

**Overview of Annual Survey Data Across  
Three New York County Jails from 2010-2015**

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Jaleesa Panico  
Research Assistant  
[Cps2047@rit.edu](mailto:Cps2047@rit.edu)

Janelle Duda-Banwar  
Research Associate  
[jmdgcj@rit.edu](mailto:jmdgcj@rit.edu)

John Klofas, Ph.D.  
Director, Center for Public Safety Initiatives  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
585 475 2432  
[Jmkgcj@rit.edu](mailto:Jmkgcj@rit.edu)

## **Introduction**

The objective of this working paper is to describe jail population trends from 2010-2015 across three New York State facilities: Monroe County jail, Niagara County Jail, and Orange County jail. The focus is on Monroe County jail, but Orange and Niagara County jails were selected as comparisons because they consistently reported data during this time period. We focused specifically on the Monroe County Jail and compared its' populations with the other two listed jails to understand the nature of the local jail population by itself, and in comparison with others within the same state to identify similar and diverging trends.

There are five areas covered include: total confinement populations, the number of admissions and releases, the racial compositions of the jail populations, juvenile populations, and the non US citizen populations. Each area includes at least one chart and description, results and conclusions are discussed, and finally, future use of this data is described.

## **Methods**

The Bureau of Justice Statistics' (BJS) Annual Survey of Jails is the data source. The BJS jail data is collected annually with the item, "On December 31, how many persons CONFINED in your jail facilities were..." The data reported for Monroe County include only the jail population, which traditionally houses unsentenced individuals and does not include data from the Monroe Correctional Facility, which typically houses sentenced individuals.

### **Total Confinement Population**

Figure 1 depicts the total combined confinement population of the Monroe, Niagara, and Orange County Jails, separated by gender. The overall jail population remains mostly consistent until 2015, which shows a drop of 521 inmates, however, the percentage of male and female inmates remains within a 2% difference for the entire reporting period. This indicates that while there

was an overall decrease in inmates in 2015, this was not driven by an increase or decrease in either males or females. Nonetheless, between 2010 and 2015, there was a reduction of more than 20% in jail inmates.

Figure 1: Monroe, Niagara, and Orange County (New York State) Combined Male and Female Jail Populations 2010-2015<sup>1</sup>

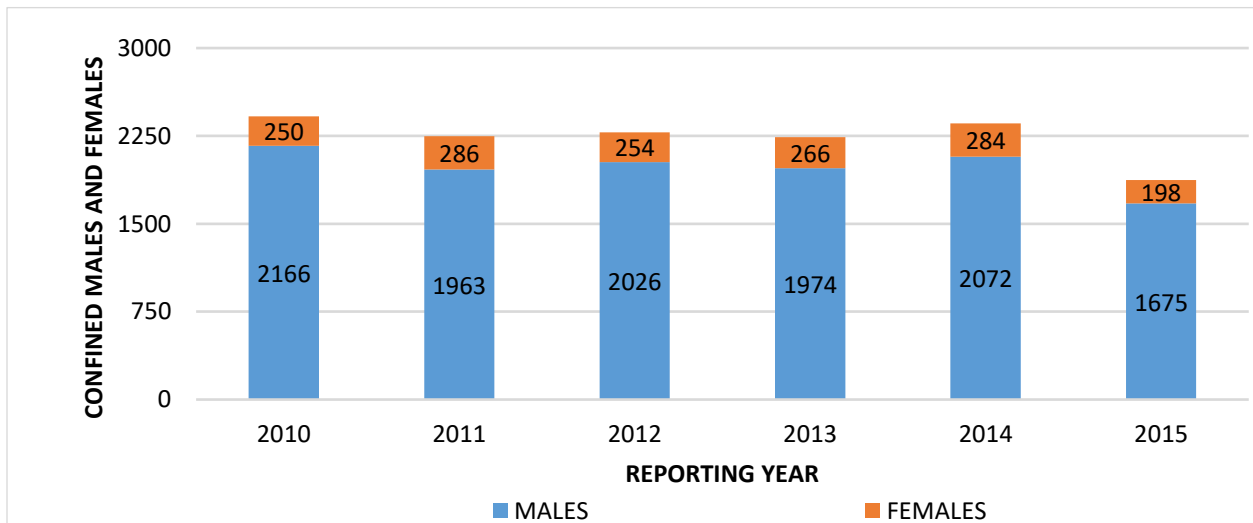


Figure 2. Monroe County (New York State) Confined Male and Female Populations 2010-2015

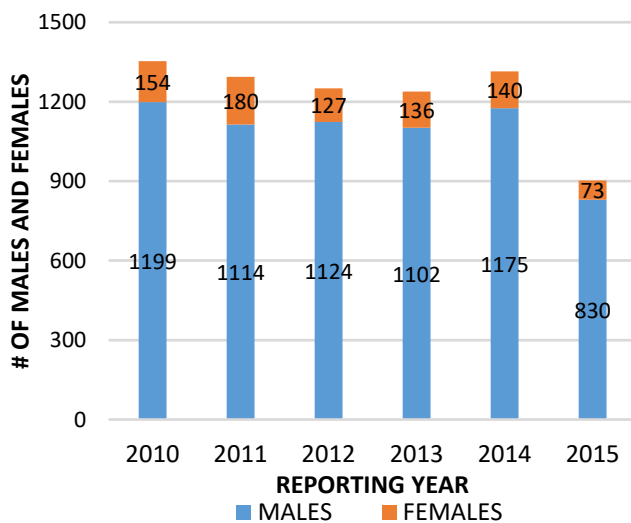
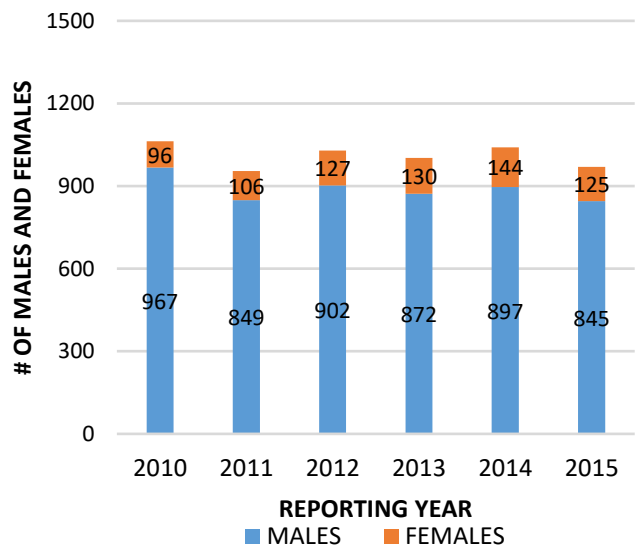


Figure 3. Niagara and Orange County (New York State) Combined Male and Female Populations 2010-2015



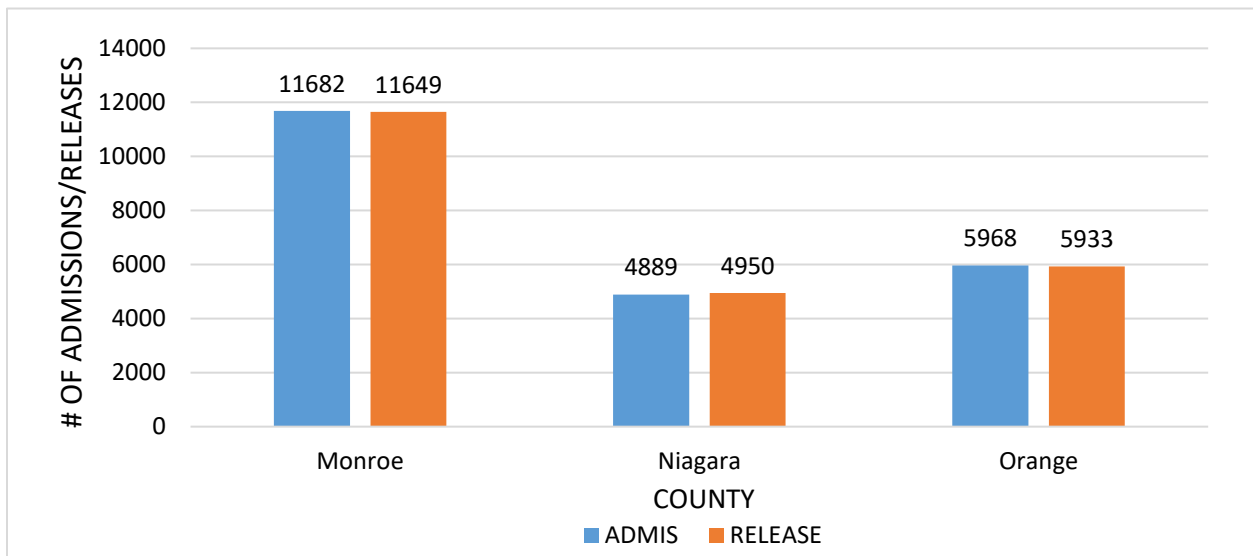
<sup>1</sup> The separate 'Total Confinement Population' variable does not equal the total male and female confined populations summed together, unknown why.

Figures 2 and 3 are a side-by-side comparison of the total confinement population of Monroe County Jail compared with the combined population of Niagara and Orange County jails. This comparison illustrates that the dip in population in 2015 is due solely to the jail population of Monroe from dropping, not Niagara or Orange counties. It is unclear what led to this drop.

### Admissions and Releases

As can be seen in Figure 4, Monroe County Jail has the highest number of admissions and releases by a large margin. This figure also shows that for each jail admissions and releases to that jail were nearly equal. For reference, Monroe County population is nearly 750,000; Orange County is nearly 380,000, and Niagara County is a little over 210,000.

Figure 4: Monroe, Niagara, and Orange County (NYS) Total Number of Admissions and Releases, 2015



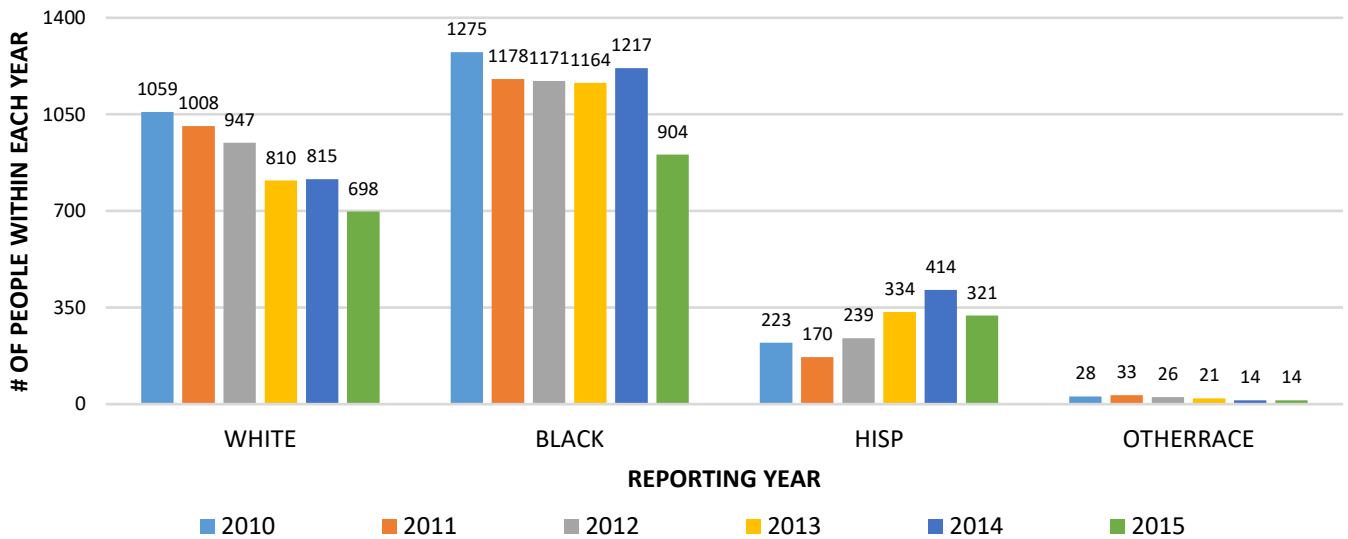
### Race

The white population, illustrated in Figure 11, steadily decreased across all three jails from 2010-2015. The Black population decreased from 2010-2011, then almost no change from 2011-2013, then an increase in 2014, followed by a sharp decrease in 2015. The Hispanic population steadily

increased from 2011-2014, then decreased in 2015. The numbers are small for the combined other races category and those who are unknown.

Monroe County consistently tracks three categories of race: White, Black, and Asian, and has inconsistently captured Hispanic ethnicity. Further, in 2012, Orange County Jail counted their 183 inmates of Hispanic origin in the ‘other race’ category with a specific note, so that count were included in the Hispanic category in the chart above. This inconsistency with how race is recorded, and the absence of any ethnicity count presents a problem with understanding the true makeup of the jail populations regarding race and ethnicity. This can impact the generalizability of any results derived from the data.

*Figure 11. Monroe, Niagara, and Orange County (New York State) Racial Makeup<sup>2</sup> of Confined Jail Populations 2010-2015*



<sup>2</sup> White is defined as answered to the question “On December 31(, 2015,) how many persons CONFINED in your jail facilities were White, not of Hispanic origin?”

Black is defined as answered to the question “On December 31(, 2015,) how many persons CONFINED in your jail facilities were Black or African American, not of Hispanic Origin?”

Hispanic is defined as answered to the question “On December 31(, 2015,) how many persons CONFINED in your jail facilities were Hispanic or Latino?”

Figure 12. Monroe County Jail (New York State) Racial Makeup of Confined Jail Population 2010-2015

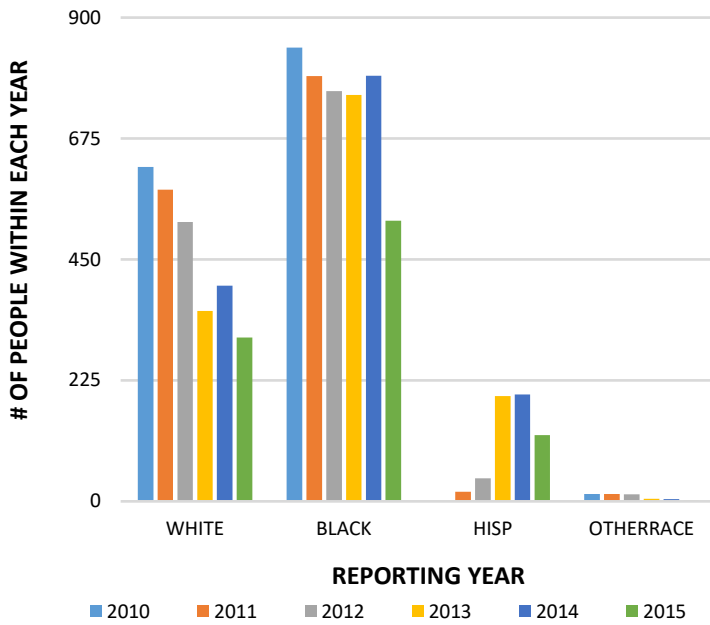
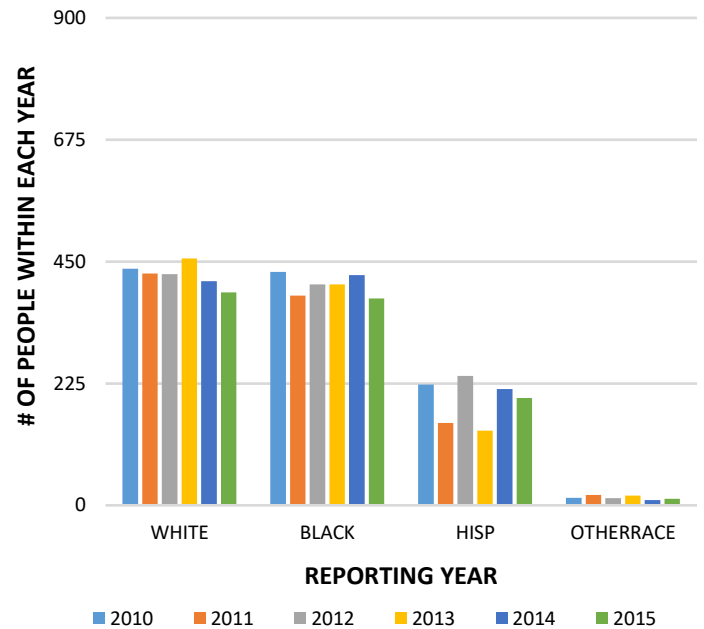


Figure 13. Niagara and Orange County (New York State) Racial Makeup of Confined Jail Population 2010-2015



Monroe County Jails’ population, depicted in figure 12, drives the trends depicted in the combined graph, with white and black populations showing an overall decrease. The Hispanic population follows a similar pattern, but the jump from 2012-2013 is more pronounced in the Monroe County data. Different trends are seen in the combined jail populations of Niagara and Orange Counties, as seen in figure 13. There is only a slight overall decrease in the white and black population, nowhere near as pronounced as in Monroe County. The Hispanic population is larger for every year in the combined Niagara and Orange Counties in comparison to Monroe. This does not happen for any category in any other variable presented in this paper.

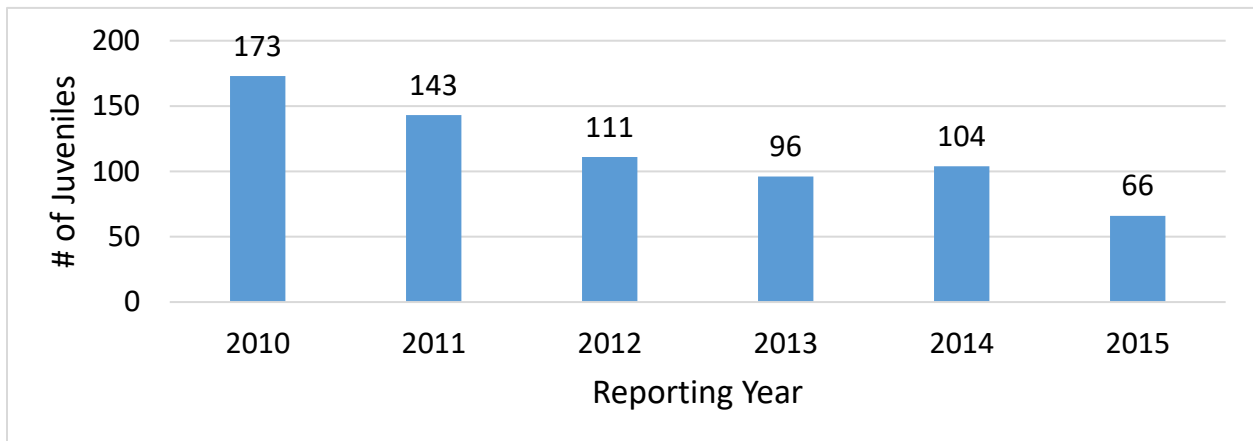
### Juvenile Populations

#### Total Juvenile Population

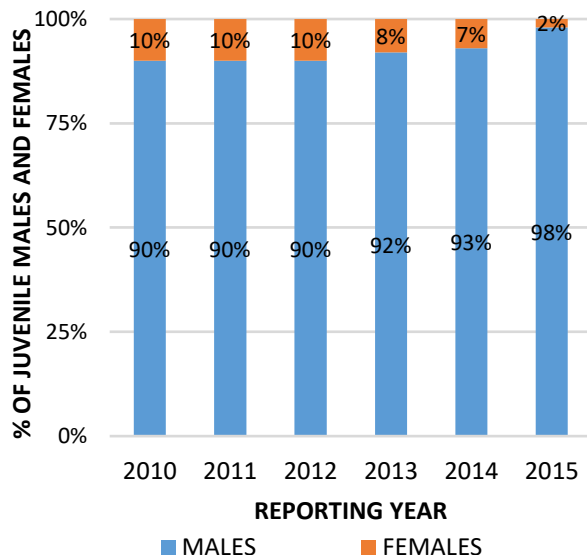
Juvenile is defined by the NY Penal Code as a person, aged 13-15, who is criminally responsible for acts. The total combined juvenile jail population, as displayed in Figure 7, has been consistently and steadily declining (with the exception in 2014). Figures 8 and 9 show

similar proportions across all three jails. The percentage of males and females changes for Monroe County over time, dropping to 2% in 2015 from 10% in 2010. A reverse pattern is revealed in Orange and Niagara counties, increasing to 12% in 2015 from 6% in 2010.

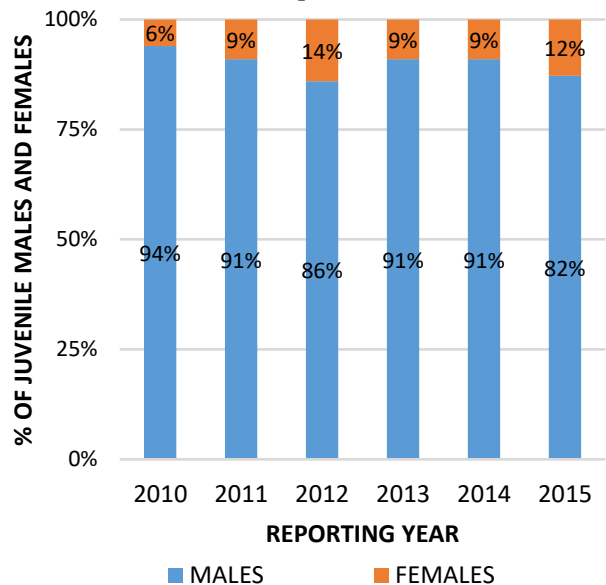
*Figure 7. Monroe, Niagara, and Orange County (New York State) Combined Juvenile<sup>3</sup> Jail Populations 2010-2015*



*Figure 8. Monroe County 100% Stacked Confined Juvenile Male and Female Populations 2010-2015*



*Figure 9. Niagara and Orange County 100% Stacked Combined Confined Juvenile Male and Female Populations 2010-2015*

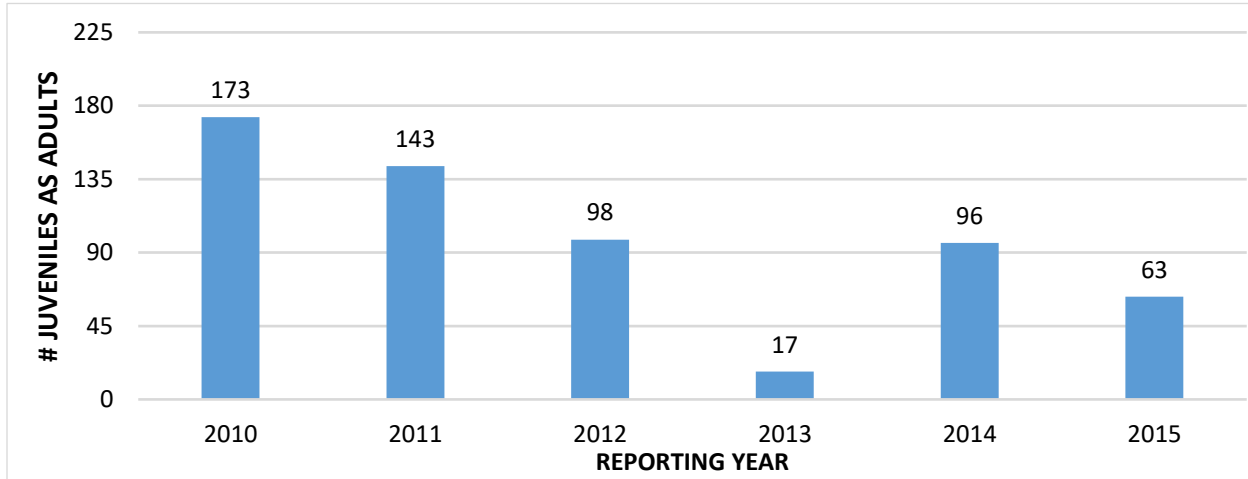


<sup>3</sup>In the BJS Annual Jail Survey Juveniles were defined as “a person of juvenile age is considered a juvenile even though they may be tried as an adult in criminal court.”

## Juveniles Tried As Adults

Similar to the total juvenile population, the population of juveniles tried as adults shown in Figure 10 has a steady decline over most of the years. However, in 2013 there is an extremely sharp decrease, from 98 to 17 juveniles tried as adults. After this sharp dip in 2013, the steady decline from previous years continues from 2014-2015. A possible explanation is a policy change that impacted that year, perhaps regarding how juveniles tried as adults are defined or even counted; there were no changes made in the survey itself regarding this variable.

*Figure 10. Monroe, Niagara, and Orange County (New York State) Combined Juveniles Tried As Adults Jail Populations 2010-2015*



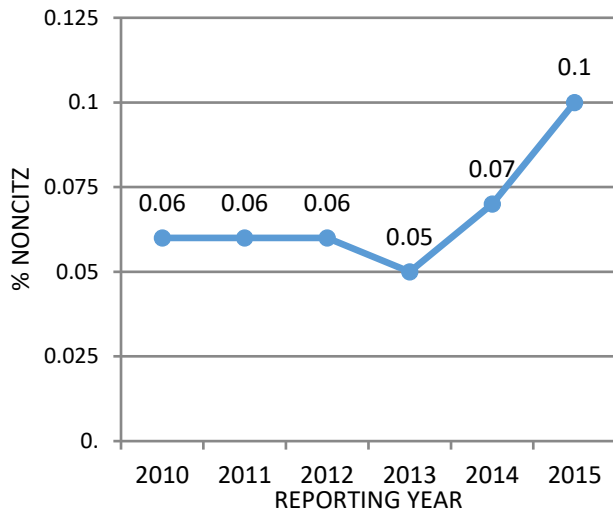
## Non-US Citizens

Figure 5 shows the percentage that Non US Citizens makeup of the combined total jail population. There is a slight increase from 2010-2012, a sharp decrease to the minimum in 2013, and then a sharp and steady increase from 2013-2015, with 2015 at the maximum. Figure 6 shows the number of Non-US Citizens in the Monroe County Jail. There were non-US citizens in the Monroe County jail in only two of the six reporting years on the specified day. The numbers driving the combined percent are from Orange and Niagara jails, not Monroe. Niagara County is

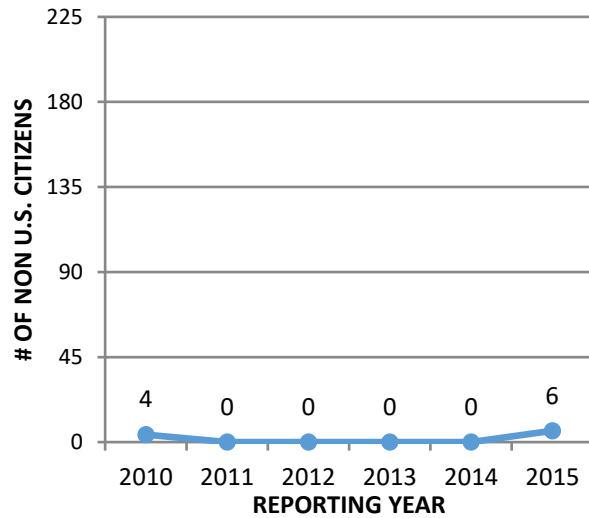


right next to the Canadian border, and Orange County is close to New York City, both of which have higher immigrant populations than Monroe.

*Figure 5. Monroe, Niagara, and Orange County (New York State) Combined Percentage of Non-US Citizens Out of Their Total Jail Population 2010-2015*



*Figure 6. Monroe County (New York State) Non-US Citizen Jail Population 2010-2015*



### Discussion

The overall jail population of Monroe County is declining, although the combined populations of Niagara and Orange are remaining, for the most part, consistent with a smaller overall decrease. This decline does not seem to be due to some specific category, such as an increase in males or females, since this remains steady over time. The White and Black populations in Monroe are both decreasing, and the Hispanic population is possibly increasing. The recent multiple changes in how Monroe County jail captures Hispanic ethnicity limits any conclusions that can be drawn based on race and ethnicity. Following a similar trend as the overall jail population, the juvenile population is consistently decreasing for all three jails. There has been a sharp increase in the number of Non-US Citizens in the jail population, although the percentage of the total population is still small.

## **Conclusion**

Studying the data with the three jails combined and in the two separated comparisons was important, because both ways made different contributions to understanding the population. With Monroe having such a high percentage of the total combined numbers for each variable, it was unsurprising that, when separated, Monroe's data trends mostly followed with the combined graphs. What was surprising was that more often than not, the combined populations of Niagara and Orange County Jails' populations did not, which suggests that different locations have different trends, and so may have different needs. This is an important when considering the potential applications of this kind of research.

## **Future Use**

The intent of this paper is to provide a general grasp of the local jail population for an ongoing project designed to identify the different needs of jail inmates, during and post-incarceration. This study is a first step to understanding the current jail population and identification of specialty populations of jail inmates. Next, we intend to conduct focus groups with identified sub-populations within the jail (e.g., females, non-US citizens) to understand their needs.

This research has shown that not all jails, even within the same state, have the same population make-up, which means that different jail inmates may have different needs, and many resources for reentry depend on the communities themselves. This all suggests that efforts to create nation-wide solutions and implications for reentry may not be as successful in some areas, and that smaller-scale, community-specific solutions should be the focus.