

**Population Size:** As of the 2022 Census, Las Cruces' estimated population totalled 113,881 with approximately 46,088 of those people being within the ages of 15-40 years old. Within this age range, the largest group of people were aged 20-24 years, so this should be where we should lean toward marketing the most. In a preliminary face to face survey, people aged 20-24 responded they would like to travel for school, work, or pleasure. This demographic also showed high interest in connecting with people from other countries and pursuing careers with corporations that have ties to companies overseas.

**Interest Level:** We can now clearly see how globalization has impacted our world and how technology continues to push our nation's youth toward cultural acceptance. Young people are now more likely to be informed on international issues, be aware of the impacts of international organizations, and are passionate about working toward global understanding and cooperation. As one of the first generations of true digital natives, today's youth has grown up with the ability to be in constant contact with a wider demographic of people - which often includes people from other countries. Forging relationships and promoting cultural exchange with this age range should prove to be beneficial for keeping the organization alive and well, and provide a bridge for digital communication to come face to face.

**Accessibility and Outreach:** Our biggest hurdle is getting our organization on the radar of the younger generation. While Las Cruces Sister Cities has provided scholarships and connections between partner schools in the past, we need to ensure we are able to maintain steady membership in order to continue to fundraise and provide these opportunities for years to come. I would like to spearhead tabling events at NMSU, the Las Cruces Farmers Market, and want to look into providing informational pamphlets to various offices across campus (study abroad office, housing office, Sam Steel Cafe, Corbett Student Union, etc.). I can also look into getting fliers posted to physical billboards and digital signage in public areas at NMSU. While it is difficult to engage this new age of digital dwellers, we could look into launching digital fundraisers like a virtual walkathon, online cooking class, beginner language courses, or an online auction.

**Marketing:** As far as marketing is concerned, we will have to rely on word of mouth and get creative as funds are limited. Now that we have set up a Facebook page, we can begin to spread the word about our organization and any upcoming events to the local community. While Facebook is the 3rd most utilized social media network in our target demographic, the age group of 18-24 makes up the 2nd most active age group on the site, just after the 25-34 age group. Because Facebook remains overall the most popular social media site in the U.S. and across the world, this is a great place to start while we build up skills and knowledge in creating short-form video content to share across other social media platforms. While the number of social media users rises every year, and short form video is king, we have also begun to see a rise in DIY culture. We may even be able to create events that allow existing and potential members to get hands-on and learn a new skill from existing members or guests from our sister cities.

**Competing Interests:** Competing interests can be an issue when trying to promote a non-profit organization. As we well know, we are all busy individuals with bills to pay. While this is certainly an organization meant more for leisure, we can highlight the importance of establishing an international network and the benefits of learning about life through another lens. We can also plan events or potential exchanges to align with summer and winter break or holidays when students will be more likely to be able to attend.

**Retention Rate:** When thinking of gaining new members, we must also think about how to retain these members. Polling for reasoning behind interest in sister cities organizations: Networking, community, language learning, etc. Of the people I have asked to gauge preliminary interest, most people mentioned wanting to connect with people locally as well as abroad to broaden their horizons. We should focus on hosting events, mixers, or even just one-on-one sessions with new members to hear from them what they are seeking within the organization.

**Estimation of interest:** Awaiting survey results

Sources:

<https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2022.S0101?q=population%20by%20age%20in%20las%20cruces%20nm>

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<https://www.statista.com/statistics/617136/digital-population-worldwide/>