

Measuring femicide in Estonia

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 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.

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.

Femicide in Estonia

There is no definition of femicide in the Estonian Penal Code. However, this type of offence may fall under other provisions of Estonian criminal law. The relevant articles for identifying femicide cases are, inter alia, Articles 113, 114, 115, 118, 141 and 151 ⁽⁴⁾.

Article 113 – Manslaughter

(1) Manslaughter is punishable by 6 to 15 years' imprisonment.

Article 114 – Murder

(1) Manslaughter, if committed in a torturous or cruel manner or in a manner that is dangerous to the public, is punishable by 8 to 20 years' imprisonment or life imprisonment.

Article 115 – Manslaughter in provoked state

If the offence is committed in a state of sudden extreme emotional disturbance caused by violence or insult inflicted on the killer or a person close to him or her by the victim, it is punishable by 1 to 5 years' imprisonment.

Article 118 – Causing serious health damage

Causing health damage that results in death is punishable by 4 to 12 years' imprisonment.

Article 141 – Death caused by rape

If the offence causes the death of the victim, it is punishable by 6 to 15 years' imprisonment.

Article 151 – Incitement of hatred causing death

If activities that publicly incite hatred, violence or discrimination on the basis of nationality, race, colour, sex, language, origin, religion, sexual orientation, political opinion or financial or social status result in death, they are punishable by a pecuniary punishment or up to 3 years' imprisonment.

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 Estonia 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).

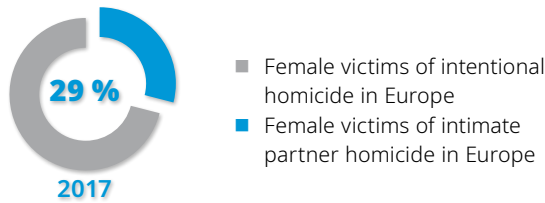
⁽⁴⁾ For more information, see indicator 9 of the Gender Statistics Database (https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/genvio_int_adm_ipv__ipv_indic_9/metadata) and the Estonian Penal Code (Riigi Teataja; <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/522012015002/consolide/current>).

⁽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.

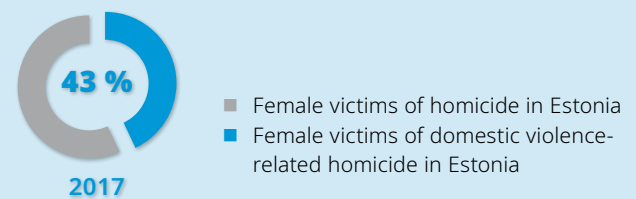
Intimate partner femicide in Europe

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 Estonia

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 Estonia, most femicides would be covered by the articles of the Penal Code identified above. Although there is no specific data collection on intimate partner femicide in Estonia, according to data from the Ministry of Justice, in 2017 there were 14 female (10) victims of homicide (11), of whom 43 % were victims of domestic violence-related homicide (n = 6) (12).



Female victims of homicide and intimate partner femicide in Estonia

The official administrative data used in Figure 1 is collected by the Ministry of Justice. EIGE has gathered data on female victims of homicide and intimate partner femicide for 2014 to 2018. However, data provided by Estonia refers to female victims of domestic violence-related homicide.

Figure 1 includes data regarding female victims of homicide and domestic violence-related homicide. After reaching a peak in 2017, the figures for homicide dropped significantly in 2018, whereas the figures for domestic-related homicide remained stable.

Type of relationship between the victim and the perpetrator

Data on domestic homicide is collected and reviewed by the Ministry of Justice.

Figure 1: Female victims of homicide and domestic violence-related homicide including attempted homicide in Estonia



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) Data is available at: https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/indicator/genvio_int_adm_ipv_ipv_indic_9/metadata

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

administrative 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 Estonia?

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 data collection on femicide in Estonia, some variables relevant to the identification of femicide are collected or analysed by the Ministry of Justice⁽¹⁵⁾. Where data on femicide in this factsheet was obtained from a com-

prehensive overview of available data from this institution, this is indicated by (*). There may be other institutions or researchers who collect and analyse data on femicide in Estonia.

	Institution (*) Ministry of Justice
Type of data collection	Official
Sources of data	E-file based on police records
Stage at which the homicide is established as a femicide	Not established
Stage at which the homicide is registered as a femicide	During the initial data collection
Parameters for establishing the killing as a femicide	Gender-related motivation (when registered by the police)
Regularity of data collection	Annual
Availability of data to the public	Data partially published on the Ministry's website, in a criminal statistics yearbook

⁽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⁾ See the Ministry of Justice's dedicated web page (<https://www.kriminaalpoliitika.ee/kuritegevuse-statistika/perevagivald-ja-ahistamine.html>).

Official sources inform administrative data collection in Estonia. In line with EIGE's data collection, official administrative data on the total number of female victims of homicide and domestic violence-related homicide are displayed for 2014 to 2019. However, data may be available in Estonia for other years. Data from the Ministry of Justice shows that, in 2019, 4 women were killed in the context of domestic violence and 7 were killed in 2020.

This data includes attempts. The Estonian Causes of Death Registry includes the numbers of women victims of homicide and women dead as a consequence of violence – 6 in 2019 and 10 in 2020 ⁽¹⁶⁾.

The Ministry of Justice collects relevant data to identify intimate partner femicide, but also other types of femicide, such as family-related femicide.

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

Data availability	2014 ^(a)	2015 ^(a)	2016 ^(a)	2017 ^(a)	2018 ^(a)	2019 ^(a)
Female victims of homicide	●	●	●	●	●	●
Female victims of domestic violence-related homicide	●	●	●	●	●	●

Types of femicide	
Intimate partner femicide ^(e)	●
Family-related femicide ^(e)	●
Child femicide	●
Prostitution-related femicide	●
Robbery-related femicide	○
Other types of femicide	○

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

Motive for femicide	Analysing femicide
Variables that indicate gender-related motivation	○
Investigating femicide	Homicide reviews / domestic homicide reviews
Protocol for investigating femicide cases	○
Contextual variables	Analysis of court cases
Variables related to the context of femicide	○
	Analysing femicide
	○
	Administrative data on cause of death
	○
	Media information
	○
	Other ^(e)
	●
	Qualitative data (police records) ^(e)

NB: n/a, not applicable.

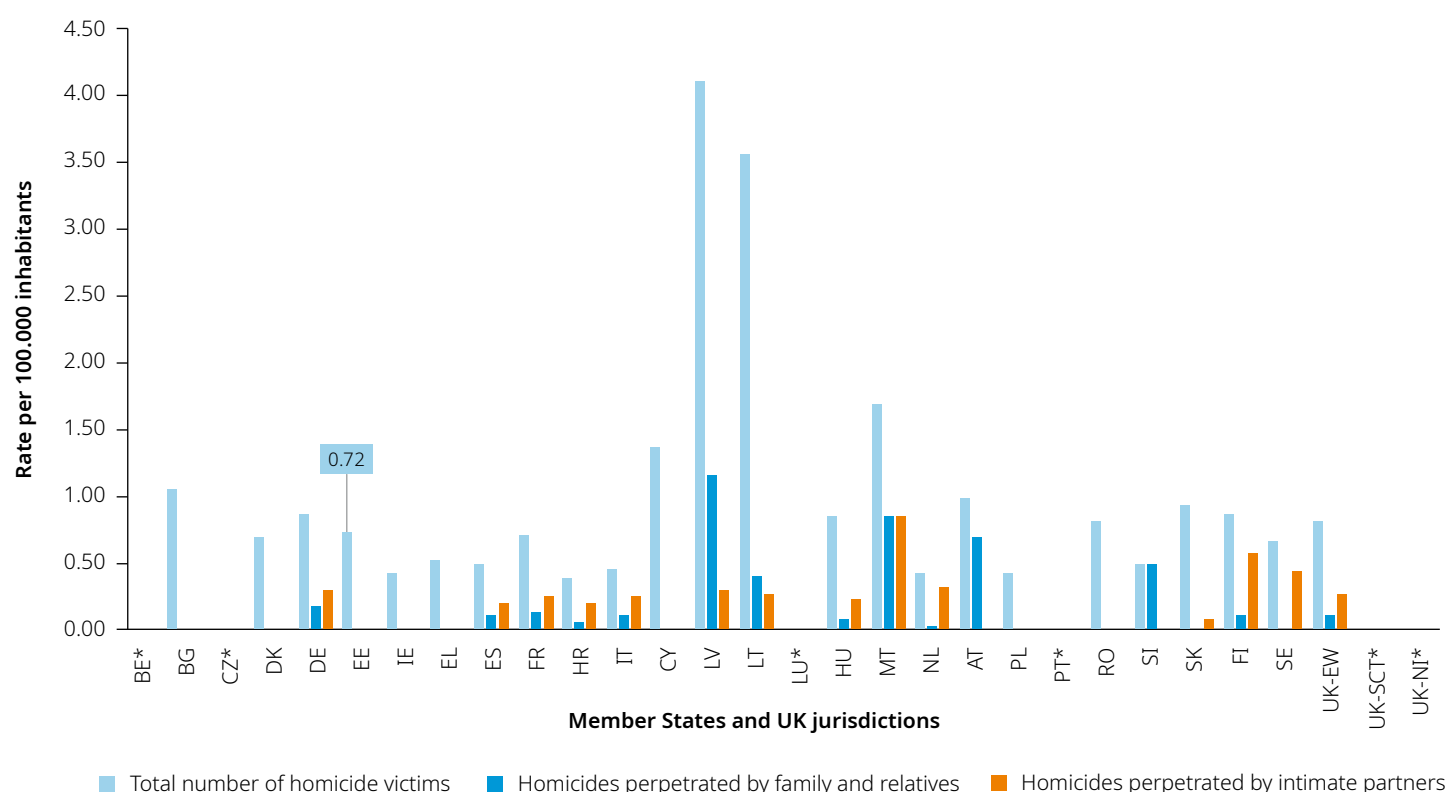
⁽¹⁶⁾ <https://statistika.tai.ee/pxweb/en>

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 Estonia was 0.72 per 100 000 inhabitants,

the 12th 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 yet available.

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/data/database>).

Key findings

- Estonia does not have a legal definition of femicide. However, the perpetrator may be liable for manslaughter, manslaughter in a provoked state, murder, health damage or rape aggravated by the result (death), or incitement of hatred causing death.
- There is one institution that collects relevant data for the identification of femicide.
- EIGE has gathered data on female victims of homicide and domestic violence-related homicide for 2014 to 2018; however, data may be available in Estonia for other years. Available data includes information about the characteristics of the victim and the perpetrator, but as qualitative information.
- Relevant data for the identification of femicide is analysed on the basis of official sources, such as police records and court records.

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⁽¹⁷⁾. 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 Estonia

To populate EIGE's indicator on femicide (indicator 9) and to improve understanding of intimate partner femicide, it is recommended that a standardised category on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator be included throughout the data collection process at police level, to differentiate intimate partners from other relationships in the domestic sphere⁽¹⁸⁾.

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>.

⁽¹⁷⁾ European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2018), *Recommendations to improve data collection on intimate partner violence by the police and justice sectors – Estonia*, 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.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Indicator 9 of the Gender Statistics Database (https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/browse/genvio/genvio_int).

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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