

SECTION VI
CRIME IN THE CITIES

CRIME IN THE CITIES

This section deals with serious crimes reported in the large urban cities of the state. These cities represent 20 percent of the population and historically account for one third of the reported Crime Index of the state.

This analysis involves the latest ten-year period 1987-1996 and endeavors further to identify crime trends in these urban areas.

The cities included in this analysis were initially categorized as urban municipalities (i.e., densely populated with extensive development) by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Division of State and Regional Planning, Bureau of Statewide Planning, and will continue to be used for comparative purposes.

The criteria used in the selection of these cities were (1) classified as urban character and (2) have a population of 50,000 or more inhabitants.

For further comparative analysis, the urban cities were subdivided into two distinct groupings.

Group number one consisted of the state's six largest urban centers with populations of 80,000 or over and is categorized as "Major Urban."

The second group included the "Major Urban" and the additional urban communities with populations of 50,000 or more inhabitants, and is referred to as the "Urban 15."

MAJOR URBAN

- Camden
- Elizabeth
- Jersey City
- Newark
- Paterson
- Trenton

THE "URBAN 15"

- Bayonne
- Camden
- Clifton
- Dover Twp.
- East Orange
- Elizabeth
- Irvington Town
- Jersey City
- Newark
- Passaic
- Paterson
- Trenton
- Union City
- Vineland
- Woodbridge

The accompanying table reflects percent changes in the state's "Major Urban" and "Urban 15" municipalities Crime Index for the years 1987-1996.

STATE AND URBAN CRIME INDEX OFFENSES

Percent Change 1987 - 1996

		NEW JERSEY	"MAJOR URBAN"	"URBAN 15"
Population	1987	7,620,330	956,041	1,563,609
	1996	7,903,994	896,668	1,510,302
	Percent Change	4	-6	-3
TOTAL CRIME INDEX	1987	402,810	106,281	145,235
	1996	346,094	86,203	120,143
	Percent Change	-14	-19	-17
Violent Crime	1987	41,293	20,401	24,970
	1996	42,420	19,414	24,945
	Percent Change	3	-5	*
Nonviolent Crime	1987	361,517	85,880	120,265
	1996	303,674	66,789	95,198
	Percent Change	-16	-22	-21
Murder	1987	350	163	195
	1996	337	182	219
	Percent Change	-4	12	12
Rape	1987	2,548	1,044	1,327
	1996	1,972	645	891
	Percent Change	-23	-38	-33
Robbery	1987	17,772	10,414	12,461
	1996	18,859	9,496	12,225
	Percent Change	6	-9	-2
Aggravated Assault	1987	20,623	8,780	10,987
	1996	21,252	9,091	11,610
	Percent Change	3	4	6
Burglary	1987	77,196	20,898	29,162
	1996	63,163	17,316	24,233
	Percent Change	-18	-17	-17
Larceny-Theft	1987	219,722	37,378	55,023
	1996	194,074	31,876	47,567
	Percent Change	-12	-15	-14
Motor Vehicle Theft	1987	64,599	27,604	36,080
	1996	46,437	17,597	23,398
	Percent Change	-28	-36	-35

* Less than one-half of 1 percent

Percent Change

- During the ten-year period 1987-1996, the Crime Index in New Jersey has decreased 14 percent, while the "Urban 15" cities decreased 17 percent and the six major urban cities decreased 19 percent.
- Violent crime in the state increased 3 percent, the 15 urban cities decreased less than one-half of 1 percent and the six major cities decreased 5 percent.
- Nonviolent crime in the state decreased 16 percent, the "Urban 15" decreased 21 percent, and the six major cities decreased 22 percent.

CRIME IN THE CITIES TEN YEAR SUMMARY

COMPARATIVE CRIME INDEX DISTRIBUTION FOR STATE AND URBAN CITIES 50,000 Population and Over 1987-1996

	NEW JERSEY	URBAN CITIES Over 80,000 Population (Major Urban)	URBAN CITIES Over 50,000 Population (Urban 15)
CRIME INDEX TOTAL	3,921,656	1,035,383	1,433,560
Percent Distribution		26.4	36.6
Violent Crime	468,849	223,849	282,642
Percent Distribution		47.7	60.3
Nonviolent Crime	3,452,807	811,534	1,150,918
Percent Distribution		23.5	33.3
Murder	3,951	2,069	2,471
Percent Distribution		52.4	62.5
Rape	22,629	7,740	10,446
Percent Distribution		34.2	46.2
Robbery	213,322	117,819	147,765
Percent Distribution		55.2	69.3
Aggravated Assault	228,947	96,221	121,960
Percent Distribution		42.0	53.3
Burglary	742,802	205,669	285,346
Percent Distribution		27.7	38.4
Larceny-Theft	2,092,399	347,755	527,237
Percent Distribution		16.6	25.2
Motor Vehicle Theft	617,606	258,110	338,335
Percent Distribution		41.8	54.8

Distribution:

- Six major urban centers—Camden, Newark, Jersey City, Trenton, Paterson and Elizabeth—collectively represent 11 percent of New Jersey’s total population. These same urban centers, during the period 1987 through 1996, accounted for 26 percent of the state’s total crime.
- Major Urban centers from 1987 through 1996 accounted for 48 percent of all violent crime and 24 percent of the nonviolent crimes in the entire state.
- The 15 urban municipalities represent 19 percent of the state’s total population.
- “Urban 15” municipalities accounted for 37 percent of New Jersey’s total Crime Index. Violent crime was 60 percent of the state total while nonviolent crime was 33 percent of the state total during this ten-year period.
- Nearly seven out of every 10 robberies reported occurred in the “Urban 15” cities during this ten-year period.

STREET CRIME

There has never been a clear-cut definition for street crime within the criminal justice system. The nation's clearinghouse for the collection and dissemination of criminal statistics, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, has no criteria in the categorization of specific crimes to be designated or defined as "street crimes." More and more this media term has been confused with the violent crime group of murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Although any particular crime can and does occur on the street, this analysis, because of reporting constraints within the Uniform Crime Reporting System, is limited to defining street crimes as those offenses which occur, or are most likely to occur, on streets, highways, parking lots, etc. These crimes include highway robbery, purse-snatching, theft from autos, theft of auto parts and accessories, theft of bicycles, and motor vehicle thefts. All are crimes against property and only one, highway robbery, falls in the violent crime group.

- During the ten-year period 1987-1996, the "Urban 15" cities accounted for 43 percent of the street crimes in the state.
- Three out of every four highway robberies occurred in the "Urban 15" during the ten-year period.
- More than half of all motor vehicle thefts during the survey span occurred in these 15 urban municipalities.
- Fifty-one percent of all purse-snatchings were perpetrated in the "Urban 15" cities.

The accompanying table reflects percent distribution of street crime for the "Urban 15" cities for the years 1987-1996.

STREET CRIME TRENDS URBAN FIFTEEN MUNICIPALITIES

STREET CRIME	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	TOTAL	Percent of State Total
Highway Robbery	10,058	10,928	12,265	13,691	12,674	12,386	12,887	12,781	12,380	9,647	119,697	77.0
Purse Snatching	1,870	2,014	2,130	1,991	1,919	1,832	1,746	1,377	1,116	826	16,821	51.3
Larceny from Motor Vehicle	12,748	13,681	15,082	13,864	12,316	11,460	10,744	12,173	14,381	12,977	129,426	29.5
Larceny of Motor Vehicle Parts & Accessories	15,555	16,144	15,240	13,846	11,770	10,894	9,511	8,118	7,818	6,831	115,727	38.2
Larceny of Bicycles	2,290	1,768	1,623	1,737	1,949	1,740	1,963	2,169	2,164	1,805	19,208	11.2
Motor Vehicle Theft	36,080	38,644	40,788	40,415	40,327	35,929	29,667	26,824	26,263	23,398	338,335	54.8
TOTAL	78,601	83,179	87,128	85,544	80,955	74,241	66,518	63,442	64,122	55,484	739,214	43.0
Percent of State "Street Crime" Total	42.1	43.9	46.1	44.6	43.0	43.5	42.2	41.8	41.4	39.6	43.0	-

“URBAN 15” PROFILES

Municipality	Year	Population	Crime Index	Violent Crime	Non-Violent Crime	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Aggravated Assault	Burglary	Larceny-Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft	Total Police Officers	Total Police Employees
Camden City	1995	82,866	12,244	3,228	9,016	58	89	1,593	1,488	3,200	3,799	2,017	341	416
	1996	82,866	10,590	2,598	7,992	28	102	1,280	1,188	2,784	3,507	1,701	351	415
Newark City	1995	258,751	40,711	10,529	30,182	104	221	5,571	4,633	7,392	12,869	9,921	1,160	1,422
	1996	258,751	34,696	8,871	25,825	94	188	4,294	4,295	6,005	11,780	8,040	1,249	1,396
Jersey City	1995	226,022	18,083	4,334	13,749	25	92	2,306	1,911	3,815	6,417	3,517	851	955
	1996	226,022	16,729	3,794	12,935	26	92	1,860	1,816	3,427	6,011	3,497	839	964
Trenton City	1995	84,441	6,599	1,331	5,268	16	80	486	749	1,298	2,545	1,425	383	434
	1996	84,441	6,518	1,328	5,190	14	161	462	691	1,379	2,704	1,107	374	427
Paterson City	1995	138,290	9,343	1,658	7,685	12	45	829	772	2,231	4,049	1,405	356	431
	1996	138,290	8,449	1,635	6,814	7	48	805	775	1,948	3,486	1,380	386	470
Elizabeth City	1995	106,298	9,657	1,347	8,310	18	46	936	347	2,083	4,239	1,988	347	423
	1996	106,298	9,221	1,188	8,033	13	54	795	326	1,773	4,388	1,872	353	440
Vineland City	1995	54,673	4,060	456	3,604	3	35	208	210	787	2,534	283	122	140
	1996	54,673	3,419	408	3,011	2	26	174	206	719	2,059	233	126	144
East Orange City	1995	72,847	7,403	1,975	5,428	12	65	1,224	674	1,664	2,541	1,223	276	302
	1996	72,847	5,682	1,429	4,253	15	59	764	591	1,077	2,038	1,138	279	304
Irvington Town	1995	60,790	7,240	1,811	5,429	11	56	1,068	676	1,705	2,086	1,638	196	232
	1996	60,790	6,730	1,559	5,171	9	66	807	677	1,748	1,699	1,724	183	218
Bayonne City	1995	62,270	1,846	255	1,591	2	7	119	127	283	1,037	271	180	215
	1996	62,270	1,702	230	1,472	1	5	113	111	276	907	289	191	219
Union City	1995	56,308	3,107	428	2,679	4	6	248	170	689	1,513	477	171	189
	1996	56,308	2,896	409	2,487	5	20	231	153	662	1,237	588	167	184
Woodbridge Twp.	1995	95,152	4,617	390	4,227	2	13	109	266	723	2,927	577	198	242
	1996	95,152	3,819	309	3,510	1	16	100	192	533	2,368	609	200	242
Dover Twp.	1995	81,550	3,097	186	2,911	-	15	60	111	575	2,204	132	128	158
	1996	81,550	3,317	202	3,115	1	19	65	117	649	2,275	191	133	165
Clifton City	1995	74,002	2,685	155	2,530	3	5	76	71	457	1,545	528	141	168
	1996	74,002	2,623	191	2,432	1	11	105	74	471	1,480	481	146	170
Passaic City	1995	56,042	4,378	837	3,541	2	22	450	363	709	1,971	861	146	161
	1996	56,042	3,752	794	2,958	2	24	370	398	782	1,628	548	149	163
“URBAN 15”	1995	1,510,302	135,070	28,920	106,150	272	797	15,283	12,568	27,611	52,276	26,263	4,996	5,888
TOTALS	1996	1,510,302	120,143	24,945	95,198	219	891	12,225	11,610	24,233	47,567	23,398	5,126	5,921