

Action IS1206 *Femicide across Europe*
Guidelines for the use of policy-makers
Template

1. Identify the **main aims** of the WG

Working group 2 focuses on femicide data collection in European countries. The central aims were (1) to identify differences and similarities in data collection on femicide on national and international levels across Europe and (2) to develop recommendations to European countries and organizations on how to improve their femicide data collection. This should build a foundation for future research and publications in this sphere.

The working group started with concrete comparisons of country-specific data on femicide and compared methodologies as well as femicide rates. Furthermore, comparisons on related topics like non-lethal forms of violence against women, the gender equality index, homicide rates in general and the socioeconomic situation in European countries were conducted in order to find patterns and relevant correlations.

Then information on several European databases and observatories related to femicide was identified and collected. Collected information included description of the organizations and good practices on femicide data collection.

Furthermore, a concept mapping study was conducted with the goal to assemble expert opinions on what strategies are needed and feasible to promote, develop and implement an integrated femicide data collection system across European countries.

2. Identify the **main achievements** of the WG: what do we know now on femicide?

- **WG2:** Identify the most important ways to collect data and measure femicide across Europe? Do different methodologies provide us with different notions? Are data comparable across Europe

The study of several femicide statistics from various European countries showed that data collection in that sphere presents a high heterogeneity. In most of the countries where systematic data collection on homicide exists, homicides or murders of women are included and can be disaggregated by gender, though the definitions of the acts differ as they are related to different criminal codes. In some countries female homicides by intimate partners can be identified, as well as information on the victim-perpetrator-relationship, but in general these statistics do not allow further differentiation of other types of femicide in non-partner-relationships; information on (gendered) motives of the cases of homicides is in general not available. In some countries the data has not yet been made public or is not accessible and has to be obtained by special request, usually through the police and justice systems or general crime statistic systems.

The data is structured in various ways which makes comparisons across countries challenging. Central problems of data collection are related to definitions and to missing data and information on the background motives of the cases:

- 1) The definition and understanding of femicide differs from country to country and in several countries it does not exist.
- 2) Even if the definitions would be harmonized, it is often unclear if the reason or motive for killing a woman was because she is a woman or not (for example, in course of a burglary).

The working group suggested the following strategy for data collection in order to solve such problems: First, all data on intentional homicides with female victims should be collected as the relevant basis for cases of femicide. Then, further information on victims and perpetrators and their relationship should be collected. Intimate partner homicides against women, as well as femicides in the context of sexual violence and prostitution are clearly gendered and thus should be defined as femicide. For other forms/contexts deeper investigation of the cases in greater detail is necessary (including background, motives and possible reasons of the killings of women).

As it is often impossible to get detailed information on the (gendered) motives of the cases, it is important to collect qualitative information and to conduct case studies or analyze cases for a full understanding of the contexts and causes of the problem.



Central sources to get quantitative and qualitative data on femicide are:

- a) International data reports and data collection systems (e.g. by EUROSTAT and UNODC, the Geneva Convention on Small Arms, the Sophia Institute, the European Homicide Monitoring System, EIGE)
 - b) Published and unpublished national criminological data and empirical studies on femicide in each country
 - c) Press information from the police and the media (the press information has to be seen as a relevant source to get background information on the cases. Certainly the results have to be re-checked and verified by the police and justice systems in order to gain valid data).
3. What **recommendations** can we make to policy-makers? Consider the 3 basic policy-making levels: **local authorities** (city councils), **national authorities** (central or federal governments), the **EU**.
- Can we recommend: special legislation, best practices, improved methodologies for treating cases, improved coordination among services, new services, etc.?

Data and information on femicide has to be collected on all regional, national and international levels by several institutions (police, courts and health systems, international bodies). It is recommended to systematically collect and publish national data on femicide and to harmonize the definitions as well as the procedures of data collection as a basis for regularly available European and international data on femicide. This data should at least allow disaggregation by sex of victims and perpetrators, the victim-perpetrator-relationship (minimum: intimate partner and non-partner femicide), prior history of domestic violence and previous institutional interventions. It should furthermore include detailed information on the definitions and the procedure of data collection and, as far as available, the motives. It is also important to train those in charge of data collection as well as journalists reporting on the issue.

For international data collection on femicide existing institutions should build a coalition in order to avoid doubling activities. Some actions and institutions like EIGE, the European Homicide Monitor and the UN Femicide Watch have already begun to collect data on the international level. They could and should include the experiences of already existing national data collection systems, e.g. from Italy, Spain, UK and Germany. The European Observatory on Femicide could, perhaps, rather be a coalition or cooperation of existing data collection systems and activities. It should furthermore be integrated in national/international data collection systems on violence against women, especially with regard to monitoring of the Istanbul Convention (GREVIO, EIGE, EUROSTAT).

Further recommendations from experts of the working group can be found in the concept mapping study (Vives-Cases C, Goicolea I, Hernández A, Sanz-Barbero B, Gill AK, Baldry A.C., Schröttle M., Stöckl H. *Expert Opinions on Improving Femicide Data Collection across Europe: A Concept Mapping Study*, PLoS One. 2016 Feb 9;11(2):e0148364).



4. Summarize the **activities** that the WG carried out in 2013-2016

The working group held annual meetings in different member states.

The first meeting took place in Nuremberg (Germany) in February 2014. Here, the working group collected and discussed national data of the member states and compared methodologies of data collection and prevalence rates. In the second meeting in Rome (Italy) in January 2015 more detailed information on data collection systems on the national level was discussed and a concept mapping study was conducted to cluster statements and recommendations by participating experts and to rate them in regard to feasibility and reliability. The third meeting was held in Vilnius in March 2016, together with working group 4. Here, experiences from European Monitoring Bodies were exchanged and the question was discussed what data and information was necessary for prevention. Another very important meeting for all working groups was the core group meeting in Brussels in November 2015 where a coalition on femicide with external partners was established. Several members of the working groups have produced articles on femicide and data collection.

5. **List names** of MC members, MC substitutes and other people who helped drafting this report

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