



INDEX OFFENSE DATA -- DATA NOTES

Illinois Uniform Crime Reports (I-UCR) Offenses

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Introduction

For each data set on our web site, we provide valuable background information, or "data notes." Please read the following data notes and click the 'Continue' button at the top or bottom of this page.

Description

The Illinois Uniform Crime Reports (I-UCR) offense data at this website are yearly aggregate counts of offenses that have been reported by law enforcement agencies throughout the state (and determined to have actually occurred). There are eight crime categories which taken together, form what is known as the "crime index". There are four violent index crimes – murder, criminal sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault; and four property index crimes – burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

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Data source

The Illinois State Police/ Division of Administration/ Crime Studies Section

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Data collection method

Currently, I-UCR forms are completed each month by law enforcement agencies throughout the state and submitted to the Illinois State Police.

When an incident is reported to law enforcement authorities, police first investigate whether a crime actually occurred and, if so, exactly what type

of crime it was. If a crime has indeed been committed, the officers must then confirm that the incident took place within their jurisdiction. Only then can the agency count the incident in its I-UCR statistics as an offense actually occurring. If the officers determine that the crime happened outside their jurisdiction, they will refer the incident to the appropriate law enforcement agency, which will then include the incident in its offense count. It is therefore important to bear in mind that the I-UCR offense totals measure only those crimes that law enforcement agencies learn about, not all crimes that occur.

The I-UCR 1983-1998 offense and arrest data presented at this website was actually collected by ISP under two separate reporting processes. From 1972-1992, law enforcement agencies reported incident-level offense and arrest information. In other words, agencies were required to submit to ISP detailed information about every offense and arrest in their jurisdiction, not just aggregate counts of those offenses.

During the late 1980s, the FBI drafted guidelines for a greatly expanded crime reporting format, called the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). In some respects, NIBRS involved enhancements at the federal level that were already in place in Illinois. At another level, though, there were new elements for the I-UCR system, including detailed information about victims, offenders, arrestees, and circumstances of crimes – such as weapons used, victim injuries, and gang and drug involvement. Formidable problems and delays have hindered NIBRS' implementation, both nationally and in Illinois.

In 1992, Illinois' version of NIBRS began operating. The new system, however, experienced significant reporting and data collection difficulties for both the reporting agencies and ISP, stemming from complexities associated with the expanded reporting requirements. By the end of 1994, ISP suspended the collection of NIBRS data, and it implemented a simplified reporting procedure for offense and arrest statistics beginning with 1993 data. ISP has requested and received from each agency aggregate totals for the eight index offenses and arrests since that time.

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Data collection form(s)

Form ISP 2-423 (3/96) is the monthly I-UCR data collection form completed by law enforcement agencies to report aggregate offense totals for the eight index crimes, as well as aggregate arrest totals for the eight index crimes and four types of drug crime.

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Publication

The data is presented by ISP in an annual publication series entitled, *Crime in Illinois*.

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Unit of measurement

The data is originally collected by ISP at the law enforcement agency level. The website, however, also contains aggregations at the county, regional, and state levels.

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Unit of count

The unit of count is the number of offenses known to police.

Time frame

Agency, county, regional, and state-level offense totals are available for the years 1983-1998.

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Year

The data is aggregated by calendar year.

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Authority usage

- *Trends & Issues* publication series (last edition was 1997)
- *County Profiles* (last editions were 1996)
- *Illinois Strategy to Control Drug and Violent Crime* (last edition was multiyear strategy for FFY97)
- *Statewide Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention Strategy* (last edition was 1998)

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Data update information

The last update was June 1999. Each year, the Illinois State Police releases the most recent annual offense totals, as well as updated totals

from the previous year (based on data modifications reported by individual law enforcement agencies). For example, in June 1999, ISP released the 1998 data set as well as an updated 1997 data set. Accordingly, at the time of our website updates, the Authority adds the newest offense data set, as well as the previous-year changes.

Index Definitions

Each of the index crimes used by the I-UCR Program is actually a group of specific statutorily-defined crimes from the Illinois Compiled Statutes (ILCS):

- **Index Murder** includes First Degree Murder (ILCS 720-5/9-1) and Second Degree (ILCS 720-5/9-2).
- **Index Criminal Sexual Assault** includes Criminal Sexual Assault (ILCS 720-5/12-13), Aggravated Criminal Sexual Assault (ILCS 720-5/12-14), Forcible Sodomy (ILCS 720-5/12-16), and Criminal Sexual Assault with an Object (ILCS 720-5/12-14) – and all attempts.
- **Index Robbery** includes Robbery (ILCS 720-5/18-1), Armed Robbery (ILCS 720-5/18-2), Vehicular Hijacking (ILCS 720-5/18-3), Aggravated Vehicular Hijacking (ILCS 720-5/18-3), and Aggravated Robbery (ILCS 720-5/18-4) -- and all attempts.
- **Index Aggravated Assault** includes Aggravated Battery (ILCS 720-5/12-4 & 12-4.2), Heinous Battery (ILCS 720-5/12-4.1), Aggravated Battery of a Child (ILCS 720-5/12-4.3), Aggravated Battery of a Senior Citizen (ILCS 720-5/12-4.6), Ritual Mutilation (ILCS 720-5/12-32), Aggravated Assault (ILCS 720-5/12-2), Attempted First Degree Murder (ILCS 720-5/9-1), and Attempted Second Degree (ILCS 720-5/9-2).
- **Index Burglary** includes Burglary (ILCS 720-5/19-1), Residential Burglary (ILCS 720-5/19-3), and Home Invasion (ILCS 720-5/12-11) -- and all attempts.
- **Index Theft** includes Theft from Motor Vehicle (ILCS 720-5/16-1), Theft of Motor Vehicle Parts or Accessories (ILCS 625-5/4-102 & 4-103), Burglary of Motor Vehicle Parts or Accessories (ILCS 720-5/19-1), Burglary from Motor Vehicle (ILCS 720-5/19-1), Theft Over \$300 (ILCS 720-5/16-1), Theft \$300 and Under (ILCS 720-5/16-1), Retail Theft (ILCS 720-5/16a-3), Delivery Container Theft (ILCS 720-5/16e-3), Pocket-Picking (ILCS 720-5/16-1), Purse-Snatching (ILCS 720-5/16-1), Theft from Building (ILCS 720-5/16-1), and Theft from Coin-Operated Machine or Device (ILCS 720-5/16-5) -- and all attempts.
- **Index Motor Vehicle Theft** includes Motor Vehicle Theft (ILCS 720-5/16-1 & ILCS 625-5/4-103) -- and all attempts.
- **Index Arson** includes Arson (ILCS 720-5/20-1), Aggravated Arson (ILCS 720-5/20-1.1) – and all attempts.

The specific statutory crimes contained in each index category reflect current index crime definitions as of the most recent update. Those index crime definitions, however, have changed somewhat over time. For more

information, contact the Authority's Information Clearinghouse at (312) 793-8550.

Caveats/Cautions

Although Crime Index totals (all eight combined) are available at this website, users of the data are cautioned that this aggregation of the eight crime categories may obscure specific offense trends. Alternatively, you may wish to examine violent index crime separately from property index crime. The vast majority of index crime is property crimes, and for analytical purposes, it is more revealing to separate the two. Otherwise, a large jump in the overall Crime Index could imply that serious crime against people is rising when, in fact, a property crime such as larceny/theft may account for most of the increase.

Crime incidents may also be reported differently across agencies. Inevitably, there will be differences in how individual agencies decide whether a reported incident is really a crime (as defined in the Illinois statutes) and, if it is a crime, which offense category best describes the incident. A barroom brawl, for example, could be categorized as aggravated or simple assault, aggravated or simple battery, disorderly conduct, or a non-reportable disturbance, depending on the officer's assessment of the incident.

Generally, when crime levels are compared across jurisdictions, rates are more revealing than raw numbers." The crime rate indicates the volume of crime occurring within a given population. It is calculated on this website as the total number of index crimes per 100,000 inhabitants and is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Crime Index} \times 100,000}{\text{jurisdictional population}} = \text{crime rate}$$

The jurisdictional population can be that of a city, town, village, county, state, or nation.

ICJIA calculates the offense rates for Illinois counties by totaling the population of all the cities, towns, and unincorporated areas of each county. The total number of offenses reported by that county (as the above formula shows) is then divided by the county population.

In some cases, these county totals may be slightly higher or lower than the county population reported by the Census Bureau because of the different methods used to calculate the county population. Because 95 cities in Illinois reside in more than one county, the Census Bureau apportions the population according to their respective counties. For example, the population of Aurora includes people in both Du Page and Kane counties. To calculate Aurora's county population, the Census Bureau allocates Aurora's population to both Du Page and Kane counties. On the other hand, ICJIA includes all of Aurora's population in Kane County (where the majority of the population resides). Because of the way law enforcement agencies in Illinois currently report offense and arrest data, it is not currently possible to allocate the data to the applicable counties. Therefore, for the 95 agencies whose jurisdictional boundaries crosses county borders, ICJIA (and the Illinois State Police) include that agency's

county borders, ICJIA (and the Illinois State Police) include that agency's offense and arrest data in the county in which the agency primarily resides.

Regional Definitions

To provide useful comparisons of offense totals and rates among different types of jurisdictions in Illinois, the website provides offense data for five subregions of the state: Chicago, suburban Cook County, collar counties, urban counties (outside of Cook and collar counties), and rural counties. The collar counties are the five which border Cook County (DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, and Will). Urban and rural counties are defined by whether or not they lie within a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). A geographic area qualifies as an MSA in one of two ways as defined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census: if it includes a city of at least 50,000, or if it includes an urbanized area of at least 50,000 population with a total metropolitan population of at least 100,000. In addition to the county containing the main city or urbanized area, an MSA may include counties having strong economic or social ties to the central county.

Besides Cook and the collar counties, there are currently [22 urban Illinois counties]. In addition, there are currently [74 rural Illinois counties]. Some urban counties were previously designated as rural until such time that their populations met the MSA requirements. For the data period covered at this website, it should be noted that Jersey, Grundy, and Kendall Counties were redefined from rural to urban in 1990; while Ogle and DeKalb Counties were redefined in 1993. Urban and rural regional offense rates for the entire 1983-1998 period are calculated based on the county assignments currently in place. This was done to ensure uniformity of these regional rates over time with a consistent county composition associated with each of the regions.

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Population Data

The county and jurisdictional population data used for calculating the offense rates are the revised population estimates produced by the U. S. Census Bureau. The 1983 through 1989 population estimates were released March 2, 1992, and the 1990 through 1998 estimates were released June 30, 1999.

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