

Measuring femicide in the Netherlands

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 the 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 the Netherlands

There is no definition of femicide in the Dutch Criminal Code. However, this type of offence may fall under other provisions of Dutch criminal law. The relevant sections for identifying femicide cases are, inter alia, Sections 287–289 ⁽⁴⁾.

Section 287 – Manslaughter

Any person who intentionally takes the life of another person shall be guilty of manslaughter and shall be liable to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 15 years or a fine of the fifth category ⁽⁵⁾.

Section 288 – Aggravated manslaughter

Manslaughter followed, accompanied or preceded by a criminal offence and committed with the intention of preparing or facilitating the performance of that offence or in the event of being caught in the commission of that offence to secure for himself or the other participants in that offence either impunity from punishment or the possession of the unlawfully obtained property, shall be liable to life imprisonment or a determinate term of imprisonment not exceeding 30 years or a fine of the fifth category.

Section 289 – Murder

Any person who intentionally and with premeditation takes the life of another person shall be guilty of murder and shall be liable to life imprisonment or a determinate term of imprisonment not exceeding 30 years or a fine of the fifth category.

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 ⁽⁶⁾. A detailed report regarding the methodology for the collection, reporting and validation of data, along with detailed metadata per country, has been published ⁽⁷⁾. 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).

⁽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), *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 Dutch Criminal Code (http://www.ejtn.eu/PageFiles/6533/2014%20seminars/Omsenie/WetboekvanStrafrecht_ENG_PV.pdf).

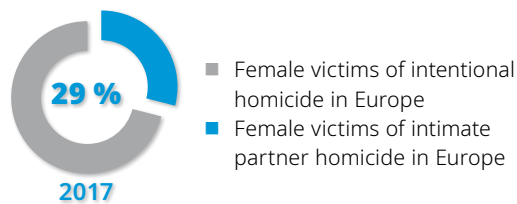
⁽⁵⁾ According to paragraph 4 of Section 23 of the Dutch Criminal Code, as of 1 January 2012, the fifth category corresponds to EUR 78 000.

⁽⁶⁾ European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2017), *Terminology and Indicators for Data Collection: Rape, femicide and intimate partner violence*, EIGE, Vilnius.

⁽⁷⁾ European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2020), *Intimate Partner Violence: Data collection methodology*, EIGE, Vilnius.

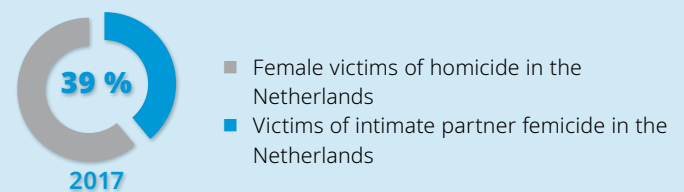
Intimate partner femicide in Europe

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⁽⁸⁾. UNODC estimates that, in Europe⁽⁹⁾, about 29 % of female victims of homicide⁽¹⁰⁾ are killed intentionally by an intimate partner.



Intimate partner femicide in the Netherlands

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 the Netherlands, most femicides would be covered by the sections of the Criminal Code identified above. According to data from the annual report on internal security from the Ministry of Justice and Security, in 2017 there were 46 female⁽¹¹⁾ victims of homicide⁽¹²⁾, of whom 39 % were victims of intimate partner femicide ($n = 18$)⁽¹³⁾.



Female victims of homicide and intimate partner femicide in the Netherlands

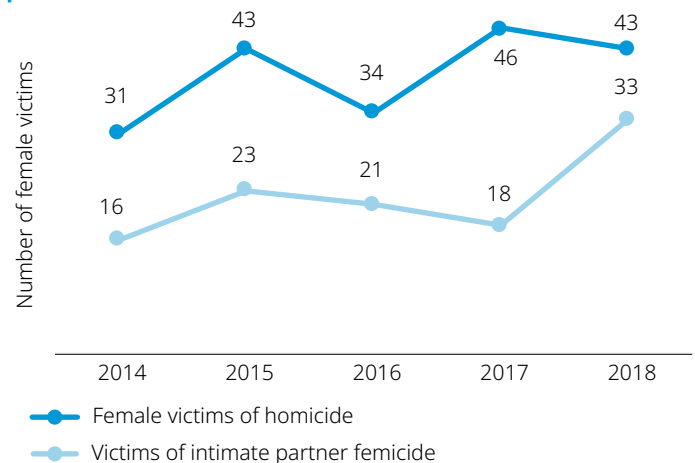
The official administrative data used in Figure 1 is collected by the National Statistics Office (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (CBS)).

EIGE has gathered data on homicide and intimate partner femicide for 2014 to 2018. Figure 1 includes data regarding female victims of intimate partner femicide; despite the variation in the numbers of female victims of homicide, according to this source the number of victims of intimate partner femicide increased in the last reported year.

Type of relationship between the victim and the perpetrator

CBS collects data on the type of intimate relationship between the victim and the perpetrator according to the following classifications: (i) partner and (ii) ex-partner.

Figure 1: Female victims of homicide and intimate partner femicide in the Netherlands



Source: EIGE's Gender Statistics Database.

⁽⁸⁾ UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2019), *Global Study on Homicide – Gender-related killing of women and girls*, UNODC, Vienna.

⁽⁹⁾ 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.

⁽¹⁰⁾ 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.

⁽¹¹⁾ 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.

⁽¹²⁾ 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.

⁽¹³⁾ 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⁽¹⁴⁾. 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⁽¹⁵⁾. 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 the Netherlands?

Definition of femicide and availability of data

Definition of femicide used for statistical purposes	No	
Collection of data on femicide	Yes, official data	Yes, non-official data

Two institutions collect or analyse data on femicide in the Netherlands: CBS⁽¹⁶⁾ and the Dutch Homicide Monitor (University of Leiden)⁽¹⁷⁾. Where data on femicide in this factsheet is

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

	Institution ^(a) CBS	Institution ^(b) Dutch Homicide Monitor (University of Leiden)
Type of data collection	Official	Non-official
Sources of data	CBS	Police data, public prosecution data, court files, newspaper data, forensic mental health data
Stage at which the homicide is established as a femicide	Not established	During the initial data collection
Stage at which the homicide is registered as a femicide	Not registered	During the data analysis
Parameters for establishing the killing as a femicide	Not established	Gender of the victim, relationship between the victim and the perpetrator (intimate partner / estranged intimate partner), motive for the crime
Regularity of data collection	Annual	Continuous
Network(s) with which information is shared	Not shared	Not shared
Availability of data to the public	Data publicly available	Data not publicly available

⁽¹⁴⁾ UN Women (2020), *A synthesis of evidence on the collection and use of administrative data on violence against women*, UN Women, New York.

⁽¹⁵⁾ 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>).

⁽¹⁶⁾ <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/nl/dataset/81453NED/table?fromstatweb>, <https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/maatwerk/2019/39/aantal-slachtoffers-door-moord-en-doods slag-2018>

⁽¹⁷⁾ <https://www.europeanhomicide.com/>

Official and non-official sources inform administrative data collection in the Netherlands. In line with EIGE's data collection, official administrative data on the total number of female

victims of homicide and intimate partner femicide is available for 2014 to 2018 ^(a) ^(b). However, data may be available in the Netherlands for other years.

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

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

Official and non-official sources collect data on intimate partner femicide, but not on other types of femicide. The Dutch Homicide Monitor (University of Leiden) is part of the European Homicide Monitor (EHM), which began in 2009 as a 3-year pilot project implemented in the Netherlands, Finland and Sweden, and financed by the EU. The architecture of the EHM is based on three main objectives: (i) creating a general homicide monitor for all types of victims and incidents; (ii) disaggregating overall homi-

cide patterns and trends – this helps to determine which sub-types of homicide account for possible general patterns, such as national differentials and even cross-national trends; and (iii) recruiting new countries to the EHM and adopting the coding system. Information captured in the Dutch Homicide Monitor (University of Leiden) and the EHM allows specific analyses of intimate partner femicide and homicide of women (in general) and, because of its unique structure, international comparisons.

Types of femicide	
Intimate partner femicide ^(a) ^(b)	●
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 ^(a) ^(b)	●	●
Sex ^(a) ^(b)	●	●
Gender identity	○	○
Sexual orientation	○	○
Nationality ^(b)	●	●
Education ^(b)	●	●
Occupation ^(b)	●	●
Applied for protection order	○	n/a
Active protection order	n/a	○
Socioeconomic profile ^(b)	●	●
Recidivist status	n/a	○
Alcohol/drug abuse ^(b)	●	●
Victim–perpetrator relationship ^(b)	●	●
Other ^(b)	● Criminal background characteristics ^(b)	● Criminal background characteristics ^(b)

Contextual variables		Motive for femicide	
Method of killing ^(b)	●	Variables that indicate gender-related motivation	○
Location ^(b)	●	Investigating femicide	
Suicide of the perpetrator ^(b)	●	Protocol for investigating femicide cases	○
Killing of children ^(b)	●	Analysing femicide	
Killing of other persons in the family ^(b)	●	Homicide reviews / domestic homicide reviews ^(b)	●
Children present		Analysis of court cases ^(b)	●
Other killings in connection with the femicide		Administrative data from police ^(b)	●
Other	○	Administrative data on cause of death	○

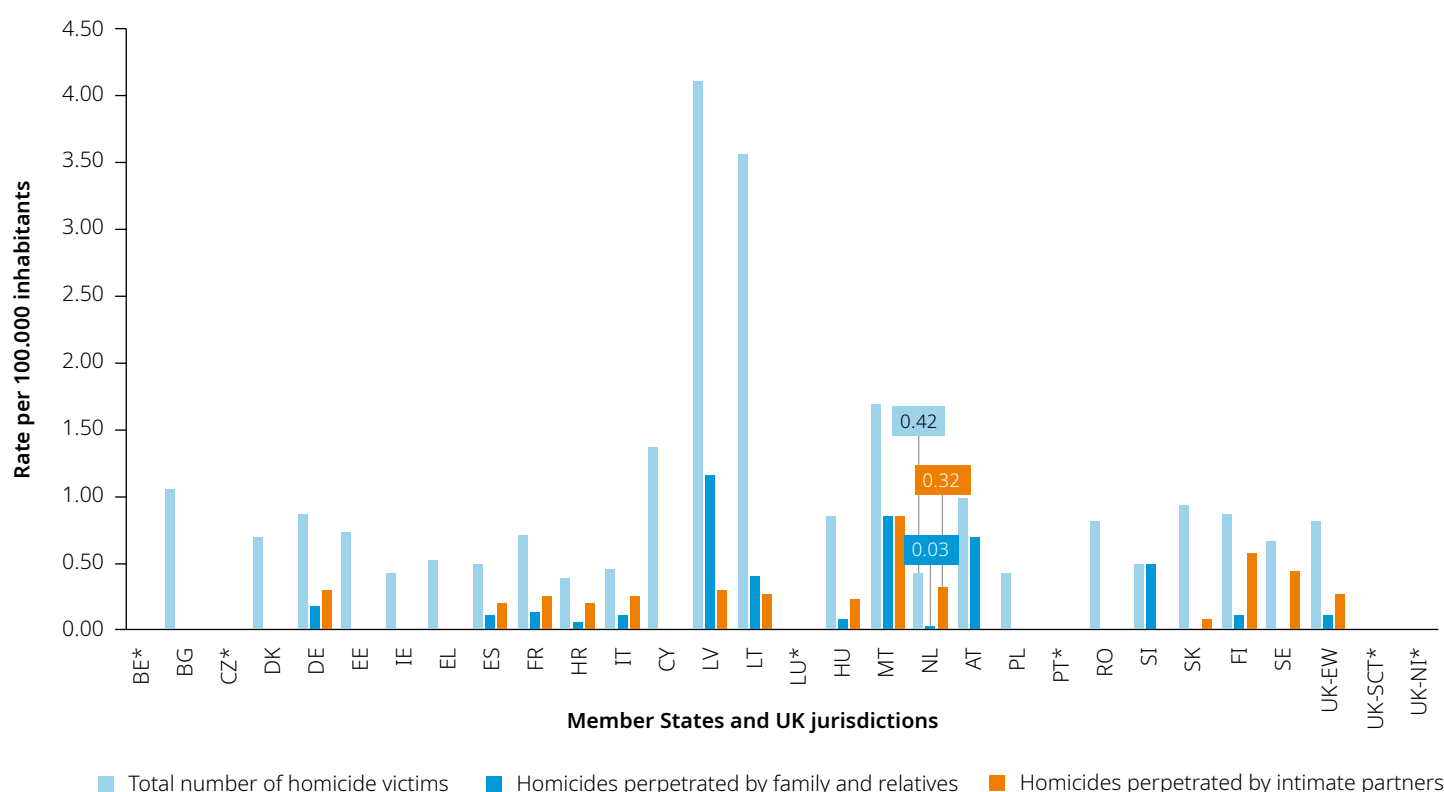
NB: n/a, not applicable.

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 the Netherlands was 0.42 per 100 000 inhabitants, the third lowest rate (together with Poland) among

the 24 Member States for which information is available and the United Kingdom. The Netherlands has the lowest rate of female victims of homicide perpetrated by family and relatives (0.03) (considering the 14 jurisdictions for which information is available) and the fourth highest rate (0.32) of female victims of intentional homicide perpetrated by intimate partners (out of 15 jurisdictions for which information is 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

- The Netherlands does not have a legal definition of femicide. However, the perpetrator may be liable for murder, manslaughter or aggravated manslaughter.
- There are two main institutions that collect or analyse data for the identification of femicide. Data is available only for intimate partner femicide.
- EIGE has gathered data on homicide and intimate partner femicide for 2014 to 2018. Available data includes information about the characteristics of the victim and the perpetrator, and contextual variables.
- Femicide is analysed on the basis of official and non-official sources, such as domestic homicide reviews, data from police and data from court cases.
- The Dutch Homicide Monitor (University of Leiden) is part of the EHM, which began in 2009 as a 3-year pilot project implemented in the Netherlands, Finland and Sweden, and financed by the EU.
- The Dutch Homicide Monitor analyses disaggregated homicide patterns and trends – this helps to determine which subtypes of homicide account for possible general patterns, such as national differentials and even cross-national trends.

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⁽¹⁸⁾. 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.

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

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

Contact details

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