

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 19 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 1988-1997 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 1988-1997.

STATE AND URBAN CRIME INDEX OFFENSES

Percent Change 1988 - 1997

		NEW JERSEY	"MAJOR URBAN"	"URBAN 15"
Population	1988	7,672,524	948,844	1,556,386
	1997	7,993,220	928,249	1,537,582
	Percent Change	4	-2	-1
TOTAL CRIME INDEX	1988	408,362	110,729	151,921
	1997	326,912	77,974	111,723
	Percent Change	-20	-30	-26
Violent Crime	1988	44,892	22,461	27,662
	1997	39,652	17,435	22,638
	Percent Change	-12	-22	-18
Nonviolent Crime	1988	363,470	88,268	124,259
	1997	287,260	60,539	89,085
	Percent Change	-21	-31	-28
Murder	1988	408	221	269
	1997	334	159	198
	Percent Change	-18	-28	-26
Rape	1988	2,592	1,024	1,336
	1997	1,730	533	748
	Percent Change	-33	-48	-44
Robbery	1988	18,886	11,111	13,459
	1997	16,953	8,347	10,684
	Percent Change	-10	-25	-21
Aggravated Assault	1988	23,006	10,105	12,598
	1997	20,635	8,396	11,008
	Percent Change	-10	-17	-13
Burglary	1988	75,617	20,626	28,863
	1997	60,941	15,644	22,338
	Percent Change	-19	-24	-23
Larceny-Theft	1988	218,883	38,424	56,752
	1997	185,142	30,289	46,248
	Percent Change	-15	-21	-19
Motor Vehicle Theft	1988	68,970	29,218	38,644
	1997	41,177	14,606	20,499
	Percent Change	-40	-50	-47

Percent Change

- During the ten-year period 1988-1997, the Crime Index in New Jersey has decreased 20 percent, while the "Urban 15" cities decreased 26 percent and the six major urban cities decreased 30 percent.
- Violent crime in the state decreased 12 percent, the 15 urban cities decreased 18 percent and the six major cities decreased 22 percent.
- Nonviolent crime in the state decreased 21 percent, the "Urban 15" decreased 28 percent, and the six major cities decreased 31 percent.

CRIME IN THE CITIES TEN YEAR SUMMARY

COMPARATIVE CRIME INDEX DISTRIBUTION FOR STATE AND URBAN CITIES 50,000 Population and Over 1988-1997

	NEW JERSEY	URBAN CITIES Over 80,000 Population (Major Urban)	URBAN CITIES Over 50,000 Population (Urban 15)
CRIME INDEX TOTAL	3,845,758	1,007,076	1,400,048
Percent Distribution		26.2	36.4
Violent Crime	467,208	220,883	280,310
Percent Distribution		47.3	60.0
Nonviolent Crime	3,378,550	786,193	1,119,738
Percent Distribution		23.3	33.1
Murder	3,935	2,065	2,474
Percent Distribution		52.5	62.9
Rape	21,811	7,229	9,867
Percent Distribution		33.1	45.2
Robbery	212,503	115,752	145,988
Percent Distribution		54.5	68.7
Aggravated Assault	228,959	95,837	121,981
Percent Distribution		41.9	53.3
Burglary	726,547	200,415	278,522
Percent Distribution		27.6	38.3
Larceny-Theft	2,057,819	340,666	518,462
Percent Distribution		16.6	25.2
Motor Vehicle Theft	594,184	245,112	322,754
Percent Distribution		41.3	54.3

Distribution:

- Six major urban centers—Camden, Newark, Jersey City, Trenton, Paterson and Elizabeth—collectively represent 12 percent of New Jersey's total population. These same urban centers, during the period 1988 through 1997, accounted for 26 percent of the state's total crime.
- Major Urban centers from 1988 through 1997 accounted for 47 percent of all violent crime and 23 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 36 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 1988-1997, 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 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 1988-1997.

STREET CRIME TRENDS URBAN FIFTEEN MUNICIPALITIES

STREET CRIME	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	TOTAL	Percent of State Total
Highway Robbery	10,928	12,265	13,691	12,674	12,386	12,887	12,781	12,380	9,647	8,280	117,919	76.7
Purse Snatching	2,014	2,130	1,991	1,919	1,832	1,746	1,377	1,116	826	658	15,609	50.0
Larceny from Motor Vehicle	13,681	15,082	13,864	12,316	11,460	10,744	12,173	14,381	12,977	12,387	129,065	29.5
Larceny of Motor Vehicle Parts & Accessories	16,144	15,240	13,846	11,770	10,894	9,511	8,118	7,818	6,831	6,114	106,286	38.9
Larceny of Bicycles	1,768	1,623	1,737	1,949	1,740	1,963	2,169	2,164	1,805	1,928	18,846	11.0
Motor Vehicle Theft	38,644	40,788	40,415	40,327	35,929	29,667	26,824	26,263	23,398	20,499	322,754	54.3
TOTAL	83,179	87,128	85,544	80,955	74,241	66,518	63,442	64,122	55,484	49,866	710,479	42.8
Percent of State "Street Crime" Total	43.9	46.1	44.6	43.0	43.5	42.2	41.8	41.4	39.6	39.2	42.8	-

“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	1996	82,866	10,590	2,598	7,992	28	102	1,280	1,188	2,784	3,507	1,701	351	415
	1997	84,844	9,136	2,412	6,724	42	96	1,110	1,164	2,452	2,780	1,492	365	432
Newark City	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
	1997	268,510	29,713	7,346	22,367	58	178	3,489	3,621	4,605	11,867	5,895	1,418	1,607
Jersey City	1996	226,022	16,729	3,794	12,935	26	92	1,860	1,816	3,427	6,011	3,497	839	964
	1997	229,039	15,808	3,786	12,022	26	109	1,668	1,983	3,170	5,775	3,077	858	999
Trenton City	1996	84,441	6,518	1,328	5,190	14	161	462	691	1,379	2,704	1,107	374	427
	1997	85,437	6,254	1,239	5,015	12	57	588	582	1,252	2,641	1,122	369	422
Paterson City	1996	138,290	8,449	1,635	6,814	7	48	805	775	1,948	3,486	1,380	386	470
	1997	150,270	7,234	1,465	5,769	14	54	694	703	1,998	2,639	1,132	382	458
Elizabeth City	1996	106,298	9,221	1,188	8,033	13	54	795	326	1,773	4,388	1,872	353	440
	1997	110,149	9,829	1,187	8,642	7	39	798	343	2,167	4,587	1,888	354	435
Vineland City	1996	54,673	3,419	408	3,011	2	26	174	206	719	2,059	233	126	144
	1997	55,906	3,231	414	2,817	6	29	141	238	673	1,952	192	129	145
East Orange City	1996	72,847	5,682	1,429	4,253	15	59	764	591	1,077	2,038	1,138	279	304
	1997	70,534	5,756	1,142	4,614	16	41	571	514	825	2,254	1,535	290	332
Irvington Town	1996	60,790	6,730	1,559	5,171	9	66	807	677	1,748	1,699	1,724	183	218
	1997	58,434	6,233	1,568	4,665	7	63	726	772	1,682	1,577	1,406	179	204
Bayonne City	1996	62,270	1,702	230	1,472	1	5	113	111	276	907	289	191	219
	1997	60,499	1,653	187	1,466	3	8	67	109	293	883	290	196	222
Union City	1996	56,308	2,896	409	2,487	5	20	231	153	662	1,237	588	167	184
	1997	57,126	2,754	357	2,397	2	18	187	150	707	1,149	541	178	190
Woodbridge Twp.	1996	95,152	3,819	309	3,510	1	16	100	192	533	2,368	609	200	242
	1997	94,714	3,918	383	3,535	-	22	95	266	562	2,450	523	200	240
Dover Twp.	1996	81,550	3,317	202	3,115	1	19	65	117	649	2,275	191	133	165
	1997	83,776	3,512	220	3,292	-	10	69	141	658	2,501	133	134	167
Clifton City	1996	74,002	2,623	191	2,432	1	11	105	74	471	1,480	481	146	170
	1997	71,305	2,659	169	2,490	1	4	92	72	480	1,444	566	138	161
Passaic City	1996	56,042	3,752	794	2,958	2	24	370	398	782	1,628	548	149	163
	1997	57,039	4,033	763	3,270	4	20	389	350	814	1,749	707	144	164
“URBAN 15”	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
TOTALS	1997	1,537,582	111,723	22,638	89,085	198	748	10,684	11,008	22,338	46,248	20,499	5,334	6,178