



**RUTGERS**  
CAMDEN

The Senator Walter Rand Institute for Public Affairs

**Senator Walter Rand Institute  
For Public Affairs  
Rutgers University, Camden**

**A COMPARISON OF CRIME AMONG  
CAMDEN & FOUR MAJOR  
NEW JERSEY CITIES**

2005

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The Walter Rand Institute for Public Affairs (WRI) at the Camden Campus of Rutgers University provides research and analysis on a variety of public policy issues. One of the key issues facing our host city is crime and WRI has played a significant role in an initiative aimed at reducing certain types of crime, the Camden Safer Cities Initiative. In this role, the WRI's Research and Evaluation Unit has gathered and analyzed Camden crime data to create a clearer picture of the current state of crime as well as crime trends over time.

As a part of this effort, the WRI has created this report comparing the crime rates for Camden and four other New Jersey cities. The four cities were chosen based on multiple characteristics including population, size of police force and crime rates. This analysis compares the following crime information for each city: overall crime rate, violent and non-violent crime rates, crime index, total violent and non-violent crime, total police force, number of police per 1,000 people, murder rate, and aggravated assault rate. Crime rates are calculated by looking at the total number of crimes in relation to the population of the area. The analysis also includes demographic information (population, average age, and median income) for each city.

The four cities compared to Camden in this analysis are:

- Newark City
- Jersey City
- Trenton City
- Atlantic City

## **SUMMARY**

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This analysis is designed to provide crime data for Camden City in comparison to similar New Jersey cities to show where Camden crime is in reference to other cities in New Jersey. The cities in this report were chosen for analysis based on information in the 2005 New Jersey Uniform Crime report. They are urban centers with a police force over 100 and have comparable crime rates.

Demographically Camden has:

- ♣ the second smallest population,
- ♣ the youngest average age for its residents,
- ♣ and the lowest median income per household.

These demographic factors have an influence on the level of crime in the city and should be taken into account when comparing Camden to other New Jersey cities.

When comparing crime data in 2005, Camden had:

- ♣ the second highest overall crime rate of the cities analyzed,
- ♣ the highest violent crime rate,
- ♣ and the second highest non-violent crime rate.

In terms of actual number of crimes, Camden ranked:

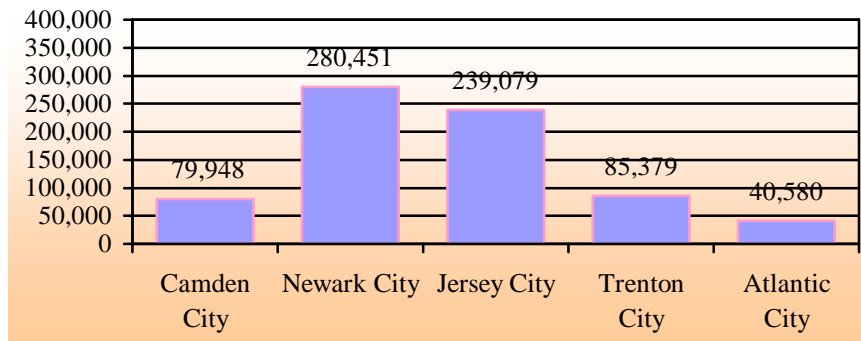
- ♣ third among the cities analyzed for violent crime total,
- ♣ and fourth for non-violent crime overall.

In terms of law enforcement efforts, Camden had:

- ♣ the third largest police force,
- ♣ and the second highest rate for police officers per 1,000 people.

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

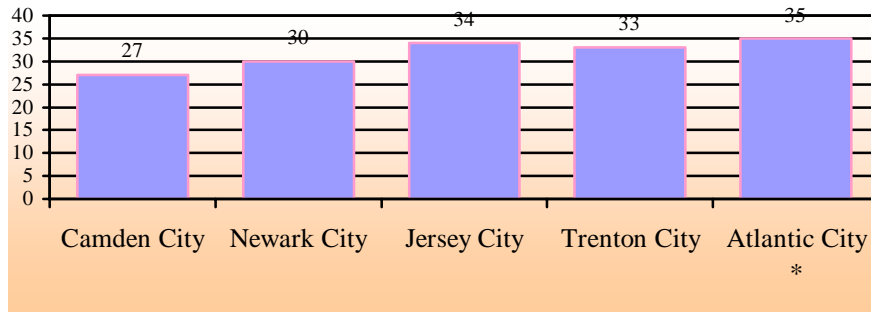
**Population by City for 2005\***



\* Based on 2004 estimates for population.

Camden has the second smallest population of the cities analyzed and is most similar in size to Trenton. Both Newark and Jersey City are much larger than the other cities analyzed, and Atlantic City has the smallest population.

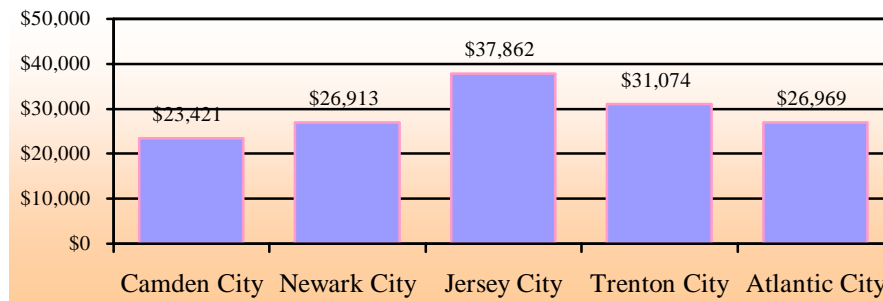
**Average Age of Residents by City (2005)**



\* Atlantic City average age is from 2000 data.

With an average age of 27, Camden’s population is the youngest of the cities in this report. Atlantic City, Jersey City and Trenton have similar-aged populations. The range of the average ages of the cities is 7 years, and all of the cities analyzed had a lower average age than the state average of 36.7 years.

**Median Income by City (1999)**

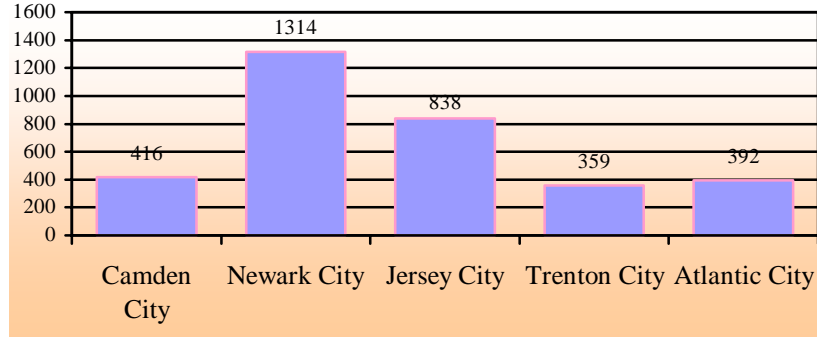


Camden is the poorest city out of the cities analyzed with a median income of \$23,421. Jersey City has the highest median income at \$37,862 followed by Trenton at \$31,074. Atlantic City and Newark had very similar median income levels.

**POLICE INFORMATION**

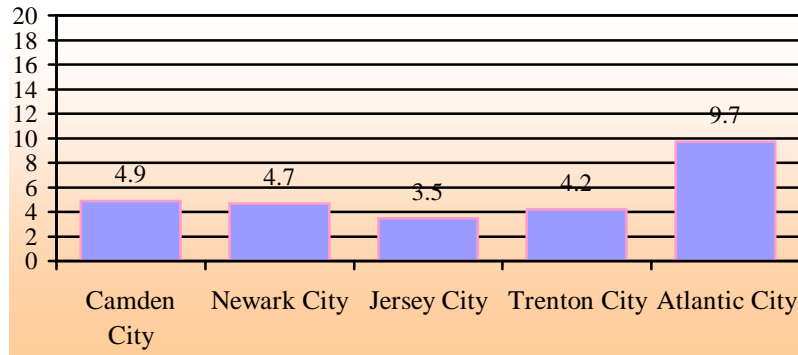
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**Number of Police Officers by City (2005)**



Other than Atlantic City, the number of police officers corresponds to the size of the city’s population; the larger the city, the larger the police force. As a thriving tourist destination, it makes sense that Atlantic City would have a large police force in comparison to its population.

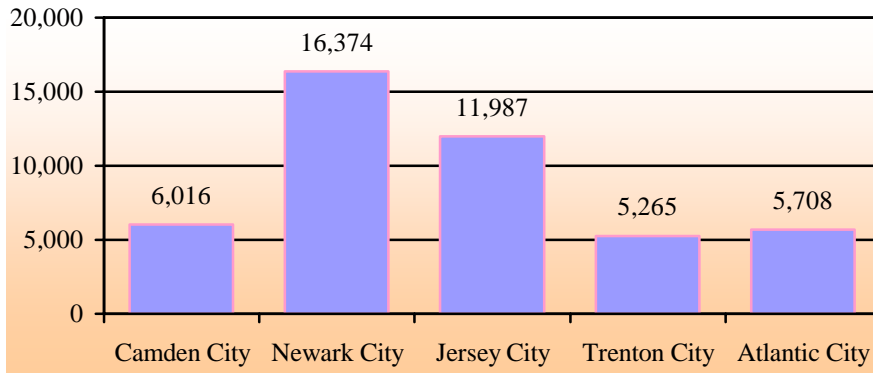
**Rate of Police Officers by Population (per 1,000) (2005)**



When taking population size into account, Atlantic City had the largest police force with a rate of 9.7 police per 1,000 residents. Newark and Camden had very similar rates at 4.7 and 4.9 respectively, and Jersey City had the lowest rate of police officers at 3.5.

**CRIME INFORMATION**

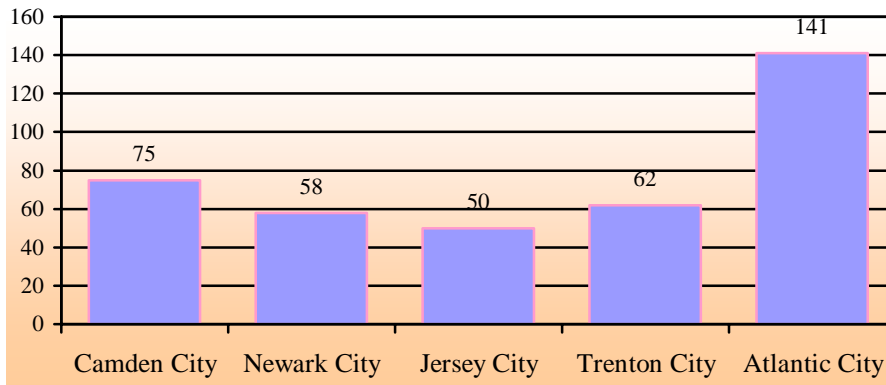
**Crime Index by City (2005)**



*\*Crime index includes the following seven major offenses: murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft.*

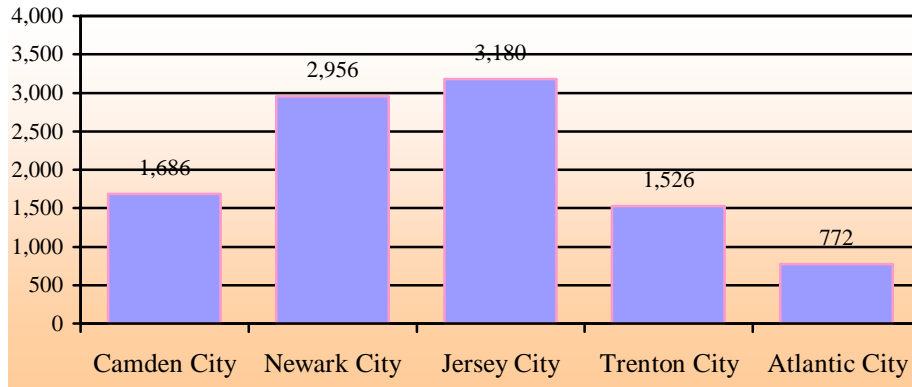
When analyzing crime index, or number of Part I crimes for the cities, Newark had the highest crime index at 16,374 offenses and Trenton the lowest at 5,265. It should be noted that Newark and Jersey City’s crime totals were in accordance with their population sizes (i.e., Newark was the largest and Jersey City the second largest city). Although Atlantic City’s population was approximately half the size of Camden and Trenton, it had a crime index near those cities. The large number of tourists that regularly visit Atlantic City likely impact the crime index.

**Crime Rates by City (per 1,000) 2005**



Atlantic City had a much higher crime rate than any of the other cities analyzed. Atlantic City had a relatively large number of both violent and non-violent crimes and the smallest population size of the cities analyzed, resulting in the high crime rate. Camden City had the second highest crime rate, and although it is lower than Atlantic City, Camden’s crime rate is still much higher than the remaining cities, Trenton, Newark and Jersey City, which all had relatively similar crime rates.

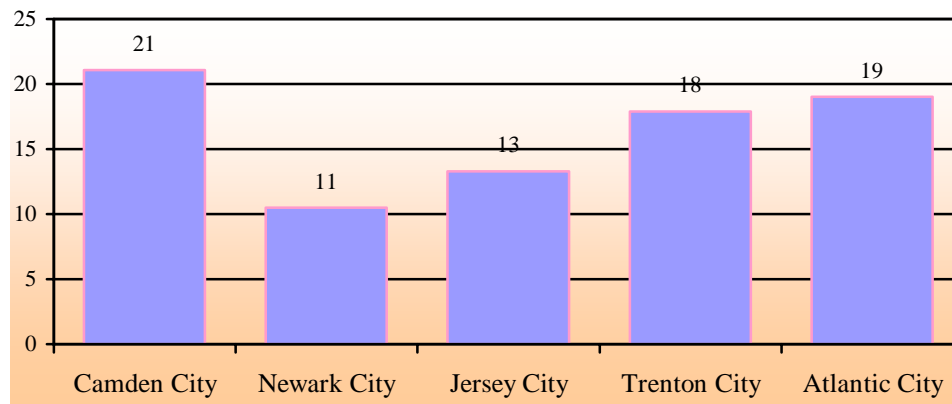
### Violent Crime Total by City (2005)



*\*Violent crimes include murder, rape, robbery, and, aggravated assault.*

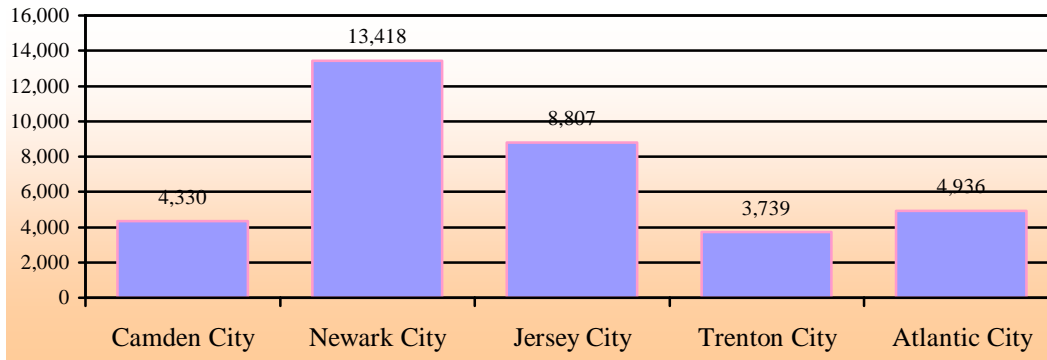
The number of violent crimes in Camden was exceeded only by Newark and Jersey City, both of which have much larger populations. The violent crime totals do not match with population order; for example, Jersey City had the highest violent crime total but the second largest population; Trenton was fourth for violent crime total and third by population size.

### Violent Crime Rate by City (per 1,000) 2005



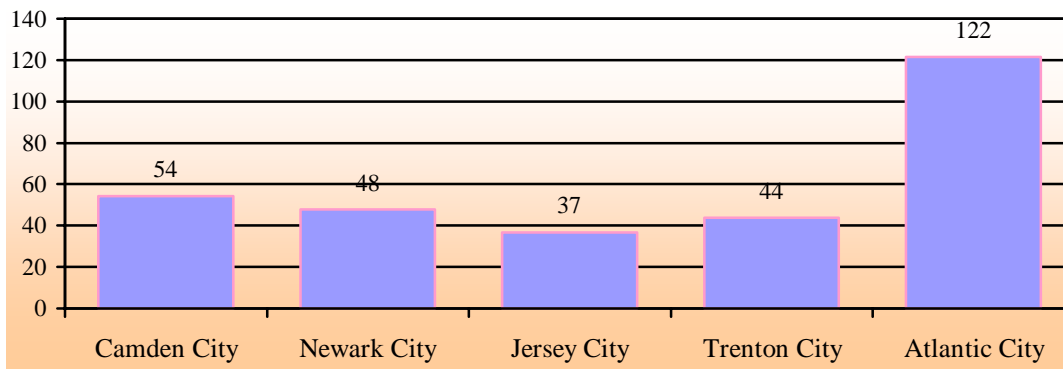
The drastically different population sizes of the cities analyzed result in very different rankings when rates, as opposed to total numbers, are presented. Camden had the highest violent crime rate at 21 per 1,000 residents. Atlantic City's and Trenton's rates were very similar, as were Jersey City's and Newark's.

### Non-Violent Crime Total by City (2005)



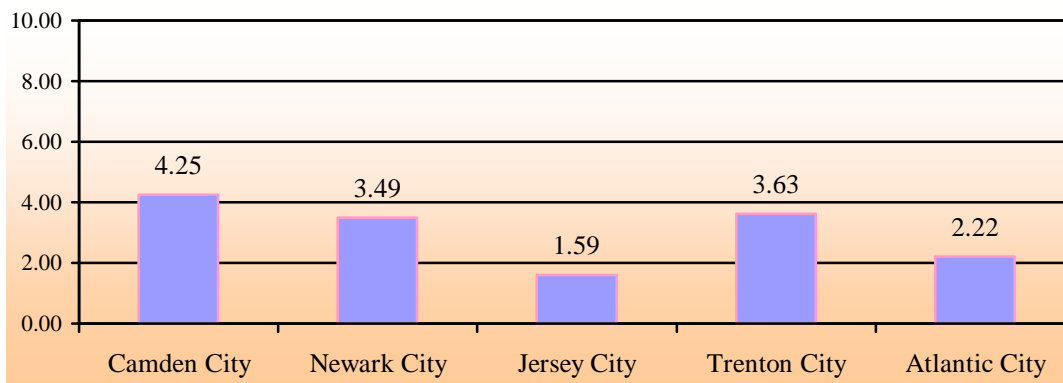
Only Trenton had a lower number of non-violent crimes than Camden. Newark had the highest non-violent crime total, followed by Jersey City. It is important to note Atlantic City's total, which is higher than both Trenton and Camden in spite of having a population approximately half the size of these cities.

### Non-Violent Crime Rate by City (per 1,000) 2005



Atlantic City had the highest non-violent crime rate of the cities analyzed. Camden had the second highest rate. Newark, Jersey City, and Trenton all had comparable non-violent crime rates.

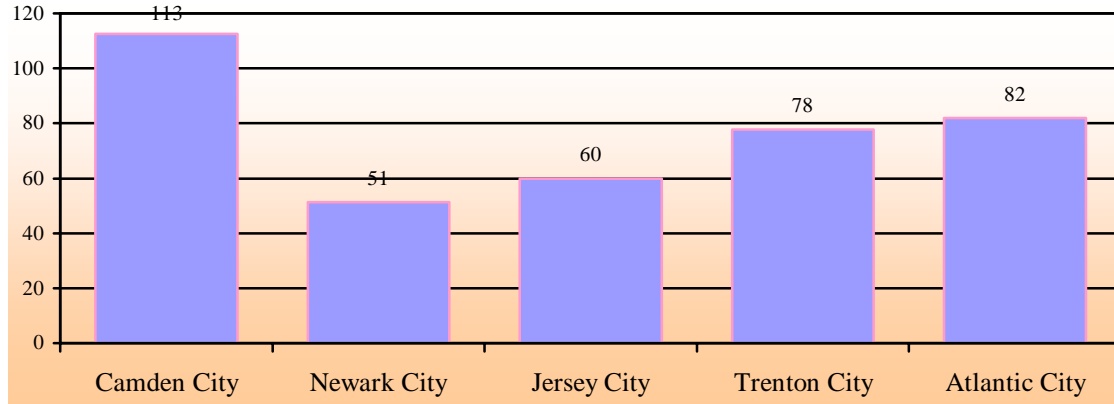
### Murder Rate by City (per 10,000) 2005



Camden, Newark, and Trenton had like murder rates of 4 per 10,000 people. Both Atlantic City and Jersey City had murder rates of 2.



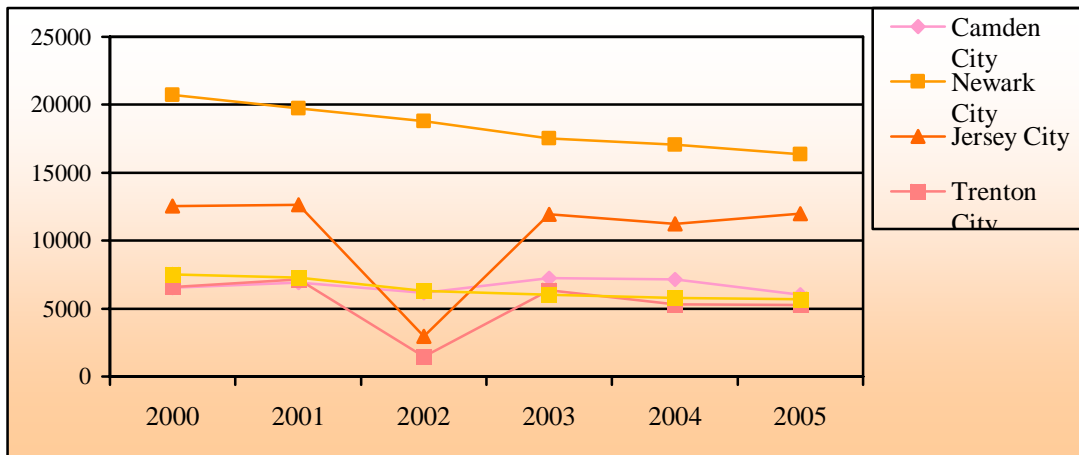
### Aggravated Assault Rate by City (per 10,000) 2005



At 113, Camden’s aggravated assault rate was the highest of the cities analyzed. Atlantic City had the second highest, and Newark had the lowest aggravated assault rate of the five cities.

This section of the report deals with crime trends in the five cities from 2000 to 2005. Newark City and Atlantic City are the only cities analyzed to show a consistent decline for index crimes from 2000 to 2005. Jersey City and Trenton index crimes are similar in their crime patterns, and both cities saw a drastic decline in 2002 with levels in 2003 back to the ‘normal’ levels. Camden seems to be the only city to have its own pattern; index crime fluctuates throughout the six year period with 2003 and 2004 being the highest years for index crimes. Violent crime was fairly steady for most of the cities analyzed with only Newark City showing a vast decline in violent crime for 2000 to 2003, with a slight increase from 2003 to 2005. Camden’s violent crime fluctuated each year with the last two years showing a slight decrease while other cities analyzed showed a fairly consistent trend for violent crime.

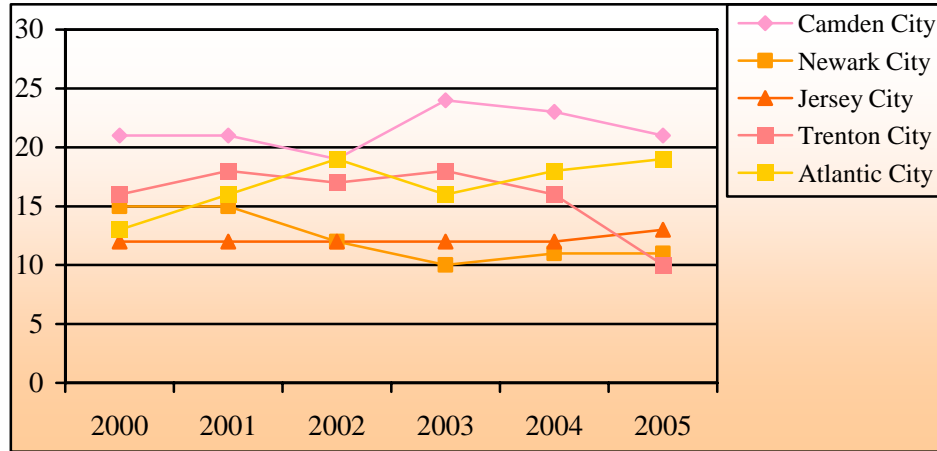
### Crime Index by City 2000-2005



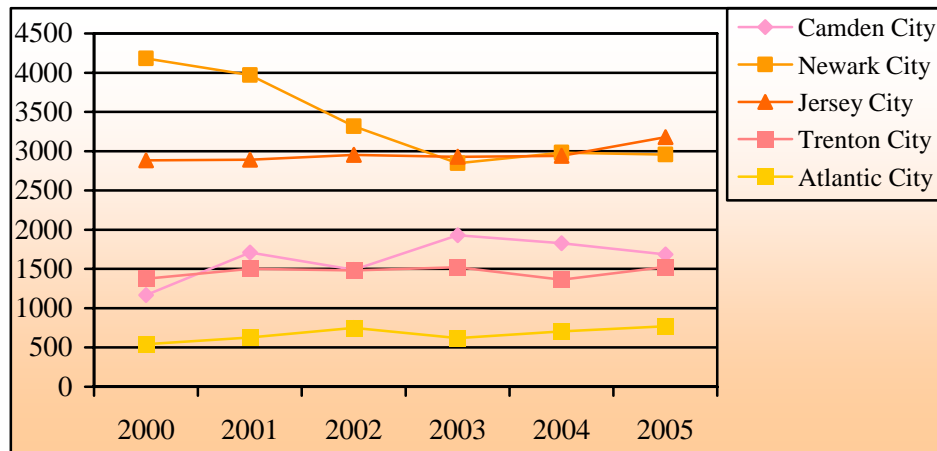
\* Crime index is the following seven major offenses: murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft.

Of the cities included, Newark and Atlantic City saw a steady decline in crime over the period analyzed, with Newark's being more extreme. Jersey City and Trenton decline experienced a steep decline in 2002 and a return to 2000/2001 levels the following year. Camden seems to be the only city to have its own pattern; [index crime] fluctuates from 2000 to 2005 with the highest years for index crimes in 2003 and 2004.

### Violent Crime Rate by City 2000-2005



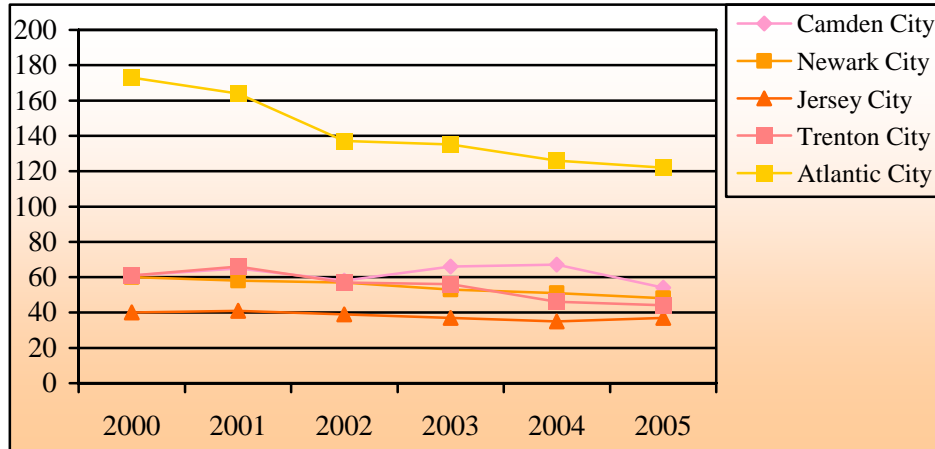
### Overall Violent Crime by City 2000-2005



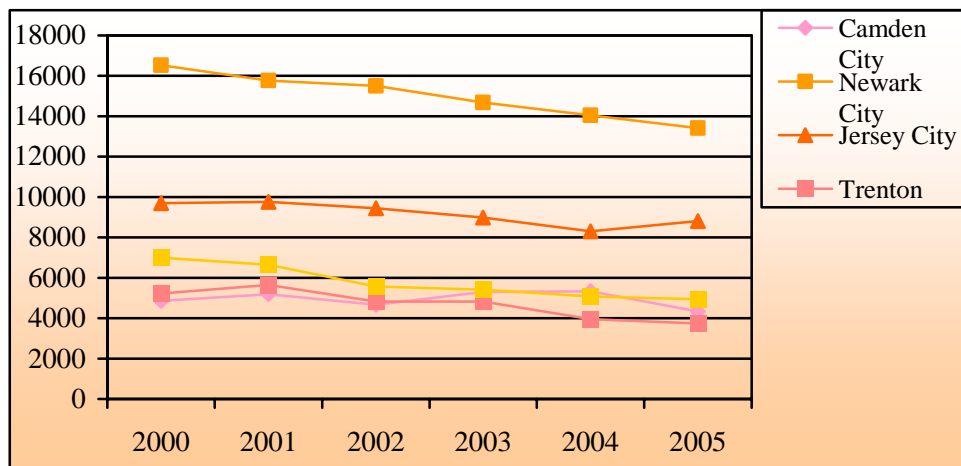
Newark showed the most drastic decline in violent crime for all the cities analyzed in terms of overall total crime, the decline started in 2001 and leveled around 2003. Newark's violent crime rate suggests the same sharp decline from 2001 to 2003. Jersey City's violent crime was fairly steady for the years analyzed with a slight increase from 2004 to 2005; the violent crime rate for Jersey City suggests the same trend. Camden's violent crime fluctuated each year, 2000 to 2001 showed a substantial increase, a decrease from 2001 to 2002, 2002 to 2003 showing a substantial increase in violent crime and a gradual decrease from 2003 to 2005. The violent crime rate for Camden suggests a similar trend however there is no increase from 2000 to 2001 for violent crime rate. Both Trenton and Atlantic City's violent crime totals were also fairly steady fluctuating slightly from year to year. Atlantic City and Trenton City violent crime rates suggest a different trend than their violent crime totals. Atlantic City saw a sharp increase in violent crime from 2000 to 2002, a decrease from 2002 to 2003, and a slight increase from 2003 to 2005.

Trenton’s violent crime rate shows no change in violent crime rate from 2000 to 2001, a slight decrease from 2001 to 2002, a sharp increase from 2002 to 2003, and then a steady decline from 2003 to 2005. It is important to make note that Camden, Atlantic City, and Trenton have the highest violent crime rates respectively, while Newark and Jersey City have the lowest crime rates; however their violent crime totals reflect a different trend, Newark and Jersey City have the highest overall violent crime totals, while the other cities have lower crime totals.

**Non- Violent Crime Rate by City 2000-2005**



**Overall Non-Violent Crime**



Overall there was a decrease in non-violent crime for the cities analyzed. Newark and Atlantic City showed a consistent decrease in non-violent crime. Although Newark’s non-violent crime total is the highest, its non-violent crime rate is fairly low; the second lowest out of the cities analyzed. Atlantic City’s non-violent crime rate is staggering in comparison to other cities analyzed; its rate is almost twice that of all the other cities analyzed. Jersey City also shows a decrease until 2005 when non-violent crime totals increased slightly. Jersey City’s non-violent crime rate reflects a similar trend to its non-violent crime total; however Jersey City’s non-violent crime rate is the lowest out of those cities analyzed while its non-violent crime total is the second highest. Trenton’s non-violent crime slightly increased in 2001 and 2003 but decreased overall; Trenton’s non-violent crime rate reflects the same trend. Camden’s non-violent crime also increased in 2001 and again in 2003 and 2004; non-violent crime was lowest in 2005 for the years analyzed. While Camden has one of the lowest non-violent crime totals, its non-violent

crime rate is in the top 3 of those cities analyzed. However the difference in non-violent crime rate between all other cities not including Atlantic City is minimal.

**Table 1: 2005 Demographics for 5 NJ Cities**

CITY	COUNTY	POPULATION	AVG. AGE OF RESIDENTS	MEDIAN INCOME
Camden City	Camden	79,948	27 yrs.	\$23,421
Newark City	Essex	280,451	30 yrs.	\$26,913
Jersey City	Hudson	239,079	34 yrs.	\$37,862
Trenton City	Mercer	85,379	33 yrs.	\$31,074
Atlantic City	Atlantic	40,580	35 yrs.	\$26,969

**Table 2: 2005 Crime Index and Rate, and Violent Crime Total and Rate**

CITY	CRIME INDEX	CRIME RATE/1,000	VIOLENT CRIME TOTAL	VIOLENT CRIME RATE/1,000
Camden City	6,016	75	1,686	21.1
Newark City	16,374	58	2,956	10.5
Jersey City	11,987	50	3,180	13.3
Trenton City	5,265	62	1,526	17.9
Atlantic City	5,708	141	772	19.0

*\*Crime index is the following seven major offenses: murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft.*

*\*Violent crimes are the following four crimes: murder, rape, robbery, and, aggravated assault.*

**Table 3: 2005 Non-Violent Crime Total and Rate, Police Offenses and Rate of Officers per 1,000 People**

CITY	NON -VIOLENT CRIME RATE/1,000	NON-VIOLENT CRIME TOTAL	TOTAL POLICE OFFICERS	RATE OF POLICE PER1,000
Camden City	54	4,330	416	4.9
Newark City	48	13,418	1,314	4.7
Jersey City	37	8,807	838	3.5
Trenton City	44	3,739	359	4.2
Atlantic City	122	4,936	392	9.7

## CONCLUSION

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As this report illustrates, Camden has had some of the highest rates and totals of crime among New Jersey cities. In 2005 Camden had the highest violent crime rate and the second highest non-violent crime rate of the cities analyzed. In terms of actual number of crimes, Camden ranked third among the cities analyzed for violent crime total and fourth for non-violent crime overall. Camden also had the highest aggravated assault rate and had one of the highest homicide rates. In terms of demographic characteristics, Camden has the second smallest population, the youngest average age for its residents, and the lowest median income per household. These demographic factors have an influence on the level of crime in the city and should be taken into account when comparing Camden to other New Jersey cities. Because Camden's population is much smaller than cities such as Newark or Jersey City, its population size may skew crime rates to appear much higher than they would in a larger city. Camden is also the youngest and poorest city making crime more prevalent because of these factors. Much of the violent crime in Camden is caused by disadvantaged youth.

In regards to law enforcement, Camden had the second highest rate for police officers per 1,000 people. See tables 1 through 3 for further reference. When analyzing crime over time, index crime fluctuates in Camden for the years analyzed and is highest in 2003 and 2004. Camden's violent crime fluctuated each year with 2002, 2004, and 2005 showing a slight decrease. Camden's non-violent crime increases in 2001 and again in 2003 and 2004; violent-crime is lowest in 2005 for the years analyzed.