

CAUTION AGAINST RANKING

Pitfalls of Ranking

The Arkansas Crime Information Centers UCR, Summary, and NIBRS crime data has been used to compile rankings of individual jurisdictions and institutions of higher learning. These crude and/or incomplete analyses have often created misleading perceptions which adversely affect geographic entities and their residents. The FBI has a longstanding policy against ranking cities, counties, states and universities/colleges on the basis of crime data alone.

Locales should not be ranked because there are many factors that cause the nature and type of crime to vary from place to place. The ACIC UCR statistics include only jurisdictional figures along with reported crime, clearance or arrest data. Rankings ignore the uniqueness of each locale.

All jurisdictions are affected in some degree by:

- Population density and degree of urbanization.
- Variations in composition of the population, particularly youth concentration.
- Stability of the population with respect to residents' mobility, commuting patterns, and transient factors.
- Modes of transportation and highway system.
- Economic conditions, including median income, poverty level, and job availability.
- Cultural factors and educational, recreational, and religious characteristics.
- Family conditions with respect to divorce and family cohesiveness.
- Climate.
- Effective strength of law enforcement agencies.
- Administrative and investigative emphases of law enforcement.
- Policies of other components of the criminal justice system (i.e., prosecutorial, judicial, correctional, and probational).
- Citizens' attitudes toward crime.
- Crime reporting practices of the citizenry.

The attitudes of a jurisdiction's citizenry toward crime and the crime reporting practices of its residents are known to have an effect on the number of crimes coming to the attention of law enforcement.

Because of concerns regarding the proper use of the ACIC UCR data, the ACIC has the following policies:

- The ACIC will not analyze, interpret, or publish crime statistics based solely on a single dimension interagency ranking.
- The ACIC will not furnish agency-based crime statistics to data users in a ranked format.
- When providing/using agency-oriented statistics, the ACIC cautions and, in fact, strongly discourages data users against using rankings to evaluate locales or the effectiveness of their law enforcement departments.