

PLACE OF MASSACHUSETTS IN NATIONAL
CRIME RATE STATISTICS FOR 1967

Compiled from the Uniform Crime Reports
of the Federal Bureau of Investigation

by the

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Approximately nine months after the end of each calendar year the Federal Bureau of Investigation publishes its UNIFORM CRIME REPORTS based on statistics voluntarily submitted by police departments throughout the country. A section of that report is devoted to a "Crime Index" which is the sum of the rates per hundred thousand inhabitants of seven selected crimes. These selected crimes are:

1. Murder (including non-negligent manslaughter)
2. Forcible rape
3. Robbery
4. Aggravated assault
5. Burglary
6. Larceny (of over \$50)
7. Auto theft (including both joyriding & stealing for resale)

This so-called "Crime Index", established by adding together the rates of these seven different crimes, is not really a valid indication of the extent of serious crime in any area because this index is heavily overweighted by the large numbers of the less serious offenses. Of the seven selected offenses the three less serious crimes against property (burglary, larceny and auto theft) occur about ten times as frequently as the four more serious crimes against persons (murder, forcible rape, robbery and aggravated assault). Such overweighting would result in an invalidly low index for a state with comparatively few larcenies and auto thefts when this same state may have a murder or rape rate seventy five percent higher than the national average. Consequently this paper does not use this overall index because it would be grossly misleading in many cases.

However, taken separately, the rates for each individual crime are the best available standardized measures for establishing the various frequencies of crimes in different areas of the country.

To compare these diverse frequencies we rank ordered the rates of every state and region for each of the seven offenses. The area with the lowest rate per hundred thousand inhabitants was ranked number one, the next lowest number two and so on. Obviously this results in the state having the highest rate for any crime being ranked fiftieth at the bottom of the list for that crime. The table attached at the end of this paper shows the rank order of each state as well as nine regions¹ of the United States.

Comparing New England with the eight other regions of the country we note that New England clearly has the lowest rate for each of the four more serious crimes of murder, forcible rape, robbery and aggravated assault. In regard to these four violent crimes in each case the New England rate is three to four times less than the rate for each region with the highest rate. In addition to having the lowest rate for the four most serious out of all seven crimes, the New England region also has the second lowest rate for larceny and the third lowest rate for burglary. However, in regard to the seventh crime of auto theft, New England has the highest rate of all nine regions.

Examination of the rank orders of the different New England states reveals that the more rural states of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont are usually among the ten least criminal states in the country for both property crimes and crimes against persons. Even the more urban states of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island are usually among the lowest third of all fifty states in regard to rates of crimes against the person. In regard to the incidence of crimes against property, however, the more urban New England states are comparatively less commendable. In

1. New England	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont
Middle Atlantic	New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania
East North Central	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin
West North Central	Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North and South Dakota
South Atlantic	Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North & South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia
East South Central	Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee
West South Central	Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas
Mountain	Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming
Pacific	Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington

this respect these states exemplify the statement of Dr. Marvin Wolfgang who wrote "Urban areas with mass population, greater wealth, more commercial establishments and more products of our technology also provide more frequent opportunities for theft. Victims are impersonalized, property is insured, consumer goods in more abundance are vividly displayed and are more portable."²

Although urbanization, at least in the more densely populated New England states, is much greater than most other states, even the urban New England states usually have lower rates for property offenses than the national average. Exceptions are Rhode Island, which has higher than the United States average rate for the two crimes of burglary and auto theft, and Massachusetts which has the highest rate in the nation for the one crime of auto theft.

It appears that only when the urban New England states are compared with the rural New England states within the New England region that Dr. Wolfgang's reasoning (that urban areas have more property crimes than rural areas) invariably applies. When the rates of the urban New England states are compared with national average rates, these New England rates are usually found to be lower for property crimes as well as much lower for crimes against the person. For a further explanation it seems appropriate to turn to a quotation from sociologist Marshall B. Clinard. He wrote "It is interesting to note that rates by city size are often affected, however, by the cultural factors in the area in which the cities are located. In fact, the regional location of a city seems often to be more related to the crime rate than is the extent of urbanization in the state. Some states, such as California, with a large proportion of urban population, also have high crime rates, whereas Massachusetts, which is also heavily urbanized, has a comparatively low rate. It is likely that the urban 'way of life' in a more recently developed area like California is characterized by norm conflicts, rapid change, and other unsettling conditions, whereas in older areas, such as New England, these aspects of urbanism may be somewhat attenuated."³

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2. from periodical CRIME AND DELINQUENCY, Vol. 14, No. 4, October, 1968, "Violence, U.S.A. - Riots and Crime" page 296
 3. SOCIOLOGY OF DEVIANT BEHAVIOR, 1968 edition, page 105

When we turn to examine the 1967 rankings in each offense for the individual state of Massachusetts as compared with the other forty-nine states, we find that these rankings have not varied markedly from the previous year. Its ranking for murder is 13th, exactly the same as 1966. For forcible rape it ranks 14th as compared with 10th the previous year. For robbery it ranks 29th as compared with 32rd in 1966. For aggravated assault it ranks 17th as compared with 15th the previous year. In regard to burglary Massachusetts ranks 28th as compared with 32nd in 1966. For larceny it ranks 20th as compared with 24th the previous year. In regard to auto theft, for the third straight year, Massachusetts ranks 50th, in the very last place. The rate per hundred thousand increased markedly from 551.3 in 1966 to 667.4 in 1967. Obviously the handling of the auto theft problem in Massachusetts needs considerable improvement.

However, reviewing our position in regard to all other offenses, we should keep in mind that Massachusetts for the crimes of murder, rape and aggravated assault, has lower rates than two thirds of all states and, in regard to robbery, burglary and larceny has rates lower than the national average.

Nelson N. Cochrane
Supervisor of Research
October, 1968

STATES and REGIONS RANK ORDERED BY CRIME RATES

1967 Rates per 100,000 inhabitants

Rank Order	S E L E C T E D C R I M E S														
	Murder and non negligent manslaughter		Forcible Rape		Robbery		Aggravated Assault		Burglary		Larceny (\$50 and over)		Auto Theft		
	Area	Rate	Area	Rate	Area	Rate	Area	Rate	Area	Rate	Area	Rate	Area	Rate	
	U.S.	6.1	U.S.	13.7	US	102.1	U.S.	128.0	US.	811.5	US	529.2	US	331.0	
REGIONS	1	New Eng	2.4	New Eng	6.3	New Eng	37.0	New Eng	58.1	E. So. Cent	532.3	E. S. Cent	334.9	E. So. Cent	321.1
	2	W. No. Cent	3.7	E. So. Cent	9.9	E. So. Cent	39.4	W. N. Cent	74.0	W. N. Cent	634.4	New Eng	372.2	W. S. Cent	234.3
	3	Mid Atlantic	4.6	W. No. Cent	10.6	Mountain	53.8	Mountain	100.9	New Eng	663.4	W. N. Cent	390.3	W. N. Cent	244.9
	4	Mountain	4.8	Mid Atl.	11.9	W. So. Cent	63.6	E. N. Cent	113.7	E. N. Cent	705.4	W. S. Cent	447.9	So. Atl.	261.9
	5	Pacific	4.9	So. Atl.	13.5	W. No. Cent	66.6	Mid Atl.	119.8	W. S. Cent	713.3	E. N. Cent	464.7	Mountain	288.8
	6	E. No. Cent	5.5	W. So. Cent	14.0	So. Atl.	97.2	E. S. Cent	124.3	So. Atl.	776.8	So. Atl.	469.1	E. N. Cent	353.1
	7	E. So. Cent	9.2	Mountain	14.5	Pacific	125.9	W. S. Cent	147.4	Mountain	797.4	Mid Atl.	620.2	Mid Atl.	377.6
	8	W. So. Cent	9.2	E. No. Cent	14.6	E. No. Cent	135.7	Pacific	149.9	Mid Atl.	885.4	Mountain	657.7	Pacific	457.7
	9	So. Atlantic	9.6	Pacific	21.8	Mid. Atl.	141.5	So. Atl.	191.1	Pacific	1308.4	Pacific	845.5	N. Eng	471.5
STATES	1	N. Dak	0.2	N. Hamp	3.4	Vermt	1.9	Vermt	11.3	N. Dak	241.2	Miss	146.6	Miss	56.7
	2	Maine	0.4	Vermt	4.3	N. Dak	5.8	N. Dak	18.3	Miss	257.8	Vermt	171.9	Ark	78.5
	3	Iowa	1.5	Wisc	4.6	N. Hamp	6.1	N. Hamp	20.3	W. Va	298.4	W. Va	175.9	N. Dak	82.3
	4	Minn	1.6	N. Dak	4.7	Maine	9.7	Zowa	30.3	S. Dak	341.5	N. Hamp	220.6	S. Dak	84.1
	5	Wisc	1.9	W. Va	4.7	Miss	10.6	Wisc	35.9	N. Hamp	342.6	Maine	230.2	W. Va	87.4
	6	N. Hamp	2.0	R. Is	4.8	Idaho	10.9	Maine	43.3	Ark	400.4	Penna	242.8	Maine	106.4
	7	R. Is	2.2	Hawaii	5.0	S. Dak	12.9	Idaho	44.5	Maine	403.0	N. Dak	243.7	N. Hamp	111.8
	8	Hawaii	2.4	Miss	5.5	Wyo	13.7	Mont	49.8	Idaho	465.9	Neb	289.0	Idaho	112.9
	9	Conn	2.4	Iowa	5.6	W. Va	19.3	Hawaii	52.8	Iowa	431.6	S. Dak	300.4	Vermt	124.9
	10	Mont	2.4	Conn	5.6	Hawaii	19.8	Minn	54.7	Wisc	450.3	Ark	310.2	N. Car	131.1
	11	Utah	2.7	Maine	6.0	Iowa	21.0	Conn	55.7	N. Car	477.8	N. Car	328.0	Alab	146.0
	12	Nab	2.7	Utah	7.2	Mont	21.4	S. Dak	62.0	Kent	482.9	S. Car	337.6	Iowa	155.2
	13	MASS	2.8	Wyo	7.3	Wisc	28.0	Del	63.5	Penna	483.2	Iowa	361.9	S. Car	155.6
	14	Vermt	3.1	MASS	7.6	N. Car	30.2	Neb	63.6	Neb	491.7	Alab	367.6	Wyo	174.9
	15	Ore	3.1	Neb.	8.2	R. Is	31.4	Penna	63.6	Wyo	506.0	Va	367.8	Kans	184.9
	16	Wash	3.1	S. Dak	8.3	Conn	32.2	Ind	64.9	Vermt	517.0	Tenn	368.0	Okla	188.0
	17	S. Dak	3.7	Minn	8.6	Alab	33.0	MASS	65.2	Mont	522.3	Ga	385.3	Neb	188.2
	18	Ind.	3.7	Idaho	8.7	S. Car	34.9	Wyo	67.6	Alab	561.6	Wisc	385.8	Ga	199.9
	19	Penna	3.8	Kent	9.1	Ark	35.2	W. Va	68.2	S. Car	567.7	Ohio	387.7	Wisc	214.6
	20	N. Jers	3.9	Penna	9.4	Alaska	35.3	Utah	68.4	Ga	591.4	MASS	392.3	Mont	215.7
	21	Kans	4.0	N. Jers	9.7	Ga	37.3	Ohio	74.5	Okla	594.9	Kent	396.7	Utah	225.3
	22	Colo	4.1	Mont	10.3	Utah	38.5	Ore	76.1	Kans	598.2	Idaho	398.3	Va	228.5
	23	Idaho	4.3	Ohio	10.3	Okla	38.5	Kent	77.2	Ohio	607.6	Kans	405.8	Penna	232.8
	24	W. Va	4.6	Del	10.3	Neb	38.7	Wash	83.7	Ill	608.5	Mo	411.0	Tenn	243.1
	25	Wyo	4.8	Alab.	10.5	Kansas	42.2	Okla	85.9	Va	635.2	Conn	413.0	N. Mex	248.5
	26	Ohio	5.2	Kans	10.7	N. Mex	44.5	Kans	86.0	Ind	651.6	Del	423.3	Tex	248.5
	27	N. York	5.4	N. Car	11.0	Kent	47.1	Miss	89.0	La	656.2	Ind	426.5	Ore	257.3
	28	Calif	5.4	Ind	11.4	Va	50.9	R. Is	90.0	MASS	675.5	Ill	428.6	La	281.3
	29	Ariz	5.6	Va	11.9	MASS	52.0	N. Jers	92.4	Utah	685.5	Okla	436.5	Wash	281.5
	30	Mich	6.2	Ore	12.4	Wash	54.6	Alaska	98.2	Alaska	688.6	Minn	459.3	Kent	281.8
	31	N. Mex	6.4	Ga	12.4	Penna	56.5	Colo	98.9	Minn	704.4	Tax	467.4	Fla	285.7
	32	Okla	6.7	Wash	12.5	Tenn	56.5	Nev	104.7	Tenn	711.8	La	471.8	Minn	292.4
	33	Kent	7.2	Tenn	12.5	Del	63.4	Va	122.0	Conn	751.7	R. Is	479.9	Colo	308.4
	34	Va	7.3	Tex	13.3	Ore	65.9	Mo	122.1	Del	771.2	Mont	482.6	Conn	321.1
	35	Mo	7.3	Okla	13.7	Minn	67.1	Ga	128.5	Colo	789.4	Wyo	494.3	Ind	322.7
	36	Ill	7.3	S. Car	13.9	Colo	67.9	Tenn	130.5	N. Mex	812.3	N. Jers	504.4	Ohio	325.6
	37	Del	7.8	Ark	14.2	Tex	68.4	Ariz	141.0	Tex	816.4	Hawaii	581.6	Mo	355.0
	38	Md	8.0	N. York	14.3	Ariz	74.9	Tex	152.3	Wash	837.7	Utah	594.3	Del	368.7
	39	Miss	8.7	Nev	14.4	Ind	76.7	N. Mex	156.9	Ore	857.4	Colo	625.4	Mich	384.8
	40	Ark	8.8	N. Mex	15.0	La	82.1	Mich	158.5	Mo	861.1	N. Mex	647.7	Hawaii	404.2
	41	Tenn	8.9	Fla	15.2	N. Jers	82.5	Ark	161.3	N. Jers	861.4	Mich	664.4	Alaska	404.4
	42	La	9.3	La	16.5	Ohio	95.0	N. York	165.8	R. Is	896.9	Wash	672.5	Ariz	407.2
	43	N. Car	9.4	Ariz	16.7	Nev	117.8	La	167.2	Md	1014.8	Md	683.2	Ill	421.7
	44	Alaska	9.6	Mo	17.1	Mo	130.5	Ill	168.3	Nev	1066.2	Fla	688.2	N. Jers	425.3
	45	Tex	9.8	Alaska	17.6	Fla	130.9	S. Car	170.7	Mich	1103.5	Ore	692.7	N. York	451.1
	46	Fla	10.5	Ill	17.9	Calif	149.0	Calif	172.7	Ariz	1137.3	Alaska	716.9	Nev	476.8
	47	Nev	10.8	Md	19.6	Mich	189.6	Alab	183.5	N. York	1149.6	Ariz	874.9	Md	489.1
	48	Ga	11.1	Colo	20.9	Ill	200.9	Fla	233.6	Hawaii	1152.4	Calif	901.2	Calif	508.1
	49	S. Car	11.2	Mich	22.5	Md	212.1	Md	234.5	Fla	1220.8	N. York	903.9	R. Is	608.9
	50	Alab	11.7	Calif	25.0	N. York	217.9	N. Car	261.5	Calif	1446.0	Nev	972.3	MASS	667.4

Taken from Table 3 page 63 of the Uniform Crime Reports of the F. B. I. issued Aug 27 1968

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