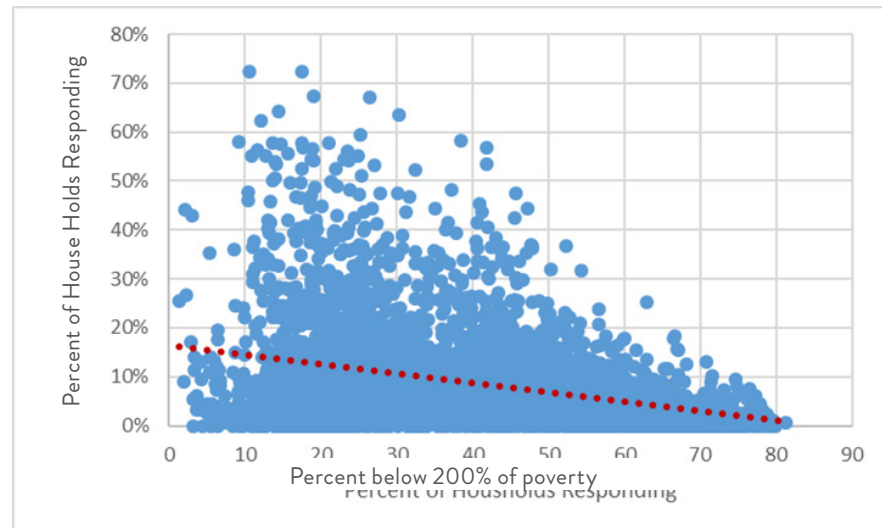


Source: US Census Bureau, 2020 Census Self-Response by State

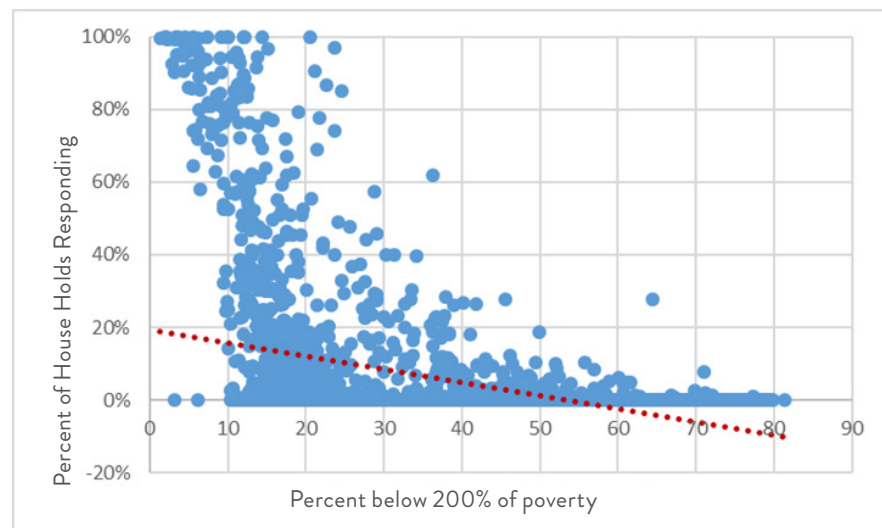
Poverty and percent of house holds responding:



Percent/update leave and percent of house holds responding:



Percent broadband internet and percent of house holds responding:



Data Source: Texas Demographic Center

Regional CENSUS REPOSENSE RATES

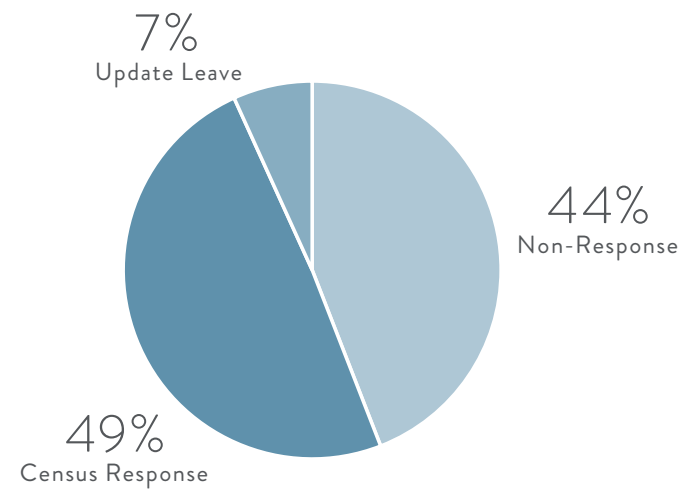
Regionally, North Texas leads census participation across the state with a response rate of 56%. By region, areas with higher HTC populations experience lower participation. Some of the lowest response rates are in rural West and South Texas, where some counties have only 10-15% participation in the census to-date.

Data Source: [Census 2020 Response Rates](#) & [City University of New York Graduate Center, Census 2020 Hard to Count Map](#)

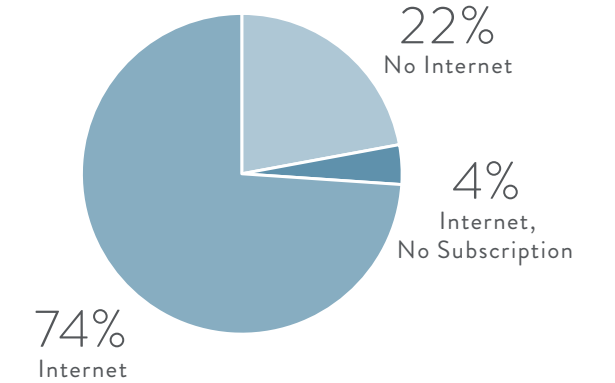
WEST TEXAS

TOTAL EST. POPULATION: 1,126,324

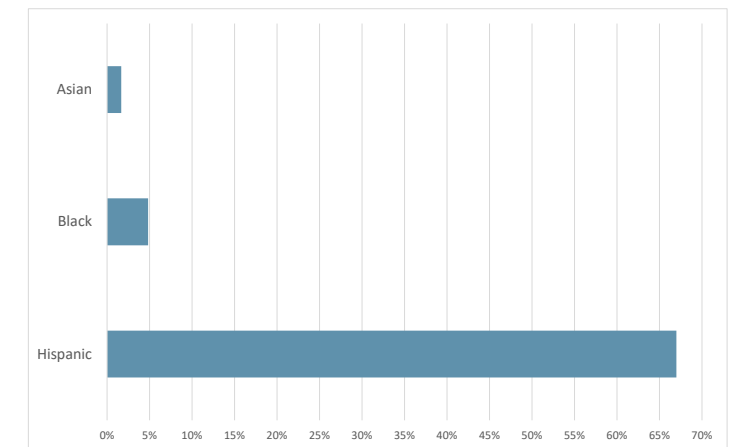
CENSUS RESPONSE RATE: 49%



INTERNET AVAILABILITY



% PEOPLE OF COLOR



COUNTIES WITH HIGHEST RESPONSE RATES

Tom Green*	57.9%
El Paso**	55.0%
Midland	48.7%
Andrews	47.7%
Dawson	45.8%

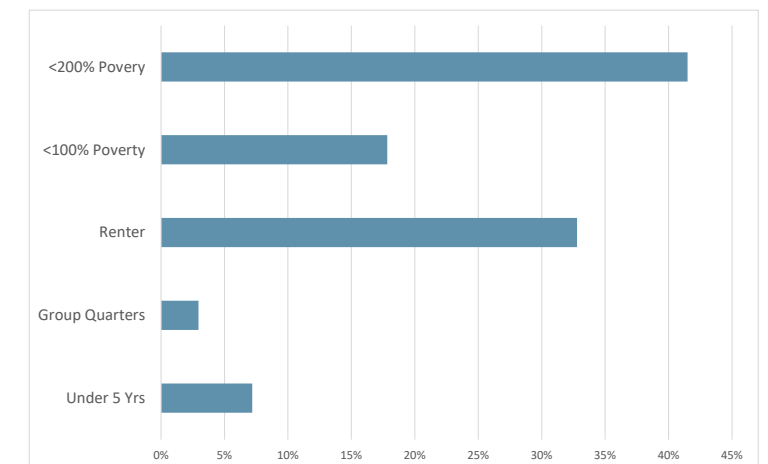
COUNTIES WITH LOWEST RESPONSE RATES

Coke	13.9%
Concho	11.0%
Irion, Kimble, Martin, Hudspeth	9-15%
Upton	9.5%
Presidio	6.0%

* highest population

** largest population

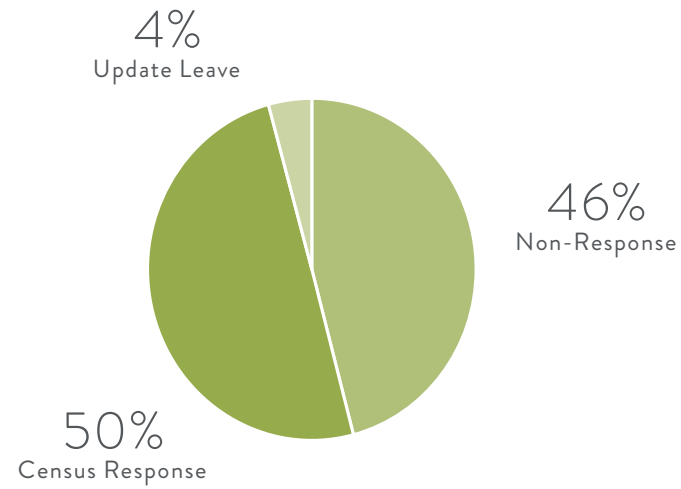
SELECT HTC CHARACTERISTICS



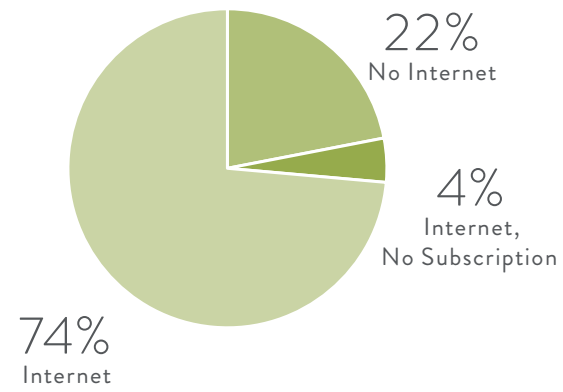
SOUTH TEXAS - RGV

TOTAL EST. POPULATION: 3,466,086

CENSUS RESPONSE RATE: 50%



INTERNET AVAILABILITY



HIDALGO/WILLACY/STARR/CAMERON

% PEOPLE OF COLOR

Hispanic: 92%
Asian: 1%
Black: 0%
American: 0%
Native Hawaiian: 0%

SELECT HTC CHARACTERISTICS

Under 5 Years: 9%
Group Quarters: 1%
Renter: 30%
<100% Poverty: 35%
<200% Poverty: 63%

WEBB/JIM HOGG/MAVERICK/DIMMIT

% PEOPLE OF COLOR

Hispanic: 96%
Asian: 1%
Black: 0%
American: 0%
Native Hawaiian: 0%

SELECT HTC CHARACTERISTICS

Under 5 Years: 9%
Group Quarters: 1%
Renter: 35%
<100% Poverty: 31%
<200% Poverty: 58%

JIM WELLS/KLEBURG/NUECES

% PEOPLE OF COLOR

Hispanic: 66%
Asian: 2%
Black: 4%
American: 1%
Native Hawaiian: 0%

SELECT HTC CHARACTERISTICS

Under 5 Years: 7%
Group Quarters: 1%
Renter: 36%
<100% Poverty: 16%
<200% Poverty: 37%

COUNTIES WITH HIGHEST RESPONSE RATES

Gillespie*	61.2%
Comal	60.0%
Bexar**	56.3%
Ken	54.6%
Victoria	53.4%

COUNTIES WITH LOWEST RESPONSE RATES

Zavala	26.1%
Dimmit	23.0%
Live Oak	16.9%
Zapata	15.8%
Duval	11.7%

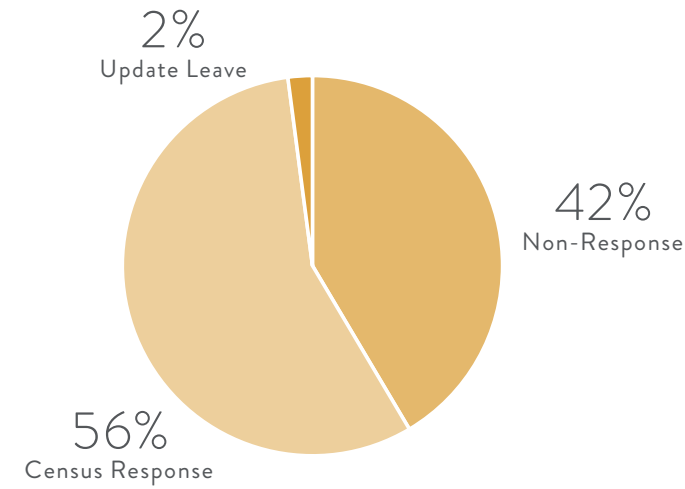
* highest population

** largest population

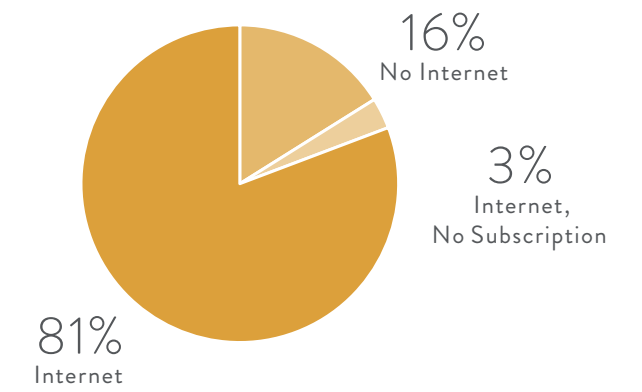
NORTH TEXAS

TOTAL EST. POPULATION: 5,868,206

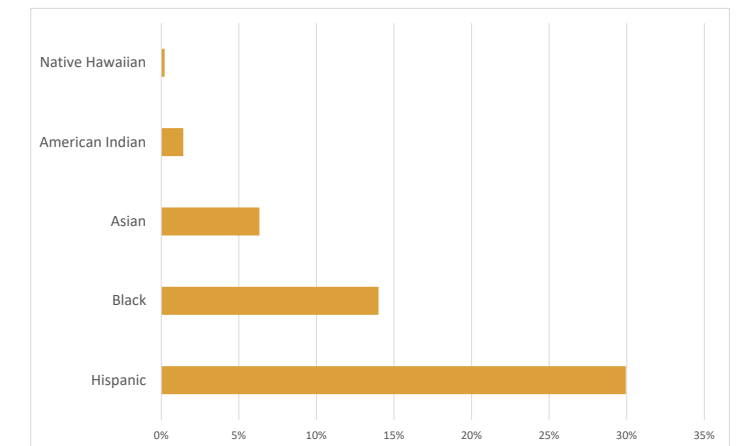
CENSUS RESPONSE RATE: 56%



INTERNET AVAILABILITY



% PEOPLE OF COLOR



COUNTIES WITH HIGHEST RESPONSE RATES

Rockwall*	65.2%
Collin	64.3%
Randall	62.5%
Ellis	62.1%
Parker	62.0%
Tarrant**	59.5%
Dallas**	54.0%

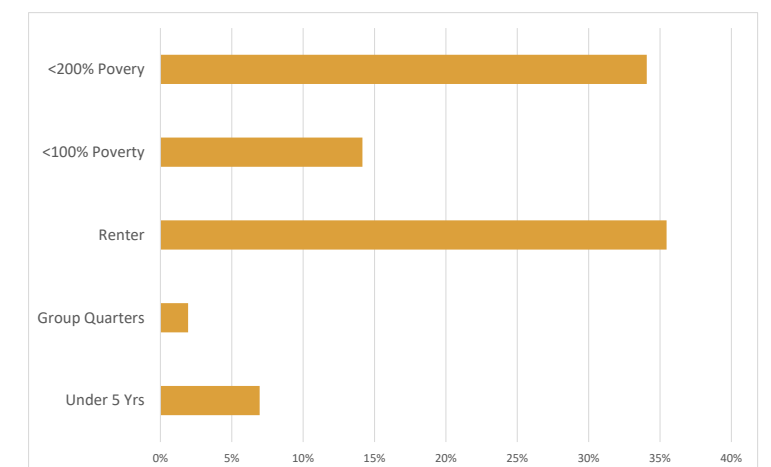
COUNTIES WITH LOWEST RESPONSE RATES

Coleman	36.3%
Cochran	31.7%
Crosby	29.4%
Castro	29.1%
Liscomb	26.1%

* highest population

** largest population

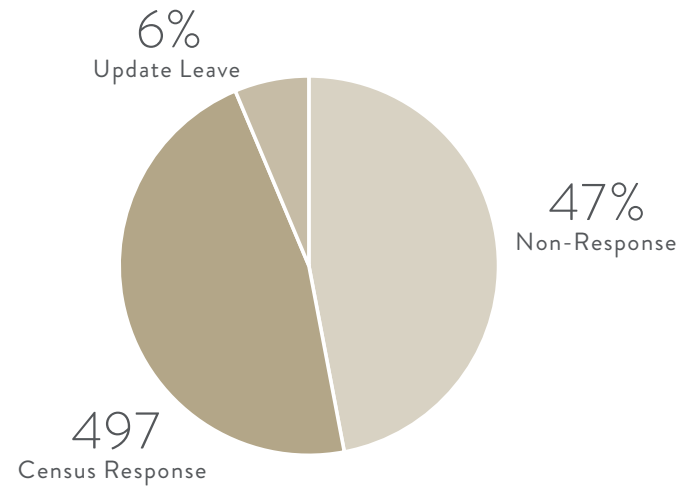
SELECT HTC CHARACTERISTICS



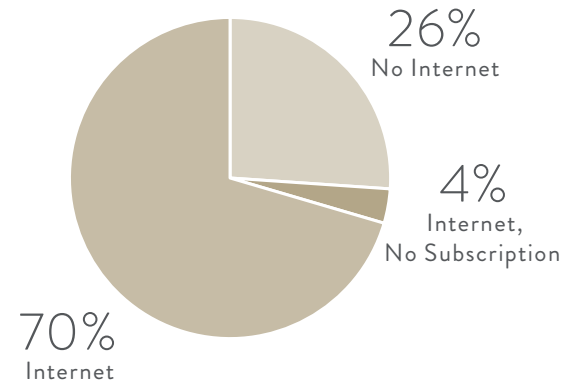
EAST TEXAS

TOTAL EST. POPULATION: 1,283,008

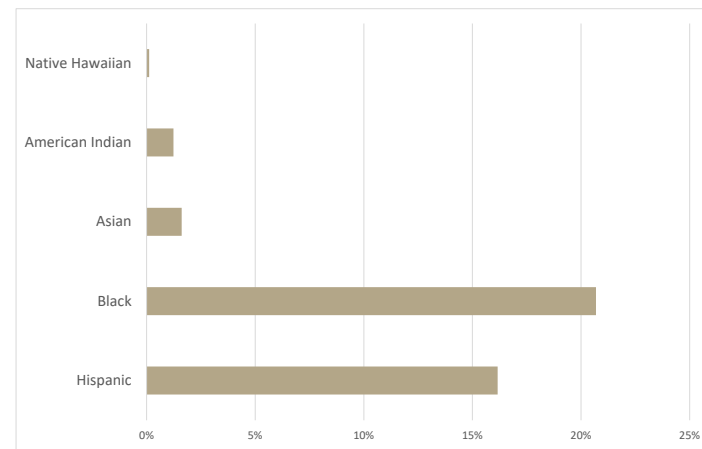
CENSUS RESPONSE RATE: 47%



INTERNET AVAILABILITY



% PEOPLE OF COLOR



COUNTIES WITH HIGHEST RESPONSE RATES

Smith*	55.0%
Gregg	54.0%
Bowie	53.1%
Lamar	52.6%
Jefferson**	50.6%

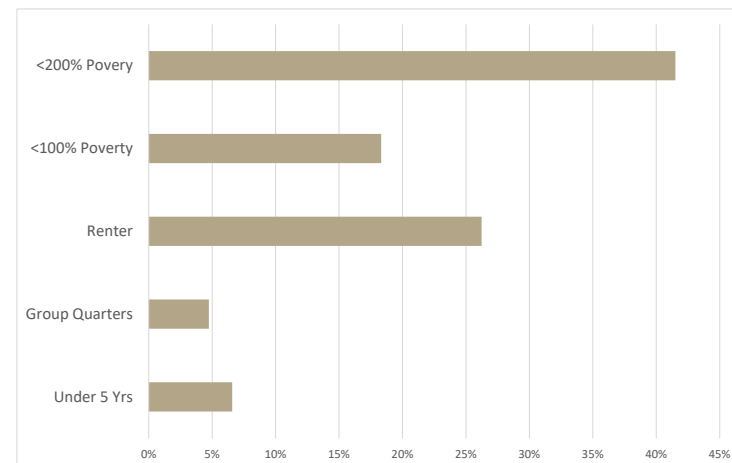
COUNTIES WITH LOWEST RESPONSE RATES

Jasper	34.2%
Trinity	29.2%
Tyler	28.0%
Newton	27.0%
Sabine	22.0%

* highest population

** largest population

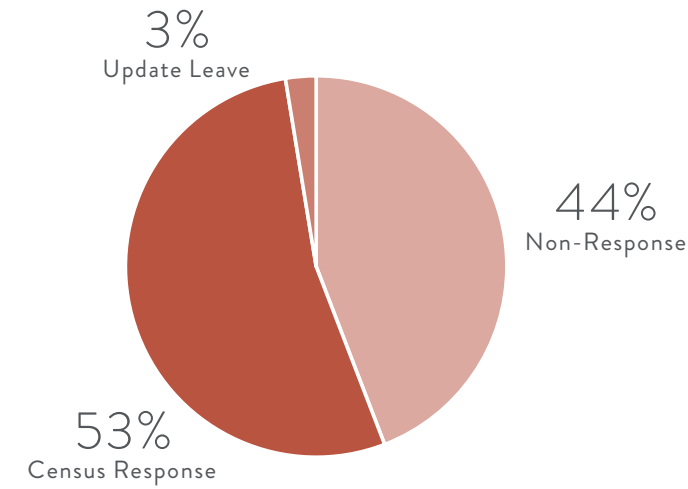
SELECT HTC CHARACTERISTICS



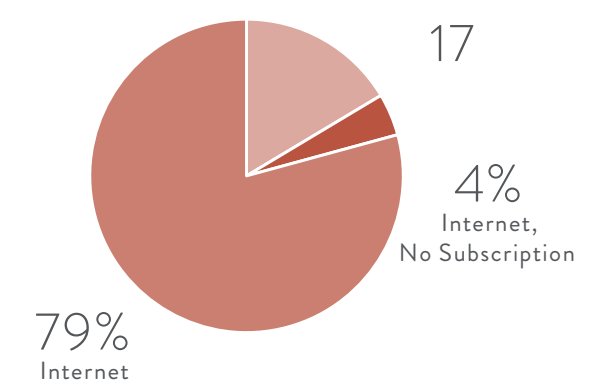
CENTRAL TEXAS

TOTAL EST. POPULATION: 1,416,569

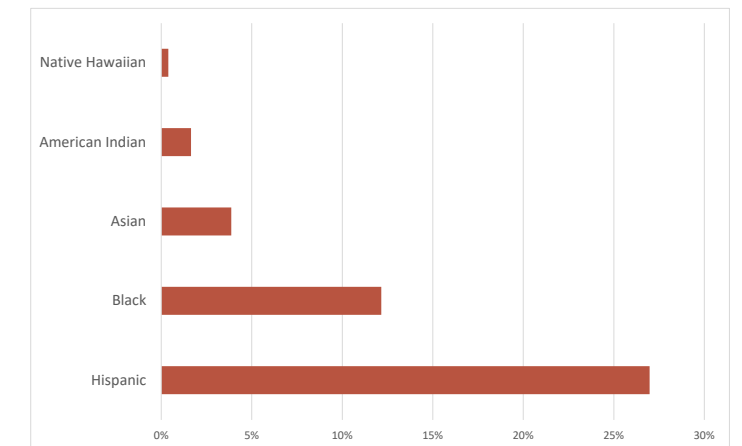
CENSUS RESPONSE RATE: 53%



INTERNET AVAILABILITY



% PEOPLE OF COLOR



COUNTIES WITH HIGHEST RESPONSE RATES

Williamson*	57.9%
Travis**	55%
Bell	54.4%
Lampasas	54.3%
McLennon	54.1%

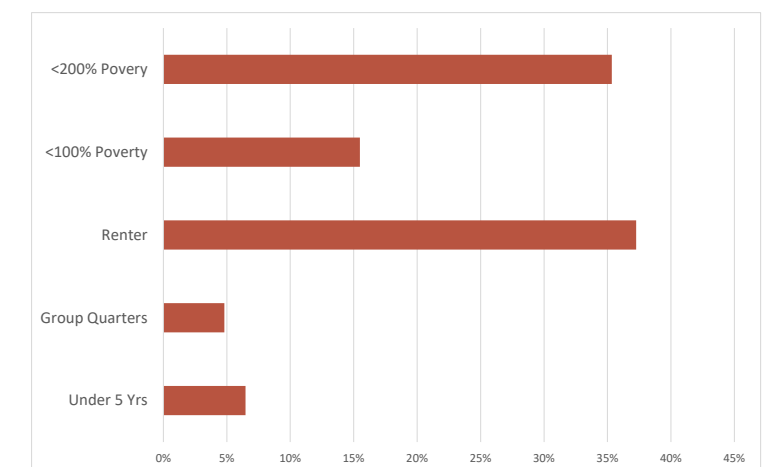
COUNTIES WITH LOWEST RESPONSE RATES

Bosque	41.0%
Grimes	40.0%
Llano	38.5%
Burleson	36.8%
Leon	21.0%

* highest population

** largest population

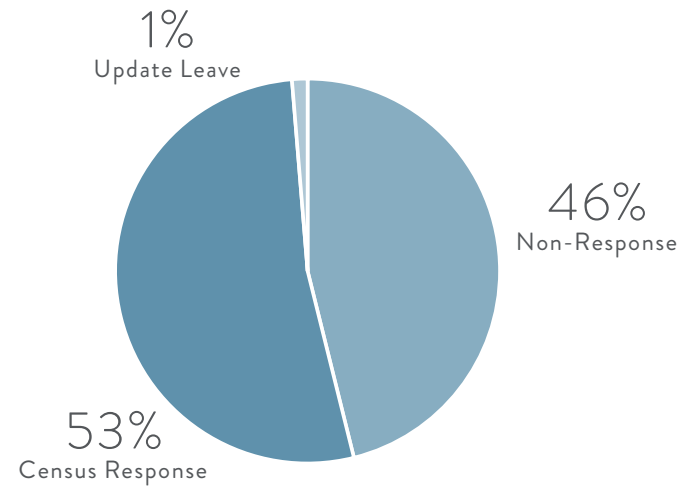
SELECT HTC CHARACTERISTICS



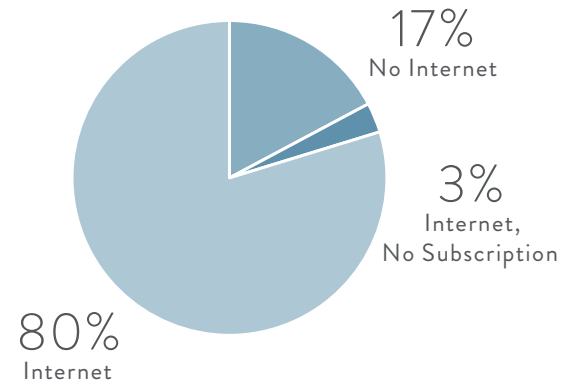
GULF COAST

TOTAL EST. POPULATION: 3,083,927

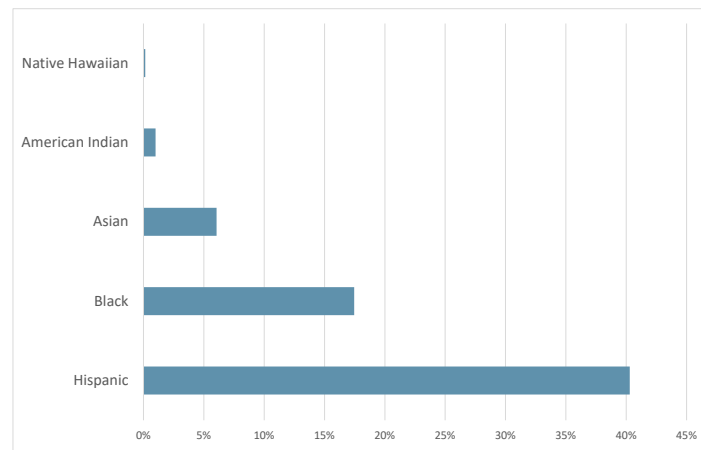
CENSUS RESPONSE RATE: 53%



INTERNET AVAILABILITY



% PEOPLE OF COLOR



COUNTIES WITH HIGHEST RESPONSE RATES

Fort Bend*	65.0%
Montgomery	57.0%
Brazoria	54.0%
Harris	52.0%
Galveston**	51.1%

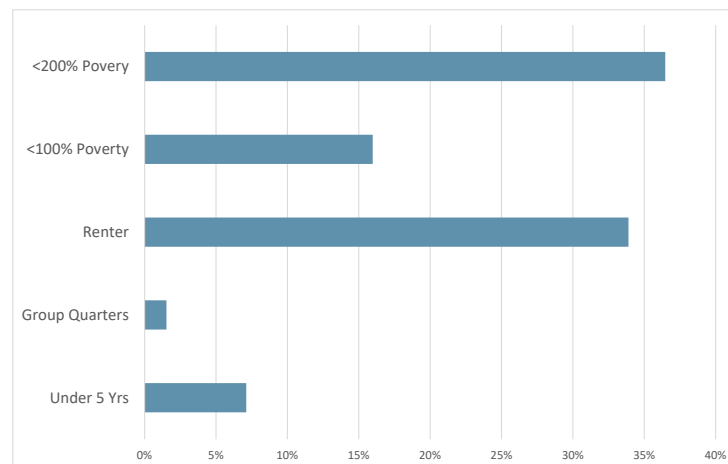
COUNTIES WITH LOWEST RESPONSE RATES

Chambers	43.9%
Waller	43.9%
Colorado	43.5%
Walker	39.0%
Matagorda	30.7%

* highest population

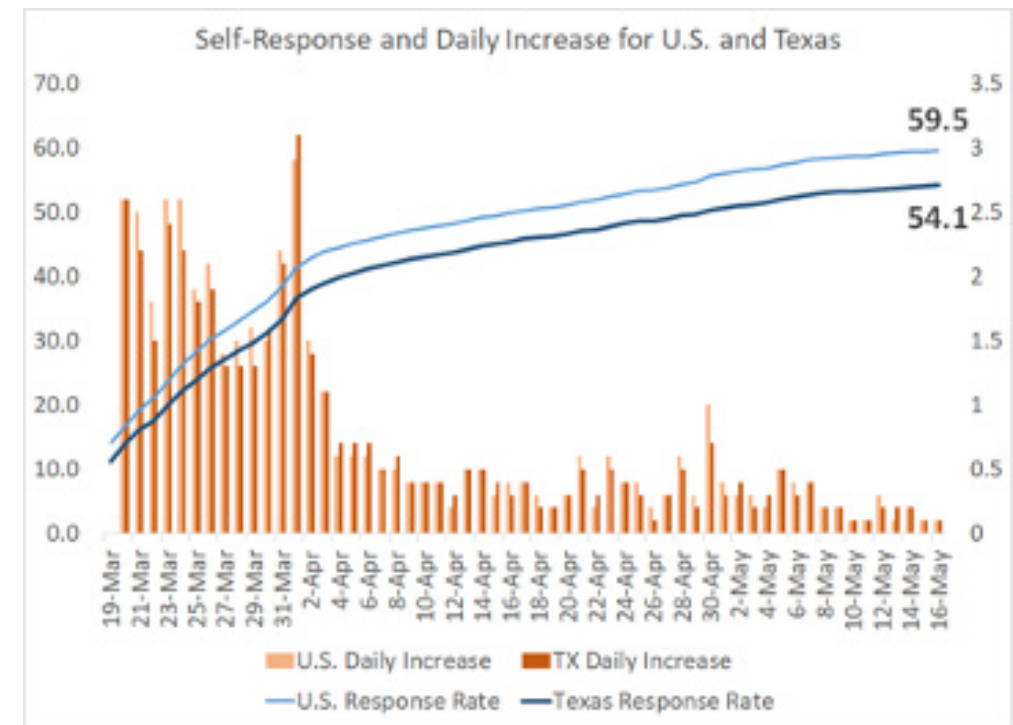
** largest population

SELECT HTC CHARACTERISTICS



Next STEPS

Since Census Day (April 1st), response rates have dropped significantly from 3% daily growth in census reporting to 0.5% daily growth.



Data Source: [Census 2020 Response Rates](#)

We hope to see some of these numbers climb as the Census Bureau begins their door-to-door enumeration and outreach to Update Leave. The Texas Counts Pooled Fund plans to offer continued support to our grantees and our partners across the state to keep these numbers rising. In the coming weeks, we will be diving more deeply into the response rates and connecting with our partners in the areas with the lowest census participation and developing some plans for support.

VIRTUAL CENSUS ROAD TRIP, TEXAS COUNTS: June 15th - 19th



In addition to focused support to our grantees, we are happy to announce that we will be supporting Texas Counts and our partners at the Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPPP) with a Virtual Census Road Trip across Texas to drum up support and excitement for the census.

They will highlight the work of grassroots partners, city and county leaders, and learn about why Texas Counts from an assortment of regional "tour guides," including librarians and park rangers. Through a variety of activities, their goal will be to empower local census advocates in regions across Texas to get out the count. Please join us and help spread the word to your GOTC colleagues: you can sign-up today at txcounts.me/hop-in.

THANK YOU *for being our partners in* *supporting the* 2020 CENSUS *in* TEXAS

We continue to seek support for census activities, and any additional funds allocated towards the Texas Counts Pooled Fund will be focused on supporting the lowest performing counties in the state.



If you have any questions, as always, please feel free to reach out:

Angela Broyles
abroyles@cftexas.org
