

# Measuring femicide in Croatia

## Femicide

Femicide can be understood as the extreme end of a continuum of violence against women that happens in all European Union Member States <sup>(1)</sup>. There is no standard agreed definition of femicide among 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 <sup>(2)</sup>. 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 <sup>(3)</sup> 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 Croatia

There is no definition of femicide in the Croatian Criminal Code. However, this type of offence may fall under other provisions of Croatian criminal law. The relevant articles for identifying femicide cases are, inter alia, Articles 110 and 111 <sup>(4)</sup>.

### Article 110 – Murder

Whoever kills a person shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than 5 years.

### Article 111 – Aggravated murder

A punishment by imprisonment for not less than 10 years or long-term imprisonment shall be imposed on whoever:

- (1) murders another in a cruel or treacherous manner;
- (2) murders a person who is especially vulnerable due to his or her age, a severe physical or mental disorder or pregnancy;
- (3) murders a family member whom he or she has already abused;
- (4) murders another out of greed, ruthless revenge, hatred or other base motives;
- (5) murders another in order to commit or cover up another criminal offence;
- (6) murders an official person in relation to his or her performance of official duties.

## 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 <sup>(5)</sup>. A detailed report regarding the methodology for the collection, reporting and validation of data, along with detailed metadata per country, has been published <sup>(6)</sup>. 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'. The data can be accessed through EIGE's Gender Statistics Database ([https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/browse/genvio/genvio\\_int](https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/browse/genvio/genvio_int)).

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

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

<sup>(3)</sup> 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](https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CCPCJ/CCPCJ_Sessions/CCPCJ_22/E-CN15-2013-NGO1/E-CN15-2013-NGO1_E.pdf)).

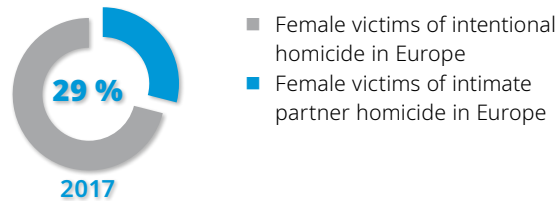
<sup>(4)</sup> For more information, see indicator 9 of the Gender Statistics Database ([https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/genvio\\_int\\_adm\\_ipv\\_ipv\\_indic\\_9/metadata](https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/genvio_int_adm_ipv_ipv_indic_9/metadata)) and the Croatian Criminal Code (in English) (<http://www.mvep.hr/files/file/dokumenti/prevodenje/zakoni/kazneni-zakon-nn-125-11-eng.pdf>).

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

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

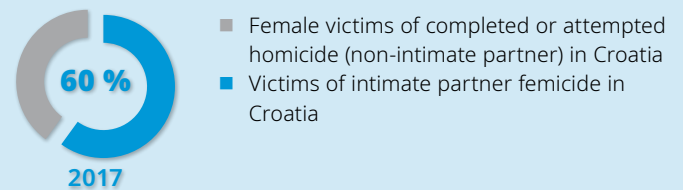
### Intimate partner femicide in Europe

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 Croatia

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 Croatia, most femicides would be covered by the articles of the Criminal Code identified above. According to data from the Croatian police, in 2017 there were 15 female (10) victims of homicide (11), of whom 60 % were victims of intimate partner femicide ( $n = 9$ ) (12).



## Female victims of homicide and intimate partner femicide in Croatia

The official administrative data used in Figure 1 is collected by the Croatian police. EIGE has gathered data on homicide and intimate partner femicide for 2014–2018.

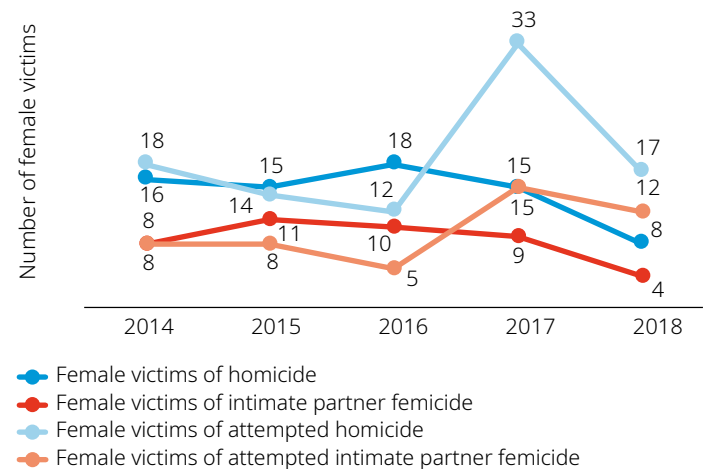
Figure 1 includes data on female victims of completed and attempted homicide and intimate partner femicide. Trends vary over time, and since 2016 there has been a downward trend in both the number of female victims of homicide and the number of victims of intimate partner femicide. Conversely, the number of attempted homicides and femicides increased sharply in 2017.

### Type of relationship between the victim and the perpetrator

The Croatian police collects data on the type of intimate relationship between the victim and the perpetrator according to the following classifications: current spouses, former spouses, common-law spouses, former common-law spouses, same-sex partners, former same-sex partners, current partners (boyfriend/girlfriend), former partners (boyfriend/girlfriend), family members (such as a lineal relative by blood, a collateral relative up to the third degree of kinship, in-laws up to the second degree, adopted family members and adoptees) and close persons (e.g. persons living in the same shared household). The definitions of family members and close persons can be found in paragraphs 8, 9, 10 and 11 of Article 87 of the Croatian Criminal Code.

graphs 8, 9, 10 and 11 of Article 87 of the Croatian Criminal Code.

**Figure 1: Female victims of homicide and intimate partner femicide (completed and attempted) in Croatia**



Source: EIGE's Gender Statistics Database.

## 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.

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

(8) 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.

(9) 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.

(10) 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.

(11) 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.

(12) Data is available at: [https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/genvio\\_int\\_adm\\_ipv\\_ipv\\_indic\\_9/metadata](https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/genvio_int_adm_ipv_ipv_indic_9/metadata)

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

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 the Member States is key to gaining this understanding<sup>(14)</sup>. It is particularly important that the motive for the killing is established by the police or judiciary, and this is then translated into standardised statistical data. The ICCS is a standardised tool for obtaining comparable

administrative data. However, it lacks a gender-related motivation 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 Croatia?

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

Six institutions collect or analyse data regarding femicide in Croatia: the Ministry of the Interior<sup>(a)</sup> (15); the Ministry of Justice<sup>(b)</sup> (16); the Croatian police<sup>(c)</sup> (17); the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality<sup>(d)</sup> (17); the Croatian Bureau of Statistics<sup>(e)</sup> (19); and

Femicide Watch<sup>(f)</sup>. Data on femicide presented in this factsheet was obtained from a comprehensive overview of the data collected from these institutions<sup>(20)</sup>. Other institutions and researchers also collect and analyse data on femicide in Croatia<sup>(21)</sup>.

	Institution (a) Ministry of the Interior	Institution (b) Ministry of Justice	Institution (c) Croatian police	Institution (d) Ombudsperson for Gender Equality	Institution (e) Croatian Bureau of Statistics	Institution (f) Femicide Watch
Type of data collection	Official	Official	Official	Official	Official	Official
Sources of data	Internal information system	Court case files	Criminal records, case study and scientific research	Official police records and other open sources	Official police records	Official police records
Stage at which the homicide is established as a femicide	It can be established throughout the criminal process (*)	Information not available	Information not available	Information not available	Information not available	Information not available
Stage at which the homicide is registered as a femicide	After the detection of the criminal offence	During the initial data collection	Information not available	Information not available	Information not available	Information not available
Parameters for establishing the killing as a femicide	Victim–perpetrator relationship; role of woman in family; motive	Victim–perpetrator relationship; victim’s gender	When the aggravating circumstance is identified (hate crime committed because of someone’s gender)	Information not available	Information not available	Information not available
Regularity of data collection	Continuous	Annual	Continuous	Information not available	Information not available	Continuous
Network(s) with which information is shared	Non-governmental organisations; Central Bureau of Statistics; European Observatory on Femicide	Not shared	Ministries	Information not available	Information not available	Ministries
Availability of data to the public	Data partially available to the public	Data not publicly available	Data partially available to the public	Information not available	Information not available	Data publicly available

(\*) A threefold process is adopted to establish a homicide as a femicide: (i) when the criminal offence is detected; (ii) during the criminal investigation; or (iii) on the conclusion of the criminal procedure.

Official sources inform administrative data collection in Croatia. In line with EIGE’s data collection, official administrative data on the total number of female victims of homicide and intimate partner femicide is displayed for 2014–2019. However, data may be available in Croatia for other years. Data for 2019 from the Ministry of the Interior<sup>(a)</sup> shows that there were 13 women killed, 10 of whom were killed by a male intimate part-

ner (7) or a close family member (3)<sup>(22)</sup>. In 2020 a total of 36 murders were recorded, of which 14 women and 9 killed by intimate partners. According to the 2020 summary report, in comparison with 2018 data shows an increase of over 50% of women killed, in almost both key parameters, total number of female homicides and number of women killed by former or current intimate partners<sup>(23)</sup>.

(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://mup.gov.hr/en>

(16) <https://pravosudje.gov.hr/en>

(17) <https://policija.gov.hr/o-ravnateljstvu/9>

(18) <https://www.ombudsman.hr/en/>

(19) [https://www.dzs.hr/default\\_e.htm](https://www.dzs.hr/default_e.htm)

(20) All these institutions (plus non-governmental organisations such as Women’s Room (Ženska soba)) are part of Femicide Watch, through which the data is comprehensively analysed.

(21) Namely non-governmental organisations, such as Women’s Room (Ženska soba) and Status M.

(22) Ministry of the Interior (2020), *Summary of the annual report for 2019 of the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality of the Republic of Croatia*, Ministry of the Interior, Zagreb ([https://www.prs.hr/application/images/uploads/Annual\\_Report\\_2019.pdf](https://www.prs.hr/application/images/uploads/Annual_Report_2019.pdf)).

(23) Ministry of the Interior (2021), *Summary of the annual report for 2019 of the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality of the Republic of Croatia*, Ministry of the Interior, Zagreb ([https://www.prs.hr/application/images/uploads/IZVJESCE\\_O\\_RADU\\_2020\\_Pravobranit.pdf](https://www.prs.hr/application/images/uploads/IZVJESCE_O_RADU_2020_Pravobranit.pdf)).

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

Data availability	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Female victims of homicide	●	●	●	●	●	●
Victims of intimate partner femicide	●	●	●	●	●	●

Official sources collect data on intimate partner femicide, but also on other types of femicide, such as family-related femicide and femicide perpetrated by someone the victim was close to. There are a Domestic Violence Treatment Protocol and recommendations from the Police Directorate and the

Ombudsman for Gender Equality. Data on gender-related killings of women is analysed by police districts, the Police Directorate and the Ombudsman for Gender Equality, and the outcomes are used to raise public awareness and identify risk factors.

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

Femicide by someone the victim was close to

Characteristics of the victim and the perpetrator	Victim	Perpetrator
Age	●	●
Sex	●	●
Gender identity	○	○
Sexual orientation	○	○
Nationality	●	○
Education	●	●
Occupation	●	●
Applied for protection order	●	n/a
Active protection order	n/a	●
Socioeconomic profile	●	●
Recidivist status	n/a	●
Alcohol/drug abuse	●	●
Victim-perpetrator relationship	●	●
Other	Health status; cohabitation; awareness of the welfare centre on violence; marital, work and residential status	Health status; cohabitation; violation of protection order; previous treatment for perpetrators; marital, work and residential status; suicidal tendencies

Motive for femicide		Contextual variables	
Context of sexual violence	●	Method of killings	●
Prior intimate partner violence	●	Location	●
Prior harassment and/or stalking by the perpetrator	○	Suicide of the perpetrator	●
Prior genital mutilation	○	Killing of children	○
Prior complaints or requests for protection measures	○	Killing of other persons in the family	○
Recent separation	●	Children present	●
'Shame or dishonour' brought on the family	○	Other killings in connection with the femicide	●
Dowry-related problems	○	Other	●
Refusal to enter into an arranged marriage	○	Violence perpetrated against other victims; witness(es); planning and preparation; modus operandi	
Political role / feminism / activism of the woman who was killed	○	<b>Investigating femicide</b>	
Context of prostitution / pornography	○	Protocol for investigating femicide cases	●
Human trafficking context	○	<b>Analysing femicide</b>	
Targeted killing of a woman in an armed conflict	○	Homicide reviews / domestic homicide reviews	●
Sexual orientation and gender identity	●	Analysis of court cases	●
Disfigurement/mutilation of the body	○	Administrative data from police	●
Other	○	Administrative data on cause of death	○
		Media information	○
		Other	○

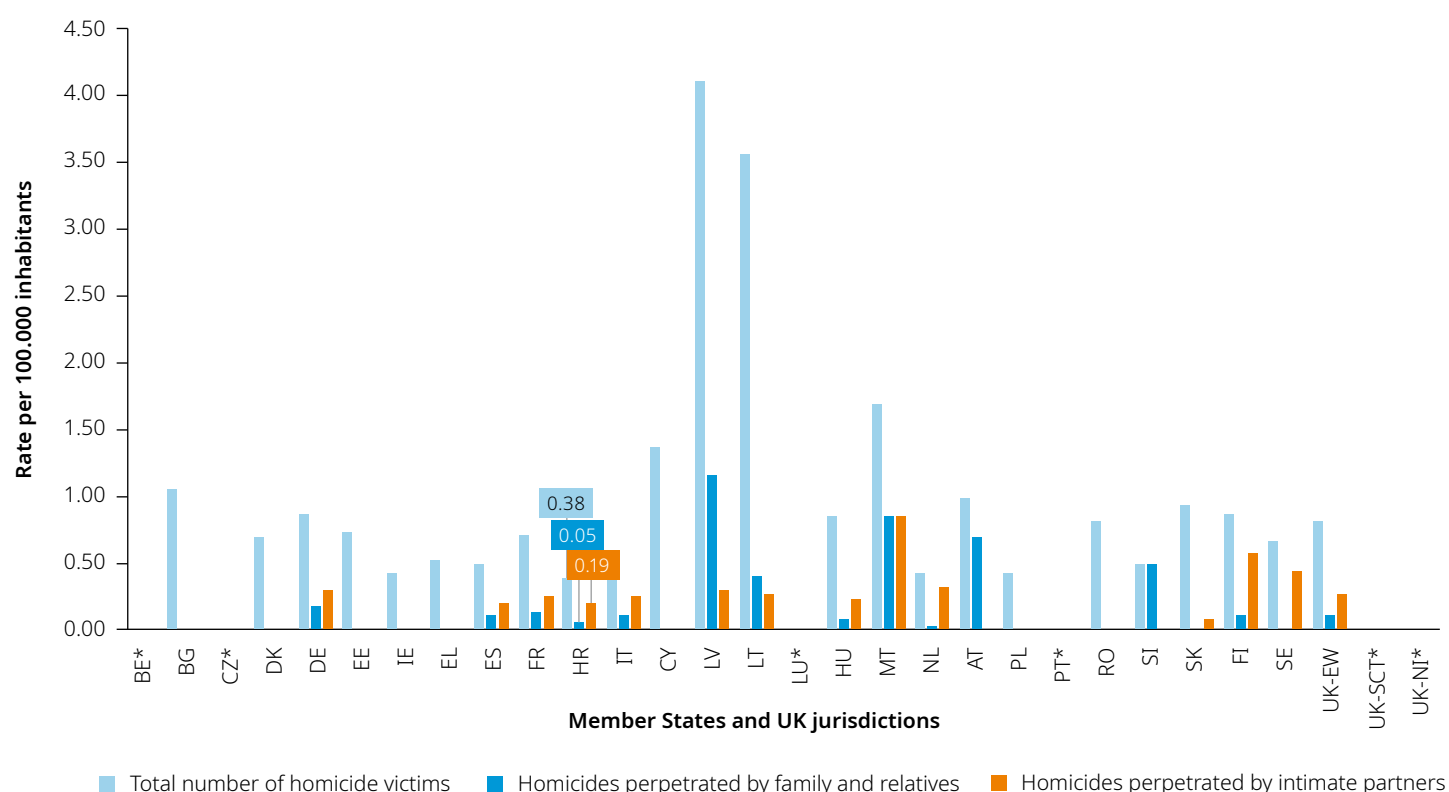
NB: n/a, not applicable.

## Female homicide in 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 victims of homicide in Croatia was 0.38 per 100 000 inhabitants,

the lowest rate among the 24 Member States and the United Kingdom for which information is available. Croatia has the second lowest rate (0.05) of female victims of homicide perpetrated by family and relatives (out of 14 jurisdictions), and the third lowest rate (0.19) of female victims of intentional homicide perpetrated by intimate partners (out of 15 jurisdictions).

Figure 2: Rate of female victims of intentional homicide in 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/databrowser/view/crim\\_hom\\_vrel/default/table?lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/crim_hom_vrel/default/table?lang=en)).

## Key findings

- Croatia does not have a legal definition of femicide. However, the perpetrator may be liable for murder or aggravated murder.
- In Croatia, there are protocols addressing the importance of the collection of data on femicide.
- There are six main institutions that collect or analyse data for the identification of femicide. Data is available for intimate partner femicide and other types of femicide.
- EIGE has gathered data on homicide and intimate partner femicide for 2014–2018; however, data may be available in Croatia for other years. Available data includes information about the characteristics of the victim and the perpetrator, contextual variables and motive.
- Femicide is analysed on the basis of official sources, such as domestic homicide reviews and data from the police.
- In 2017, Femicide Watch was established as an observatory for the comprehensive monitoring, collection, analysis and reporting of femicide cases in Croatia. The observatory is the result of a network involving several official institutions.

## 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<sup>(24)</sup>. 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 Croatia

To populate EIGE's indicator on femicide (indicator 9) and to improve understanding of intimate partner femicide, it is recommended that the statistical unit used should be 'victim'<sup>(25)</sup>.

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>.

<sup>(24)</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2018), *Recommendations to improve data collection on intimate partner violence by the police and justice sectors – Croatia*, 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.

<sup>(25)</sup> Indicator 9 of the Gender Statistics Database ([https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/genvio\\_int\\_adm\\_ipv\\_\\_ipv\\_indic\\_9/metadata](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.

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