



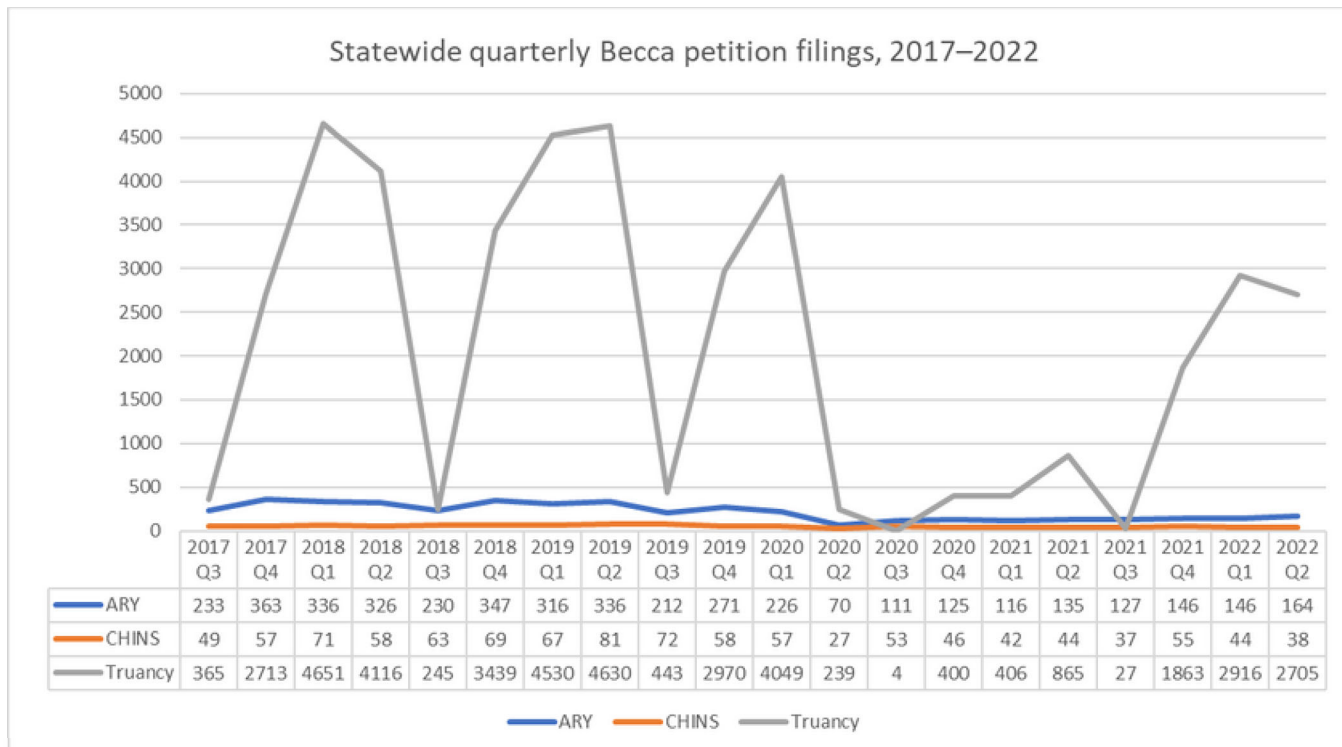
# Becca Petition Filings in Washington State July 2017 through June 2022

The purpose of this brief report is to examine trends in At-Risk Youth (ARY), Child in Need of Services (CHINS), and Truancy petitions, collectively known as Becca Petitions, in Washington State over a five-year period (July 2017 – June 2022). While this descriptive report is not intended to investigate causes of changes in petition filings, it is important to take note of two events that occurred during the study period which impacted Becca petitions. First, the pandemic disrupted in-person school operations and resulted in confusion around defining truancy during remote learning. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) ultimately decided that unexcused absences while engaged in remote learning could not result in a Truancy petition filing. Second, Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill (ESSSB) 5290 was passed, which phased out the lawful use of detention for youth who violate a valid court order related to a non-offender matter. In this report we examine petition filings over time, as well as ARY and Truancy petition filings by demographic characteristics. There were too few CHINS petitions to warrant analyses by demographics.

For questions, please contact Dr. Amanda Gilman at [amanda.gilman@courts.wa.gov](mailto:amanda.gilman@courts.wa.gov).

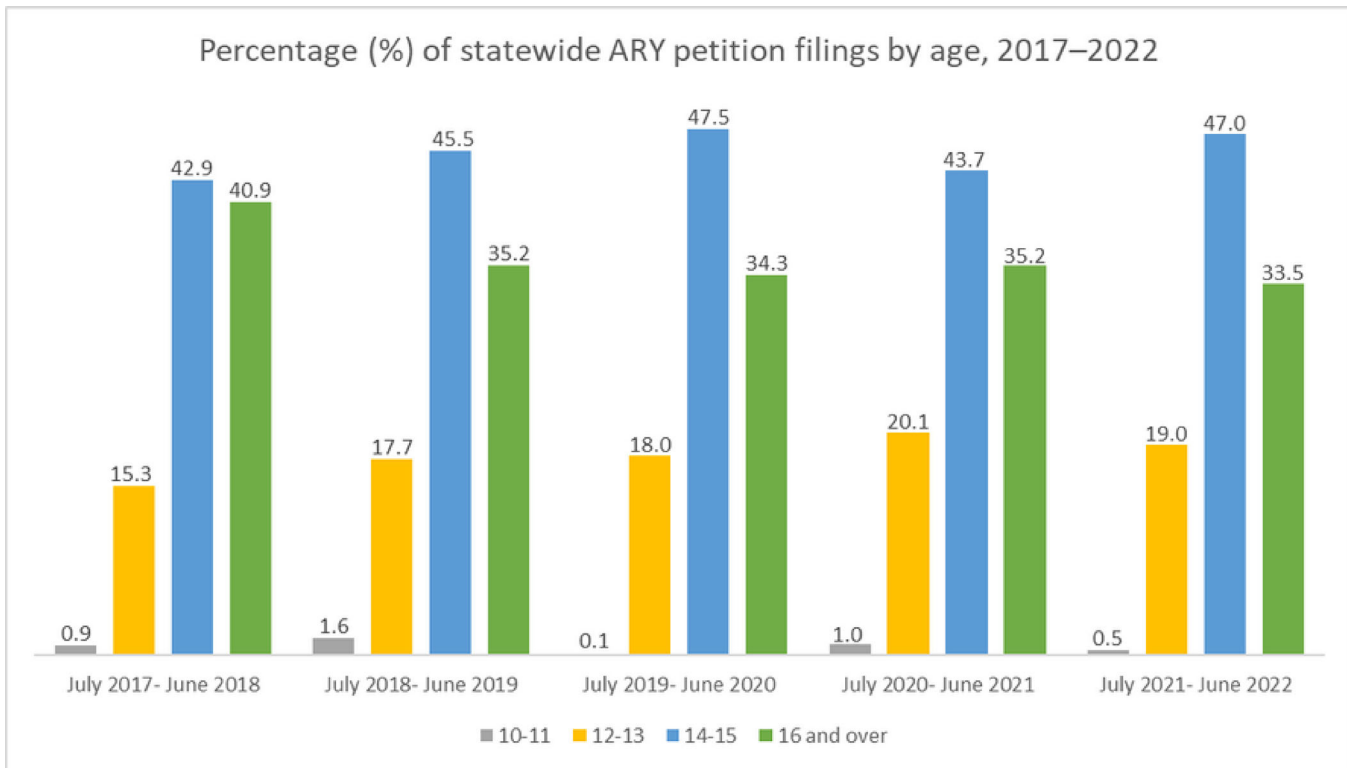
## Key takeaways from analysis of Becca petition filings over time

- Over the study period, there were roughly ten times more Truancy petitions filed than ARY petitions. CHINS petitions were rare (81 or fewer in any given quarter).
- Truancy petitions followed an expected seasonal trend, with drastic dips in the third quarter summer months.
- ARY and Truancy petitions dropped substantially in the Spring of 2020 and remained historically low through the summer of 2021. The numbers of both petition types have been increasing since the fall of 2021, but have not reached pre-2020 levels.

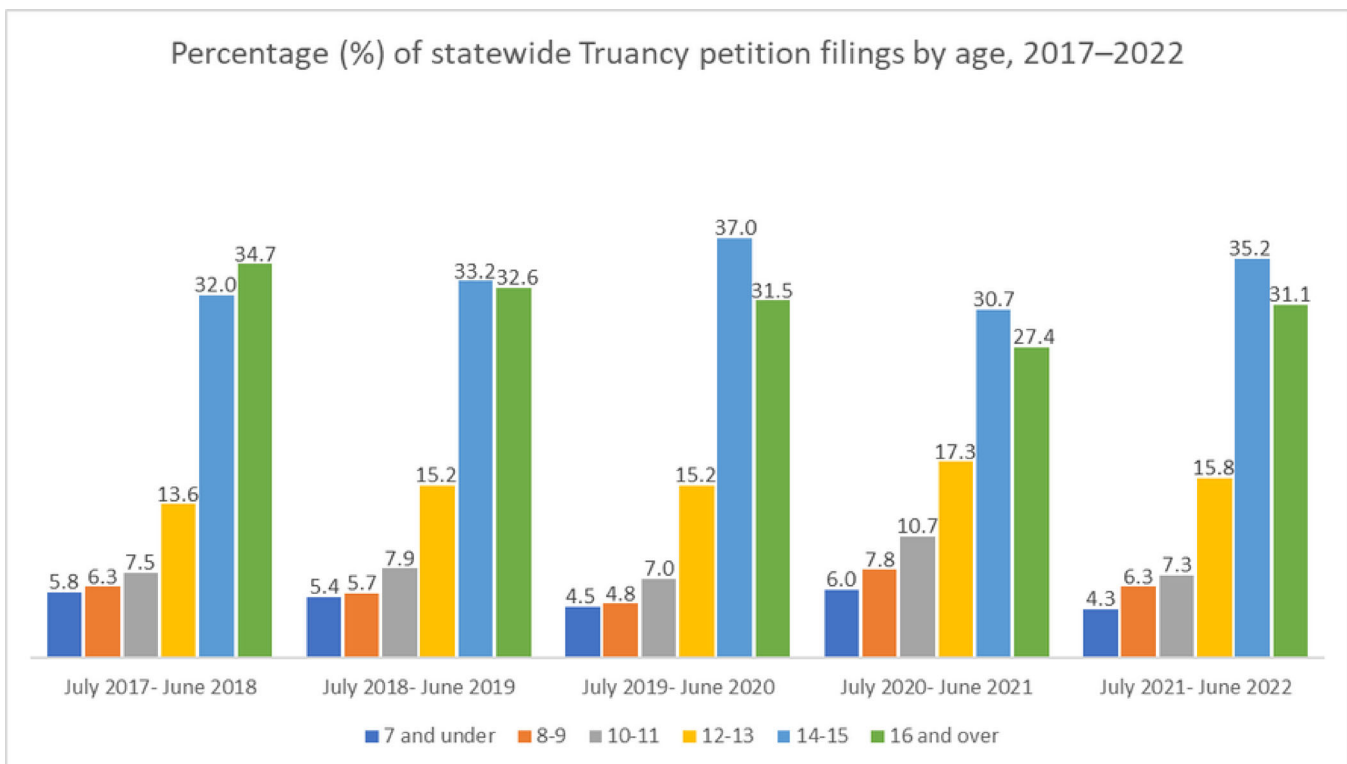


## Key takeaways from analysis of ARY and Truancy petition filings by age

- Over the study period, Truancy petitions were filed on youth ages 5 through 18. ARY petitions were filed on youth ages 10 through 17.
- Patterns of the age distribution for both Truancy and ARY petitions remained fairly stable over the five-year period, with a modest decrease in the percent of petitions accounted for by youth 16 and older.

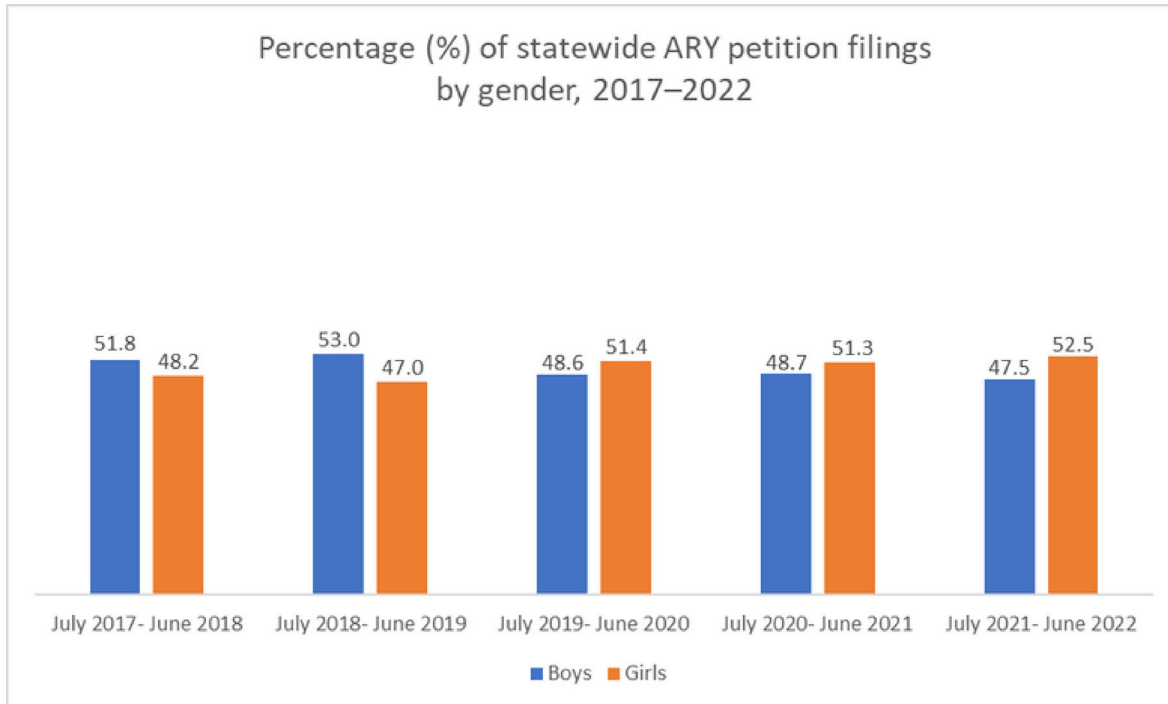


Note: no petitions were filed on youth younger than 10.

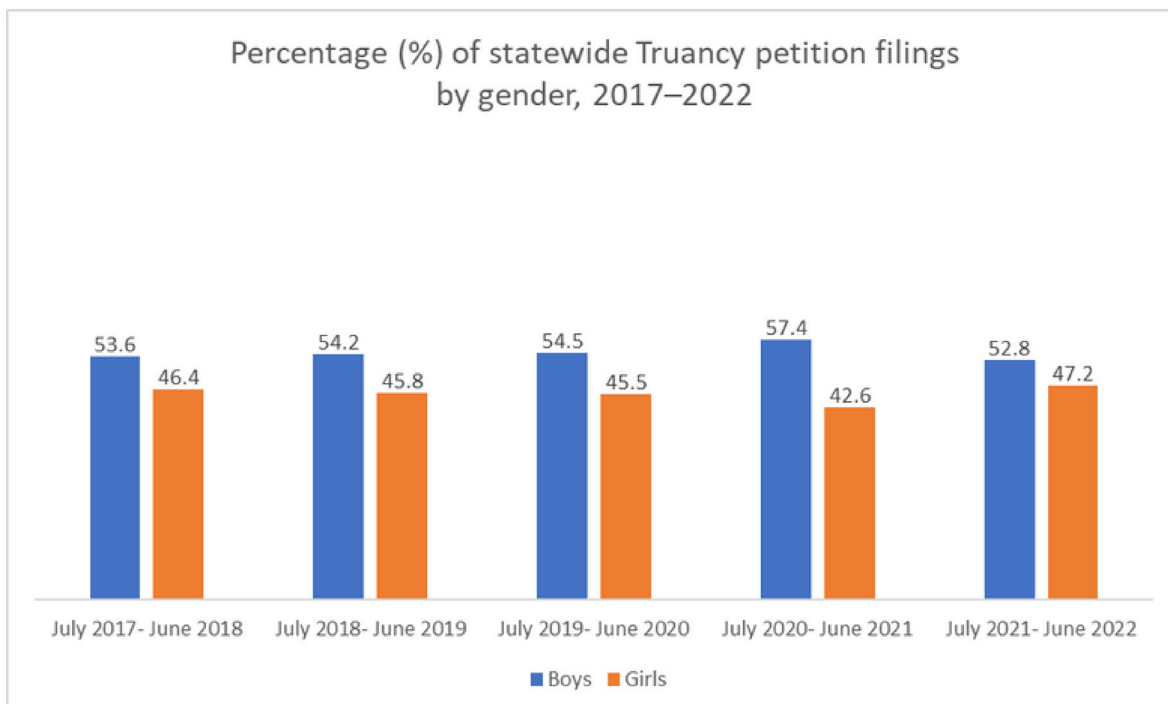


## Key takeaways from analysis of ARY and Truancy petition filings by gender

- While boys and girls were roughly equally represented in ARY petitions over the study period, the percentage of petitions accounted for by girls increased slightly, so that since mid-2019 just over half of ARY petitions have been accounted for by girls.
- Boys made up more than half of all Truancy petitions filed in each of the five years studied (range: 53% to 58%).



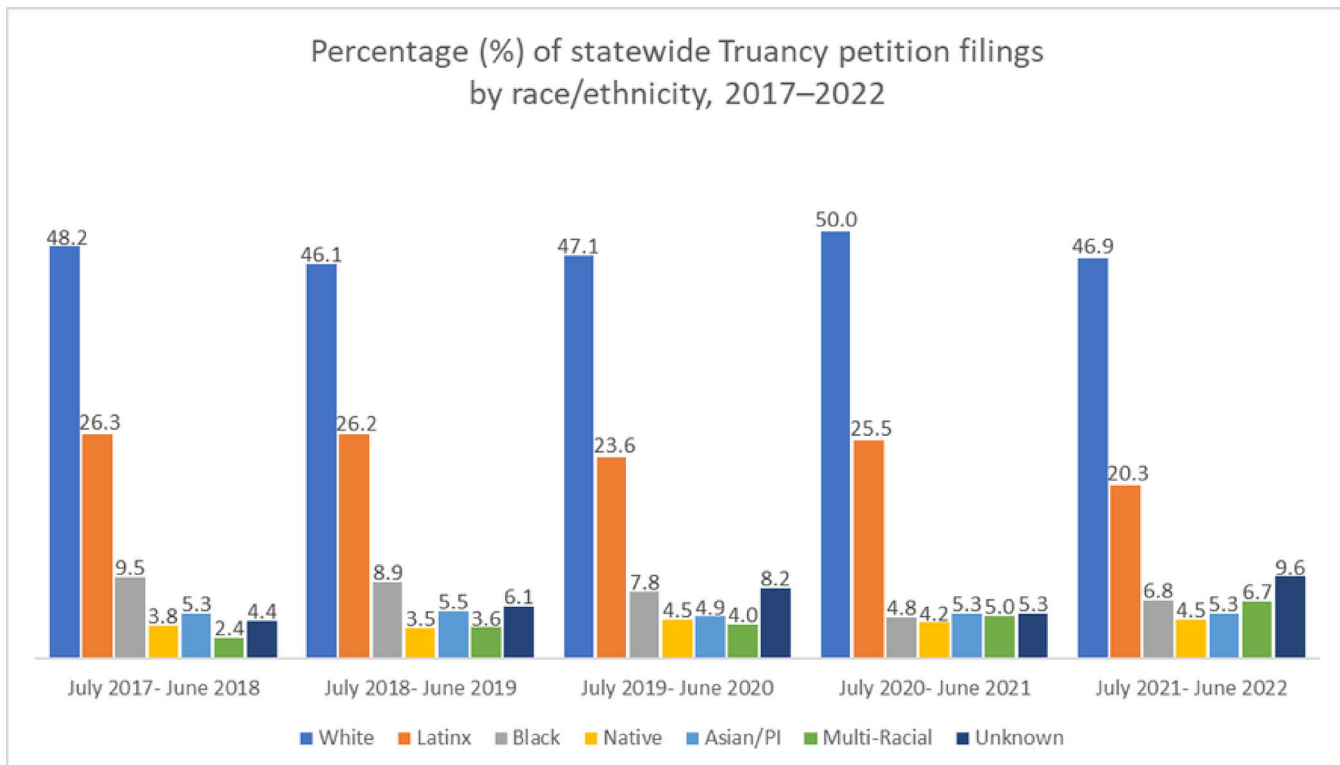
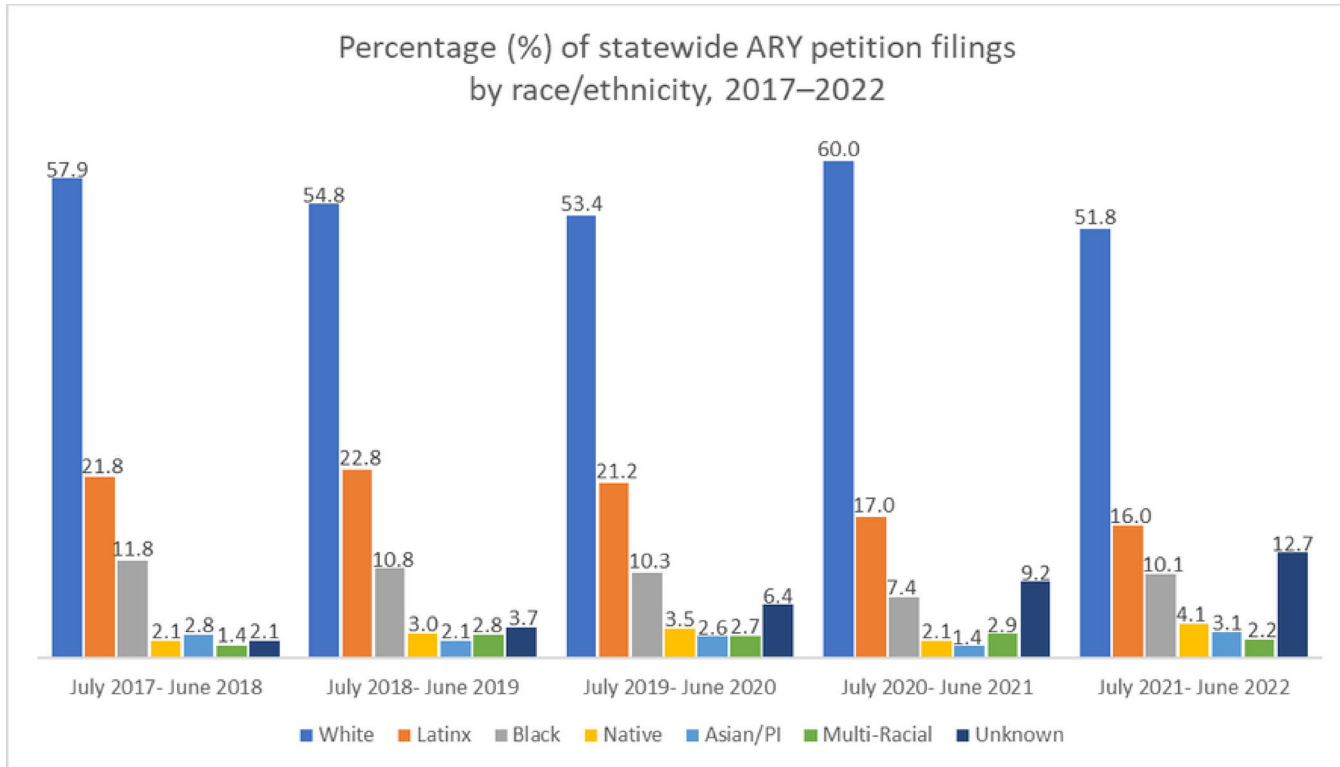
Notes: (1) data management systems only allow a user to pick “male” or “female.” (2) fewer than 1% of youth each year were missing gender information.



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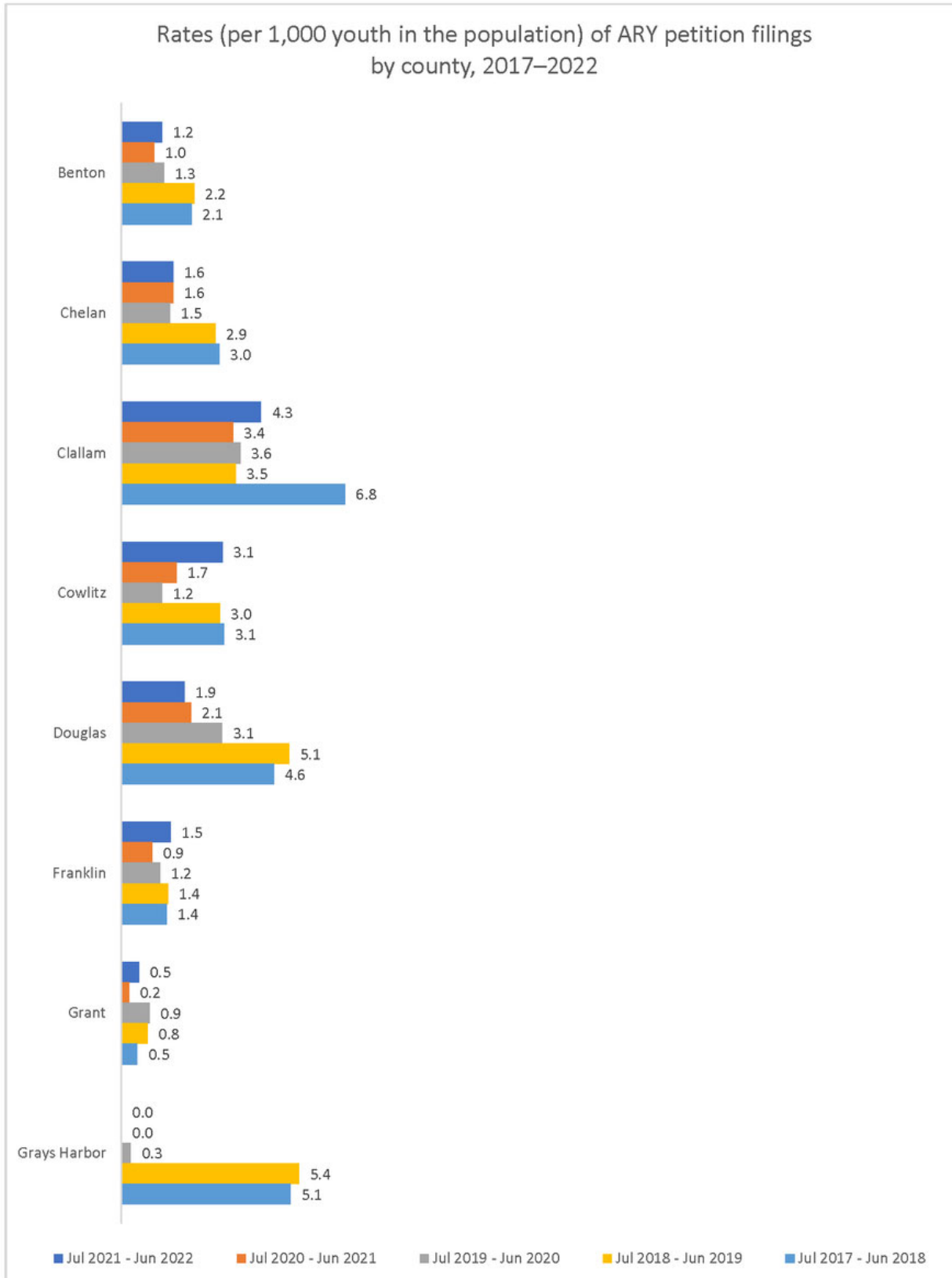
## Key takeaways from analysis of ARY and Truancy petition filings by race/ethnicity

- In each study year, White youth made up over half of all ARY petitions filed (range: 52% to 60%), and between 47% and 50% all Truancy petitions filed.
- The most notable change in both ARY and Truancy petitions by race was the increase in the percent of petitions where the youth's race/ethnicity was coded at multi-racial or was unknown. Missing data makes it difficult to interpret any observed changes in racial/ethnic representation over time.



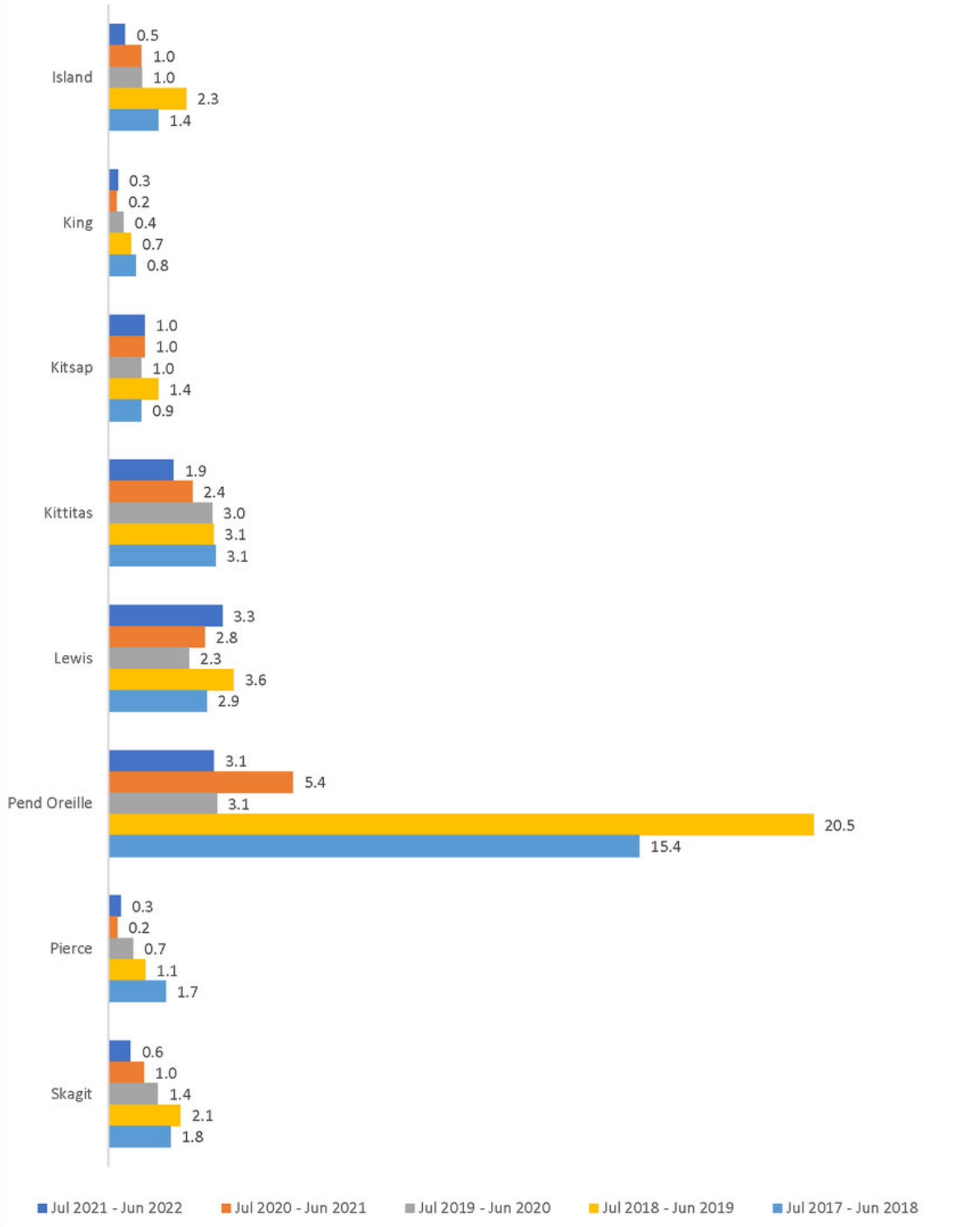
## Key takeaways from analysis of ARY and Truancy petition filings by county

- Across counties there is variability in the population-based rates of both ARY and Truancy petition filings.
- Most counties saw a sizable drop in the rate of ARY and Truancy petition filings beginning in July 2020. Some county rates remained low through 2021 and early 2022.



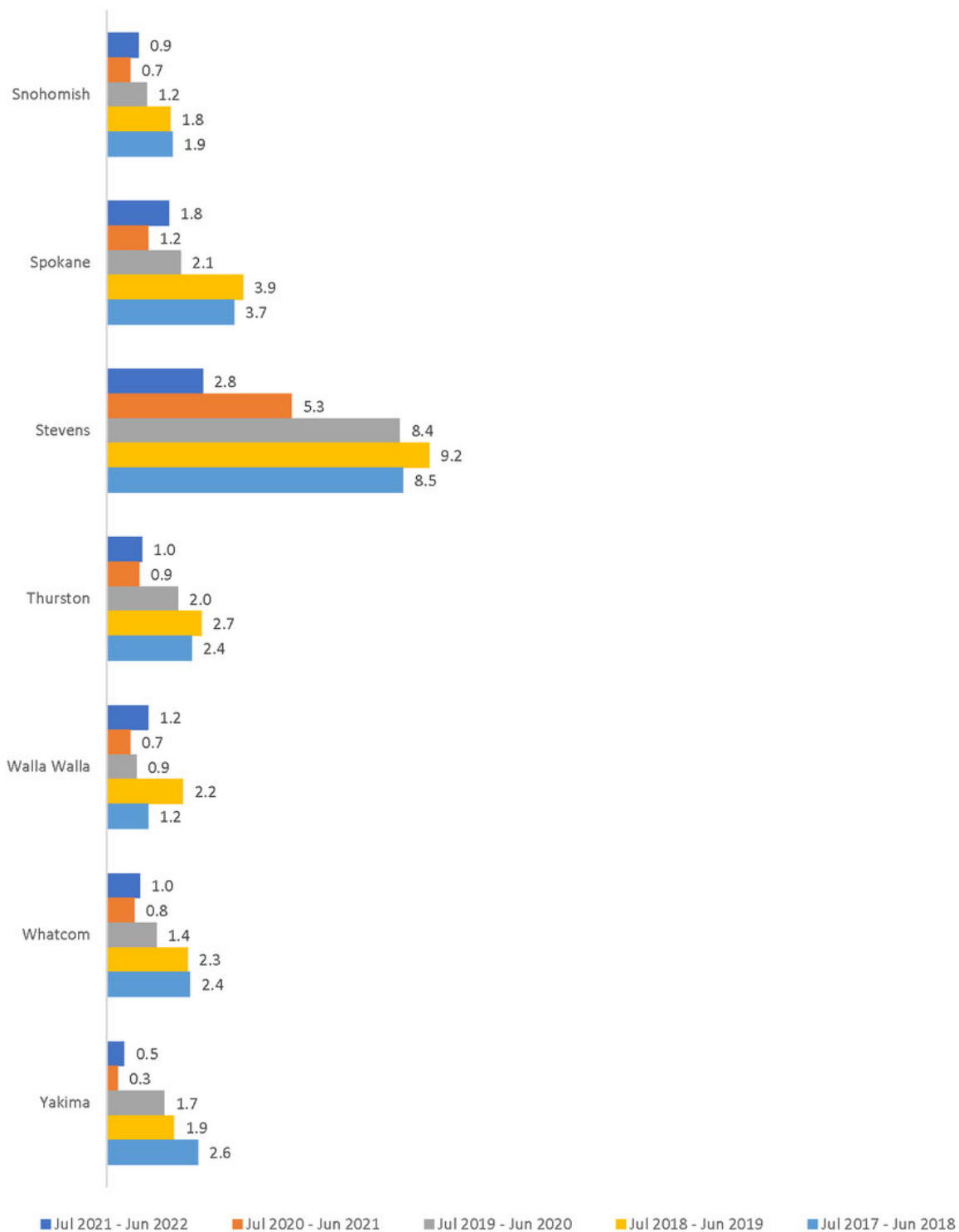
Notes: (1) counties with fewer than 10 petitions in each year are excluded. (2) rates based on population of youth aged 10-17.

Rates (per 1,000 youth in population) of ARY petition filings by county, 2017–2020 (cont.)



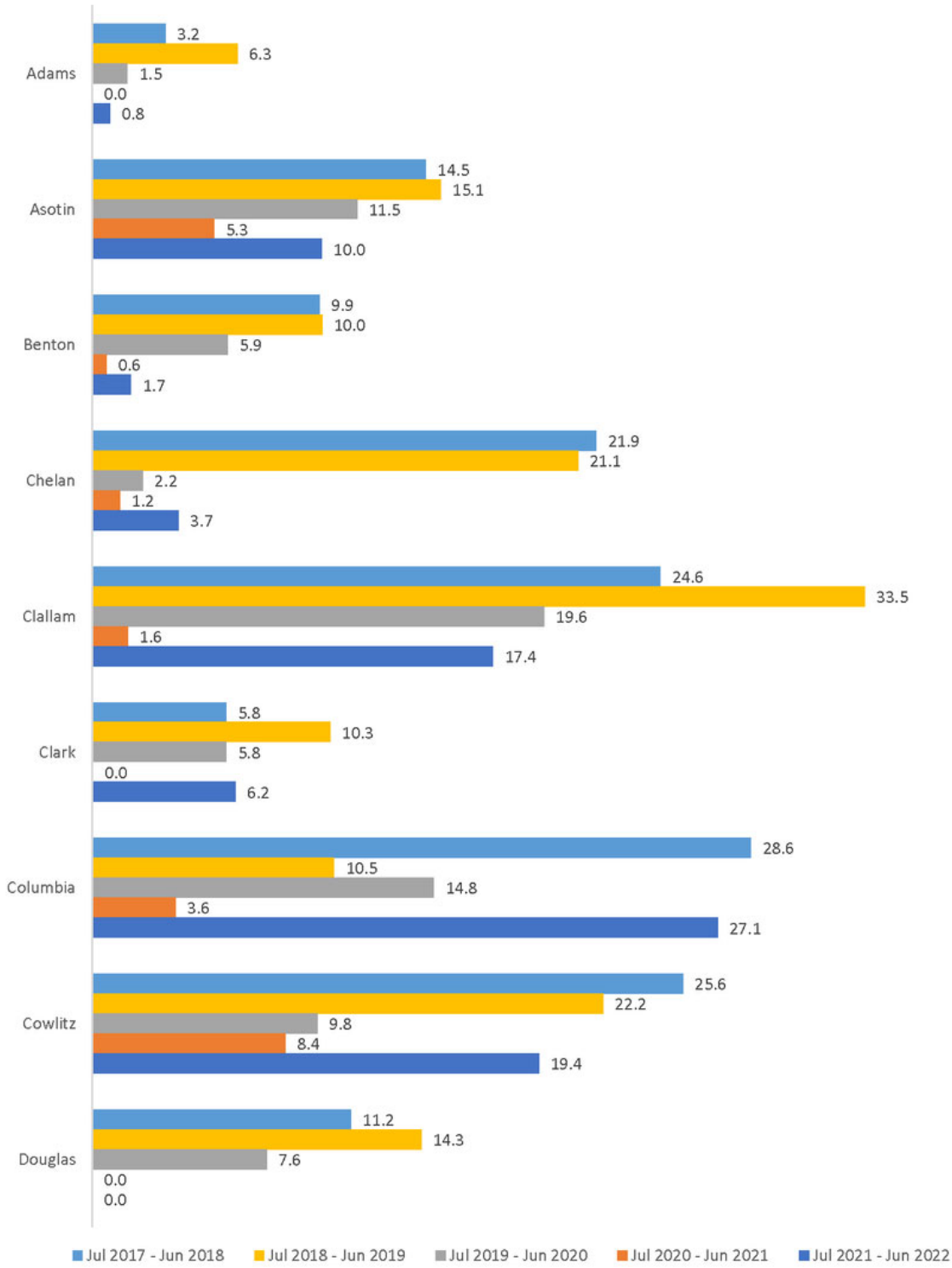
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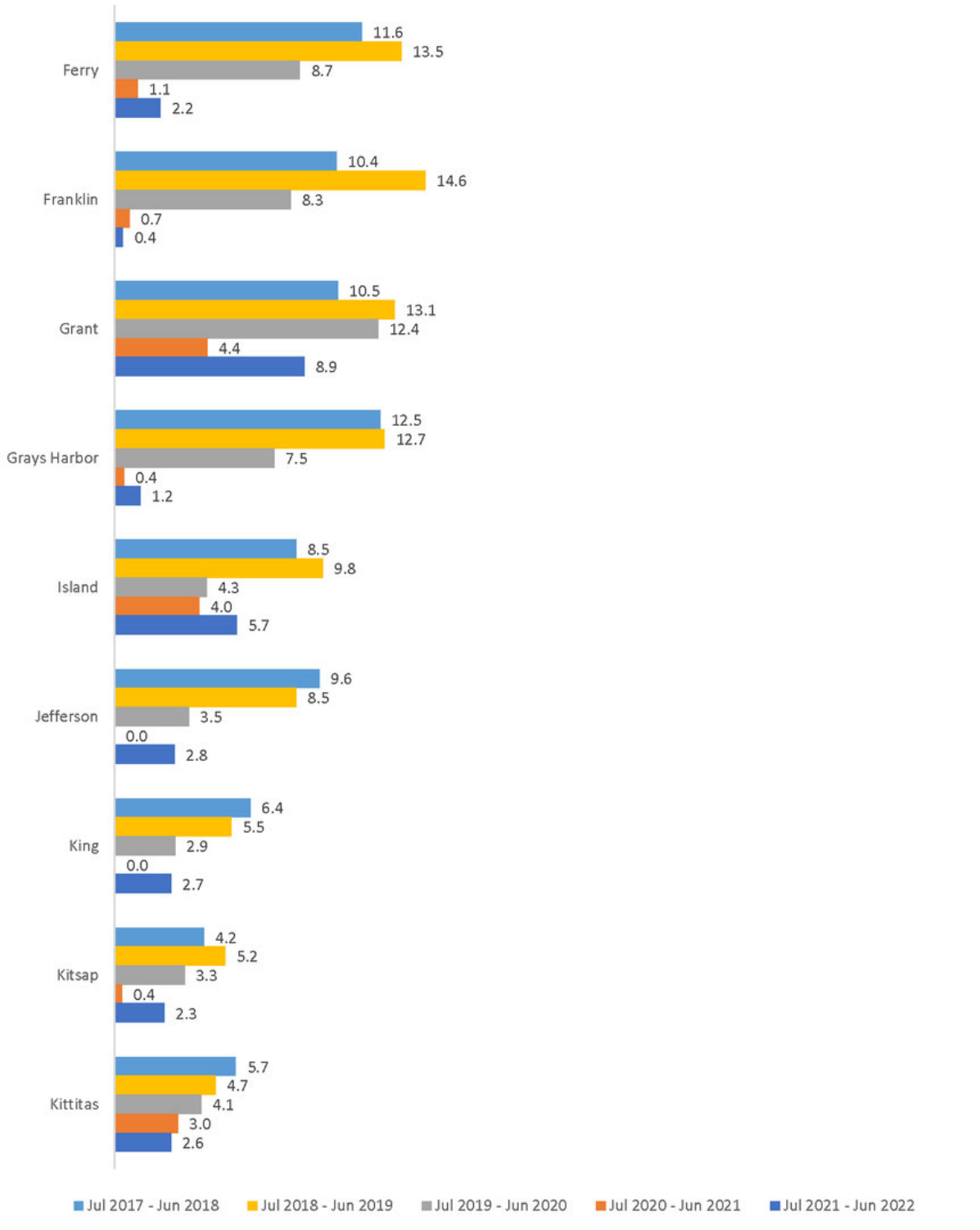
Rates (per 1,000 youth in the population) of Truancy petition filings by county, 2017–2022



Notes: (1) counties with fewer than 10 petitions in each year are excluded. (2) rates based on population of youth aged 10-17.

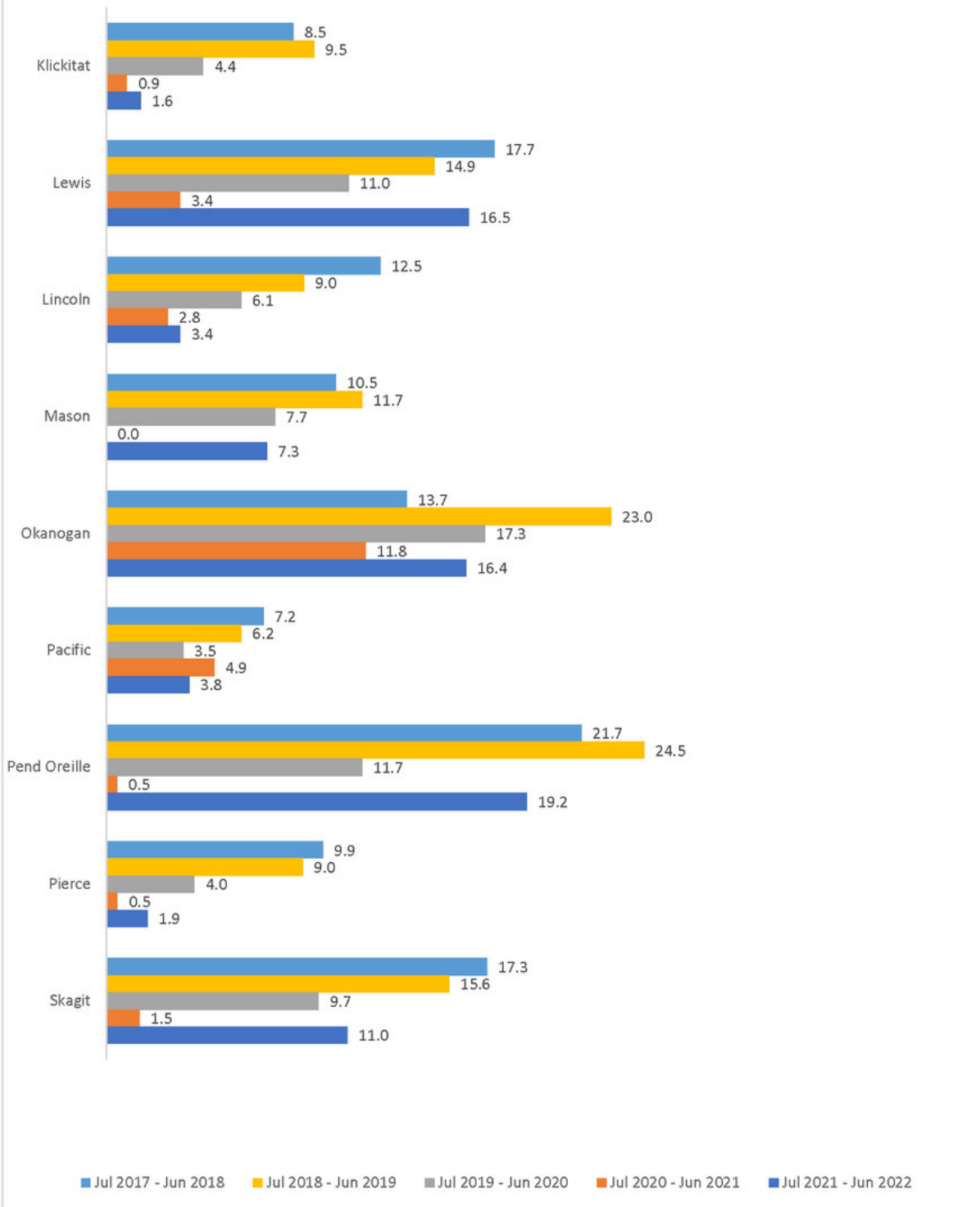


Rates (per 1,000 youth in the population) of Truancy petition filings by county, 2017–2022 (cont.)



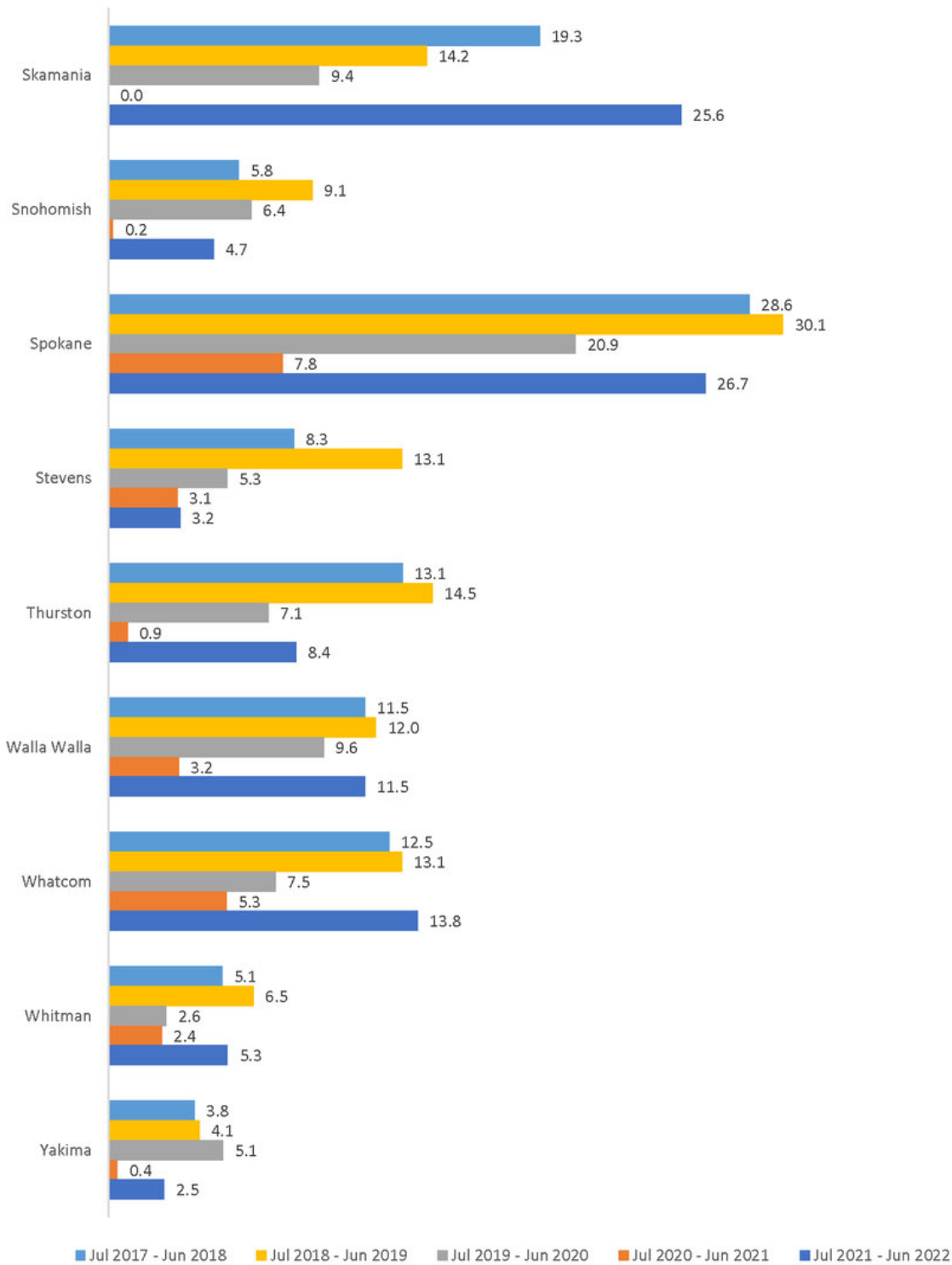
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Rates (per 1,000 youth in the population) of Truancy petition filings by county, 2017–2022 (cont.)



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Rates (per 1,000 youth in the population) of Truancy petition filings by county, 2017–2022 (cont.)



Notes: (1) counties with fewer than 10 petitions in each year are excluded. (2) rates based on population of youth aged 5-17.

Notes: (1) percent totals in graphs may not add to 100 due to rounding. (2) county population data from: Puzzanchera, C., Sladky, A. and Kang, W. (2021). "Easy Access to Juvenile Populations: 1990-2020." Online. Available: <https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/statistical-briefing-book/data-analysis-tools/ezapop>. 2021 population data not available. 2021-2022 rates based on 2020 population.

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