

## Assessing Illinois' Metropolitan Enforcement Groups and Task Forces

120 S. Riverside Plaza,  
Suite 1016  
Chicago, Illinois 60606

Tel: (312) 793-8550  
Fax: (312) 793-8422  
TDD: (312) 793-4170

[www.icjia.state.il.us](http://www.icjia.state.il.us)

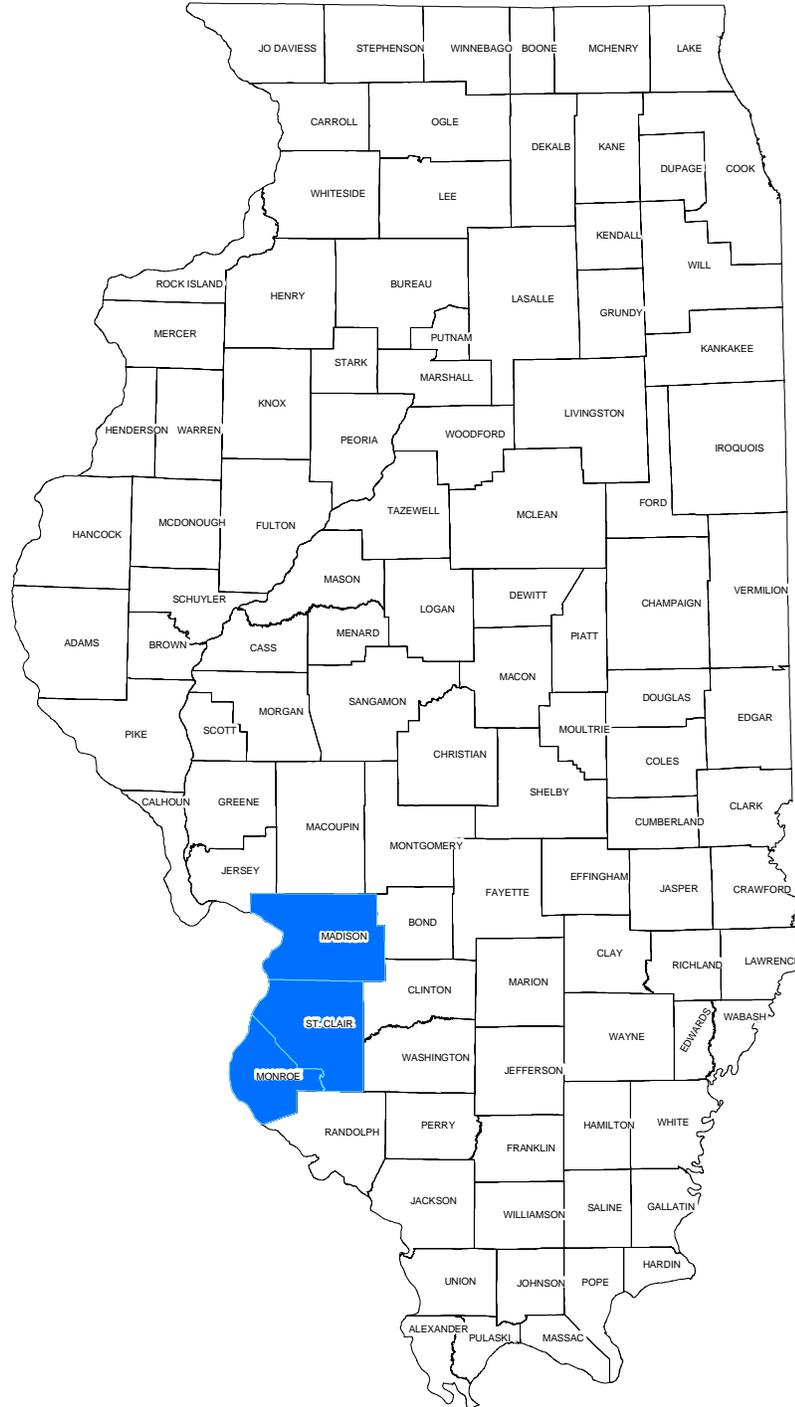
*Prepared by*

The Research and  
Analysis Unit

Rod R. Blagojevich  
Governor

Sheldon Sorosky  
Chairman

Lori G. Levin  
Executive Director



## Profile of the Metropolitan Enforcement Group of Southwestern Illinois

March 2004



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Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority  
120 S. Riverside Plaza, Suite 1016  
Chicago, Illinois 60606-3997  
Telephone (312) 793-8550  
Telefax (312) 793-8422  
TDD: (312) 793-4170  
World Wide Website <http://www.icjia.state.il.us>

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*Gary Kupsak*  
*Kelly Marzano*  
*Thomas Nichol*  
*David Olson*  
*Gerard Ramker*  
*Michelle Repp*  
*Gregory Stevens*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 1989, the Authority's Research and Analysis Unit has received funds under the federal Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 to document the extent and nature of drug and violent crime in Illinois and the criminal justice system's response to these offenses. As a result of these efforts, the Authority has amassed a large amount of data measuring the extent and nature of drug and violent crime in Illinois and the impact these crimes have had on the criminal justice system. In addition, as part of its monitoring and evaluation efforts, the Authority also requires funded programs to submit monthly data reports describing their activities and accomplishments. This profile is intended to provide a general overview of the drug and violent crime problem in the jurisdictions covered by Illinois' MEGs and task forces, and the response to these problems by the units.

Although the data presented in this report are by no means inclusive of all indicators, they do provide a general overview of drug and violent crime and the response and impact of the criminal justice system. The following represent general conclusions that can be made based on the data analyzed for this report.

- In 2002, 18 local Illinois police agencies participated in MEGSI (a participating agency is defined as one that contributes either personnel or financial resources to MEGSI). Officers assigned to MEGSI (totaling 16 in 2002, 11 from participating agencies) accounted for 2 percent of the total number of sworn police officers working for agencies participating in MEGSI (page 1).
- The violent Index offense rate was collectively higher across jurisdictions participating in MEGSI than among the combined jurisdictions that did not participate in MEGSI (page 3).
- The drug arrest rate tended to be slightly higher in those jurisdictions participating in MEGSI than in those jurisdictions not participating. The drug arrest rate achieved by MEGSI was significantly lower than that achieved by both participating and non-participating agencies. In fact, the drug arrest rate achieved by the participating agencies was nearly eight-times higher than the rate experienced by MEGSI, meaning that the unit, with 16 officers, made one arrest for a violation of the Cannabis Control or Controlled Substances Acts for every eight arrests made by all of the participating agencies combined (page 6).
- When comparing the types of drug offenders arrested by those agencies participating in MEGSI, those agencies not participating, and MEGSI, it was found that MEGSI tended to target and arrest more serious drug law violators, specifically violators of the Controlled Substances Act, which tend to be felony-level offenses (page 8).
- The majority of all drug arrests reported by MEGSI, for either violations of the Cannabis Control Act or the Controlled Substances Act, involve drug sale or delivery (page 13).
- Between 1993 and 2002, the amount of cannabis and cocaine seized by MEGSI increased (pages 14 and 15).
- Between 1989 and 2002, almost 90 percent of all drug arrests by MEGSI resulted in prosecution. Of these MEGSI drug offender prosecutions, 58 percent were for violations of Controlled Substances Act. In addition, between 1989 and 2002, 80 percent of all drug offenders who were prosecuted as a result of MEGSI activity were convicted (page 17).

- In 2002, among those MEGSI drug offenders convicted and sentenced, probation sentences accounted for the largest proportion (76 percent), followed by prison sentences (19 percent) and jail sentences (5 percent) (page 19).
- Between 1989 and 2002, prison sentences resulting from MEGSI cases accounted for 22 percent of all drug-law violators sent to prison from the region where MEGSI operates; however, that proportion has decreased from 44 percent in 1989 to 20 percent in 2002 (page 20).
- Unlike the arrests made by the participating and non-participating agencies, the arrests made by MEGSI tended to involve the substances considered to be most serious (i.e., felony versus misdemeanor) and the substances for which a large proportion of community residents were seeking and receiving substance abuse treatment in 2002 (page 24).



## I. Introduction

The Metropolitan Enforcement Group of Southwestern Illinois (MEGSI) covers Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties. Combined, these counties had a 2002 total population of 547,851 – 1 percent less than in 1990. In 2002, 18 local police agencies participated in MEGSI. These include the Madison and Monroe County sheriff's offices and the following municipal police departments: Bethalto, Brooklyn, Caseyville, Collinsville, East St. Louis, Edwardsville, Granite City, Highland, Madison, Maryville, New Athens, O'Fallon, Pontoon Beach, Troy, Venice, and Waterloo. As a result, these agencies served 47 percent of the population in Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties covered by MEGSI (see Map 1 on page 30). A participating agency is defined as one that contributes either personnel or financial resources to MEGSI.

In addition to agencies that participate in MEGSI, Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties are served by 38 additional police departments that do not participate in MEGSI. According to the Illinois State Police, the county sheriff and local police departments in Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties, combined, employed 1,036 full-time police officers as of October 31, 2002. In comparison, there were a total of just 16 officers assigned to MEGSI in 2002, 11 of which were assigned by participating agencies and five from the Illinois State Police. Thus, the officers assigned to MEGSI during 2002 accounted for a relatively small proportion—2 percent—of the total number of sworn police officers working in the participating police departments, and the region as a whole.

Since 1989, the Authority's Research and Analysis Unit has received funds under the federal Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 to document the extent and nature of drug and violent crime in Illinois and the criminal justice system's response to these offenses. As a result of these efforts, the Authority has amassed a large amount of data measuring the extent and nature of drug and violent crime in Illinois and the impact these crimes have had on the criminal justice system. In addition, as part of its monitoring and evaluation efforts, the Authority also requires funded programs to submit monthly data reports describing their activities and accomplishments. To put this information into the hands of Metropolitan Enforcement Group (MEG) and drug task force directors and policy board members, the Authority's Research and Analysis Unit has developed profiles – of which this is one – for each MEG and task force. The profile is intended to provide a general overview of the drug and violent crime problem in the jurisdictions covered by Illinois' MEGs and task forces, and the response to these problems by the units.

In addition to administering federal block-grant funds that come to Illinois for crime control initiatives, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority is also responsible for providing policymakers, criminal justice professionals and others with information, tools and technology needed to make effective decisions that improve the quality of criminal justice in Illinois. The Authority provides an objective system-wide forum for identifying critical problems in criminal justice, developing coordinated and cost-effective strategies, and implementing and evaluating solutions to those problems. The specific powers and duties of the Authority are delineated in the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Act (Illinois Compiled Statutes, Ch. 20, Sec. 3930). Two of the Authority's many responsibilities are serving as a clearinghouse of information and research on criminal justice and undertaking research studies to improve the administration of criminal justice.

While the data presented in this report are by no means inclusive of all indicators, they do provide a general overview of drug and violent crime and the response and impact of the criminal justice system. In addition, these data are readily available and consistently defined through existing statewide data collection mechanisms. Some data presented in this profile have been analyzed differently than in previous years; therefore, caution must be taken when comparing numbers presented with previous profiles.

While a considerable amount of the information presented in this profile has been provided to the Authority by MEGSI, a number of state agencies have also provided data to the Authority that are included in this report. Specifically, the Illinois State Police, the Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts, the Illinois Department of Human Services' Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, the Illinois Department of Corrections and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services all provided data used to develop this profile. The support and cooperation of these agencies and their staffs have helped make this report an informative and timely source of information on the activities of the criminal justice system in Illinois.

## II. Trends in Violent Index Offenses and Arrests

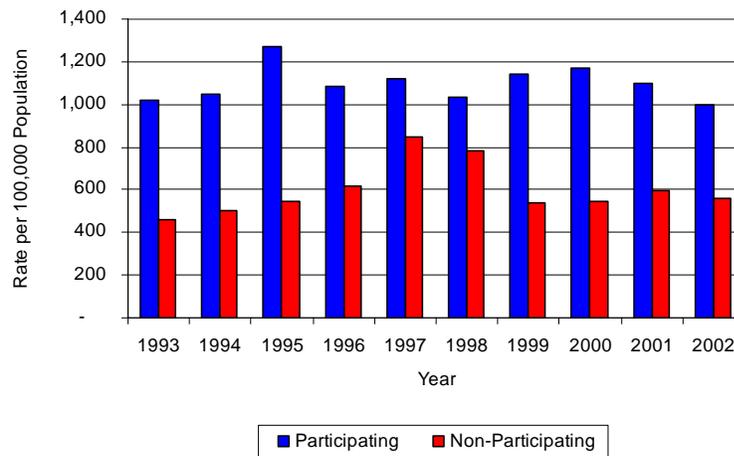
While most of Illinois' Metropolitan Enforcement Groups and drug task forces are primarily involved in drug enforcement activities, it is clear that the relationship between drugs and violence is particularly evident in a number of Illinois communities. In addition, a number of MEGs and task forces have increased their involvement in the investigation of violent crime, particularly that associated with gang activity and violence related to drug distribution, sale and turf battles. One of the most commonly used indicators of the level of crime in a particular jurisdiction is the number of Index offenses reported to the police. In Illinois, as part of the Illinois Uniform Crime Reporting (I-UCR) program, every law enforcement agency in the state is required to report crime data monthly to the Illinois State Police (ISP), either directly or through another law enforcement agency, usually the county sheriff's office. There are eight separate offenses that constitute the Crime Index, including murder, criminal sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault (violent Index offenses), burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson (property Index offenses). Although these eight offenses do not account for all crimes reported to the police, they are considered to be the most serious, frequent, pervasive and consistently defined by different law enforcement agencies.

In 2002, the total number of violent Index offenses reported to the police in the three-county region where MEGSI operates totaled 4,196, a 2 percent decrease from the 4,112 offenses reported in 1993. The majority (75 percent) of violent Index offenses reported to the police between 1993 and 2002 were aggravated assaults, while 15 percent were robberies.

During the period analyzed, the violent Index offense rate for the region covered by MEGSI increased 5 percent, from 730 offenses per 100,000 population in 1993 to 766 offenses per 100,000 population in 2002. Similarly, the violent Index offense rate in the non-participating agencies increased 20 percent, from 463 to 557 offenses per 100,000 population, while the rate in the participating agencies decreased 2 percent, from 1,021 to 1,000 offenses per 100,000 population (Figure 1). Thus, the violent Index offense rate was collectively higher across the jurisdictions that participate in MEGSI than it was among the combined jurisdictions that did not participate in MEGSI.

**Figure 1**

Violent Index Offense Rates for Participating and Non-participating Agencies in Region Covered by MEGSI

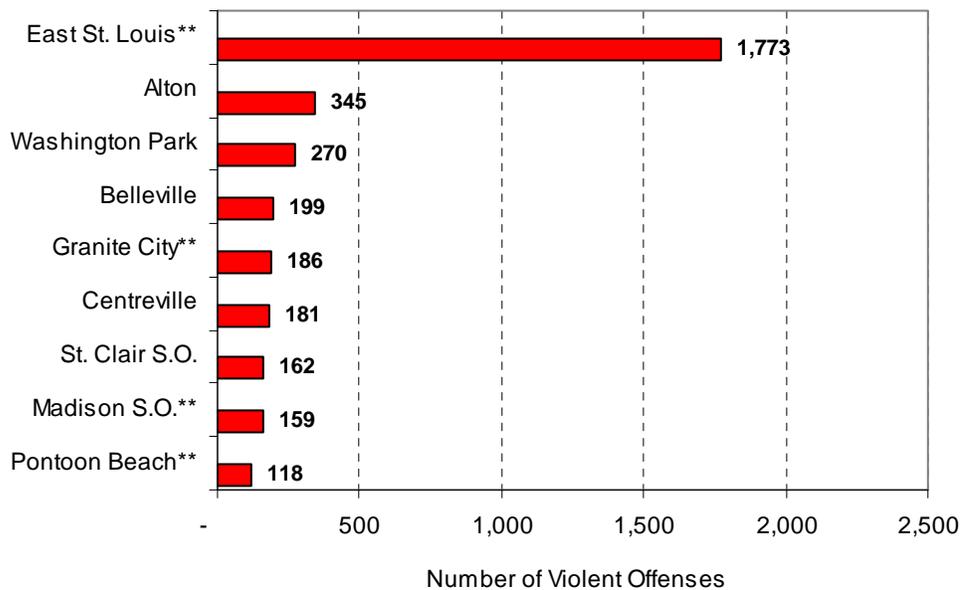


Source: ICJIA calculations using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census

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A Profile of the Metropolitan Enforcement Group of Southwestern Illinois*

Across the individual local law enforcement agencies covered by MEGSI’s jurisdiction, nine agencies accounted for 81 percent of all violent Index offenses reported to the police (Figure 2). Agencies reporting fewer than 100 violent Index offenses in 2002 are excluded from Figure 2. When controlling for differences in the populations served by these law enforcement agencies, the violent Index offense *rate* ranged from zero in 17 agencies to 23,695 violent Index offenses per 100,000 population in Sauget.

**Figure 2**  
**2002 Violent Index Offenses\* Reported by Participating and Non-participating Agencies in Region Covered by MEGSI**



Source: Illinois State Police

\*Agencies reporting 100 or more violent offenses

\*\*Agencies participating in MEGSI

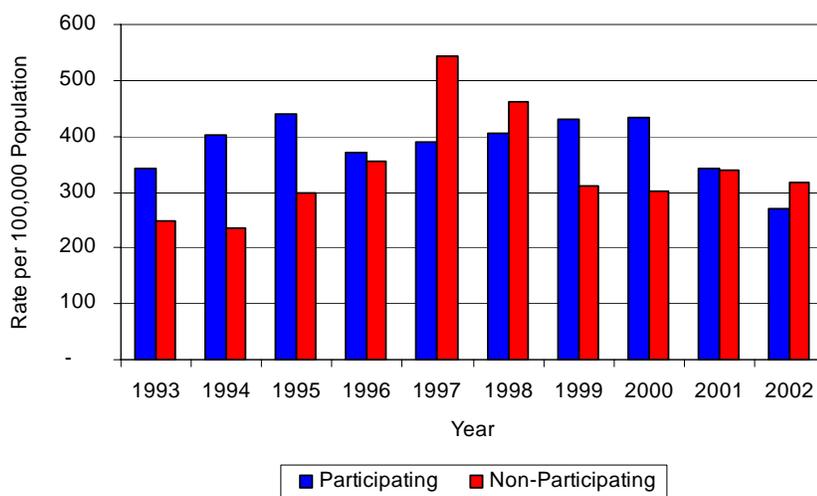
An indicator of the workload that law enforcement agencies place on other components of the justice system is the number of arrests made by police, including those for violent and property Index offenses and drug offenses. Unlike offenses, which are what police must respond to, arrests represent those offenders who may eventually be processed through other components of the justice system, including the courts, county jails, and state and local correctional programs.

Between 1993 and 2002, the number of arrests for violent Index offenses made by law enforcement agencies in the region covered by MEGSI also decreased 2 percent, from 1,649 to 1,619. As with reported violent Index offenses, the majority (81 percent) of violent Index arrests were for aggravated assaults, followed by robberies (10 percent).

During the period analyzed, the violent Index arrest rate for the region covered by MEGSI increased slightly, from 293 offenses per 100,000 population in 1993 to 296 arrests per 100,000 population in 2002. The violent Index arrest rate in the non-participating agencies increased 28 percent, from 249 to 317 offenses per 100,000 population, while the rate in the participating agencies decreased 20 percent, from 341 to 271 offenses per 100,000 population (Figure 3).

**Figure 3**

**Violent Index Arrest Rates for Participating and Non-participating Agencies in Region Covered by MEGSI**

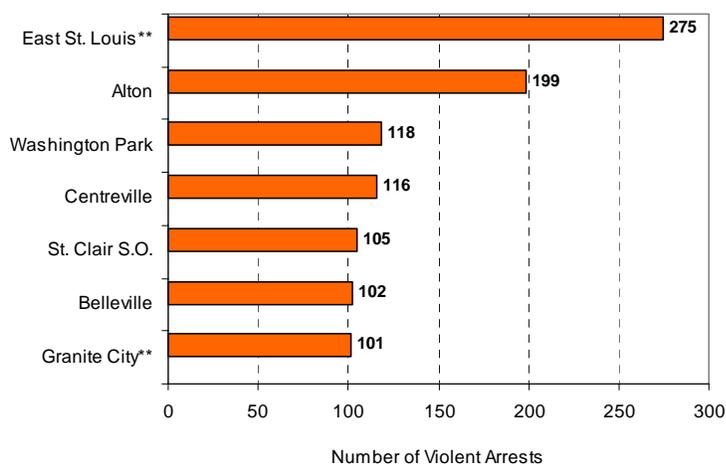


Source: ICJIA calculations using Illinois State Police and U. S. Census Bureau data

Similar to the number of violent Index offenses, the majority (73 percent) of arrests for violent Index offenses occurring in the three-county region covered by MEGSI were made by nine agencies. Agencies reporting fewer than 50 arrests for violent Index offenses in 2002 are excluded from Figure 4. Of the 1,623 violent Index arrests made in 2002, the East St. Louis Police Department accounted for 17 percent, followed by Alton (12 percent), Centreville and Washington Park (7 percent each), and Belleville, Granite City, Pontoon Beach and the St. Clair County Sheriff's Office (6 percent each) (Figure 4).

**Figure 4**

**2002 Violent Index Arrests\* Reported by Participating and Non-participating Agencies in Region Covered by MEGSI**



Source: Illinois State Police

\*Agencies reporting 50 or more violent arrests  
\*\*Agencies participating in MEGSI

### III. Trends in Drug Arrests

There are two sources of drug arrest data presented in this section. One source is the Illinois Uniform Crime Reporting (I-UCR) program that includes information submitted by local law enforcement agencies on the number of persons arrested for violations of Illinois' Cannabis Control Act, Controlled Substances Act, Hypodermic Syringes and Needles Act, and Drug Paraphernalia Control Act. In addition, data on drug arrests made by Illinois' MEGs and task forces are reported to the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. In some jurisdictions, arrests made by the MEG or task force may be reported by both local law enforcement agencies through the I-UCR and to the Authority by the unit. In other jurisdictions, arrests made by the MEG or task force are only reported to the Authority by the unit. Therefore, in some instances drug arrests may be double counted – included in both local agency statistics reported to I-UCR and those of the MEG or task force. Currently there is no mechanism in place to ensure that drug arrest statistics are not being duplicated at both the local agency and MEG/task force level. This should be kept in mind when interpreting the information presented in the following section.

The majority of drug offenses in Illinois are violations of either the *Cannabis Control Act* – which prohibits the possession, sale and cultivation of marijuana – or the *Controlled Substances Act* – which prohibits the possession, sale, distribution or manufacture of all other illegal drugs, such as cocaine and opiates. Illinois also has various other laws prohibiting other drug-related activity. These include the *Hypodermic Syringes and Needles Act* – which prohibits the possession or sale of hypodermic instruments – and the *Drug Paraphernalia Control Act* – which prohibits the possession, sale or delivery of drug paraphernalia. In general, violations of Illinois Controlled Substances Act are considered to be more serious, since they primarily involve cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, and hallucinogens, and are almost all classified under Illinois law as felonies – offenses for which a sentence to prison for one year or more is provided. The majority of cannabis and drug paraphernalia offenses encountered by police, on the other hand, tend to be misdemeanor-level offenses – those offenses for which a sentence to a term of incarceration in other than a prison for less than one year may be imposed.

In 2002, local law enforcement agencies in the counties covered by MEGSI reported 3,014 arrests for drug law violations, more than double the number in 1993 (1,374 arrests). Between 1993 and 2002, arrests for violations of Illinois' Cannabis Control Act consistently out-numbered arrests for violations of the Controlled Substances Act since 1996 in Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties. During the same period, the number of arrests for violations of the Cannabis Control Act in these three counties more than doubled from 592 to 1,310. Arrests for violations of the Controlled Substances Act in the three counties, combined, increased 18 percent, from 726 to 858. In addition, arrests for violations of the Drug Paraphernalia Control Act, enacted in 1993, increased dramatically from 33 in 1993 to 818 in 2002. Much of this increase can be attributed to a 1994 addition to the Drug Paraphernalia Control Act, which included the possession of drug paraphernalia as a violation.

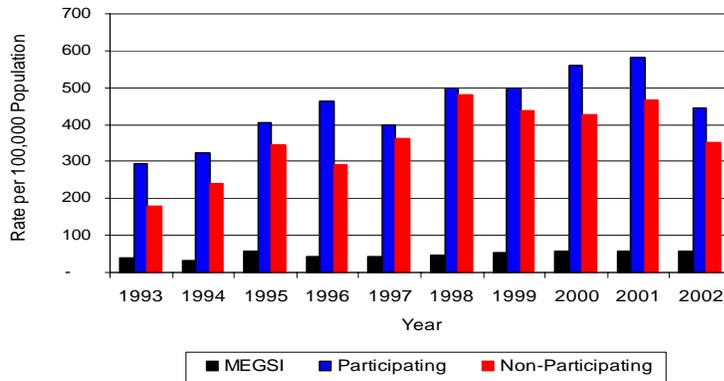
Because arrests for violations of the Drug Paraphernalia Control Act are frequently made in conjunction with other drug offense arrests, these arrests may be double-counted, thus skewing the actual number of drug arrests. Therefore, only arrests for violations of the Cannabis Control Act and Controlled Substances Act will be used for drug arrest comparisons between MEGSI and the participating and non-participating agencies.

During the period analyzed, the drug arrest rate for the Cannabis Control Act and Controlled Substances Act, combined, in the region covered by MEGSI increased 69 percent, from 234 arrests per 100,000 population in 1993 to 396 arrests per 100,000 population in 2002. The drug arrest rate in the participating agencies increased 51 percent, from 295 to 444 arrests per 100,000 population, while the drug arrest rate in the non-participating agencies nearly doubled, from 179 to 352 arrests per 100,000 population. The

arrest rate for MEGSI increased 48 percent, from 39 to 58 arrests per 100,000 population (Figure 5). Thus, the drug arrest rate tended to be slightly higher collectively in the jurisdictions that participated in MEGSI than in those jurisdictions that did not participate in MEGSI. The drug arrest rate achieved by the participating agencies was nearly eight-times higher than the rate experienced by MEGSI, meaning that the unit, with 16 officers, made one arrest for a violation of the Cannabis Control or Controlled Substances Acts for every eight arrests made by all of the participating agencies combined.

**Figure 5**

**Drug Arrest Rates for MEGSI and Participating and Non-participating Agencies in Region Covered by MEGSI**

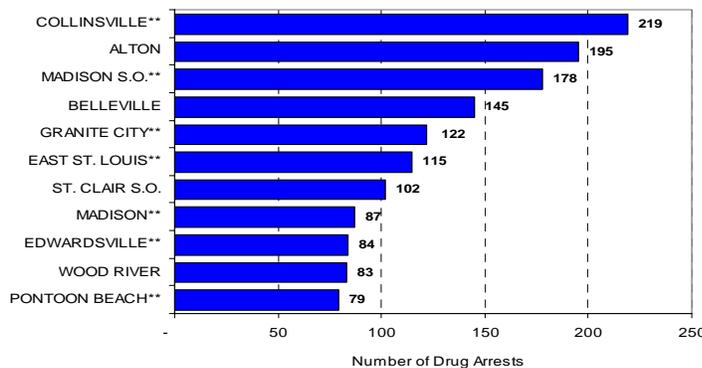


Source: ICJIA calculations using Illinois State Police and U.S. Census Bureau data

Across the individual local law enforcement agencies in the region covered by MEGSI, the total number of cannabis and controlled substances arrests ranged from zero in 19 agencies to 219. Of the 2,169 drug arrests made during 2002 in the three-county region, 11 agencies accounted for nearly two-thirds (65 percent) of these drug arrests. Agencies reporting fewer than 50 drug arrests in 2002 are excluded from Figure 6. Collinsville (10 percent) accounted for the largest proportion (14 percent) of cannabis and controlled substance arrests in Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties, followed by, Alton (9 percent), Madison County Sheriff’s Office (7 percent), Granite City (6 percent), and East St. Louis and St. Clair County Sheriff’s Office (5 percent each) (Figure 6). Among the 11 agencies with the highest number of drug arrests during 2002, seven participated in MEGSI.

**Figure 6**

**2002 Drug Arrests\*Reported by Participating and Non-participating Agencies in Region Covered by MEGSI**



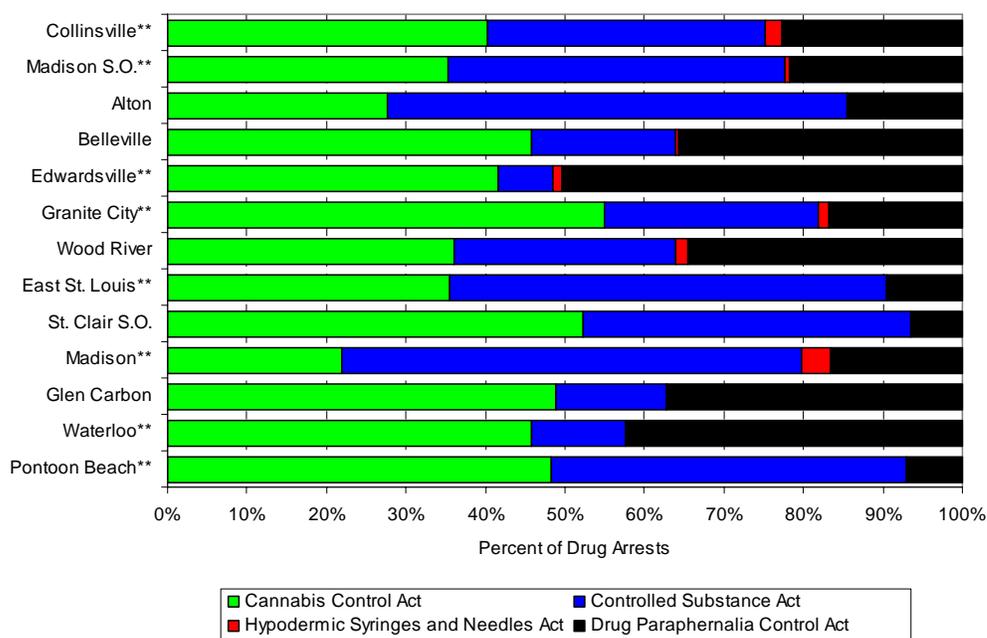
Source: Illinois State Police

\*Agencies reporting 75 or more drug arrests  
 \*\*Agency does not participate in MEGSI

In addition to the dramatic difference in the number of drug arrests made, there are also differences in the types of drug law violation arrests across the agencies in the region. In 2002, violations of the Cannabis Control Act accounted for the largest proportion of arrests across most individual agencies in the region covered by MEGSI (Figure 7).

**Figure 7**

Total 2002 Drug Arrests\* Reported by Participating and Non-participating Agencies in Region Covered by MEGSI, by Drug Type



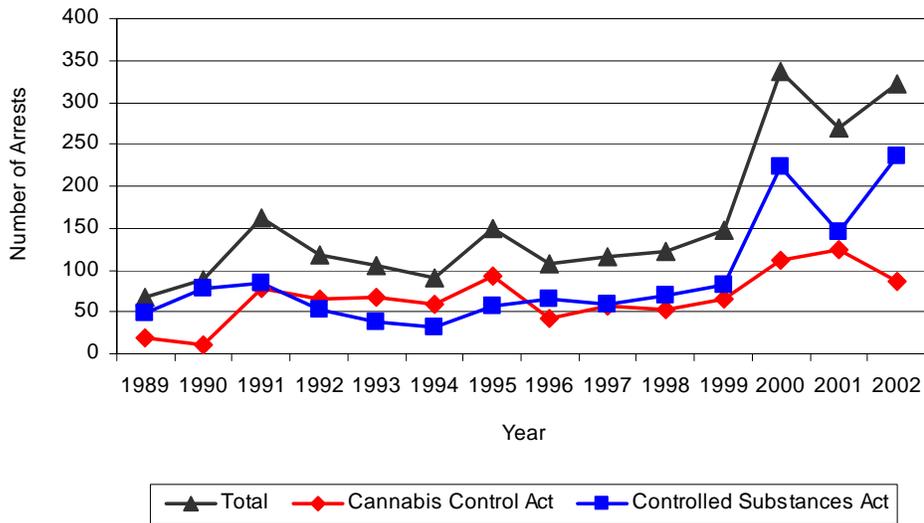
Source: Illinois State Police

\*Agencies reporting 75 or more drug arrests  
 \*\*Agencies participating in MEGSI

Between 1993 and 2002, the number of combined cannabis and controlled substances arrests made by MEGSI more than tripled, from 106 to 322 (Figure 8). Unlike drug arrests made by most local police departments in the region, violations of the Controlled Substances Act accounted for the majority of drug arrests made by MEGSI throughout most of the period analyzed. During the period analyzed, the number of MEGSI arrests for violations of the Cannabis Control Act increased 26 percent, from 68 to 86, while arrests for violations of the Controlled Substances Act increased more than five-fold, from 38 to 236 (Figure 8).

Between 1993 and 2002, the proportion of drug arrests accounted for by violations of the Controlled Substances Act decreased for participating and non-participating agencies, but increased for MEGSI. In 2002, 57 percent of the drug arrests made by MEGSI were for violations of the Controlled Substances Act, compared to 36 percent in 1993. In 2002, arrests for controlled substances violations accounted for 41 percent of the drug arrests made in the participating agencies and 38 percent for the non-participating agencies, compared to 57 percent and 53 percent, respectively, in 1993. Thus, arrests by MEGSI were more likely than arrests by either participating or non-participating agencies to involve violations of Illinois' Controlled Substances Act, as opposed to the Cannabis Control Act. One interpretation of this pattern is that MEGSI is more focused in who they are targeting and arresting than local departments, and are also getting a more serious drug law violator, since violations of the Controlled Substances Act are more likely to involve felony-level offenses.

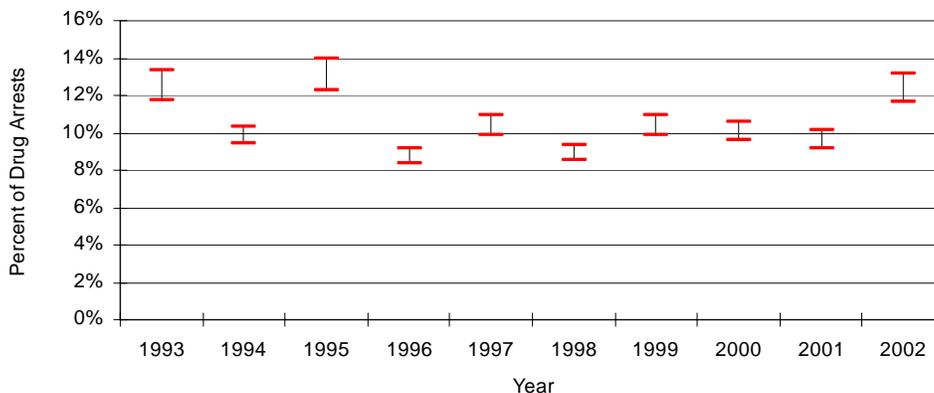
**Figure 8**  
Drug Arrests by MEGSI



Source: MEGSI

The data presented below represent the percent of total drug arrests made by agencies participating in MEGSI accounted for by MEGSI. An upper and lower bound is shown in Figure 9 which accounts for whether or not the units numbers are counted as part of the UCR submissions made by local departments (which is unknown at this point). The upper bound indicates the percentage of arrests if *all* of the MEGSI arrests are included in the local UCR submissions. The lower bound indicates the percentage if *none* of the MEGSI arrests are included in the local UCR submissions. It is estimated that the proportion of all drug arrests across participating agencies accounted for by MEGSI was relatively stable between 1993 and 2002, and remained unchanged at between 12 to 13 percent in both 1993 and 2002. Thus, despite the fact that the officers assigned to MEGSI accounted for a small proportion of total officers in the region, and unlike many other units, they accounted for more than 10 percent of the drug arrests in the region.

**Figure 9**  
Percent of Total Drug Arrests  
Accounted for by MEGSI



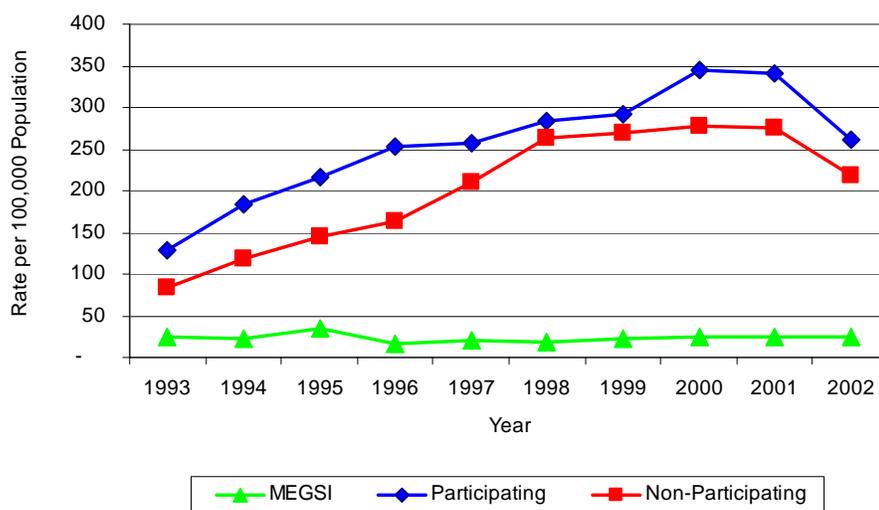
Source: ICJIA calculations using  
Illinois State Police and MEGSI data

The number of arrests for violations of Illinois' Cannabis Control Act in Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties totaled 1,310 in 2002, more than double the 592 arrests made for cannabis violations in 1993. Between 1993 and 2002, the proportion of all drug arrests accounted for by violations of the Cannabis Control Act in three-county region increased from 45 percent to 60 percent. Agencies participating in MEGSI accounted for the largest portion (52 percent) of the total number of arrests for cannabis violations. MEGSI reported a total of 65 arrests for cannabis violations in 2002, 43 percent of the unit's drug arrests.

Between 1993 and 2002, the cannabis arrest rate for the region covered by MEGSI more than doubled, from 105 arrests per 100,000 population in 1993 to 239 arrests per 100,000 population in 2002. The cannabis arrest rate in the participating and non-participating agencies also more than doubled, from 128 to 261 arrests per 100,000 population and 84 to 219 arrests per 100,000 population, respectively. The cannabis arrest rate for MEGSI, on the other hand, remained unchanged between 1993 and 2002 at 25 arrests per 100,000 population (Figure 10). Thus, the arrest rate for violations of the Cannabis Control Act was collectively slightly higher in the participating agencies than in the combined jurisdictions of the non-participating agencies.

**Figure 10**

**Cannabis Arrests Rates in the Region Covered by MEGSI as Reported by Participating Agencies, Non-participating Agencies, and MEGSI**

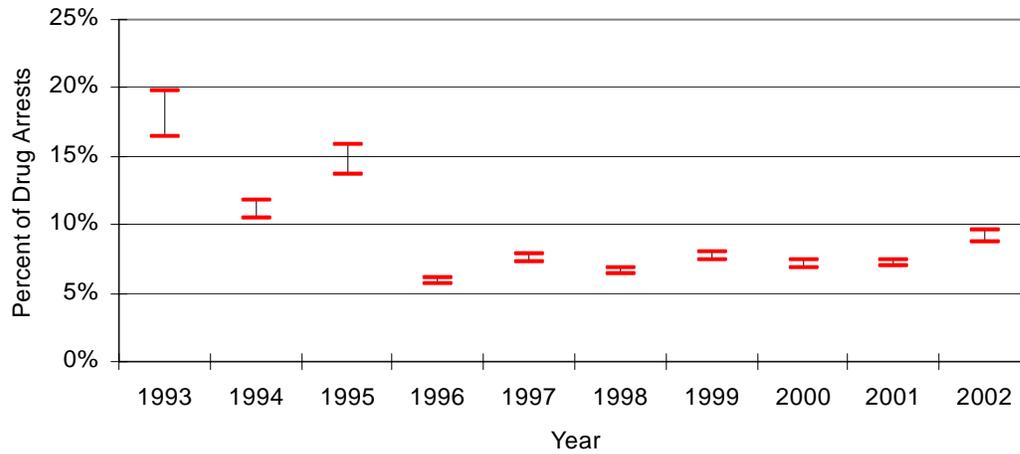


Source: ICJIA calculations using Illinois State Police, U.S. Census Bureau, and MEGSI data

The data presented in Figure 11 represent the percent of cannabis arrests made by agencies participating in MEGSI accounted for by MEGSI. An upper and lower bound is shown which accounts for whether or not the unit's numbers are counted as part of the UCR submissions made by local departments (which is unknown at this point). The upper bound indicates the percentage of arrests if *all* of the MEGSI arrests are included in the local UCR submissions. The lower bound indicates the percentage if *none* of the MEGSI arrests are included in the local UCR submissions. It is estimated that the proportion of cannabis arrests across participating agencies accounted for by MEGSI was between 16 and 20 percent in 1993, but remained relatively stable since 1996 and decreasing slightly to between 9 to 10 percent in 2002.

**Figure 11**

**Percent of Cannabis Arrests  
Accounted for by MEGSI**



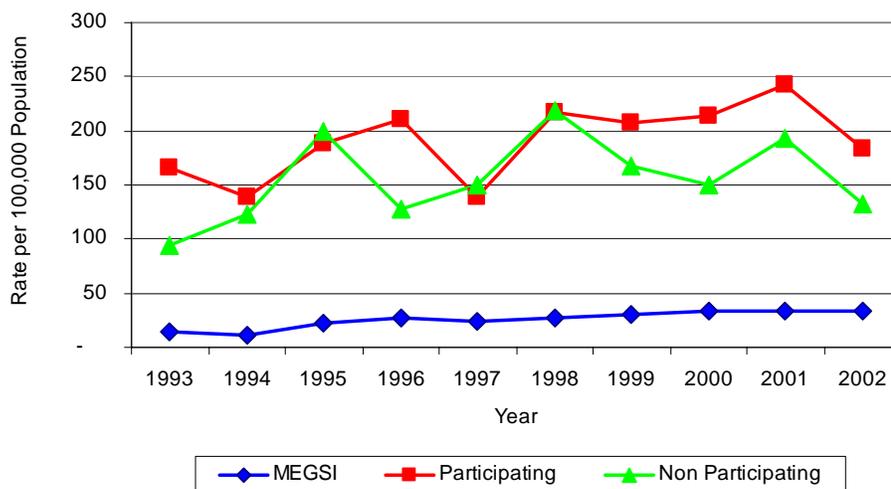
Source: ICJIA calculations using  
Illinois State Police and MEGSI data

In Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties, the number of arrests for violations of Illinois' Controlled Substances Act increased 18 percent between 1993 and 2002, from 726 to 858. Between 1993 and 2002, the proportion of all drug arrests accounted for by violations of the Controlled Substances Act in three-county region decreased from 55 percent to 40 percent. Agencies participating in MEGSI accounted for the largest portion (55 percent) of the total number of arrests for controlled substances violations. In 2002, MEGSI reported 86 arrests for controlled substance violations, 57 percent of all drug arrests reported to the Authority by the unit.

Between 1993 and 2002, the arrest rate for controlled substances act violations for the region covered by MEGSI increased 21 percent, from 129 to 157 arrests per 100,000 population (Figure 12). The controlled substances arrest rate in the participating agencies increased 10 percent, from 167 arrests per 100,000 population in 1993 to 183 arrests per 100,000 population in 2002, while the arrest rate in the non-participating agencies increased 41 percent, from 94 to 133 arrests per 100,000 population during the same period. The controlled substances arrest rate for MEGSI more than doubled, from 14 to 33 arrests per 100,000 population (Figure 12). Thus, the Controlled Substances Act arrest rate was higher in the participating agencies than the non-participating agencies.

**Figure 12**

**Controlled Substances Arrest Rates in the Region Covered by MEGSI as Reported by Participating Agencies, Non-participating Agencies, and MEGSI**

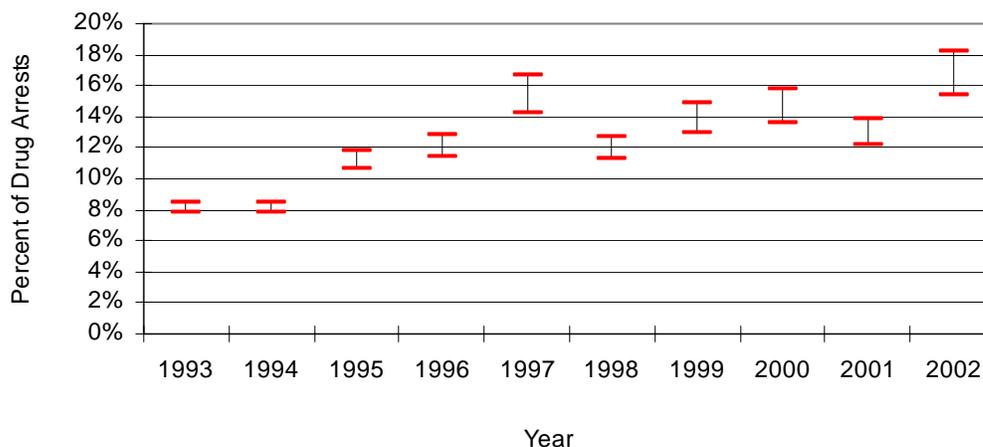


Source: ICJIA calculations using Illinois State Police, U.S. Census Bureau, and MEGSI data

The data presented in Figure 13 represent the percent of controlled substances arrests made by agencies participating in MEGSI accounted for by MEGSI. An upper and lower bound is shown which accounts for whether or not the units numbers are counted as part of the UCR submissions made by local departments (which is unknown at this point). The upper bound indicates the percentage of arrests if *all* of the MEGSI arrests are included in the local UCR submissions. The lower bound indicates the percentage if *none* of the MEGSI arrests are included in the local UCR submissions. It is estimated that the proportion of controlled substances arrests across participating agencies accounted for by MEGSI was 8 percent in 1993 and increased to between 15 to 18 percent in 2002.

**Figure 13**

**Percent of Controlled Substances Arrests Accounted for by MEGSI**

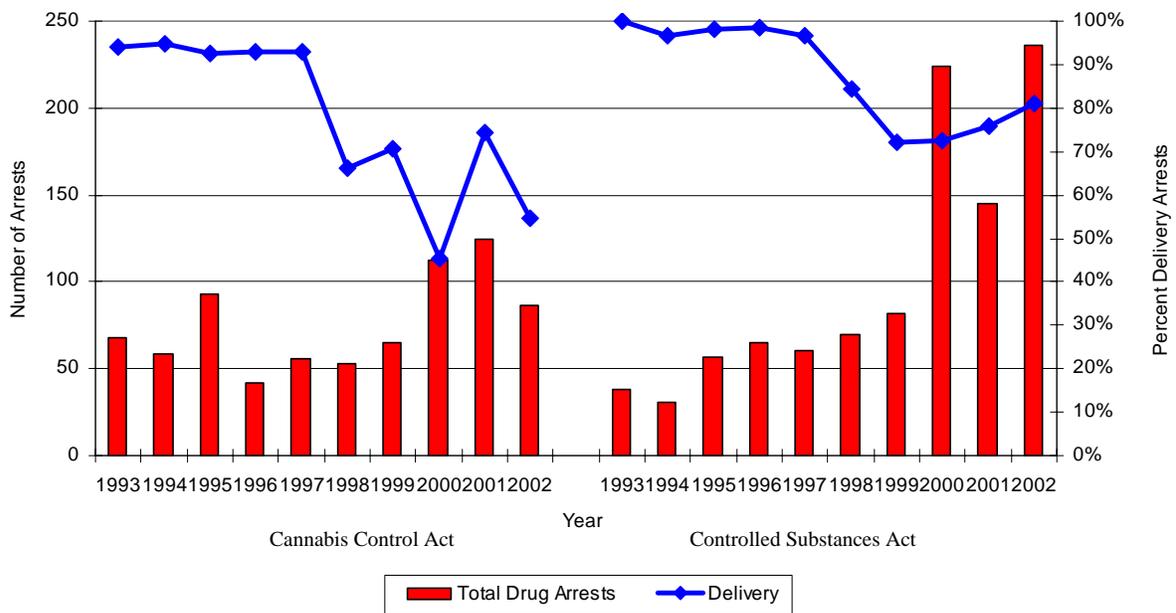


Source: ICJIA calculations using Illinois State Police and MEGSI data

The majority of all drug arrests reported by MEGSI are for delivery. Arrests for drug delivery accounted for 79 percent of all drug arrests made by MEGSI between 1993 and 2002. During the period analyzed, the number of drug delivery arrests made by MEGSI more than doubled, from 102 to 238. When cannabis and controlled substance arrests were examined separately, during the period analyzed, arrests for delivery of controlled substances accounted for 88 percent of the total number of arrests made for violations of the Controlled Substance Act, whereas arrests for the delivery of cannabis accounted for 78 percent of all arrests for violations of the Cannabis Control Act. However, the proportion of delivery arrests has decreased during the period analyzed. The proportion of arrests for delivery of cannabis decreased from 94 percent in 1993 to 55 percent in 2002, while the proportion of arrests for delivery of controlled substances decreased from 100 to 81 percent between 1993 and 2002.

**Figure 14**

**MEGSI Drug Arrests for Possession versus Delivery, by Drug Type**



Source: ICJIA calculations using MEGSI data

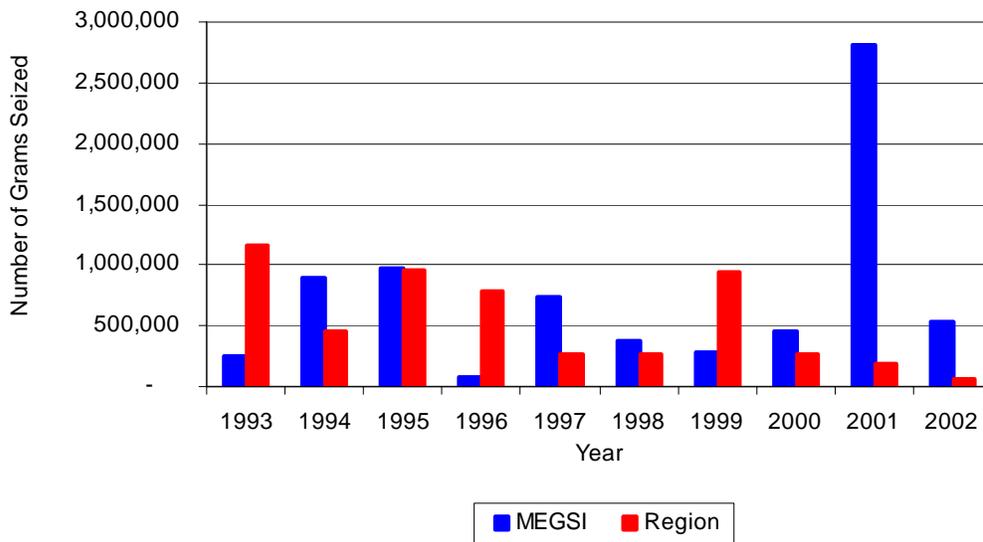
#### IV. Trends in Drug Seizures

Drugs seized by law enforcement agencies are another indicator of the extent and nature of illegal drug trade in a jurisdiction. When illegal drugs are seized by law enforcement agencies, all or a portion of the total amount seized is submitted to a crime lab for analysis. Most agencies submit drugs to one of the Illinois State Police crime labs. These labs record the quantity of drugs submitted from each county. This section discusses trends in the quantities of illegal drugs seized and submitted to the Illinois State Police and the Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties Sheriff's Office Crime Laboratory from local law enforcement agencies in Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties as well as the quantities of drugs seized by MEGSI. It is important to note, however, that while MEGSI data report the total quantities of drugs actually *seized*, local agency data only represent the quantities of seized drugs that are *submitted* to the Illinois State Police for analysis. County-level cannabis, cocaine, crack, methamphetamine, and heroin seizure rates for Illinois' 102 counties are provided in maps located in the Appendix of this report.

As in most Illinois jurisdictions, cannabis accounts for the majority of illegal drugs seized in the region covered by MEGSI. The quantity of cannabis seized and submitted by law enforcement agencies in Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties decreased 95 percent, from 1,157,729 grams in 1993 to 60,738 grams in 2002. However, the quantity of cannabis seized by MEGSI more than doubled between 1993 and 2002, from 246,298 grams to 533,810 grams despite jumping to 2,813,722 grams seized in 2001 (Figure 15). In 2002, MEGSI's cannabis seizure rate of 206,429 grams per 100,000 population was nearly 19-times higher than the cannabis seizure rate of 11,087 grams per 100,000 population in the three-county region covered by MEGSI and was nearly 11-times higher than the statewide cannabis seizure rate of 19,437 grams per 100,000 population (Map 2).

Figure 15

Cannabis Seized and Submitted to ISP  
by Monroe, Madison, and St. Clair  
Counties and Seized by MEGSI

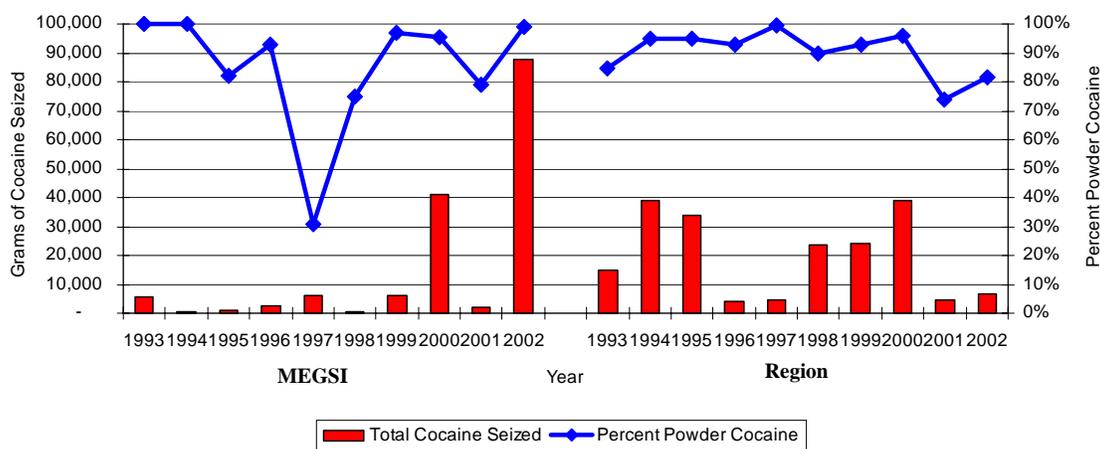


Source: Illinois State Police and MEGSI

Between 1993 and 2002, a combination of crack and powder cocaine has accounted for a small proportion of drugs seized in the three-county region covered by MEGSI. However, the quantity of cocaine seized and submitted by law enforcement agencies in Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties decreased 56 percent, from 14,847 grams in 1993 to 6,482 grams in 1999. Between 1993 and 2002, the quantity of cocaine seized by MEGSI increased nearly 15-fold, from 5,516 grams to 87,630 grams.

The proportion of all cocaine seized in the three-county region covered by MEGSI accounted for by powder cocaine remained relatively stable between 1993 and 2002, decreasing slightly, from 85 percent in 1993 to 82 percent in 2002, whereas MEGSI seizures revealed a bit more variation. In contrast, for MEGSI, although powder cocaine accounted for the largest proportion of total cocaine seizures in nine of the ten years examined, the proportion decreased slightly, from 100 percent in 1993 to 99 percent in 2002, while declining to a period low of 31 percent in 1997 (Figure 16). In 2002, MEGSI's cocaine seizure rate of 33,887 grams per 100,000 population was significantly higher than the cocaine seizure rate of 1,183 grams per 100,000 population in the three-county region covered by MEGSI, and 55 percent higher than the statewide cocaine seizure rate of 21,891 grams per 100,000 population (Maps 3 and 4).

**Figure 16**  
 Powder and Crack Cocaine Seized and Submitted to ISP  
 by Monroe, Madison, and St. Clair Counties  
 and Seized by MEGSI



Source: Illinois State Police and MEGSI

The total quantity of illegal drugs seized and submitted by law enforcement agencies in Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties decreased 94 percent between 1993 and 2002, from 1,173,177 grams to 70,949 grams. Conversely, the total quantity of illegal drugs seized by MEGSI more than doubled, from 251,843 grams in 1993 to 631,942 grams in 2002.

During the period, methamphetamine seizures accounted for a relatively small but increasing proportion of total drugs seized by MEGSI and the three-county region covered by MEGSI. Between 1993 and 1997, there were no reported methamphetamine seizures by MEGSI; however, the quantity of methamphetamine seized by MEGSI increased from 39 grams in 1998 to 10,271 grams in 2002. The quantity of methamphetamine seized by law enforcement agencies in the three-county region covered by MEGSI increased more than eight-fold, between 1993 and 2002, from 236 grams to 2,179 grams. In 2002, MEGSI had a methamphetamine seizure rate of 3,972 grams per 100,000 population, nearly ten-times higher than the rate of 398 grams seized per 100,000 population in the three-county region and dramatically higher than the statewide seizure rate of 222 grams per 100,000 population (Map 5).

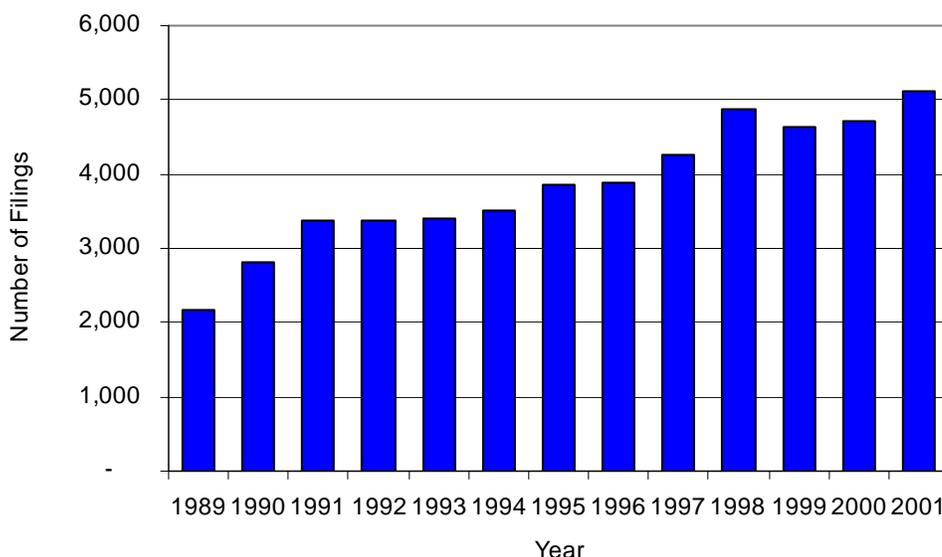
## V. Trends in Prosecutions for Drug Offenses and All Felonies

Although Illinois has one of the best court reporting systems in the country, the Administrative Office of the Illinois Court only collects information regarding the aggregate number of court filings. Currently, there are no statewide data available on court filings by offense type. The Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts reports data on felony criminal court cases. After screening a case and deciding it warrants further action, the state's attorney must file formal charges in court. Felony cases can be punished by a probation term up to four years and incarceration for more than one year.

Between 1989 and 2001, the number of felony filings in the three-county region covered by MEGSI has increased nearly every year. During the period analyzed, the number of felony filings more than doubled, from 2,181 to 5,121 (Figure 17).

**Figure 17**

### Number of Felony Filings in Monroe, Madison, and St. Clair Counties

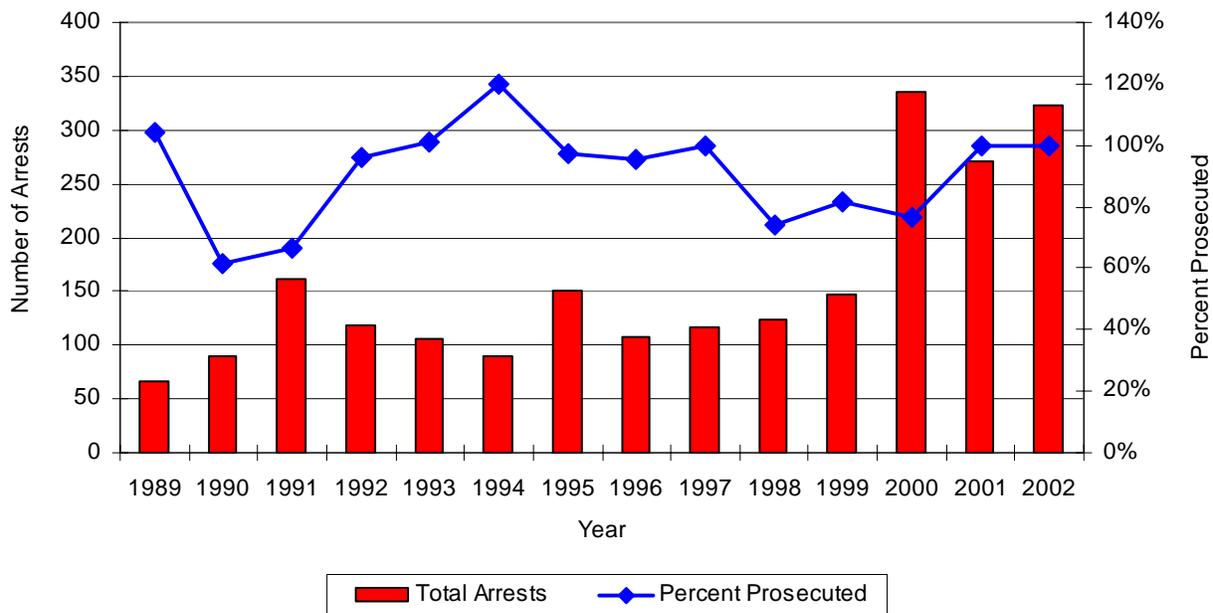


Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

Between 1989 and 2002, there were 1,985 drug prosecutions initiated as a result of MEGSI arrests in Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties. During this time, the number of MEGSI drug arrests more than quadrupled, from 67 arrests in 1989 to 322 arrests in 2002 (Figure 18). Between 1989 and 2002, 90 percent of drug arrests by MEGSI resulted in prosecution. While more than one-half (58 percent) of MEGSI drug offender prosecutions during this period were for violations of the Controlled Substance Act, the proportion of prosecutions accounted for by controlled substances has decreased from 80 percent in 1989 to 73 percent in 2002. In some years, the proportion of arrests resulting in a prosecution exceeded 100 percent. This is due to some slight differences in the timing of an arrest and the filings of charges, or could be due to charges, rather than defendants, being reported by the unit. In addition, some offenders have charges filed, and a subsequent warrant issued, without an arrest taking place.

**Figure 18**

**Total MEGSI Drug Arrests and Percentage of Arrests Resulting in Prosecution**



Source: MEGSI

Between 1989 and 2002, 80 percent (1,580) of the 1,985 drug offenders who were prosecuted as a result of MEGSI activity were convicted. Convictions for controlled substances accounted for 61 percent of all MEGSI initiated convictions during the period analyzed.

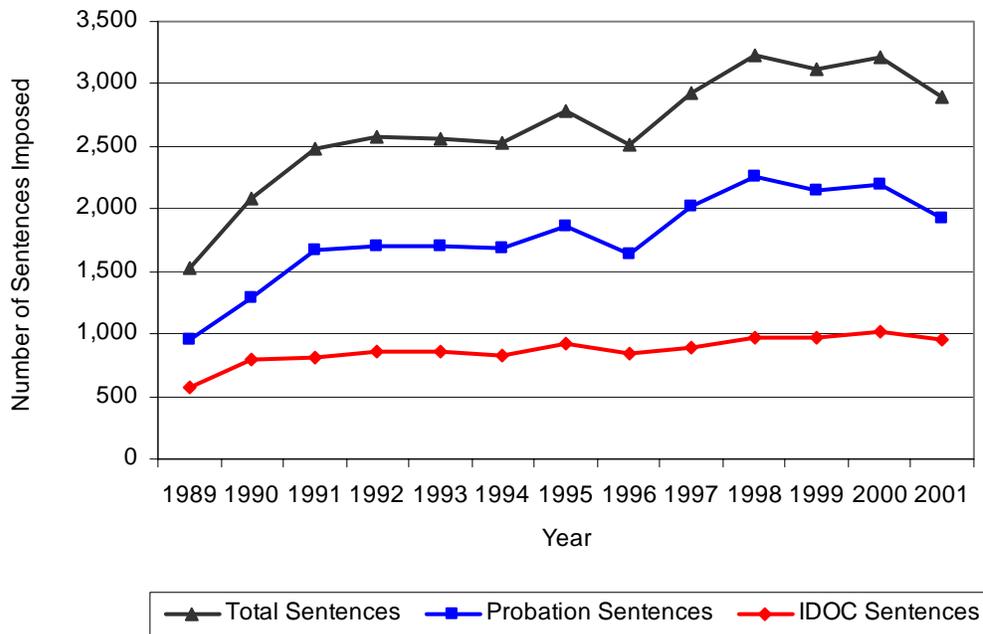
## VI. Trends in Percent of Convicted Drug Offenders Sentenced to Prison

Under Illinois law, those convicted of most Class 1, 2, 3, and 4 felonies can be sentenced to probation or prison; the two most commonly used sentencing options. However, there are some exceptions. For example, those convicted of possessing 15 grams or more of cocaine, heroin, or methamphetamine are guilty of a Class 1 felony, but cannot be sentenced to probation. Such instances, as well as for all Class X felonies (e.g., sale/distribution of 15 grams or more of cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine), must result in a sentence to prison and cannot be sentenced to probation. Where a sentence to probation or prison is an option, a number of factors may influence the type and length of sentence imposed, including the severity of the crime, the offender's criminal and social history, and the safety of the community.

Between 1989 and 2001, the number of offenders convicted of a felony and sentenced in the three-county region covered by MEGSI increased 89 percent, from 1,530 to 2,896. The number of convicted felons sentenced to the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) increased 68 percent between 1989 and 2001, from 569 to 955. However, the proportion of felons sentenced to IDOC decreased during the same period, from 37 percent to 33 percent of total felony sentences. In 2001, 1,929 probation sentences were imposed on convicted felons in Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties, more than double the 960 probation sentences in 1989 (Figure 19). As a result, the proportion of felons sentenced to probation increased from 63 percent in 1989 to 67 percent in 2001. Sentences other than prison or probation accounted for less than 1 percent of the remaining felony sentences imposed in 2001.

**Figure 19**

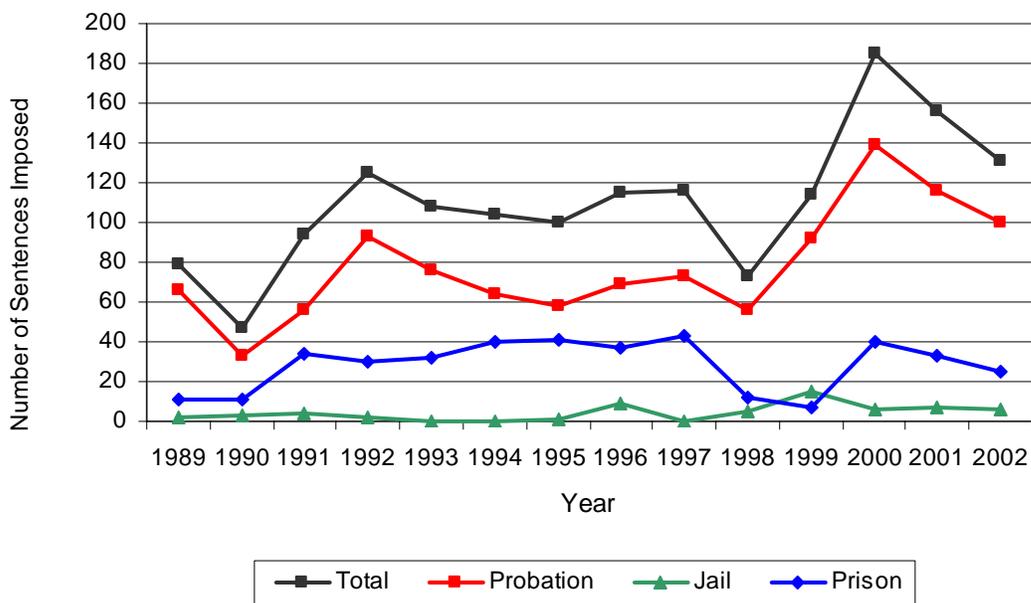
### Sentences Imposed on Felons Convicted in Monroe, Madison, and St. Clair Counties



Source: Administrative Office of the Illinois Courts

Between 1989 and 2002, the number of MEGSI drug offenders convicted and increased 66 percent, from 79 to 131. During the period analyzed, the number of convicted MEGSI drug offenders sentenced to prison more than doubled between 1989 and 2002, from 11 to 25. The number of convicted MEGSI drug offenders sentenced to probation and jail also increased during the period analyzed, from 66 to 100 and two to six, respectively (Figure 20). Despite the increases, the proportion of drug offenders convicted and sentenced to probation decreased from 84 percent in 1989 to 76 percent in 2002. On the other hand, the proportion of prison and jail sentences increased between 1989 and 2002, from 14 to 19 percent and 3 to 5 percent, respectively. Thus, in 2002, among those MEGSI drug offenders convicted and sentenced, probation sentences accounted for the largest proportion (76 percent), followed by prison sentences (19 percent) and jail sentences (5 percent).

**Figure 20**  
Sentences Imposed on Convicted  
MEGSI Drug Offenders



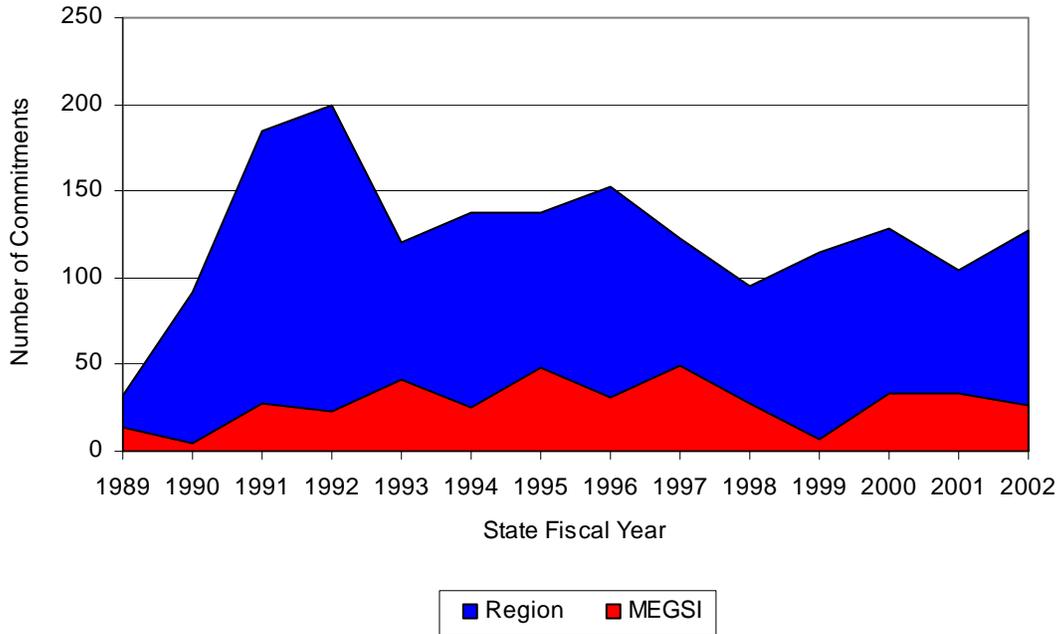
Source: MEGSI

Between state fiscal years<sup>1</sup> 1989 and 2002, the number of new court commitments to IDOC’s Adult Division for drug offenses from Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties nearly quadrupled, from 32 to 127. During the same period, the number of drug offender admissions by MEGSI increased 86 percent, from 14 to 26 (Figure 21). Thus, while prison sentences resulting from MEGSI cases accounted for 22 percent of all drug-law violators sentenced to prison from the region where MEGSI operates during the period analyzed, the proportion of prison sentences accounted for by MEGSI decreased from 44 percent in 1989 to 20 percent in 2002.

<sup>1</sup> Some state data are collected according to State Fiscal Year (SFY) instead of calendar year. SFYs begin on July 1<sup>st</sup> and end the following June 30<sup>th</sup>, and are named according to the calendar year between January and June, e.g. state fiscal year 1991 was from July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1990 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1991.

**Figure 21**

**Number of Drug Offenders Committed to IDOC  
by MEGSI and Region Covered by MEGSI**

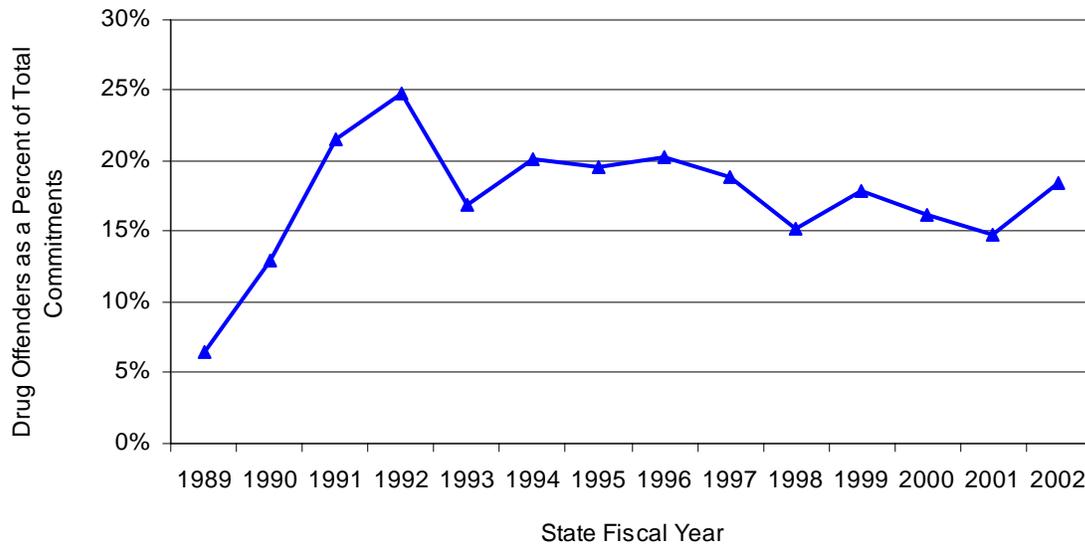


Source: Illinois Department of Corrections and MEGSI

During the period analyzed, drug offenders accounted for an increasing proportion of new court commitments to the Illinois Department of Corrections from Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties. In 1989, drug offenses accounted for 6 percent of all commitments to IDOC, compared to 18 percent in 2002 (Figure 22).

**Figure 22**

**Drug Offenders as a Percent of Total IDOC Commitments from  
Monroe, Madison, and St. Clair Counties**

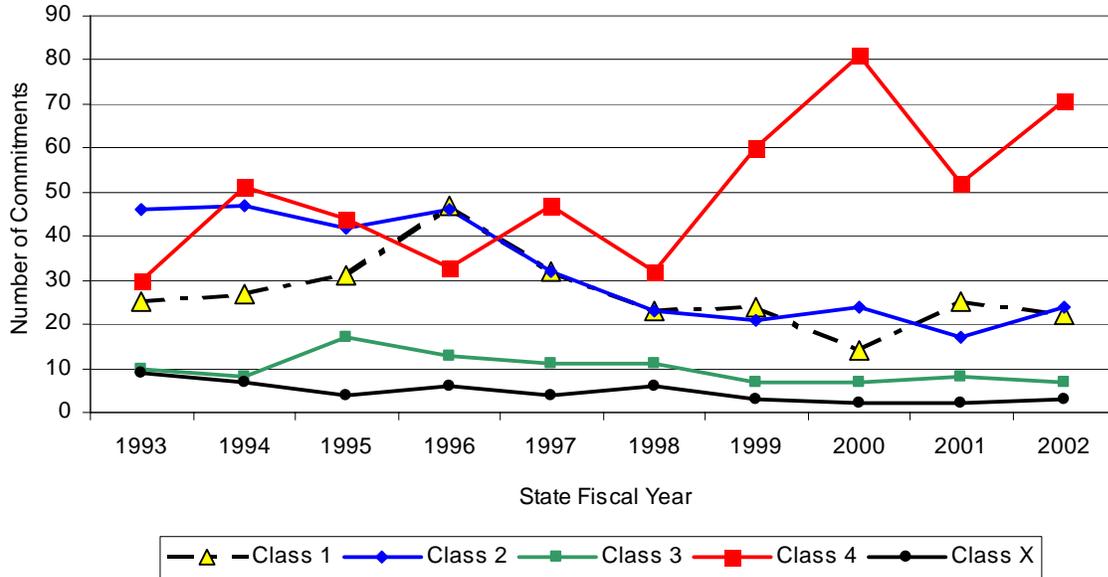


Source: ICJIA calculations using  
Illinois Department of Corrections data

Penalties for drug offenses were also examined between 1993 and 2002. Class 4 felonies accounted for the largest proportion (40 percent) of sentences to IDOC for drug offenses, followed by Class 2 felonies (26 percent), Class 1 felonies (22 percent), Class 3 felonies (8 percent), and Class X felonies (4 percent). Between 1993 and 2002, the number of Class 4 felony sentences more than doubled from 30 to 71. Conversely, between 1993 and 2002, the number of Class X felony sentences decreased from nine to three, while Class 2 felony sentences decreased 48 percent, from 46 to 24, Class 3 felonies decreased 30 percent, from ten to seven, and Class 1 felonies decreased slightly, from 25 to 22 (Figure 23).

**Figure 23**

**Drug Offenders Committed to IDOC from  
Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair Counties,  
by Offense Class**



Source: Illinois Department of Corrections

Similar to the increase in Class 4 felony sentences to IDOC between 1993 and 2002, the mean sentence length for Class 4 felonies increased slightly from 1.6 to 1.8 years during the period. However, while the number of sentences decreased across the remaining Class types, the mean sentence lengths varied. The mean sentence length for Class 1 felonies increased from 4.5 to 5.8 years and Class X mean sentence lengths increased from 7.0 years to 8.5 years. Conversely, the mean sentence for a Class 2 and Class 3 felonies decreased slightly during the period analyzed, from 4.0 to 3.9 years and 3.0 to 2.9 years, respectively.

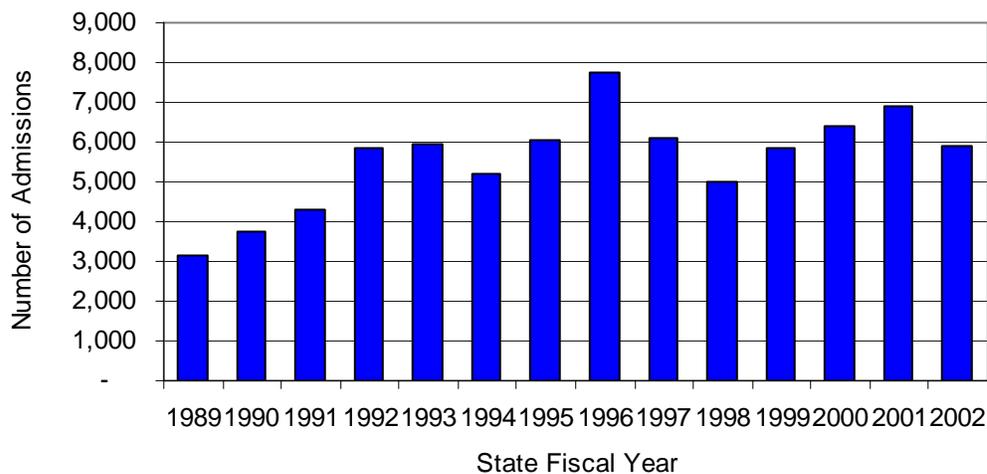
## VII. Trends in Drug Treatment Admissions in MEGSI Region by Drug Type

In addition to considering indicators of the extent and nature of drug abuse as reported through the criminal justice system (for example, arrests and prison sentences), there are indicators of substance abuse available from other Illinois social service agencies. Overseeing and supporting treatment for substance users, whether they are referred from the criminal justice system or elsewhere, is the responsibility of the Illinois Department of Human Services' Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse (OASA). It is important to note, however, that while OASA data represent the majority of the overall demand for substance abuse treatment in the state, some private programs provide treatment services to a smaller but significant number of clients who may not be included in the state's reporting system.

In state fiscal year 2002, OASA reported 5,918 admissions for alcohol or drug abuse treatment from Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair counties, 89 percent more than the 3,136 admissions in 1989 (Figure 24). Among the 5,918 admissions to substance abuse treatment in state fiscal year 2002, 34 percent (1,989) reported alcohol as their primary substance of abuse, while abuse of illicit substances accounted for 62 percent and 4 percent reported no primary substance of abuse.

**Figure 24**

### Substance Abuse Treatment Admissions from Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair Counties



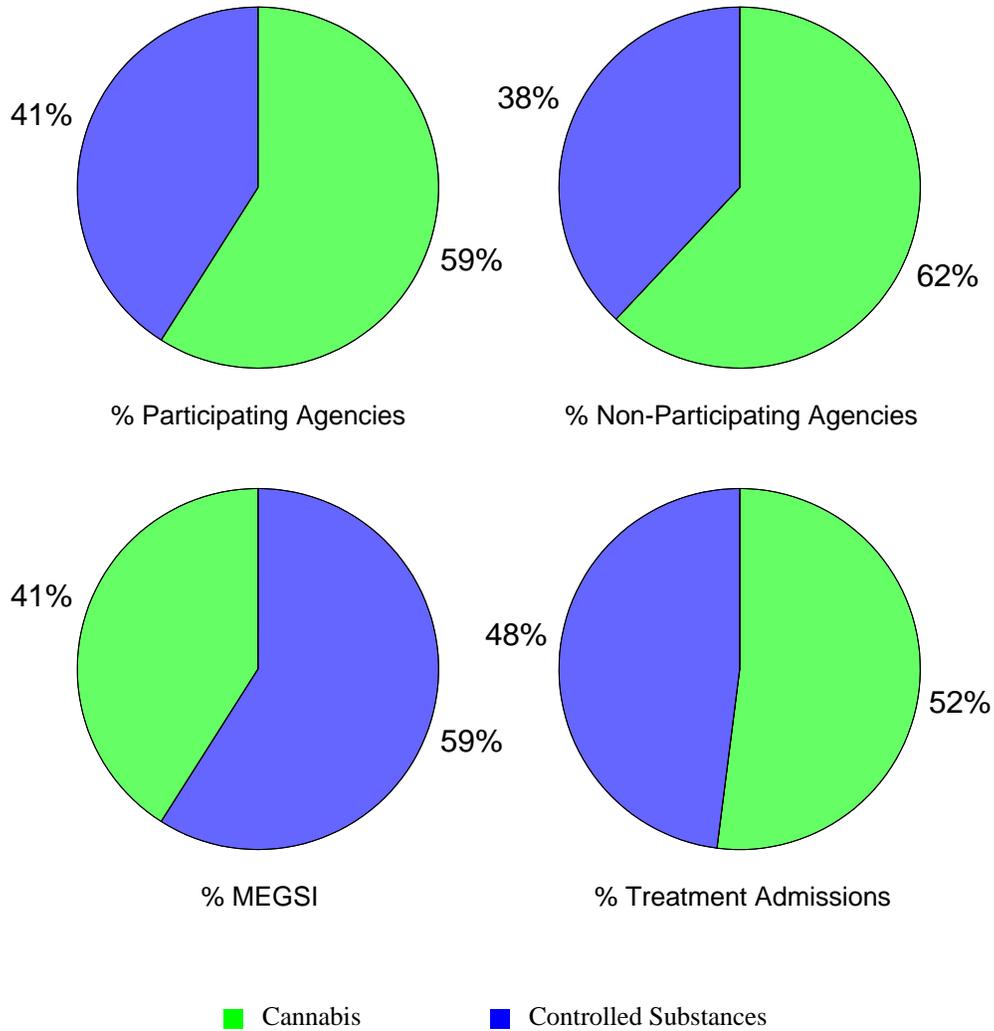
Source: Illinois Department of Human Services'  
Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse

While drug treatment admissions can be considered a measure of the demand placed on a specific component of the human services system within Illinois, the extent and nature of drug treatment admissions could also be indicative of the substance abuse problem within a particular region. In some respects, the characteristics of those admitted to drug treatment can be considered a profile of the most serious drug abusers in the community, since admission to treatment requires a documented, formal assessment of a drug problem and a level of substance abuse warranting treatment. By comparing the types of drugs of abuse reported by those admitted to substance abuse treatment with the types of drugs involved in law enforcement agency arrests, one can get a sense of the degree to which arrests reflect the drugs which are most problematic within a community.

In the following analyses, the percent of arrests accounted for by drugs classified under Illinois' Controlled Substances Act (primarily cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine) versus the Cannabis Control Act (marijuana) across the participating agencies combined, non-participating agencies combined and MEGSI are compared to the proportion of drug treatment admissions accounted for by these groups of substances. From these comparisons, a number of general conclusions can be made. First, the proportion of arrests made by MEGSI accounted for by drugs other than marijuana (Controlled Substances Act offenses) was very close to the proportion of drug treatment admissions from the covered region accounted for by these substances. Thus, there is considerable convergence between the drugs involved in MEGSI arrests and treatment admissions. On the other hand, the majority of arrests by local police departments (including those participating in MEGSI and non-participating agencies) were for cannabis offenses. Thus, while local arrests may reflect the most widely available and used drug in the region, they tend not to involve the substances considered to be most serious (i.e., felony versus misdemeanor) nor the substances individuals are seeking and receiving treatment for (Figure 25).

**Figure 25**

**Comparison of Drug Arrests by MEGSI and Participating and Non-participating Agencies vs. Drug Abuse Treatment Admissions in Madison, Monroe, and St. Clair Counties, 2002**



Source: ICJA calculations using Illinois Department of Human Services' Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse and MEGSI data

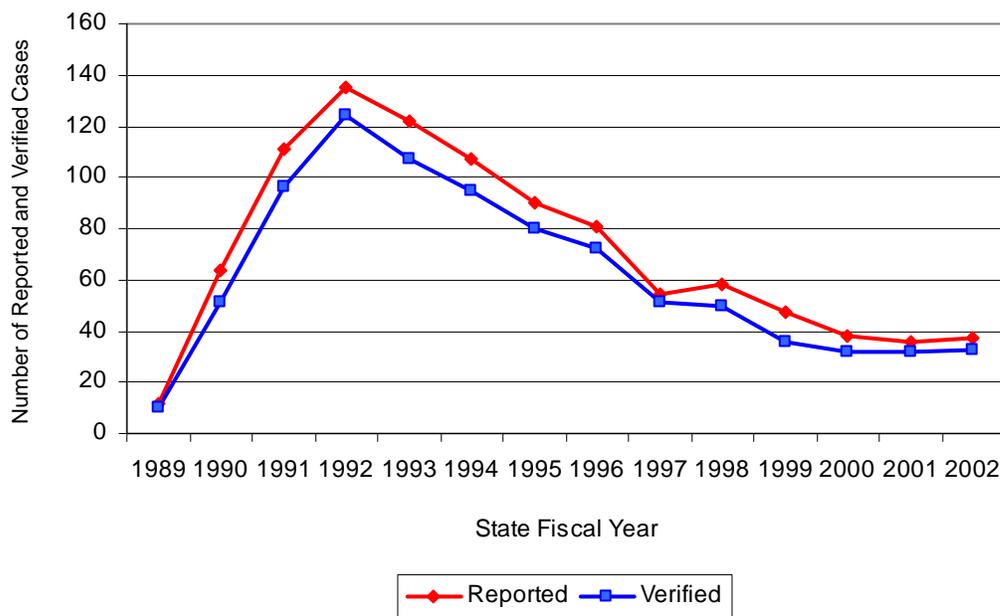
### VIII. Trends in Substance-Exposed Infants

Illinois continues to experience the effects of prenatal substance abuse. In Illinois, if a baby is born and thought to have been exposed to illegal substances or alcohol, either through observation by physicians or toxicology tests, the case is reported to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. These cases are then investigated by DCFS to verify the child's prenatal exposure to either alcohol or illegal substances. Between state fiscal years 1989 and 2002, 96 of Illinois' 102 counties reported at least one case of a substance-exposed infant.

Although the number of substance-exposed infant cases reported in the three-county region covered by MEGSI more than tripled, from 12 to 37 between state fiscal years 1989 and 2002, the number jumped dramatically to a period high of 135 in 1992 before declining nearly every year thereafter. Between state fiscal years 1989 and 2002, 869 cases, or 88 percent of all cases reported, were verified as involving prenatal drug use by a DCFS investigation. Mirroring the trend of reported cases, verified cases of substance-exposed infants in the MEGSI region increased from ten in 1989 to a period high of 124 in 1992 and has decreased annually to 33 in 2002 (Figure 26).

Figure 26

Cases of Substance-Exposed Infants in Monroe, Madison, and St. Clair Counties



Source: Department of Children and Family Services

## IX. Summary of Drug Situation

Although the distribution of illegal drugs is difficult to measure precisely, data obtained from criminal justice sources can be helpful in estimating drug availability. Information from a recent survey of Illinois drug enforcement units, as well as the most up-to-date data available on drug price, are presented as indicators of the drug supply in Illinois.

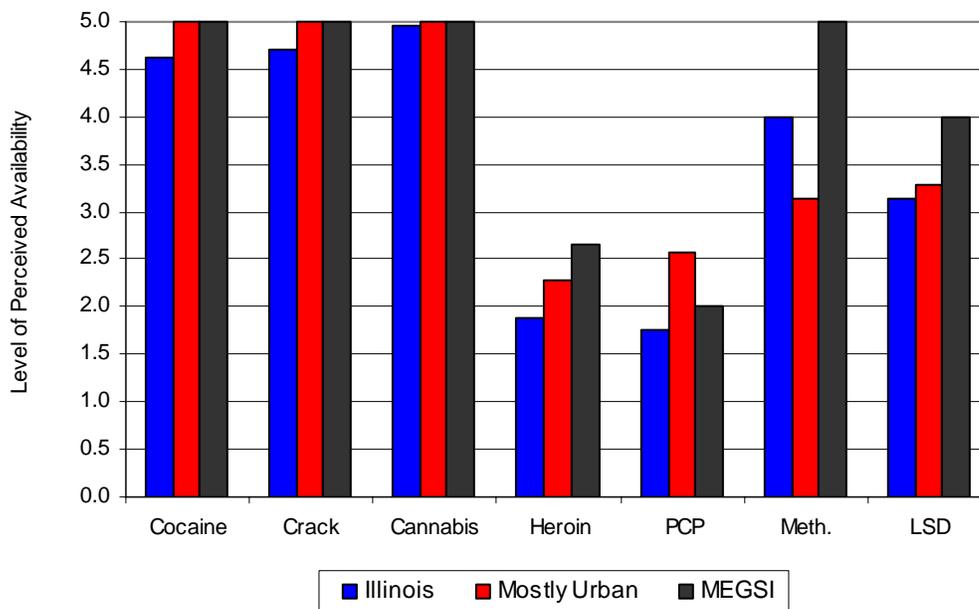
The Authority conducts a survey of each MEG and task force in Illinois (the most recent being conducted in 2000) to gauge the perceived availability of drugs in the areas they cover. Questions were asked concerning the availability of specific drugs, and results were analyzed by region of the state. MEGs and task forces are classified as being mostly urban, mostly rural, or mostly urban based upon the classification of the county(s) that each unit covers, and, for purposes of this report, are compared to the average of similar units.

According to MEGSI survey responses, cannabis, cocaine, crack, and methamphetamine were the most visible drugs on the street and were all reported to be “readily available” across all regions analyzed. While the perceived availability of most drugs, with the exception of LSD, increased across most regions, the perceived availability of methamphetamine and heroin experienced the greatest increase in availability across all regions since the 1998 survey. Methamphetamine was reported as readily available across Illinois, and available to a somewhat lesser degree by all MEGs and task forces in mostly urban regions, while it was easily available in the three-county region covered by MEGSI. Cocaine and crack were reported as somewhat less available across the state and by all other MEGs and task forces in mostly urban regions than in the area covered by MEGSI. On the other hand, heroin appears to be more readily available in the three-county region covered by MEGSI than across Illinois or in all other MEGs and task forces in mostly urban regions (Figure 27).

**Figure 27**

### Availability of Drugs in Illinois, 2000

1=Not Available 5=Easily Available



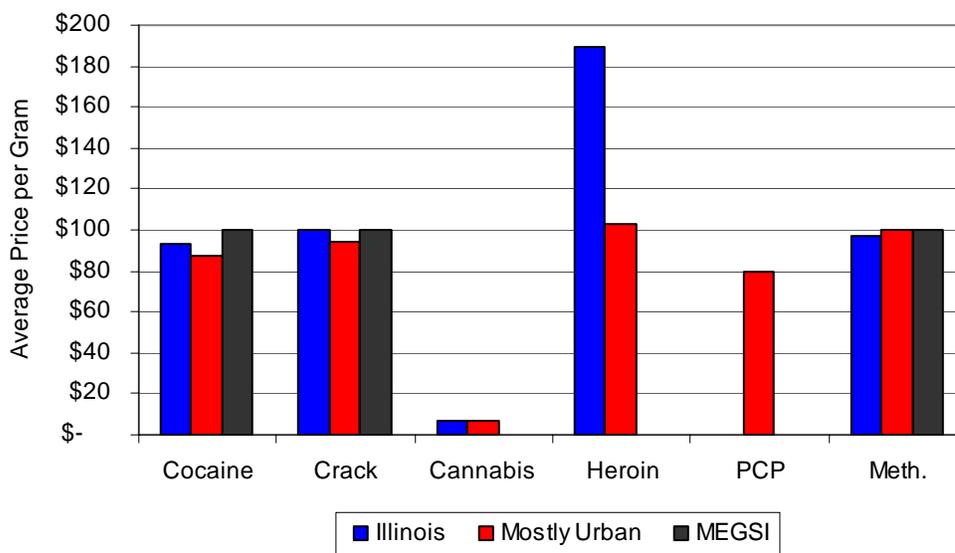
Source: Authority Survey of Illinois MEGs and task forces

Another market indicator that can be used to assess availability is drug price. Lower prices tend to suggest a sufficient supply to meet demand, while increasing prices indicate decreased availability.

Based on a statewide survey of MEG and task force units, the average prices of cocaine, crack, and methamphetamine appear to be relatively stable across all regions surveyed in 2000, while prices for PCP and heroin appear to vary somewhat across Illinois. MEGSI reported average price data on only cocaine, crack, and methamphetamine in the 2000 survey. Thus, between the 1998 and 2000 surveys, the prices for these drugs remained unchanged at \$100 per gram. Statewide, the average price of methamphetamine increased slightly, from \$96 to \$97 per gram, while remaining unchanged at \$100 per gram in other regions covered by mostly urban MEGs and task forces. Similarly, the average price of crack increased slightly statewide, from \$99 to \$100 per gram. However, across regions covered by mostly urban MEGs and task forces, the average price of crack increased from \$60 per gram in the 1998 survey to \$200 per gram in the 2000 survey. On the other hand, the average price of heroin varied between 1998 and 2000 and across regions. Between 1998 and 2000, the average price of heroin increased statewide, from \$138 per gram to \$190 per gram. Conversely, during the same period, in the regions covered by mostly urban MEGs and task forces, the average price of heroin declined from \$133 to \$100 per gram (Figure 28). In 2000, the average price of cannabis was reported as approximately \$6 per gram statewide, compared to \$10 per gram in 1998, while the average price of cannabis in regions covered by mostly urban MEGs and task forces decreased from \$25 per gram in 1998 to \$10 per gram in 2000.

**Figure 28**

**Price Per Gram in Illinois, 2000**

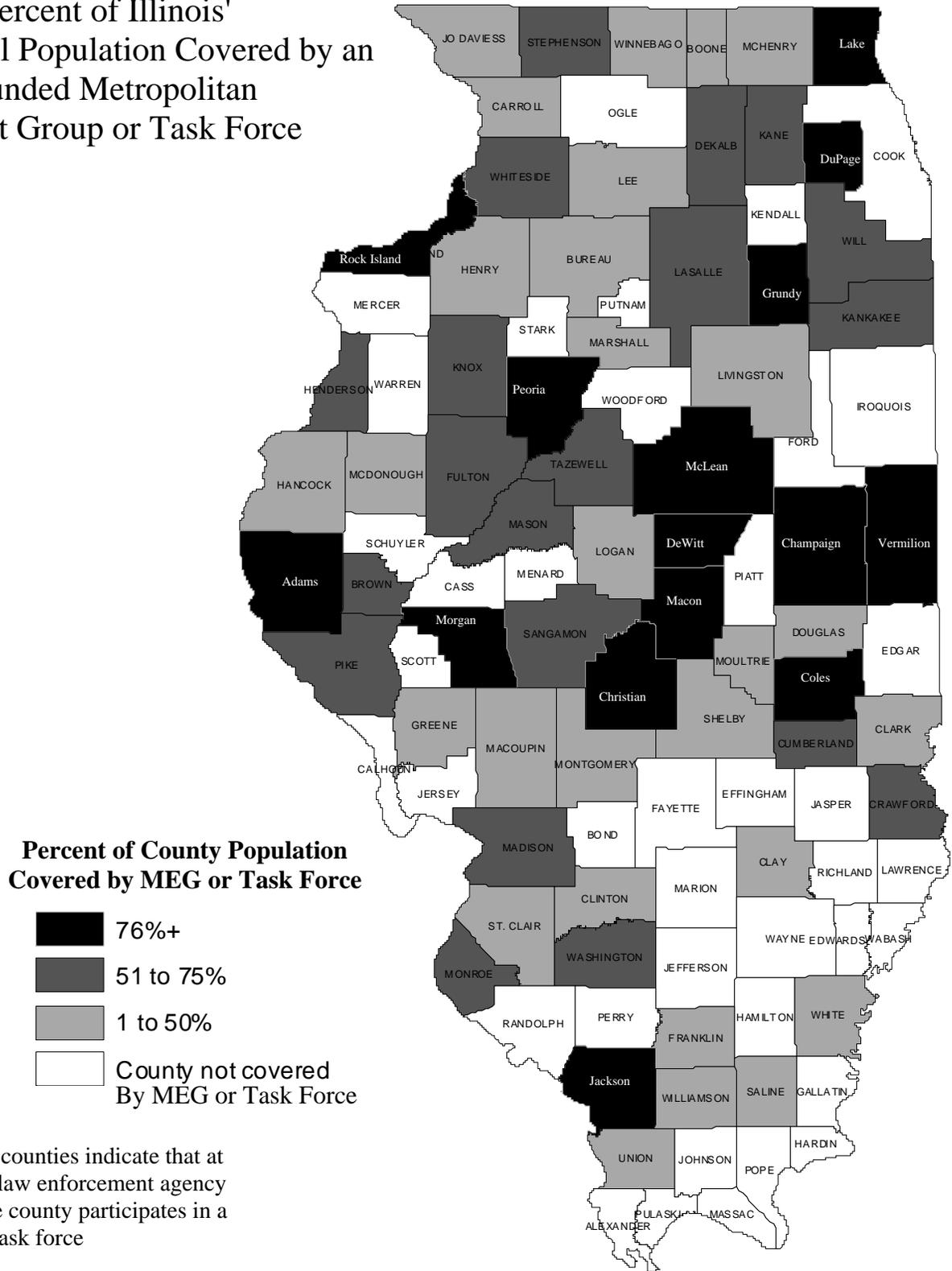


Source: Authority Survey of Illinois MEGs and task forces

# **X. Appendices**

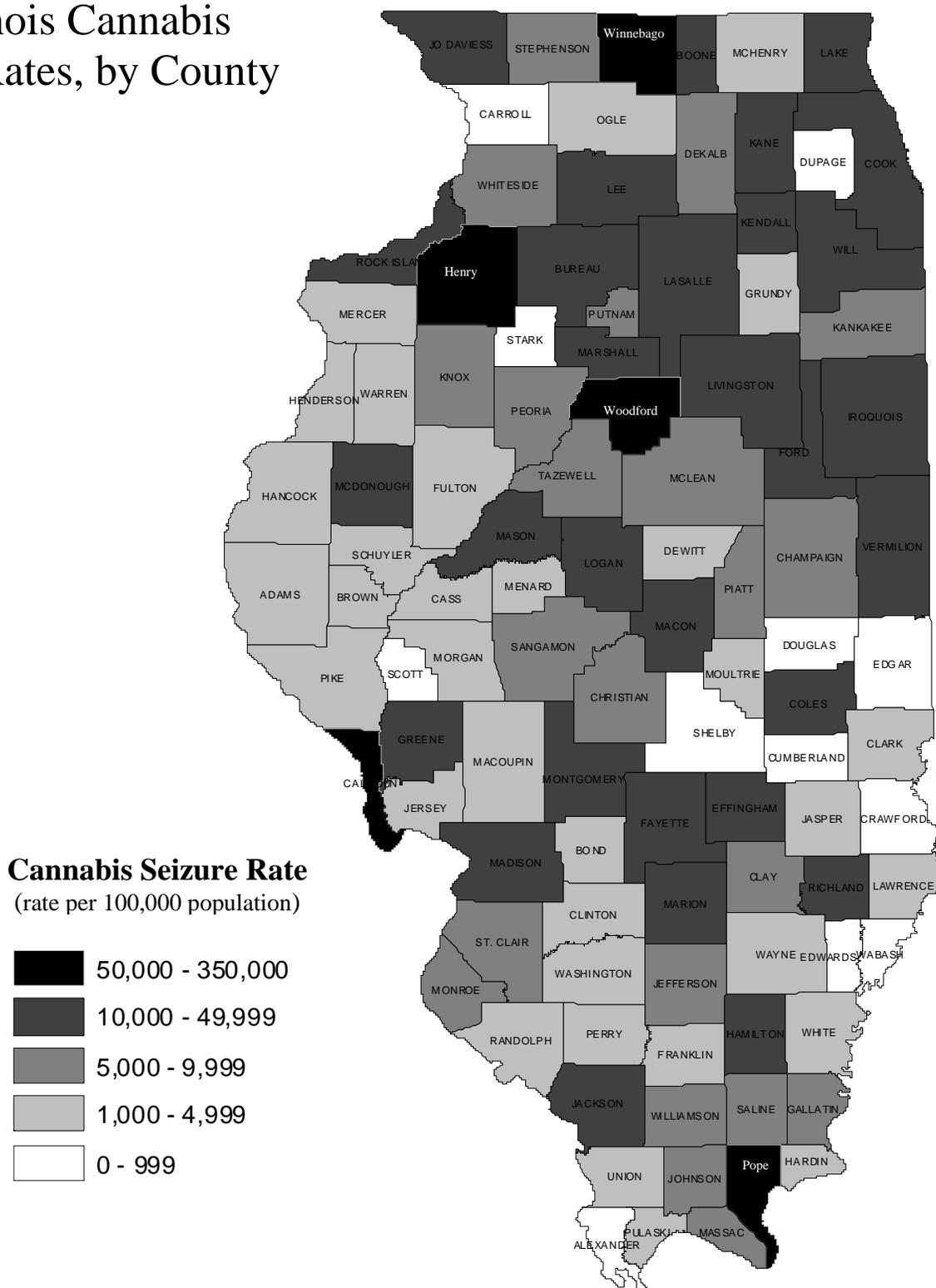
Map 1

SFY 2002 Percent of Illinois' County-level Population Covered by an Authority-funded Metropolitan Enforcement Group or Task Force

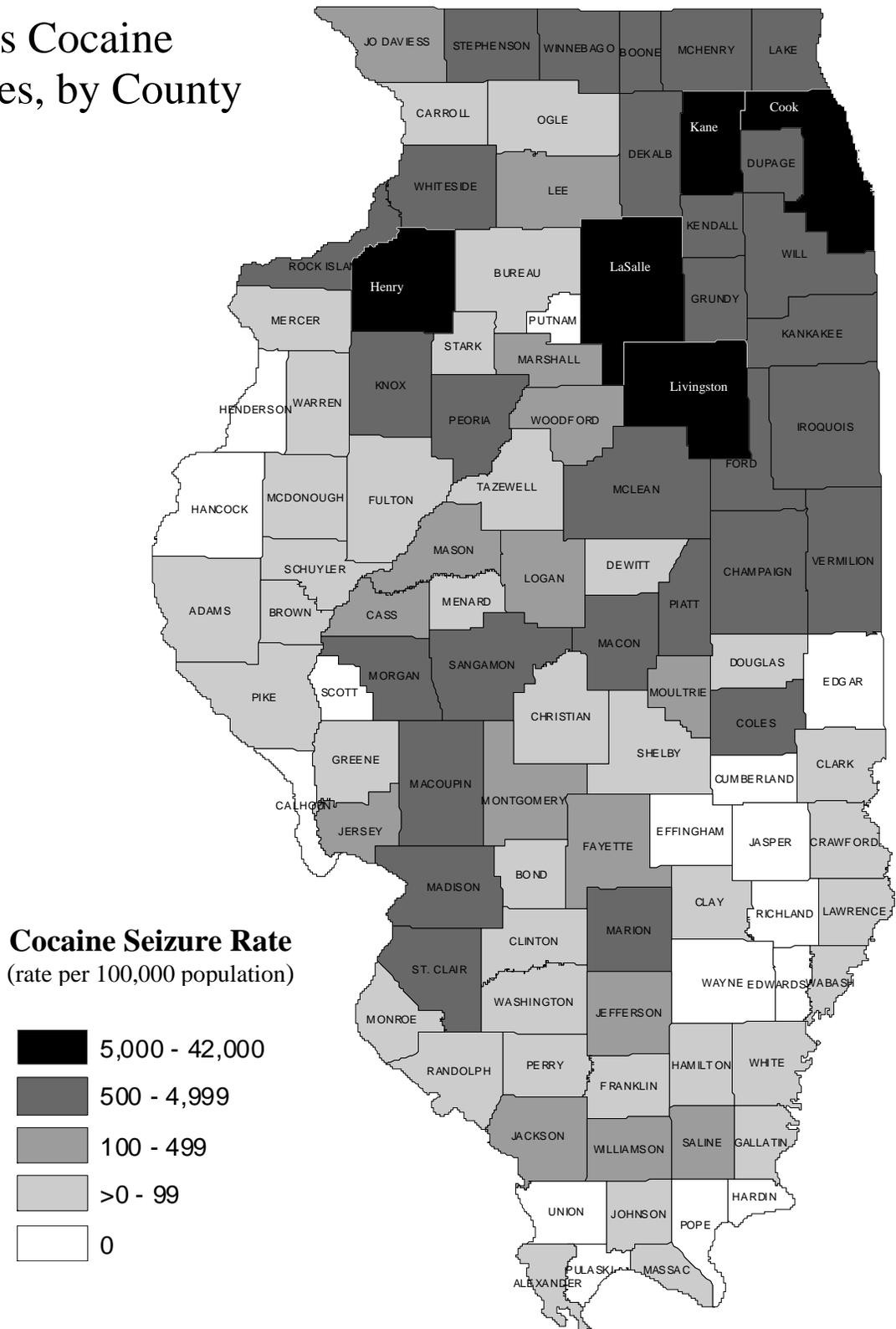


Map 2

# 2002 Illinois Cannabis Seizure Rates, by County

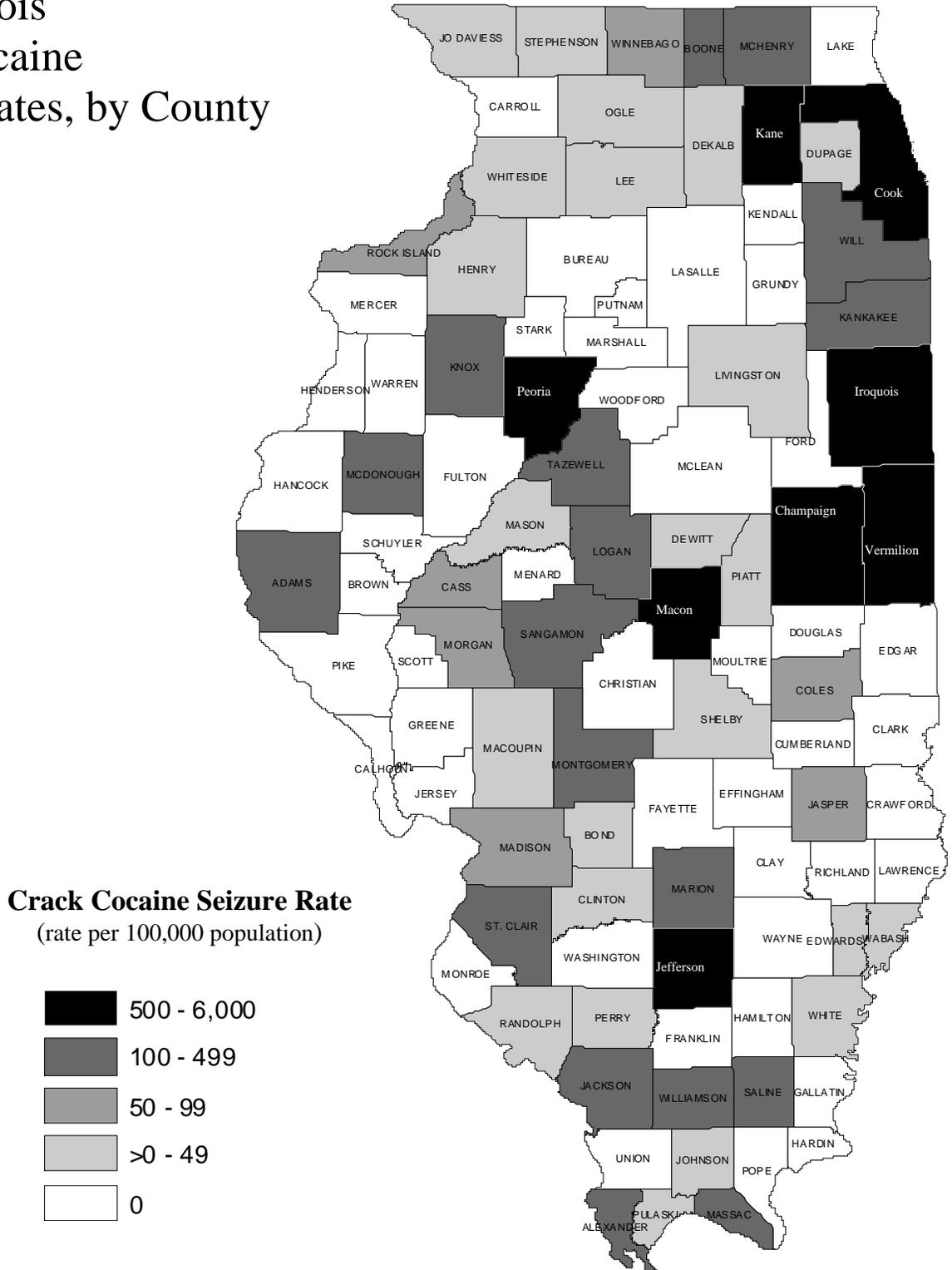


# 2002 Illinois Cocaine Seizure Rates, by County



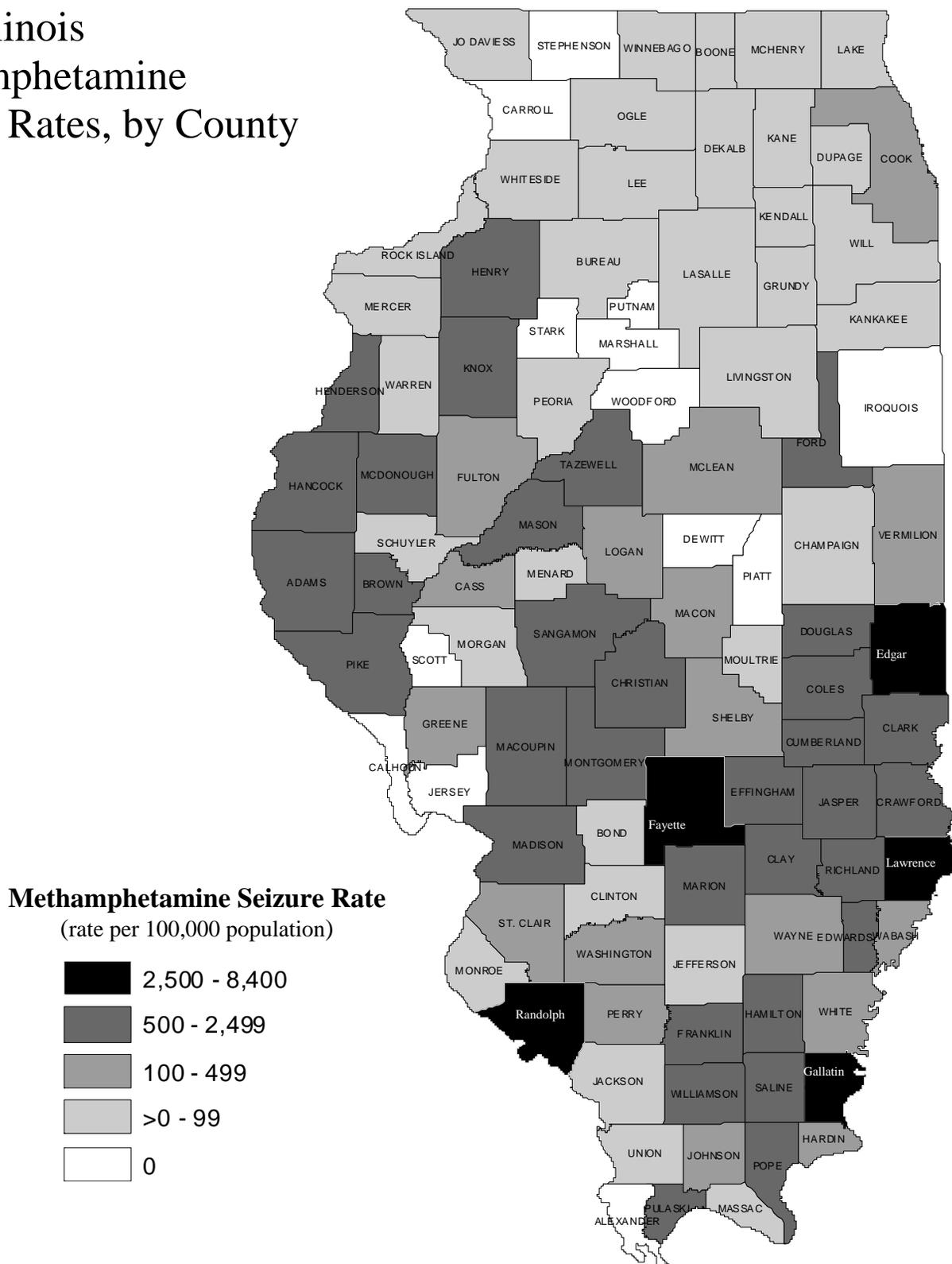
Map 4

# 2002 Illinois Crack Cocaine Seizure Rates, by County

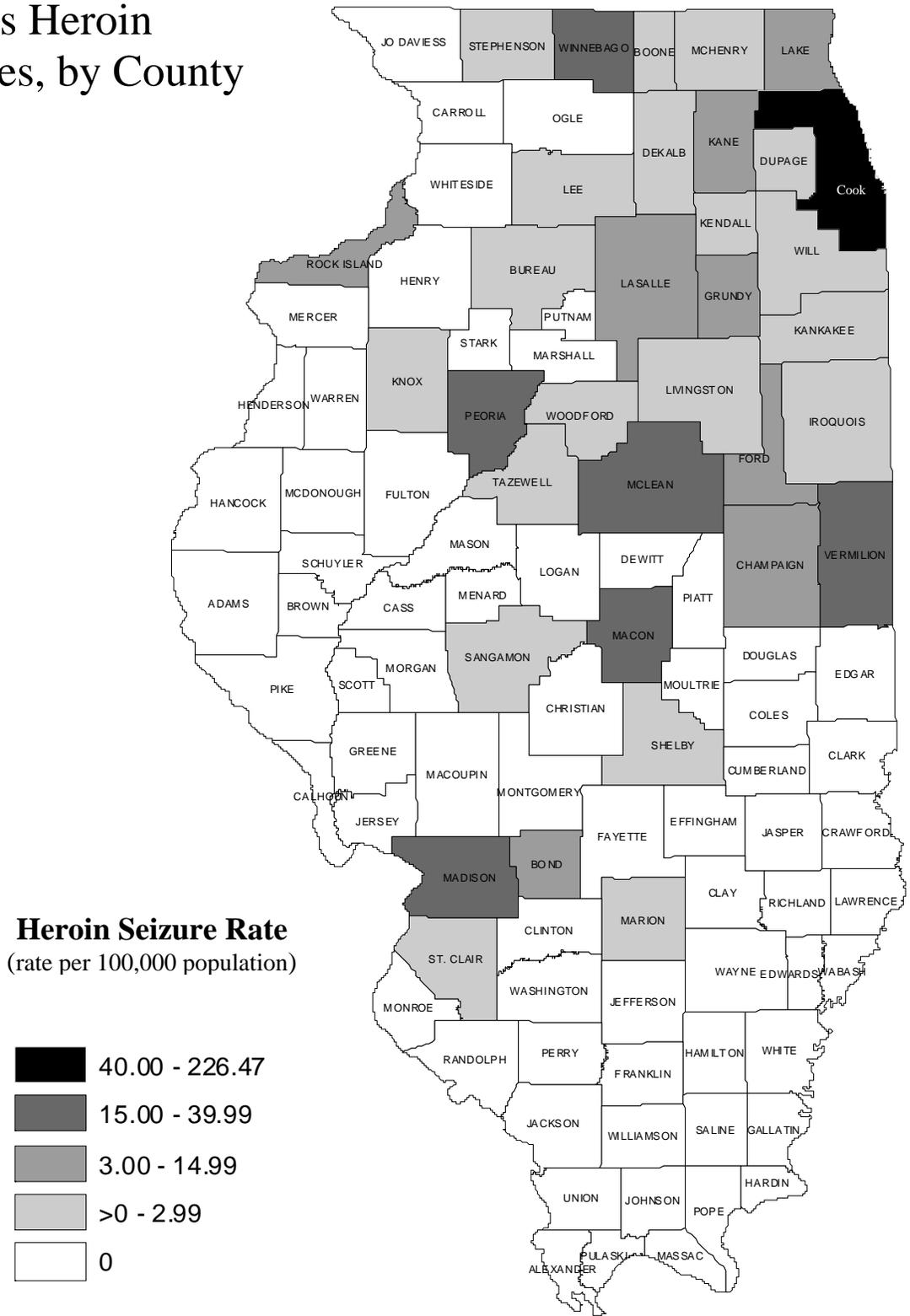


Map 5

# 2002 Illinois Methamphetamine Seizure Rates, by County



# 2002 Illinois Heroin Seizure Rates, by County



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**Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority**

120 S. Riverside Plaza, Suite 1016  
Chicago, Illinois 60606  
Telephone: 312-793-8550  
TDD: 312-793-4170  
Fax: 312-793-8422  
[www.icjia.state.il.us](http://www.icjia.state.il.us)



Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor  
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