Weekly Report on 2020 Census Self-Response (Rates Issued on April 30)
New York City Department of City Planning—Population Division

The self-response rate measures the percentage of housing units that self-responded to the 2020 Census either online, by mail, or by phone.
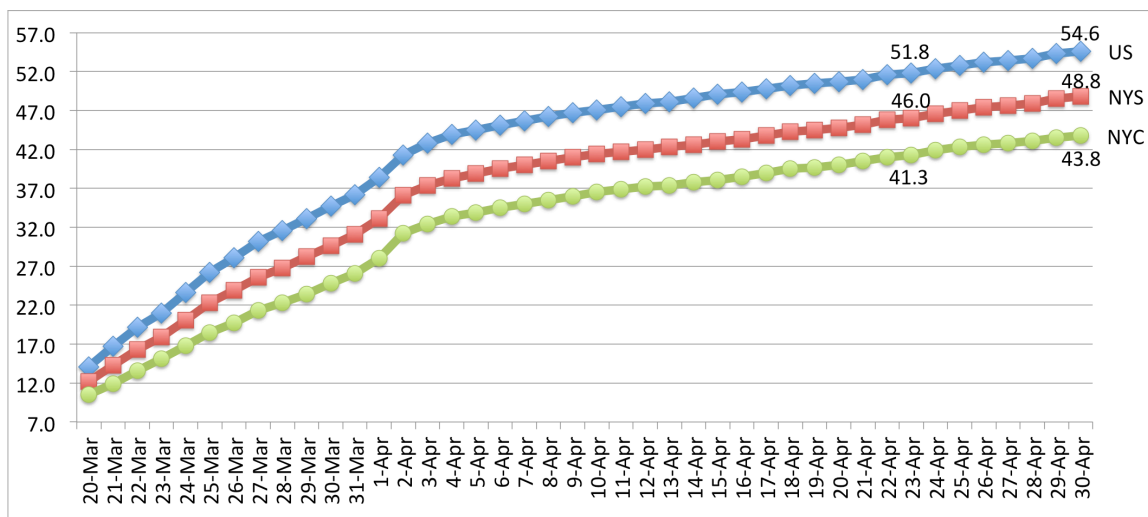
Why We Care

If an area has a low self-response rate, it means:

- More census enumerators will need to knock on doors to count residents in-person; and

- It is more likely people in the area may be missed or counted inaccurately.

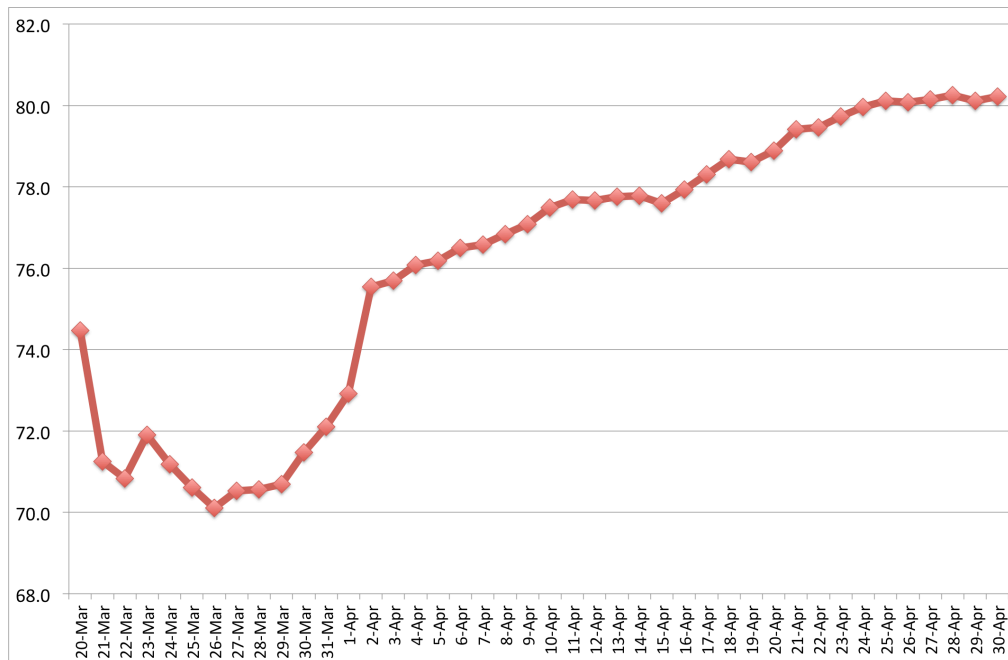## How does New York City Compare to New York State and the U.S.?

New York City's response rate stands at 43.8 percent, compared to 48.8 percent for New York State, and 54.6 percent for the U.S. (figure 1). Over the past week (April 23-30, self-response rates labeled in figure 1), New York City was up 2.5 percentage points, compared to 2.8 percentage points for both New York State and the nation.

Figure 1. Comparison of 2020 Census Self-Response Rates

The city's self-response rate as a percentage of U.S. self-response has been generally increasing over the past month. It now stands at 80 percent of U.S. self-response (figure 2).

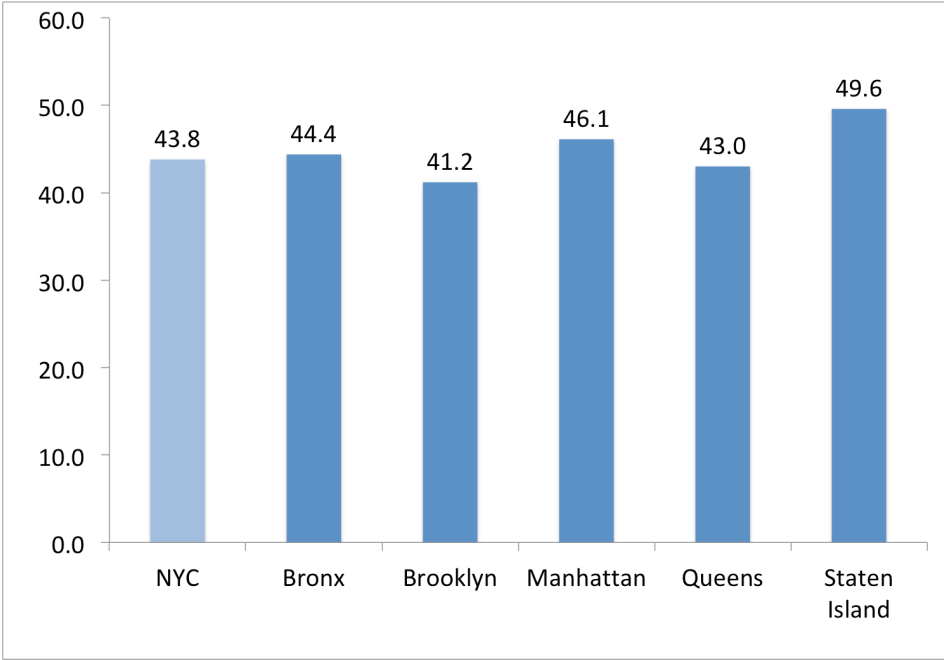**Figure 2. NYC Self-Response as a Percentage of U.S. Response Rate in 2020**

A Detailed Look at Self-Response in New York City

As part of the Census Bureau's fourth mailing, which began April 8th and ended April 30th, materials mailed to households that had failed to respond included a paper questionnaire, providing a mail-in paper option for **all** households, including those previously limited to the internet and phone options. The hope was that this would provide a boost to self-response, especially in areas where rates were very low and internet access was less than optimal. Thus far, however, patterns throughout the city have remained largely the same.

Within New York City, Staten Island had the highest self-response, with nearly one-half of households responding, while Brooklyn had the lowest (41.2 percent) (figure 3).

Figure 3. Self-Response Rates by Borough as of April 30

Self-Response by Neighborhood

The sixth week of the self-response period reveals a persistent pattern of lower self-response in neighborhoods that are predominantly black. There are 23 neighborhoods where 60 percent or more of the population is black nonhispanic. The response rate for these 23 neighborhoods is 38.1 percent, compared to the citywide rate of 43.8 percent. Self-response ranges, from a high of 46.4 percent (Cambria Heights, Queens) to a low of 32.6 percent (South Jamaica, Queens).

A large number of black communities in the Bronx, Queens, and Brooklyn remain in the lowest two intervals of self-response (figure 4). These include Stuyvesant Heights, Ocean Hill, Rugby-Remsen Village, Erasmus, Canarsie, and East New York in Brooklyn; South Jamaica, Baisley Park, Rosedale, and Far Rockaway in Queens; and Williamsbridge, Eastchester, and Wakefield in the Bronx. East New York and Stuyvesant Heights actually lost ground over the past week, falling into the lowest response category.
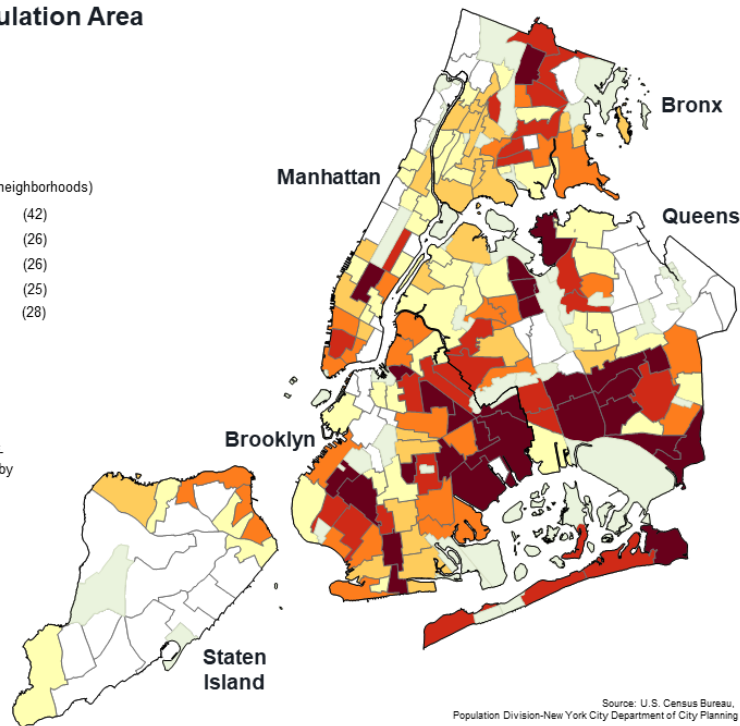
Figure 4.

New York City 2020 Self-Response Rates* as issued on April 30 by Neighborhood Tabulation Area

New York City: 43.8%

Self-Response Rate

☐	More than 48.7%	(41 neighborhoods)
☐	45.2% to 48.7%	(42)
☐	42.6% to 45.1%	(26)
☐	39.6% to 42.5%	(26)
☐	37.0% to 39.5%	(25)
☐	Less than 37.0%	(28)

*Self-Response Rate measures the percentage of housing units that self-responded either online, by mail, or by phone.

Manhattan · Bronx · Queens · Brooklyn · Staten Island

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division-New York City Department of City Planning

But once again, there are several communities with a majority or plurality of black residents that are above the city average, including Cambria Heights in Queens, Harlem in Manhattan, Flatbush in Brooklyn, and Co-op City and Parkchester in the Bronx.

While most of Staten Island has exhibited high levels of self-response, Stapleton-Rosebank and West New Brighton-St. George are exceptions. Most areas of Manhattan are also showing relatively high self-response, though the Upper East Side-Carnegie Hill, Midtown, and SoHo-Tribeca are lagging. Finally, Borough Park and Williamsburg in Brooklyn continue to have low levels of self-response. Joining the ranks of low response areas is Breezy Point-Belle Harbor-Broad Channel in the Rockaways, which lost ground over the past week. It is important to note that, in general, increases for the lowest response areas, shown in the table 1 below, are lower than for those neighborhoods with the highest levels of response (table 2), despite the fact that low response areas have much more ground to make up.

Table 1. Neighborhoods with **Lowest** Self-Response Rates as of April 30th, and Change over Past Week

NTA	NTA Names	% Self-Response April 23	% Self-Response April 30	Percentage Point Change*
QN26	North Corona	24.8	26.4	1.6
BK88	Borough Park	26.6	28.7	2.2
BK72	Williamsburg	28.5	30.8	2.3
QN27	East Elmhurst	29.2	31.3	2.1
QN55	South Ozone Park	30.1	31.7	1.6
BK83	Cypress Hills-City Line	29.9	31.7	1.8
MN17	Midtown-Midtown South	29.6	31.8	2.2
QN54	Richmond Hill	29.5	31.8	2.3
QN01	South Jamaica	30.9	32.6	1.7
BK96	Rugby-Remsen Village	31.1	32.7	1.7

*Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

Table 2. Neighborhoods with **Highest** Self-Response Rates as of April 30th, and Change over Past Week

NTA	NTA Names	% Self-Response April 23	% Self-Response April 30	Percentage Point Change*
MN50	Stuyvesant Town-Cooper Village	58.6	61.8	3.2
QN42	Oakland Gardens	53.1	57.5	4.4
SI25	Oakwood-Oakwood Beach	51.6	56.2	4.5
QN47	Ft. Totten-Bay Terrace-Clearview	52.8	55.8	3.0
QN44	Glen Oaks-Floral Park-New Hyde Park	52.7	55.4	2.7
BK40	Windsor Terrace	51.9	55.2	3.4
MN35	Washington Heights North	51.9	55.2	3.3
SI48	Arden Heights	52.1	55.0	2.9
SI07	Westerleigh	51.6	54.9	3.3
BX13	Co-op City	53.1	54.8	1.6

*Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

As noted in the report on April 16th, a higher share of foreign-born residents in a neighborhood is associated with lower levels of self-response, though the relationship is neither strong nor straightforward. This continues to be true. Neighborhoods with large foreign-born concentrations lie on both ends of the self-response spectrum. Some neighborhoods with large concentrations of immigrants have relatively high response, most notably in a corridor from Washington Heights South, Washington Heights North, and Marble Hill-Inwood in Upper Manhattan, extending to Kingsbridge Heights and Van Cortlandt Village in the Bronx. And, while not in the highest response category, a cluster of fairly high response has emerged in the

south Bronx communities of East Concourse, West Concourse, and Highbridge, all with a large plurality of the foreign-born.

But there are a sizable number of immigrant neighborhoods that show low self-response: North Corona, Corona, East Elmhurst, Flushing, East Flushing, Queensboro Hill, and College Point in the northern section of Queens, and Richmond Hill, South Ozone Park, and Jamaica in the southern part of the borough. In Brooklyn, a corridor of low response starts in Sunset Park, Dyker Heights, and Bensonhurst, and runs through Homecrest and into Brighton Beach — all neighborhoods with large immigrant populations. Over the past week, however, some gains can be seen in this corridor of Brooklyn, with improvements registered in Sunset Park, Bath Beach, and parts of Bensonhurst. Finally, several neighborhoods characterized by large black West Indian populations have low response, including Erasmus, Rugby-Remsen Village, East Flatbush-Farragut, Flatlands and Canarsie in Brooklyn, and Rosedale in Queens.
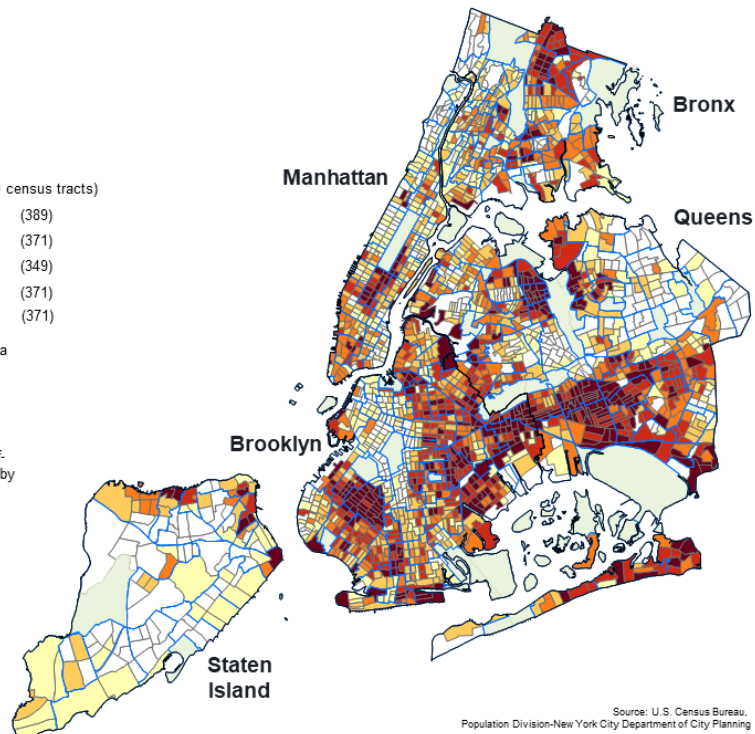
Figure 5.

New York City 2020 Self-Response Rates* as issued on April 30 by Census Tract

2020 Census Self-Response Rates and Public Housing

We cannot directly measure the response rates for public housing given that the Census Bureau releases rates for census tracts, which are not usually coterminous with public housing developments. Despite this, we can form an idea of how public housing is faring by looking at the response rates for tracts where 80 percent or more of the housing stock is comprised of public housing.

Based on the response rates issued on April 30th, tracts where public housing comprises 80 percent or more of the housing stock had a self-response rate of 48.6 percent, compared to the citywide rate of 43.8 percent. While the overall self-response rate for these public housing tracts is higher relative to the citywide rate, the range among these tracts is substantial, from a low of 40.1 percent to a high of 54.8 percent. The lowest self-response is in the census tract that encompasses West Brighton houses on Staten Island. Households in this census tract have especially low levels of internet connectivity, compared to other public housing tracts, which may make it difficult for digital outreach strategies to reach residents during the pandemic. The highest self-response of 54.8 percent was in the census tract that encompassed Baruch houses in Manhattan. Tracts encompassing Coney Island Houses in Brooklyn, Riis Houses in Manhattan, and Morris/Butler Houses in the Bronx also had self-response rates well above the city average.

It is important to note that while many tracts with public housing have had above average response rates in past census enumerations, these tracts also tended to have "within household misses" — respondents often failed to include every person in the household when answering the census questionnaire. This happened despite the best efforts by outreach workers to allay fears among tenants about a connection between census response and enforcement actions. While the above-average 2020 response rates are noteworthy, it is important that respondents list **all** persons in the household, thus ensuring a complete count.

Table 3. Census Tracts with the Highest Self-Response Rates
(Among Tracts where Public Housing Comprised 80 Percent or More of All Housing)

Borough	Tract Number	% of Housing Stock that is Public Housing	NYCHA Development Name	% Self-Response April 30	Percentage Points Above Citywide Average
Manhattan	10.02	100	Baruch	54.8	+11.0
Brooklyn	340.00	80	Coney Island	54.5	+10.7
Manhattan	24.00	100	Riis	53.8	+10.0
The Bronx	147.02	92	Morris / Butler	52.7	+8.9

Table 4. Census Tracts with the Lowest Self-Response Rates
(Among Tracts where Public Housing Comprised 80 Percent or More of All Housing)

Borough	Tract Number	% of Housing Stock that is Public Housing	NYCHA Development Name	% Self-Response April 30	Percentage Points Above/Below Citywide Average
Staten Island	133.01	95	West Brighton	40.1	-3.7
Brooklyn	906.00	84	Hughes/Howard	42.6	-1.2
Brooklyn	910.00	87	Van Dyke/Woodson	44.1	+0.3
Brooklyn	259.02	92	Tompkins	44.6	+0.8

Please note: This overview provides a broad picture of self-response based on the aggregate characteristics of neighborhoods and census tracts. We cannot determine at an individual level who is and who is not self-responding to the census, nor can we attribute characteristics of neighborhoods or tracts to individuals within those neighborhoods or tracts. It is important to note this when discussing aggregated characteristics of neighborhoods and tracts, such as proportion of the population of different race/Hispanic origins and/or nativity.