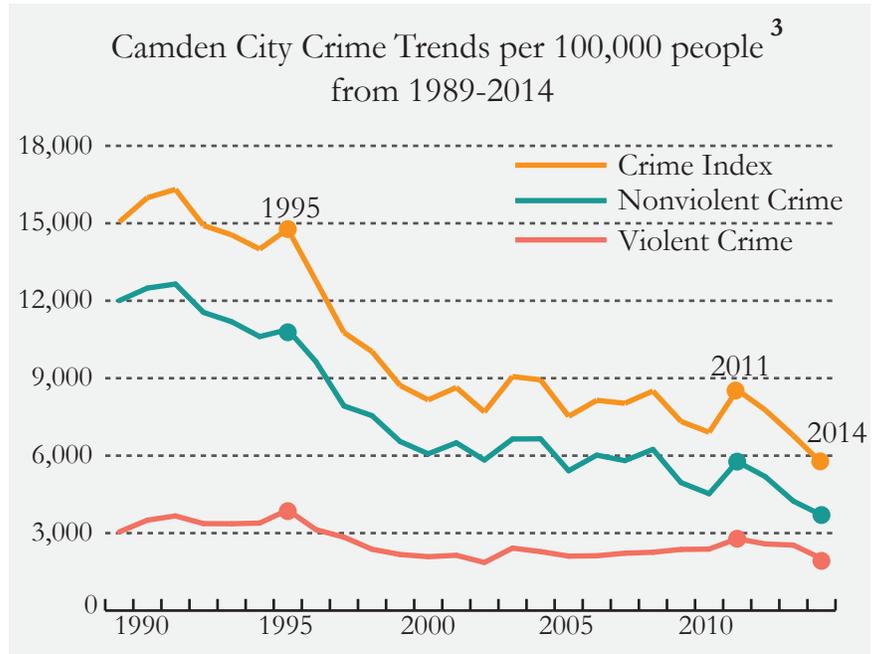# Camden City Crime Trends from 1989 to 2014

Crime patterns in Camden reflect national trends as well as local events such as budget cuts and police department restructuring.
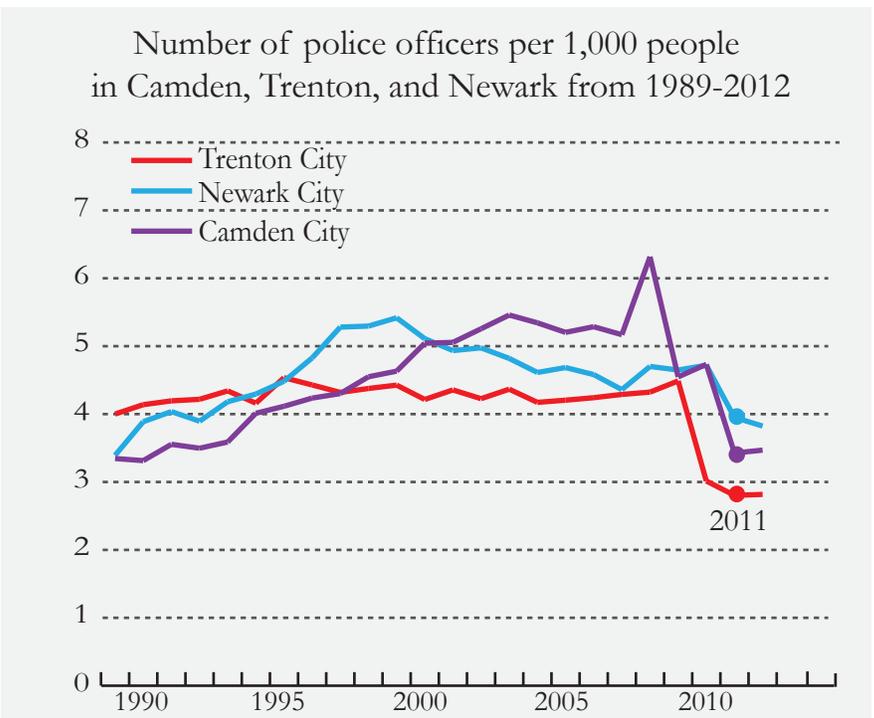
When examining Camden crime trends, it's important to look at long-term patterns, not just the last few years, and to compare Camden data to that of other similar geographic areas. On an annual basis, the FBI Uniform Crime Reports compile the *crime index*, an aggregated statistic that provides a standardized measure which allows us to compare crime data year-to-year, and across the United States. In line with national trends (see Page 2),[1] Camden crime sharply decreased from 1995 until 2000. Nonviolent crime decreased very gradually until 2011, while violent crime increased slowly in that span.

In 2011, budget cuts caused massive layoffs in the Camden City Police Department, and other cities in New Jersey, including Newark and Trenton, have done the same to combat declining state aid and tax revenue.[2] From 2010 to 2011, the number of Camden police officers fell from 366 to 265, and the total number of all employees dropped from 452 to 314. Also in 2011, the **crime index (+23.8%)**, **violent (+16.9%)**, and **nonviolent crime (+27.5%)** increased – although it is important to note that we can't definitively conclude that the layoffs caused these results.

Data Source: New Jersey Uniform Crime Reports 1989 - 2014
http://www.njsp.org/info/stats.html

Camden City Crime Trends per 100,000 people[3] from 1989-2014

The crime index can include murder, manslaughter, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft. Violent crime, a segment of that measurement, involves the use of force while nonviolent crime does not.

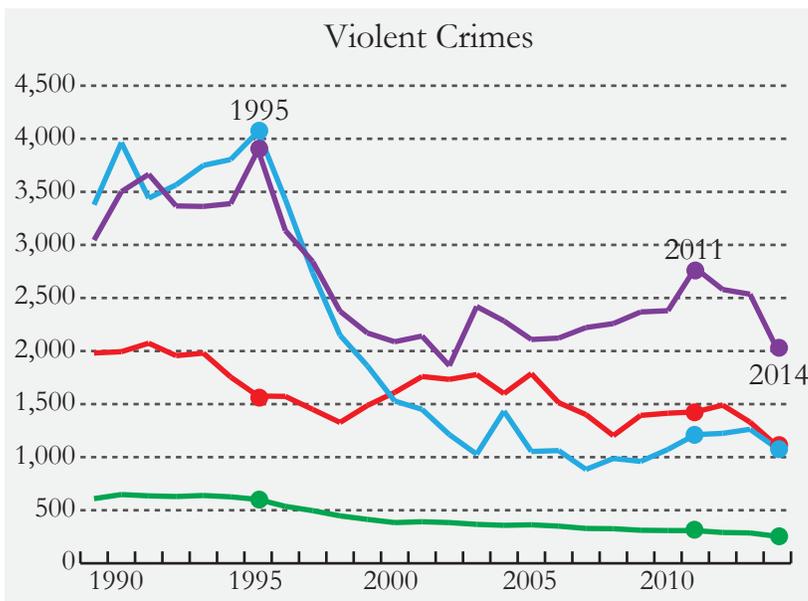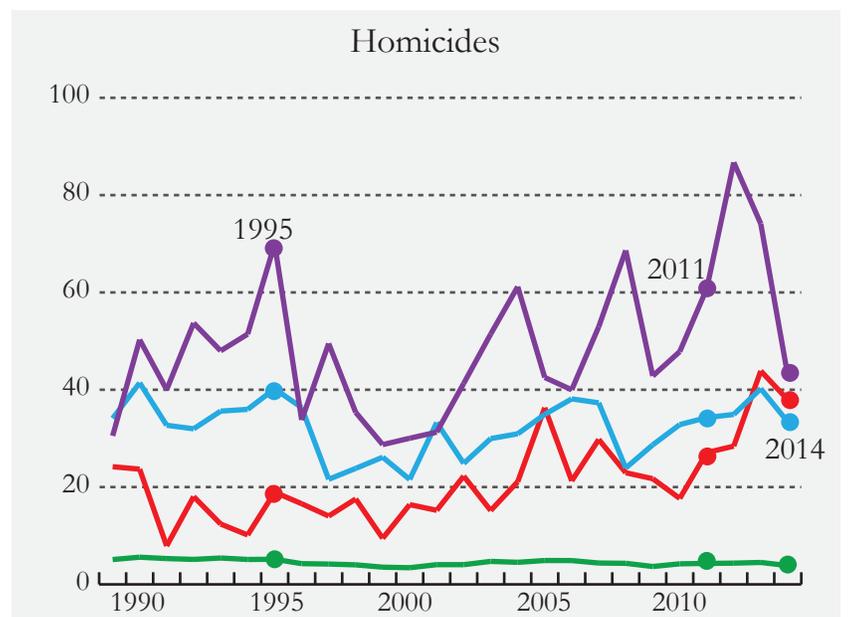Number of police officers per 1,000 people in Camden, Trenton, and Newark from 1989-2012
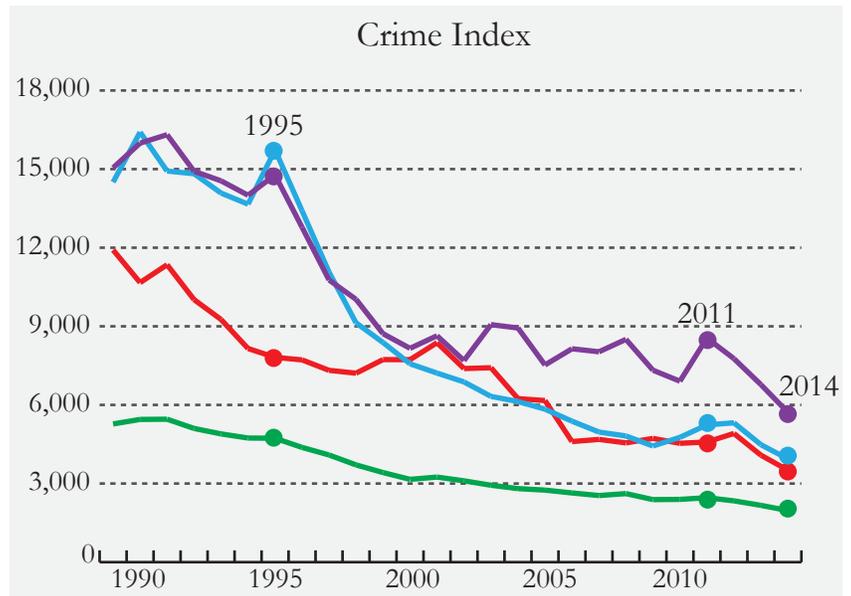
Levels of police officers per 1,000 residents had been increasing steadily in Camden, but then dropped sharply by 2011, a trend that was mirrored in Trenton and Newark as well.

Homicides, Crime Index, and Violent Crimes per 100,000 people from 1989 - 2014

Legend:
—— New Jersey   —— Newark
—— Trenton   —— Camden City

In 2013, the Camden City Police Department was disbanded in favor of a new Camden County Police Department, a move which made national news,[4] and was met with both support and criticism. From 2012-2014, the Camden crime index, violent crime, nonviolent crime, and homicide rates showed a decreasing trend compared to the peak of 2011. Compared to 2013, **homicide (-42.1%)**, **crime index (-15.6%)**, and **violent (-20.5%)**/**nonviolent crime (-12.7%)** rates lowered in 2014, but we can't say for sure that this was a direct result of the police restructuring.

Crime across the US has been on the decline since the 1980s due to a host of factors, and crime in New Jersey cities have followed a similar pattern. Violent crime has followed this trend, but homicides, however, have either stayed flat over the last 25 years, or slightly increased in the case of Camden or Trenton.

Crime Index

Homicides

Violent Crimes

Footnotes:

1.http://www.cna.org/sites/default/files/research/Crime_Trends.pdf

2.http://www.nj.com/news/index.ssf/2012/05/after_heavy_police_layoffs_in.html

3. All data is adjusted for population in order to provide a more consistent comparison across cities and time.

4.http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/29/nyregion/overrun-by-crime-camden-trades-in-its-police-force.html?_r=1

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