Mapping Hard to Count Communities with **HTC 2020** for a Fair and Accurate Census

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Every 10 years, here’s how the Census Bureau counts us:

1. Self-Response
   - Census Bureau mails information about the decennial questionnaire to almost all households (starting in March 2020, continuing through April).
   - For 2020, some households will be mailed the actual questionnaire, most households will be mailed a website link to fill out the form online, & everyone will have the opportunity to mail in the form or call-in their responses.  

   *The most accurate & complete population data is submitted during this phase.*

2. Non-Response Follow Up
   - The Census Bureau hires 100s of thousands of people to go door-to-door to count every household that didn’t self-respond (after April 1, 2020).
   - Much more expensive than the self-response phase ($2 BILLION in 2010).
   - During this phase, the risk is greatest that people will be missed or counted inaccurately.
   - Areas with large shares of households that don’t self-respond are therefore “hard to count”. Almost every community will have some households that don’t self-respond. But in many communities 25% or more of their households didn’t mail in their forms and needed to be counted in person. *We’ve mapped these communities to help ensure a fair and accurate 2020 Census.*
That’s why we highlight areas as “Hard to Count” – in orange to red – where a quarter or more households did not mail back their census forms in 2010.
Hard to count factors
- 2010 mail return rate
- Low response score

• 2020-specific issues: internet access; concerns about citizenship Q
• Recent population characteristics

In 2010, 75.8% of the county's households mailed back their 2010 census questionnaire, requiring more costly and difficult in-person follow up to enumerate the remaining 24.2%.

(IMPORTANT CLARIFICATION: This doesn't mean that only 75.8% of Kern County's population was counted in 2010. Rather, it represents the percent of households that mailed back their census forms, or "self responded." The Census Bureau had to count the remaining 24.2% of households in person during the Nonresponse Follow-up operation. But there is a greater risk that some people were missed or counted incorrectly during this follow-up.)

Based on the latest census estimates, approx. 30% of Kern County's current population (or 266,538 people) lives in hard-to-count neighborhoods, shaded in light orange-to-dark red on the map. (These are census tracts where almost a quarter or more households did not mail back their census questionnaires in 2010.) Without higher self-response, more households in these and other neighborhoods in the state are at risk of being missed in the 2020 census.

Another 4,830 people (~0.5% of Kern County's current population) live in tracts that did not receive a census questionnaire by mail in 2010 because these areas did not have traditional addresses, had large numbers of seasonally vacant housing, or were otherwise rural or sparsely populated. In the 2010 Census, the net undercount in these tracts was nearly 8%, according to the Census Bureau. Therefore, these areas also may be hard to count in 2020.
Hard-to-count factors

- **2010 mail return rate:** definitive count of households that self-responded in last census; low MRR means many households had to be counted in-person.

- **Low response score:** uses some recent and some older (2010) population data to predict areas where large share of households will not self-respond.

- **Updated concerns in 2020:** lack of home internet access (and potential for libraries to help by providing wifi access).
  - Census Bureau contact strategies that may help overcome internet access: “Internet Choice” as well as “Internet First” mailings.

- **Recent population estimates:** populations at risk of being undercounted for various reasons.
Will this tract be hard-to-count in 2020? (2010 mail return rate; recently added LRS)

**Census Self-Response**

1) In 2010, only 70.9% of the tract's households mailed back their 2010 census questionnaire, requiring more costly and difficult in-person follow up to count the remaining 29.1%. This tract is one of the hardest to count in the country.

2) Another measure of census self-response is the Census Bureau’s low response score (LRS). The LRS for this tract is 34.4, which means 65.6% of this tract's households are projected to fill out the 2020 Census questionnaire on their own. (This is based on a statistical model; the actual 2020 self-response rate may be different.)

**REMEMBER:** Neither of these self-response statistics tell the whole story about whether your community will be hard-to-count in 2020. View other information about this tract with the “Census Details” bar above for a more detailed picture of your neighborhood. And be sure to combine your local knowledge of your neighborhood with these data points when you’re planning your Get Out the Count efforts.

(Tract FIPS code: 06029002200)
Hard-to-count factors

- **2010 mail return rate**: definitive count of households that self-responded in last census; low MRR means many households had to be counted in-person

- **Low response score**: uses some recent and some older (2010) population data to predict areas where large share of households will not self-respond.

- **Updated concerns in 2020**: lack of home internet access (and potential for libraries to help by providing wifi access).
  - Census Bureau contact strategies that may help overcome internet access: “Internet Choice” as well as “Internet First” mailings

- **Recent population estimates**: populations at risk of being undercounted for various reasons.
Internet access? (2020 Census will be digital)

During 2014-18, 40.1% of this tract’s households had either no home internet subscription or dial-up only, according to the latest American Community Survey estimates. 17.1% of households had a cellular data plan only (which may be costly to use for non-essential services).

In 2020 for the first time, the Census Bureau will be urging most households to submit their census responses online. See this FAQ about technology issues & different ways to participate in the 2020 Census.

Census supporters can use the HTC map to identify areas where households may have difficulty filling out the 2020 census questionnaire online. Click here to display the internet access slider. In tracts where a large share of households have no internet subscription, public libraries and others may be able to provide online access for households with no internet access.

However, all households receiving census materials in the mail or dropped off at their door have the option of submitting responses by phone or using a paper questionnaire. In areas with poor internet access, census supporters can emphasize the availability of these other two response methods.

Finally, tracts with limited internet access represent areas where people will need help accessing the internet to apply for census jobs.
Hard-to-count factors

• **2010 mail return rate**: definitive count of households that self-responded in last census; low MRR means many households had to be counted in-person

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  – Census Bureau contact strategies that may help overcome internet access: “Internet Choice” as well as “Internet First” mailings

• **Recent population estimates**: populations at risk of being undercounted for various reasons.
Census Bureau Contact Strategies

When the toggle below is On, the map shows how each community will be contacted by the Census Bureau in 2020. When it's off, the map shows HTC tracts across the country.

- **2020 Census Initial Contact**
  - Internet First mailing (English)
  - Internet First mailing (bilingual)
  - Internet Choice mailing (English)
  - Internet Choice mailing (bilingual)
  - Hand-delivered packet (Update/Leave)
  - Counted in-person (Update/Enumerate)
  - Counted in-person (Remote Alaska)

The mailing for households in this tract is called Internet Choice because it will include a paper version of the census questionnaire, as well as online instructions and a unique ID for online response.

Also, the paper questionnaire and online instructions will be bilingual in Spanish & English, because at least 20 percent of this tract's households are recognized as needing "Spanish assistance" — defined as at least one household member aged 15 or older who speaks Spanish and does not speak English "very well" based on the 2013–2017 American Community Survey (ACS).

The paper form will be included because the latest American Community Survey (ACS) shows that this tract had a low self-response rate and either a higher population of people age 65 or more, low internet subscribership rates, or low internet response during the latest ACS.

The packet also will include a Language Assistance insert with instructions in English plus 12 other languages for calling a phone assistance line with questions or to provide your responses right over the phone.
Hard-to-count factors

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  - Census Bureau contact strategies that may help overcome internet access: “Internet Choice” as well as “Internet First” mailings.

- **Recent population estimates**: populations at risk of being undercounted for various reasons.
Populations at Risk of Being Undercounted

Some populations historically have been, or are at risk of being, missed in the census at disproportionately high rates. These include (based on 2014-18 estimates):

- ~71% of the tract is Hispanic (regardless of race)
- ~26% of the tract reported their race as Black (either alone or in combination with other races)
- ~1% of the tract reported their race as Asian (either alone or in combination with other races)
- ~1% of the tract reported their race as American Indian or Alaska Native (either alone or in combination with other races)
- ~2% of the tract reported their race as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (either alone or in combination with other races)

(Percentages may not total 100%.)

Note: see the Census Bureau's analysis of net undercount rates for race and Hispanic origin categories, DDSD 2010 CENSUS COVERAGE MEASUREMENT MEMORANDUM SERIES #2010-G-01. [PDF]

The following links provide fact sheets and tables regarding the risk of undercount for people of color:

- Hispanic / Latino
- Asian / Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander
- Black / African American

The Census Bureau will invite households in Tract 22 to participate in the 2020 Census by:
- Mailing a letter to 100% of the tract’s housing units, beginning March 2020.

Click/tap below for more info on factors affecting Tract 22's participation in the 2020 Census:

CENSUS DETAILS FOR TRACT 22

Populations at Risk of Being Undercounted
Some populations historically have been, or are at risk of being, missed in the census at disproportionately high rates. These include (based on 2014-18 estimates):

LOW-INCOME POPULATIONS:
- ~51% of the tract is in poverty (an estimated 2,567 people have incomes below the poverty level).
- Another 33% of the population is near poverty (an estimated 1,657 people have incomes between 100 and 200% of the poverty level).

NB: These statistics apply to the population for whom poverty status has been determined.

Note: see Will You Count? Households with Low Incomes in the 2020 Census [PDF].


Hardest to Count (HTC) Tracts in the Nation
Tracts with 2010 mail return rates of 73% or less (in the bottom 20 percent of return rates nationwide) are shaded on the map:
- 0 - 60% mail return rate
- 60 - 65%
- 65 - 70%
- 70 - 73%
- Above 73% (no HTC tracts)

Update/Enumerate tracts in 2010: hard-to-count but no mail return rates

2020 Census Initial Contact

Libraries

MORE MAP FEATURES

(Tract FIPS code: 06029002200)
Populations at Risk of Being Undercounted

Some populations historically have been, or are at risk of being, missed in the census at disproportionately high rates. These include (based on 2014-18 estimates):

- ~26% of the tract’s households are limited English speaking households (an estimated 358 households).

Of these limited English speaking households:
- 100% speak Spanish (an estimated 358 Spanish-speaking households).

According to the Census Bureau, a limited English speaking household is one in which no member 14 years old or over speaks only English, or speaks a non-English language and speaks English ‘very well.’ In other words, all members 14 years old and over have at least some difficulty with English.

Also according to the Bureau, the household language assigned to the housing unit is the non-English language spoken by the first person with a non-English language. This assignment scheme ranks household members in the following order: householder, spouse, parent, sibling, child, grandchild, other relative, stepchild, unmarried partner, housemate or roommate, and other nonrelatives.

Putting it all together

*Advanced Tract Search*

- Select all tracts within a county based on any of the population and housing data at the HTC map
- Show those selected tracts on the map and download the data just for those tracts.

Examples:

- Tracts in Kern County where *kids under 5 make up 10%* or more of the population.
- Tracts in Kern where the *Hispanic population is greater than 30%* -- *and* -- *30% or more households have no home internet subscription.*
www.CensusHardToCountMaps2020.us

Advanced search

Search for tracts in counties:
Kern County, California

that meet the following criteria from the 2014-2018 American Community Survey
(except criteria with an *, these are from the 2013-17 ACS):
- % of Kids under 5 share of total population greater than 10

38 selected tracts (check box to highlight on map)

Tract IDs (click/tap each one to zoom to the tract on the map):
3, 4, 5.03, 5.04, 5.05, 6, 8, 9.04, 9.07, 11, 11.02, 11.03, 12.02, 13, 14, 15, 19.02, 20, 21, 22, 23.02, 24, 28.19, 29, 30, 31.13, 31.22, 35, 36, 45, 47.02, 48, 49.01, 50.03, 57, 59, 62.01, 62.02, 63.03, 63.04

rates of 73% or less (in the bottom 20 percent of return rates nationwide) are shaded on the map:
- 0 - 60% mail return rate
- 60 - 65%
- 65 - 70%
- 70 - 73%
- above 73% (no HTC tracts)

Update/Enumerate tracts in 2010, hard-to-count but no mail return rates

Selected tracts in Kern County

MORE MAP FEATURES
www.CensusHardToCountMaps2020.us

Download the data
Using the HTC 2020 map & data to prioritize Get Out the Count outreach strategies

Low mail return rates in 2010
- Emphasize importance of self-response

People of color
- Political representation, historic undercounts

Limited internet connectivity
- Nearby public libraries?

Recent immigrants
- Emphasize importance of self-response (no need to talk with Census enumerator)
- Importance of being counted despite worrisome political climate

Young children
- 2.2 million missed nationwide in 2010 census

Trusted voices / trusted partners!
Going beyond the online map:

- **Download Excel list of tracts with detailed population estimates** from the latest American Community Survey – state-by-state or nationwide.

- **Compare tract data to a PDF map of your county/borough** with tracts labeled on the map.

- **Link the Excel data to a shapefile of tracts** for additional spatial analysis & outreach planning.

- **Print your map** – zoom to any location on the map and create a printable version – send directly to your printer or save as a PDF.

- **Share your map** – zoom to any location on the map and create a shareable and embeddable link specific to that view of the map.
Download Excel list of tracts with detailed population estimates

Tract 40 in Kern County, CA

- Tract data [in Excel format]
- Tract boundary file [a shapefile for GIS]
- Map of Kern County; tracts on this PDF map are labeled by ID so you can compare with the Excel tract list

Based on the latest census estimates (for 2014-2018), 7,949 people live in 2,019 households in this tract, and 727 people live in group quarters. (Total population = 8,676.)

The Census Bureau will invite households in...
Compare tract data to a PDF map of your county

HARD-TO-COUNT CENSUS TRACTS IN KERN COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

For more details and additional information, please visit: https://www.CensusHardtoCountMaps2020.us
Detailed descriptions & data sources – helping to make the data intuitive

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<td>Tract code that matches map tract labels</td>
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<td>1 if tract was included in update/enumerate component of 2010 census - i.e. hard to count</td>
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<td>1 if tract was hard-to-count based on either 2010 MRR or update/enumerate</td>
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<td>Foreign-born non-citizen entering 2010 or later ACS 2013-2017 table B05005</td>
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FOREIGN BORN POPULATION

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS
www.CensusHardToCountMaps2020.us

Updates as we get closer to the 2020 count

Census Bureau Contact Strategies

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ON 2020 Census Initial Contact

- Internet First mailing (English)
- Internet First mailing (bilingual)
- Internet Choice mailing (English)
- Internet Choice mailing (bilingual)
- Hand-delivered packet (Update/Leave)
- Counted in-person (Update/Enumerate)
- Counted in-person (Remote Alaska)

Hand-delivered census packets in Kern County:

Census staff will drop-off an invitation to participate to 2.9% (or 8,498) housing units in Kern County. This packet will include a paper version of the census questionnaire, as well as online instructions and a unique ID for online response. Householders can then submit their census information either online or by phone, or by mailing back the questionnaire.

If householders do not respond, the Census Bureau will send reminder mailings to fill out the questionnaire. **(Note: you can't obtain a paper form simply by calling the Census Bureau. All forms are coded to a specific address.)**

Mailings will be distributed across Kern County as follows:

48.1% (or 142,314) of the state's housing units will receive mailings in English (only) explaining how to submit census responses online or by phone. This internet First letter will provide a unique ID
Data that will be available in Spring 2020

• Self-response rates from the Census Bureau that will show:
  ➢ **day-to-day self-response rates**
    o combined internet, paper, and phone/CQA;
  ➢ **separate rates just for internet self-response**; and
  ➢ **comparable 2010 rates**:
    o overall rate from end of 2010 self-response operation.

• Published daily by the Bureau (**starting March 20**) via:
  ➢ Census Bureau API (link TBD)
  ➢ Downloadable file from Census Bureau (comma-delimited)
  ➢ Online map from Census Bureau (TBD)
  ➢ Other maps from state/local stakeholders?
Rates will be published for these areas:

1. National (includes 50 states and District of Columbia only)
2. State (50 states, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico)
3. County
4. Census Tract
5. County Subdivision
6. Tribal Census Tract
7. Indian Reservation (including Off Reservation Trust Land)
8. Consolidated Cities
9. Incorporated Places
10. Congressional Districts
11. Region (West, Midwest, South, and Northeast)

Importantly, at this point the Bureau doesn’t plan to publish rates for:

- areas smaller than census tracts
- state legislative districts
- unincorporated places/villages
Other resources (a partial list)

Census Counts 2020 (via Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights)
• [https://censuscounts.org/](https://censuscounts.org/)
  - Fact sheets and state/city/congress district tables of HTC pop.
  - White papers on citizenship question, privacy concerns, health care implications of census, and much more

The Census Project
• [https://thecensusproject.org/](https://thecensusproject.org/)

Counting For Dollars
• [http://civilrightsdocs.info/pdf/census/CountingForDollars-Intro.pdf](http://civilrightsdocs.info/pdf/census/CountingForDollars-Intro.pdf)
  - Analysis of federal/state funding dependent on accurate census data
Contact for questions, additional information:


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