

Unfinished Business: Why Cities Matter to Welfare Reform

New York

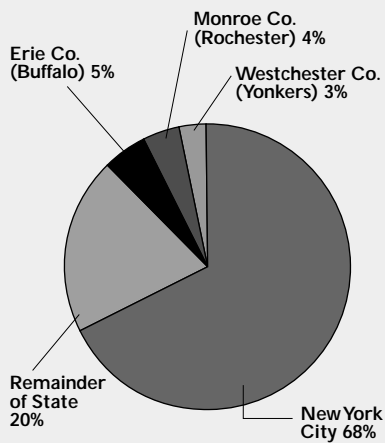
An analysis of welfare caseloadsⁱ in the 89 urban counties that contain the 100 largest citiesⁱⁱ found that:

- In 1999, ten states, including New York, accounted for nearly 70 percent of the nation's welfare caseloads, up significantly from 42.5 percent in 1994. The bulk of the national welfare population can be found in: California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Washington. These ten states contained 53 percent of the overall national population in 1999.
- While urban welfare caseloads are declining rapidly, they are shrinking more slowly than national caseloads. New York's four largest urban areas followed this trend. While the nation's welfare caseloads dropped by 51.5 percent between 1994 and 1999, the state, along with New York City, Erie County (Buffalo), Monroe County (Rochester), and Westchester County (Yonkers) lagged behind the national decline. Between 1994 and 1998 (the most recent data available), the state's welfare rolls declined by 29.4 percent and New York City's caseloads decreased by 27.7 percent. Erie, Monroe, and Westchester counties lagged even farther behind, declining by 24.8 percent, 19.2 percent, and 23.4 percent, respectively. In 1998, the state contained 290,117 cases; New York City had 225,651 cases, the second largest caseload in the nation after Los Angeles County.
- New York City's share of New York State's families on welfare grew between 1994 and 1998; Erie, Monroe, and Westchester counties' shares remained stable. New York City contained 69.5 percent of New York State's welfare caseloads in 1998, up slightly from 68.0 percent in 1994. Erie, Monroe, and Westchester counties had significantly smaller shares of the state's caseloads, with 4.9 percent, 4.4 percent and 2.9 percent, respectively.
- New York City is shouldering a disproportionate share of New York State's welfare cases when compared to its share of the state's population. While New York City contained only 40.8 percent of the state's population, it contained 69.5 percent of New York's welfare caseload, nearly double (or 1.7 times) its "fair share." Monroe and Erie counties both had approximately their "fair share" of the state welfare rolls, with indices of 1.1 and 0.9, respectively. Westchester County had a smaller share of state welfare recipients with a Fair Share Index of 0.6.ⁱⁱⁱ

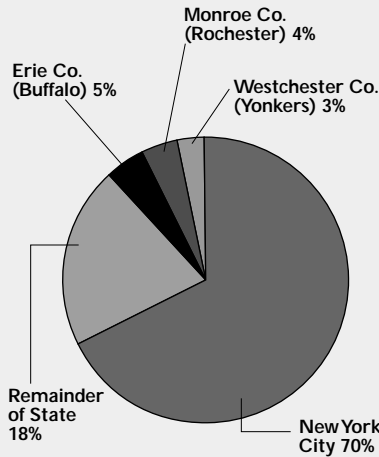




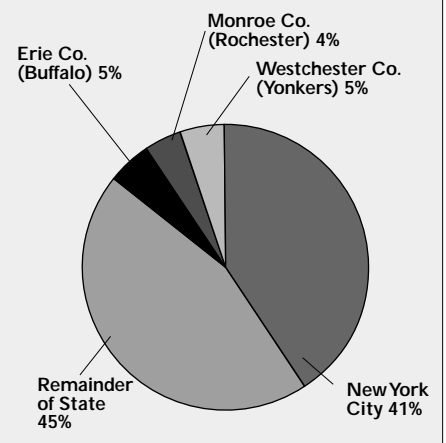
A. Share of New York's Welfare Caseload, 1994



B. Share of New York's Welfare Caseload, 1998



C. Share of New York's Total Population, 1999



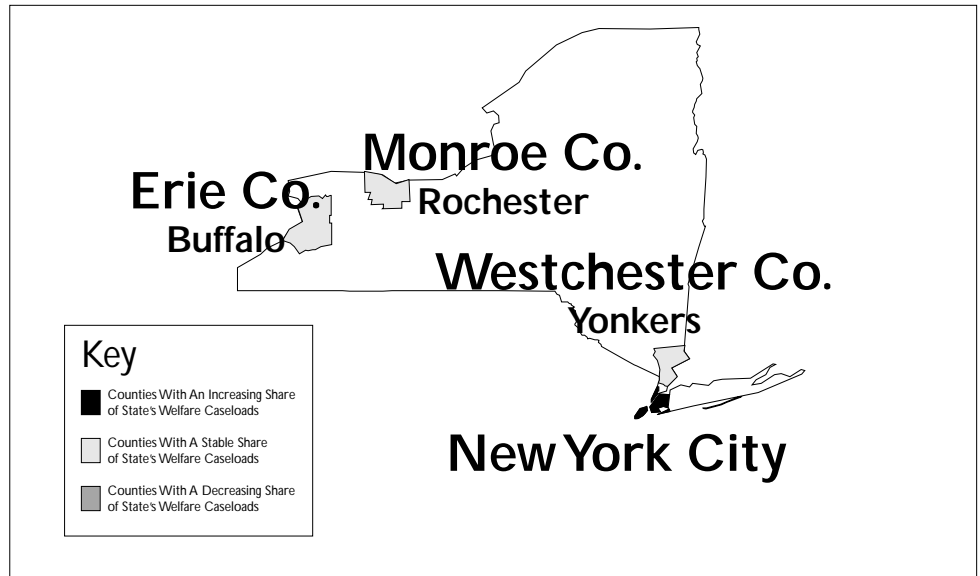
New York Data Table

	Welfare Cases 1998 ^{iv}	% Decline in Welfare Cases 1994-1998	% of State Caseload 1994	% of State Caseload 1998	% of Total State Population 1998	Fair Share Index 1998	City Concentrated Poverty Rate ^v 1990	% of County Population in Central City ^{vi} 1998
New York	290,117	29.4%						
New York City ^{vii}	225,651	27.7%	68.0%	69.5%	40.8%	1.7	13.0%	100.0%
Erie Co. (Buffalo)	15,830	24.8%	4.6%	4.9%	5.1%	0.9	18.7%	32.2%
Monroe Co. (Rochester)	14,123	19.2%	3.8%	4.4%	3.9%	1.1	14.4%	30.3%
Westchester Co. (Yonkers)	9,353	23.4%	2.7%	2.9%	5.0%	0.6	n/a	21.1%





Right: The map indicates the change in concentration of state welfare caseloads in three large urban counties and New York City. New York City experienced an increased concentration of New York State's welfare cases; Erie, Monroe, and Westchester counties' shares remained stable between 1994 and 1998.



Endnotes

- i The caseload data reflect the number of welfare cases, not individual recipients. Welfare cases may include a two-parent household with children, a single-parent household with children, or cases where there is no adult in the assistance unit (child-only cases). The data also reflect the number of cases that received cash assistance under Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and its successor, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF).
- ii Because welfare programs, both AFDC and TANF, are typically administered at the county-level, the caseload data reflect the county caseloads, not the number of cases within the central cities. For the most part, the use of county-level caseload data may understate the central city welfare trends because of the inclusion of welfare cases from suburbs.
- iii The Fair Share Index conveys the share of the state welfare population contained in a county, compared with the county's share of the overall state population. The Fair Share Index is a ratio of two figures: the county's percentage of the state welfare caseload in 1998 divided by the county's percentage of the state total population in 1998.
- iv Most recent data available for New York is 1998.

- v The concentrated poverty rate reflects the percentage of the city population that lived in census tracts where 40 percent of the residents were poor in 1990 (the most recent year for which concentrated poverty data is available). Concentrated poverty is associated with the social characteristics and behaviors that define the so-called "hard-to-serve" welfare population: illiteracy, chronic unemployment, poor work history, no high school diploma, low skills, teenage pregnancy and out-of-wedlock births.
- vi The percentage of the county population that lives in the central city indicates how "urban" the county and, by extension, the welfare caseload actually is. Counties in the Southwest and West are relatively larger than the Northeastern and Midwestern counties and contain larger suburban populations. We would expect that the welfare population is more urban even in relatively more suburban counties. The indicator serves as a rough estimate of how well the county welfare data captures city-specific welfare trends.
- vii New York City data is a composite of the five boroughs.

Full Report Available at:
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