

Measuring femicide in Denmark

Femicide

Femicide can be understood as the extreme end of a continuum of violence against women that happens in all European Union Member States⁽¹⁾. There is no standard agreed definition of femicide among the EU Member States or around the world. The lack of a uniform definition hampers the measurement of femicide, which becomes invisible among general homicide data⁽²⁾. The general concept of femicide refers to the killing of a woman or girl because of her gender. The United Nations Vienna Declaration on Femicide⁽³⁾ was the first to identify different types of femicide, including:

- murder of women as a result of intimate partner violence;
- torture and misogynistic slaying of women;
- killing of women and girls in the name of honour;
- targeted killing of women and girls in the context of armed conflict;
- dowry-related killing of women;
- killing of women and girls because of their sexual orientation and gender identity;
- killing of aboriginal and indigenous women and girls because of their gender;
- female infanticide and gender-based sex selection foeticide;
- genital mutilation-related deaths;
- accusations of witchcraft;
- other types of femicide connected with gangs, organised crime, drug dealers, human trafficking and the proliferation of small arms.

Femicide in Denmark

There is no definition of femicide in the Danish Penal Code. However, this type of offence may fall under other provisions of Danish criminal law. The relevant sections for identifying femicide cases are, inter alia, Sections 237 and 246⁽⁴⁾.

Section 237 – Homicide

Anyone who kills another shall be punished for homicide with imprisonment from 5 years up to life imprisonment.

Section 246 – Aggravating circumstances for physical assault

If a physical assault covered by Section 245 (physical assault) or Section 245a (female genital mutilation) has been of such a serious nature or has resulted in such serious injuries or death as to result in extremely aggravating circumstances, the punishment may increase to imprisonment for 10 years.

About the study

Data collection systems vary widely across EU Member States, as they draw on various sources. To improve the collection of administrative data on femicide, EIGE has been working to establish indicators that can harmonise data collection processes across Member States' jurisdictions.

EIGE has collected information from a wide variety of stakeholders through a questionnaire sent to official data providers and an online survey filled in by national experts. The ultimate goal is to identify a classification system of femicide with mutually agreed variables that can be used by all EU Member States.

Methodology for data collection

To address the lack of comparable data on violence against women, EIGE developed 13 indicators with uniform definitions of the multiple forms of intimate partner violence, femicide and rape⁽⁵⁾. A detailed report regarding the methodology for the collection, reporting and validation of data, along with detailed metadata per country, has been published⁽⁶⁾. The data presented in this factsheet refers to indicator 9 on intimate partner violence: 'Women victims of intimate femicide (aged 18 and over) committed by a male intimate partner (aged 18 and over), as a share of the women victims of homicide aged 18 and over'. However, the data available for Denmark under this indicator is not yet comparable. The data can be accessed through EIGE's Gender Statistics Database (https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/browse/genvio/genvio_int).

(1) This factsheet includes data collected before the United Kingdom left the EU, so the reference to EU Member States includes the United Kingdom.

(2) European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2017), *Glossary of definitions of rape, femicide and intimate partner violence*, EIGE, Vilnius.

(3) UN Economic and Social Council (2012), *Vienna Declaration on Femicide*, UN, New York (https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/CCPCJ_Sessions/CCPCJ_22/E-CN15-2013-NGO1/E-CN15-2013-NGO1_E.pdf).

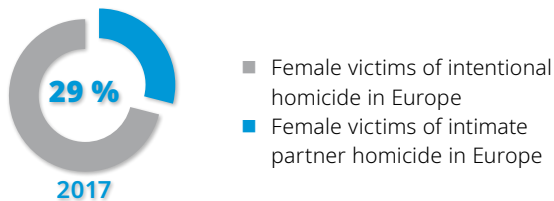
(4) For more information, see indicator 9 of the Gender Statistics Database (https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/genvio_int_adm_ipv__ipv_indic_9/metadata) and the Danish Penal Code (<https://danskelove.dk/straffeloven>).

(5) European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2017), *Terminology and Indicators for Data Collection: Rape, femicide and intimate partner violence*, EIGE, Vilnius.

(6) European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2020), *Intimate Partner Violence: Data collection methodology*, EIGE, Vilnius.

Intimate partner femicide in Europe

From a statistical perspective, and based on the International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (ICCS), the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) highlights that intentional homicide of female victims perpetrated by intimate partners or family members is the most prevalent form of femicide (7). UNODC estimates that, in Europe (8), about 29 % of female victims of homicide (9) are killed intentionally by an intimate partner.



Intimate partner femicide in Denmark

From a statistical perspective, the working definition that the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) uses for femicide is 'killing of a woman by an intimate partner and the death of a woman as a consequence of a practice that is harmful to women. Intimate partner is understood as a former or current spouse or partner, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim'. In Denmark, most femicides would be covered by the sections of the Penal Code identified above. According to data from the Danish police, in 2017 there were 15 female (10) victims of homicide (11). Using official data from the Danish Health Data Authority, a recent study found that, between 1992 and 2016, there were 536 female victims of homicide in Denmark, of whom 56 % were killed by a current partner or ex-partner (n = 298) (12).



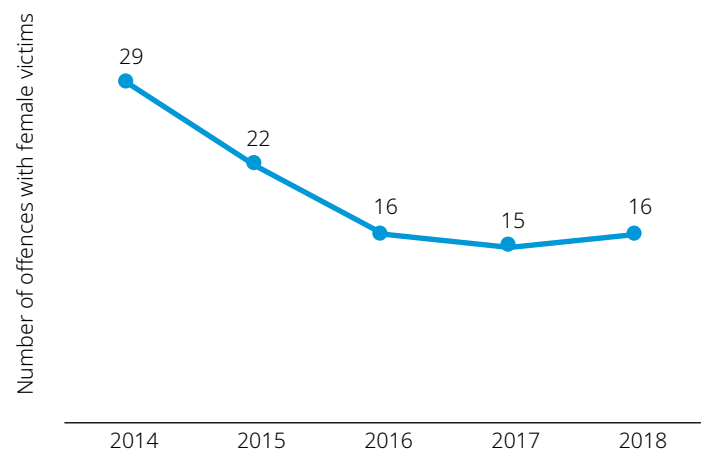
Female victims of homicide and intimate partner femicide in Denmark

The official administrative data used in Figure 1 is collected by the Danish police. EIGE has gathered data on homicide and intimate partner femicide for 2014 to 2018; however, in Denmark there is no information on intimate partner femicide. Figure 1 includes data regarding the number of homicide offences with female victims aged 20 years and over, and a declining trend can be observed between 2014 and 2017. In 2018, the figures slightly increased.

Type of relationship between the victim and the perpetrator

Information regarding the victim-perpetrator relationship is not collected by the Danish police.

Figure 1: Female homicide offences in Denmark



Source: EIGE's Gender Statistics Database.

(7) UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2019), *Global Study on Homicide – Gender-related killing of women and girls*, UNODC, Vienna.

(8) Data from UNODC includes European jurisdictions other than the EU Member States. There is no estimation of the percentage of female victims of homicide who were victims of intimate partner femicide limited to EU Member States.

(9) The term 'homicide' is used when reporting UNODC data given that it is the term used in the original source (p. 17). The gender-related motivation is not recorded, because of the lack of a standardised definition. However, it is clear from the report that this data quantifies a significant share of all gender-related killings of women and girls.

(10) The term 'female' is used instead of 'woman', as it is not always possible to disaggregate data by the victim's age, meaning that the victim could be either a woman or a girl aged under 18 years.

(11) The term 'homicide' is used given that the gender-related motivation for the intentional homicides is not recorded, and therefore it is not possible to classify all the killings as femicides.

(12) Thomsen, A. H., Leth, P. M., Hougen, H. P., Villesen, P. and Brink, O. (2019), 'Homicide in Denmark 1992–2016', *Forensic Science International: Synergy*, Vol. 1, pp. 275–282, doi:10.1016/j.fsisyn.2019.07.001.

Collecting administrative data on femicide



What is administrative data? Administrative data is collected for recording, organising and monitoring purposes ⁽¹³⁾. Administrative data on femicide can be obtained from different institutions, namely those that are involved in criminal investigations, prosecutions, the punishment of perpetrators and victim support – that is, institutions in the **police and justice sectors**. Administrative data might include information about the prevalence and types of femicide, the characteristics of the victim, the perpetrator and their relationship, the characteristics of and motive for the crime, and data about the criminal process.

In order to help policymakers design effective policies to combat femicide, it is necessary to understand the nature and prevalence of the issue. The collection of comparable administrative data on femicide across Member States is key to gaining this understanding ⁽¹⁴⁾. It is particularly important that the motive for the killing is established by the police or judiciary and that this is then translated into standardised statistical data. The ICCS is a standardised tool for obtaining comparable admin-

istrative data. However, it lacks a gender-related motive variable. This means that the concept of femicide cannot be properly operationalised, which prevents the collection of data that fully captures the phenomenon. The collection of data on femicide would make the issue more visible, which would strengthen the political will to eradicate it. Administrative data on femicide also enables countries to monitor trends over time and evaluate the effectiveness of measures.

What administrative data on femicide is available in Denmark?

Definition of femicide and availability of data	
Definition of femicide used for statistical purposes	No
Collection of data on femicide	Yes, official data

Although there is no specific collection of data on femicide in Denmark, some variables relevant to the identification of femicide are collected or analysed by the Danish police ⁽¹⁵⁾, Statistics Denmark ⁽¹⁶⁾ and the Ministry of Justice ⁽¹⁷⁾. Where data

on femicide in this factsheet is drawn from these institutions, this is indicated by ^(a), ^(b) and ^(c), respectively. There may be other institutions that or researchers who collect and analyse data on femicide in Denmark.

	Institution ^(a) Danish police	Institution ^(b) Statistics Denmark	Institution ^(c) Ministry of Justice
Type of data collection	Official	Official	Official
Sources of data	Police crime records	Police crime records	Court cases
Stage at which the homicide is registered as a femicide	Not registered	Not registered	Information not available
Network(s) with which information is shared	Statistics authority (Statistics Denmark)	Information not available	Information not available
Availability of data to the public	Data not publicly available	Data publicly available	Data publicly available

The Ministry of Justice published a report analysing the types of homicide sentenced in Denmark between 2012 and 2017. The main types identified were those perpetrated by family members and intimate partner homicides. The study includes cases in which at least one offender was criminally convicted of manslaughter, child murder or physical assault aggravated by the victim's death. Regarding intimate partner violence, the report mentions that 23 % of deaths can be described as intim-

ate partner homicide, and in most cases the victims are women. The report also highlights that jealousy and separation are common motives that are identified when an intimate partner homicide occurs, and most crimes occur in private spaces. The report states that relatively few perpetrators showed symptoms of mental illness compared with the general sample, which contradicts some myths regarding perpetrators' mental health and intimate partner homicide ⁽¹⁶⁾.

⁽¹³⁾ UN Women (2020), *A synthesis of evidence on the collection and use of administrative data on violence against women*, UN Women, New York.

⁽¹⁴⁾ It is important to note that data and statistics should be produced, developed and disseminated in compliance with the principles in the *European Statistics Code of Practice*: Eurostat (2018), *European Statistics Code of Practice*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/4031688/8971242/KS-02-18-142-EN-N.pdf/e7f85f07-91db-4312-8118-f729c75878c7?t=1528447068000>).

⁽¹⁵⁾ <https://politi.dk/en>

⁽¹⁶⁾ <https://www.statbank.dk/STRAF5>

⁽¹⁷⁾ Ministry of Justice (2020), *Typen af drab i Danmark*, Ministry of Justice, Copenhagen (https://www.lokk.dk/media/5t0mttck/typer_af_drab_rapport_2020.pdf).

In line with EIGE's data collection, official administrative data regarding the number of homicide offences with female victims is displayed for 2014 to 2019. However, data may be available in Denmark for other years. Official data from Statistics Denmark

shows that, in 2019 and 2020, 23 and 17 homicide offences with female victims were registered in Denmark, respectively, and there were 30 attempted female homicides each year.

● Official data available ● Non-official data available ○ No data available

Data availability	2014 ^(b)	2015 ^(b)	2016 ^(b)	2017 ^(b)	2018 ^(b)	2019 ^(b)
Female victims of homicide	●	●	●	●	●	●
Victims of intimate partner femicide	○	○	○	○	○	○

Types of femicide	
Intimate partner femicide	○
Family-related femicide	○
Child femicide	○
Prostitution-related femicide	○
Robbery-related femicide	○
Other types of femicide	○

Characteristics of the victim and the perpetrator	Victim	Perpetrator
Age ^(b) ^(c)	●	●
Sex ^(b) ^(c)	●	●
Gender identity	○	○
Sexual orientation	○	○
Nationality ^(b) ^(c)	●	●
Education	○	○
Occupation	○	○
Applied for protection order	○	n/a
Active protection order	n/a	○
Socioeconomic profile	○	○
Recidivist status ^(b) ^(c)	n/a	●
Alcohol/drug abuse ^(c)	○	●
Victim-perpetrator relationship ^(c)	●	●
Other ^(c)	○	● Mental illness ^(c)

Motive for femicide	Analysing femicide
Context of sexual violence ^(c)	Homicide reviews / domestic homicide reviews
Prior intimate partner violence ^(c)	Analysis of court cases ^(c)
Prior harassment and/or stalking by the perpetrator	Administrative data from police ^(e) ^(b)
Prior genital mutilation	Administrative data on cause of death
Prior complaints or requests for protection measures	Media information
Recent separation ^(c)	Other
'Shame or dishonour' brought on the family	Contextual variables
Dowry-related problems	Method of killing ^(c)
Refusal to enter into an arranged marriage	Location ^(c)
Political role / feminism / activism of the woman who was killed	Suicide of the perpetrator
Context of prostitution / pornography	Killing of children ^(c)
Human trafficking context	Killing of other persons in the family ^(c)
Targeted killing of a woman in an armed conflict	Children present
Sexual orientation and gender identity	Other killings in connection with the femicide
Disfigurement of the body	Other
Other ^(c)	Investigating femicide
Jealousy, revenge, financial/economic issues, conflict about common children, threat ^(c)	Protocol for investigating femicide cases

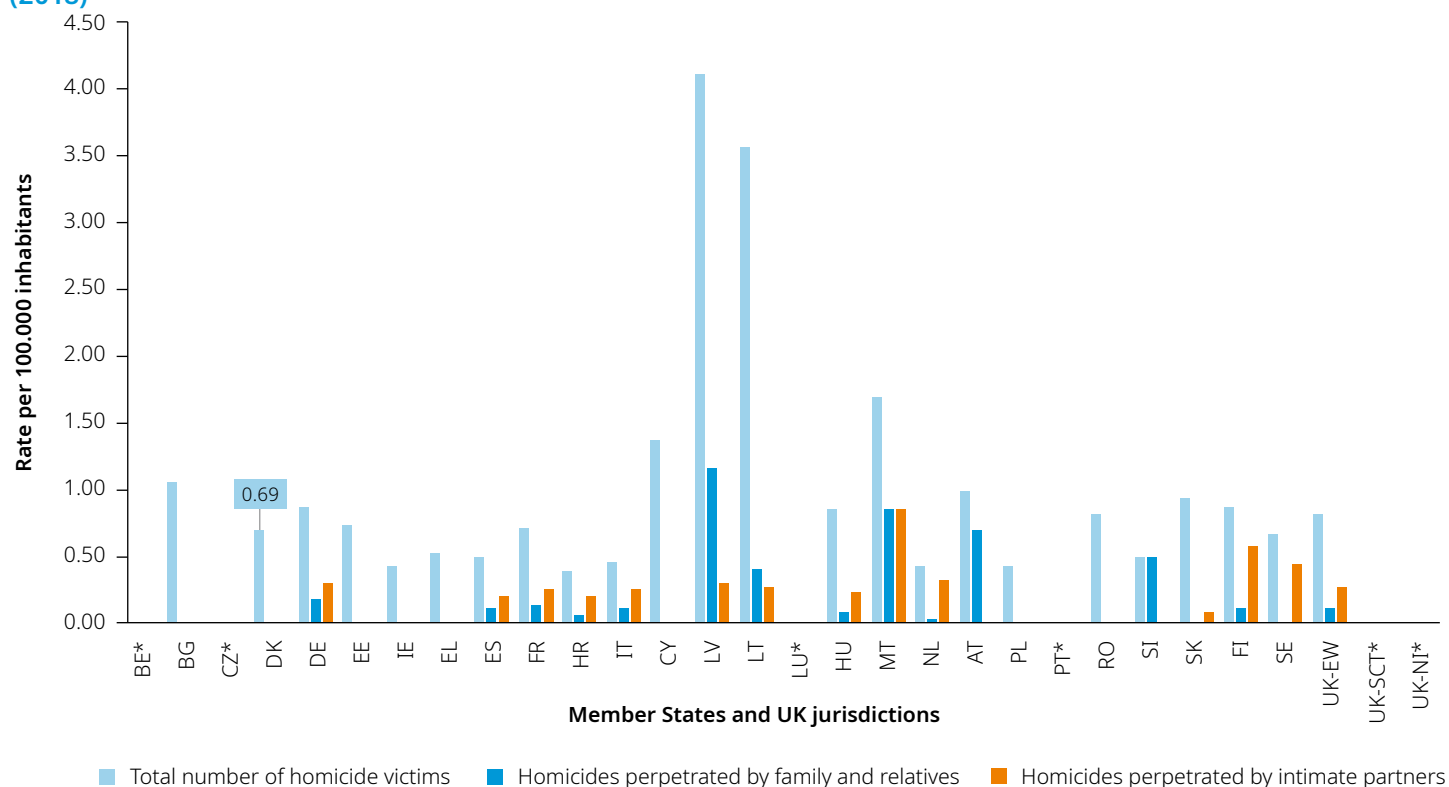
NB: n/a, not applicable.

Female homicide in the EU Member States and the United Kingdom (Eurostat)

At the EU level, based on the ICCS, Eurostat compiles data on intentional female homicides, focusing on intimate partner and family-related homicides, disaggregated by age, gender and relationship with the perpetrator. The data from Eurostat presented in Figure 2 reveals that, in 2018, the rate of female vic-

tims of homicide in Denmark was 0.69 per 100 000 inhabitants, the tenth lowest rate among the 24 Member States for which information is available and the United Kingdom. The rates of homicide perpetrated by family and relatives and by intimate partners are not known in Denmark.

Figure 2: Rate of female victims of intentional homicide in the EU Member States and the United Kingdom (2018)



(*) No data available.

NB: UK-EW, England and Wales, United Kingdom; UK-NI, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom; UK-SCT, Scotland, United Kingdom.

Source: Eurostat.

Data information

Eurostat regularly publishes figures on crime and criminal justice. Intentional homicides are recorded by the police in each of the Member States and the United Kingdom. It is not possible to collect information about the gender-related motivation for homicide, the sex of the perpetrator or the age of the perpetrator using this database. Therefore, it is not possible to provide precise data on femicide.

Figures for 2008 onwards are based on the joint Eurostat-UNODC data collection. In this database, homicide is classified by the ICCS.

Data is available on Eurostat's website (<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>).

Key findings

- Denmark does not have a legal definition of femicide. However, the perpetrator may be liable for homicide or physical assault aggravated by the victim's death.
- There are three institutions that collect or analyse relevant data for the identification of femicide.
- EIGE has gathered data on homicide and intimate partner femicide for 2014 to 2018. However, in Denmark, only data on the number of homicide offences with female victims is available.
- A 2019 study of homicide in Denmark between 1992 and 2016 highlights that domestic homicide is the most common form of homicide registered and that 76.5 % of victims of this type of homicide are female ⁽¹⁸⁾.
- The Ministry of Justice published a report analysing homicides sentenced in Denmark between 2012 and 2017. The study showed that homicides perpetrated by a family member and by intimate partners are frequent, and that most intimate partner homicide victims are women. The report also examines motive, characteristics of the victims and the perpetrators, and the existence of previous intimate partner violence.
- In Denmark, the Ministry of Justice's Research Office has since the end of 2012 analysed information on homicides using the same structure as the European Homicide Monitor (EHM), which allows for comparison with other European studies. The analysis sheds light on the types of homicide committed in Denmark ⁽¹⁹⁾.

Recommendations

The collection of accurate and comparable data on femicide by the police and justice sectors across Member States helps to increase knowledge and improve responses to prevent femicide ⁽²⁰⁾. It is therefore important to:

- develop a femicide definition for statistical data collection, in order to reflect the specific circumstances relating to the killing of women;
- implement a process of continuous data collection;
- establish comprehensive data collection, adding variables that are important for detecting key aspects of femicide, such as those describing the context and the circumstances of the killing, the gender-related motivation, and the victim and perpetrator characteristics, in order to systematise and harmonise the collection of data for statistical use;

- cross-reference the variables of the victim and those of the perpetrator, and analyse them using an intersectional approach;
- ensure that the gender dimension of homicide data is made visible.

Recommendations for data collection on femicide in Denmark

To populate EIGE's indicator on femicide (indicator 9) and to improve understanding of intimate partner femicide, it is recommended that adjustments be made in the data-recording process to include the victim-perpetrator relationship, in order to report complete data on this indicator. The relationship categories should cover current and former spouses and current and former partners, whether cohabiting or non-cohabiting ⁽²¹⁾.

This factsheet is based on information from EIGE's study 'Advancing administrative data collection on intimate partner violence and gender-related killings of women' (2021) and has been prepared by the Alternative and Response Women's Association (UMAR). For more information, visit <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-based-violence/femicide>.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Thomsen, A. H., Leth, P. M., Hougen, H. P., Villesen, P. and Brink, O. (2019), 'Homicide in Denmark 1992–2016', *Forensic Science International: Synergy*, Vol. 1, pp. 275–282, doi:10.1016/j.fsisyn.2019.07.001.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Information available at: https://www.lokk.dk/media/5t0mttck/typer_af_drab_rapport_2020.pdf

⁽²⁰⁾ European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2018), *Recommendations to improve data collection on intimate partner violence by the police and justice sectors – Denmark*, EIGE, Vilnius; European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2017), *Recommendations for the EU to improve data collection on violence against women*, EIGE, Vilnius; European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2021), *EIGE's indicators on intimate partner violence, rape and femicide: Recommendations to improve data quality, availability and comparability*, EIGE, Vilnius.

⁽²¹⁾ Indicator 9 of the Gender Statistics Database (https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/genvio_int_adm_ipv_ipv_indic_9/metadata).

European Institute for Gender Equality

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) is the EU knowledge centre on gender equality. EIGE supports policymakers and all relevant institutions in their efforts to make equality between women and men a reality for all Europeans by providing them with specific expertise and comparable and reliable data on gender equality in Europe.

© European Institute for Gender Equality, 2021

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.



European Institute for Gender Equality
Gedimino pr. 16
LT-01103 Vilnius
Lithuania

Contact details

<http://eige.europa.eu/> 
[facebook.com/eige.europa.eu](https://www.facebook.com/eige.europa.eu) 
twitter.com/eurogender 
[youtube.com/user/eurogender](https://www.youtube.com/user/eurogender) 
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/eige> 
eige.sec@eige.europa.eu 
+370 52157444 
<https://eurogender.eige.europa.eu/> 



Publications Office
of the European Union