

'UN Women' 'Tackling the issue of femicide'



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Introducing your Chairs

Hana

Hi everyone, my name is Hana, I'm a 17 year-old high school student from Bratislava, Slovakia and I will be chairing the UN Women committee this year. I've attended four MUNs so far as a delegate and this one is going to be my fourth time chairing. I look forward to this conference and am truly excited about meeting all of you. I hope to have fruitful debates on interesting topics, but also plan to have lots of fun and for all of us to enjoy this conference.

See you all soon 😊



Mirthe



Hey everybody, I'm Mirthe, I'm 15 and I follow the bilingual program at Kandinsky College. I will be the deputy chair of UN Women, and I am very excited, but also a little nervous, since this is my first time chairing. I have attended 5 MUNs before, 2 of those are SkyMUN, where I was in the Organising Committee. I hope we have some enthusiastic debate, but I'm also hoping to meet new people and to have a lot of fun with you guys! See you at the conference!

Definition of Key Terms

Femicide: Intentional murder of women or girls based on their gender, often rooted in societal norms, discrimination, and gender-based violence. It is the highest form of discrimination against women.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV): Harmful actions directed at an individual based on their gender. It includes physical, sexual, or mental harm and can be present in domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment, and other forms of mistreatment.

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV): Harm caused by a current or former partner or spouse. IPV is a common form of gender-based violence and may involve controlling behaviours, coercion, and various forms of abuse within an intimate relationship.

Honor Killing: Murder of a person, usually a woman, by family members due to the perception that the victim has brought shame or dishonour to the family. Mainly through behaviour such as alleged adultery or choosing a partner against the family's wishes.

Systemic Gender-Based Violence: A term referring to patterns of violence deeply embedded in societal structures, norms, and institutions. This includes discriminatory laws, cultural practices, and social attitudes that normalize or justify violence against women.

Gender Inequality: Unequal distribution of opportunities, resources, and rights between people of different genders. It is the primary cause of femicide, as it creates an environment where women are marginalized, disempowered, and more vulnerable to violence.

Victim Blaming: Victims being held responsible by individuals or a society for the violence they experience, rather than placing blame on the aggressor. In cases of femicide, victim blaming may contribute to perpetuating violence against women.



An Introduction to the Issue

Femicide, the deliberate and systematic killing of women and girls based on their gender, stands as a harrowing manifestation of the pervasive inequality and violence deeply entrenched in societies across the globe. This huge violation of human rights is not confined to a specific region, culture, or social class. Rather, it is a global concern that demands urgent attention and collective action.

At the heart of femicide lies the reality of gender-based violence, a complex web of physical, sexual, and psychological harm inflicted upon individuals due to their gender. Women and girls often find themselves disproportionately affected by this, bearing the brunt of discriminatory cultural norms, systemic inequalities, and deeply ingrained patriarchal structures that perpetuate their vulnerability.

Femicide manifests in various forms, from intimate partner violence within domestic spheres to honour killings justified by perceived breaches of family honour. The motives underlying femicide are diverse and intertwined with societal attitudes that normalize and, in some cases, condone violence against women. Rooted in gender inequality, femicide is not merely a sporadic act of brutality but a symptom of systemic issues that necessitate comprehensive societal reflection and reform.

The concept of intersectionality adds another layer to understanding femicide. Women from marginalized communities often face compounded forms of discrimination based on their intersecting identities, such as race, ethnicity, social status, or sexual orientation. Recognizing these factors is crucial to combating femicide effectively.

As societies struggle with the multifaceted dimensions of femicide, acknowledging the role of education, legal frameworks, and cultural shifts becomes crucial. Addressing femicide requires not only the punishment of aggressors but also an approach that challenges ingrained beliefs, dismantles systemic inequalities, and empowers women.

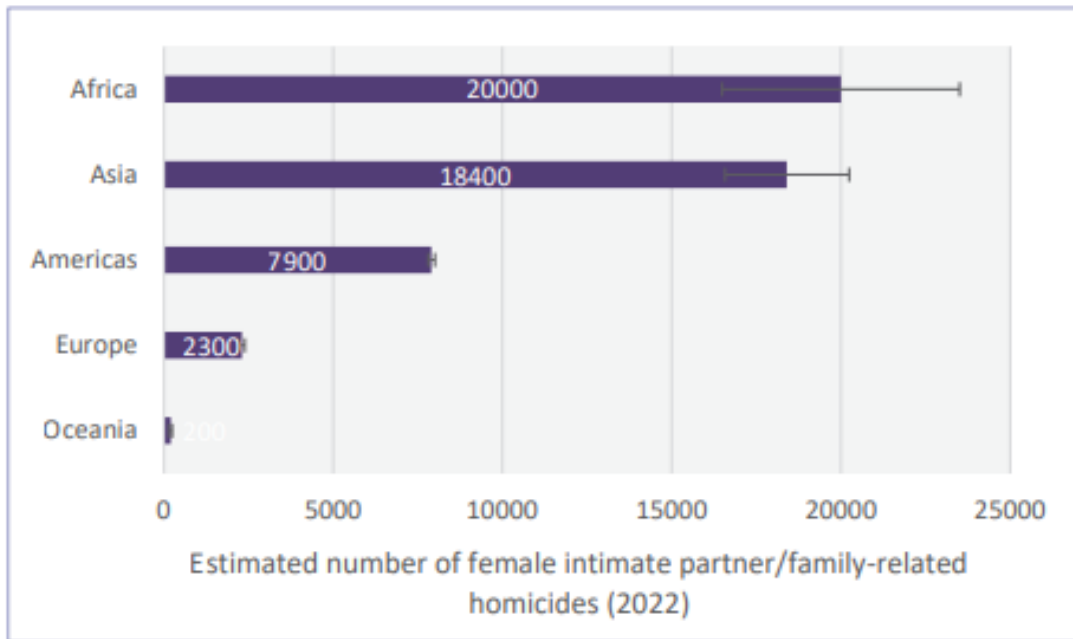
A General Overview of the Issue

Femicide, the deliberate killing of women based on their gender, remains a pervasive and alarming global issue, reflecting inequalities and systemic gender-based violence. Across continents, women face various degrees of vulnerability, with femicide manifesting in diverse forms and contributing to a profound human rights crisis.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), globally, approximately 137 women are killed by a family member every day. This horrifying figure sheds light on the pervasive nature of gender-based violence mainly within domestic spaces, where women should ideally feel safe. Furthermore, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reports that almost 60% of all female homicide victims are killed by an intimate partner or family member.

Legal and institutional responses vary globally, contributing to the persistence of femicide. In some cases, inadequate legal frameworks, lenient penalties, and a lack of effective enforcement undermine efforts to combat gender-based violence. Furthermore, societal attitudes that perpetuate stereotypes and victim-blaming add layers of complexity to the issue, hindering the creation of a culture of accountability.

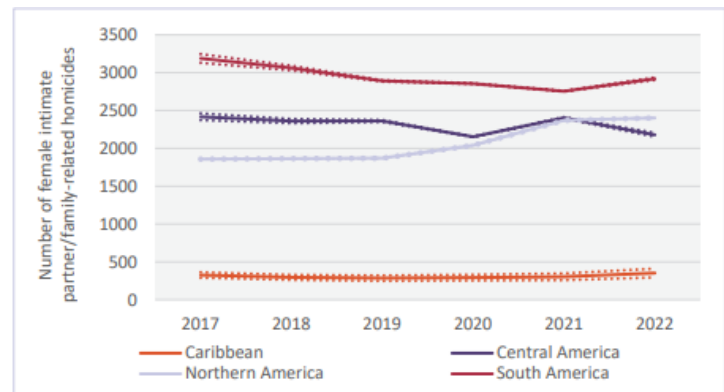
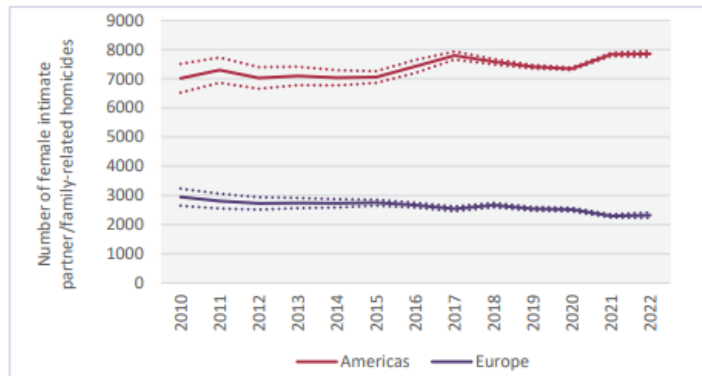
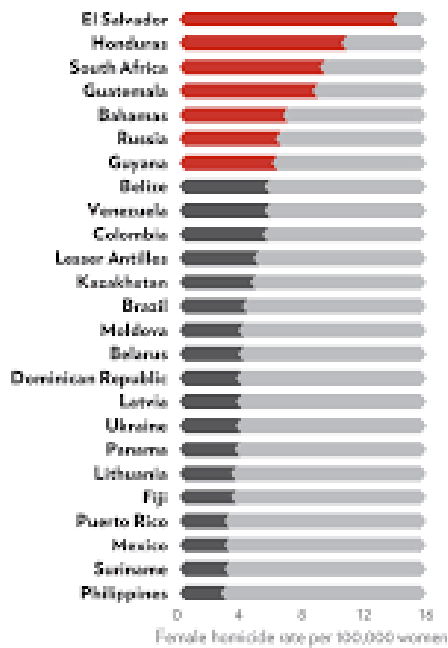
Efforts to address femicide demand a comprehensive approach, including legal reforms, education, economic empowerment, and cultural shifts. International agreements such as the Istanbul Convention and CEDAW provide frameworks for action, yet implementation gaps persist. To combat femicide effectively, a global commitment to challenging ingrained norms, fostering gender equality, and ensuring robust legal protections is imperative. The urgency of this challenge necessitates a collective response to create a world where women can live free from the pervasive threat of gender-based violence.



Average High and Very High Female Homicide Rates

2007-2012

- "Very high" > 8 female homicides per 100,000 women
- "High" 3-8 female homicides per 100,000 women



Historical Background

The roots of femicide extend far into deep history, reflecting a longstanding pattern of gender-based violence that has persisted across diverse cultures and epochs. While the term "femicide" gained prominence in recent years, the phenomenon itself traces back centuries, entwined with societal norms, legal systems, and power structures that have marginalized and subjugated women.


In ancient societies, practices such as infanticide and child marriage exemplified the devaluation of female lives. Female infants were often considered burdensome, leading to widespread infanticide in cultures that favoured male heirs. Similarly, child marriage, prevalent in various historical contexts, subjected young girls to early and often abusive unions, perpetuating cycles of gender-based violence.

During medieval times, witch hunts exemplified a dark chapter in history where thousands of women were accused of witchcraft and subsequently executed. These trials were rooted in misogyny, religious fervour, and the fear of women who defied societal expectations. The persecution of alleged witches reveals the intersection of gender-based violence with religious and patriarchal ideologies.

The 19th and early 20th centuries witnessed strides in women's rights movements, yet violence against women persisted. The suffragette movement faced systemic violence and opposition as women demanded political equality. The concept of "crimes of passion" often provided legal cover for men who killed their wives or female relatives, reinforcing a culture of impunity surrounding violence against women.

In more recent decades, various studies have illuminated the horrible truth of femicide globally. In 2022, 48 800 women and girls were killed by their partners or relatives, which is approximately 134 women killed by a family member every day. These statistics emphasize the persistent nature of gender-based violence and the urgent need for comprehensive strategies to address and prevent femicide.

Regional variations in femicide rates highlight the complex interplay of cultural, social, and economic factors. For instance, in Latin America, femicide rates have reached alarming levels, prompting widespread protests and calls for systemic change. The data



emphasizes the urgency of addressing not only individual cases but also the deeply ingrained cultural norms and systemic inequalities that perpetuate gender-based violence.

Understanding the historical context of femicide is crucial for developing effective interventions. It requires a holistic approach that acknowledges the deep-seated roots of gender-based violence and aims to dismantle the historical structures that perpetuate the devaluation and victimization of women. As societies confront this historical legacy, they must commit to fostering environments where women are treated with dignity, equality, and, above all, where femicide becomes a dark chapter of history rather than an enduring reality.

Major Parties Involved

Since femicide is a global issue that does not concern just a singular country or region, here is an overview of the situation in different parts of our world, focusing separately on each.

Latin America:

Latin American countries have faced particularly high rates of femicide. In Mexico, the femicide rate was reported as 3.8 per 100,000 women in 2020. Brazil has consistently recorded high numbers, with over 1,000 femicides in recent years. Argentina reported a femicide rate of 1.1 per 100,000 women in 2019.

South Africa:

South Africa has struggled with alarmingly high rates of femicide and gender-based violence. In 2020, the femicide rate was reported as 2.4 per 100,000 women. Issues include systemic inequality, high levels of sexual assault, and various social and economic problems.

Middle East:


Femicide situations vary across the Middle East. In Jordan, the femicide rate was reported as 2.1 per 100,000 women in 2018. In Lebanon, the reported femicide rate was 0.9 per 100,000 women in 2019. Turkey experienced over 450 femicides in 2020. Honor killings, domestic violence, and limited legal protections for women contribute to challenges in some countries.

India:

India has faced significant challenges related to femicide. The National Crime Records Bureau reported 7,793 cases of dowry deaths in 2019. Despite legal reforms, enforcement gaps and societal attitudes persist.

United States:

In the United States, femicide rates are heavily influenced by factors such as gun violence, domestic abuse, and systemic issues. In 2019, the femicide rate was 1.1 per 100,000 women. Disparities in access to resources and support services contribute to



the challenge.

Europe:

Femicide rates vary across European countries. In Spain, the femicide rate was reported as 0.6 per 100,000 women in 2019. In Italy, the femicide rate was 0.7 per 100,000 women in the same year. Germany reported a femicide rate of 0.9 per 100,000 women in 2020. While some nations have implemented strong legal frameworks, others still face challenges in addressing gender-based violence.

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women):

This is a historic UN treaty from 1979 that defines the rights of women and works to end discrimination against them. It does not mention femicide directly, but it urges countries to take steps to stop violence against women, including femicide.

Issue: Some countries have different views or problems with applying CEDAW to their laws and cultures.

Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence):

Legal treaty from 2011 that focuses on various forms of violence against women, including femicide. It obliges countries to prevent violence, protect victims, and prosecute offenders. It also stresses the importance of gender equality.

Issue: Not all countries have ratified the convention, and even among signatories, effective implementation can be hindered by cultural resistance and gaps in legal frameworks.

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action:

Adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, the Beijing Declaration is a global commitment to advancing women's rights. The Platform for Action, a key outcome of the conference, addresses violence against women, calling for legal reforms, support services, and international cooperation.

Issue: While the Beijing Declaration has led to some progress, challenges persist in achieving its ambitious goals due to uneven implementation and insufficient commitment from some nations.

European Union Victims' Rights Directive:

The EU Victims' Rights Directive, implemented in 2015, sets out standards for the rights, support, and protection of victims of crime, including gender-based violence. It highlights the need for member states to address the specific needs of vulnerable victims, such as victims of domestic violence and femicide.

Issue: Enforcement varies across EU member states, and cultural factors may impact the effectiveness of victim support measures.



Possible solutions for the Issue

Addressing femicide requires a multifaceted and complex approach that spans legal, societal, and cultural dimensions. Here are a few possible ways to help tackle this issue.

Strengthening Legal Measures:

Implementing and enforcing strict laws against femicide with severe penalties.
Ensuring, that legal frameworks align with international agreements like the Istanbul Convention and CEDAW.

Educating about Gender Equality in schools:

Gender education would be implemented into school curriculums to challenge stereotypes and promote respect, making change from a young age which is crucial for eliminating gender bias and harmful actions in the future of the individual.

Community-Based Programs:

Developing local programs that raise awareness, offer resources, and engage communities in preventing femicide through workshops, support groups, and awareness campaigns.


Economic Empowerment:

Countries shall be globally encouraged to support women's economic empowerment through equal job opportunities, vocational training, and entrepreneurship support to reduce dependency on potentially harmful partners.

Technology for Reporting:

Use of modern technological discoveries to facilitate reporting through hotlines, mobile apps, or online platforms. Encourage the use of technology for evidence gathering and efficient investigations.

Supportive Measures for Victims:



Establishment of shelters, counselling services, or legal aid for victims of gender-based violence, creating a support network to help survivors rebuild their lives.

Community Advocacy:

Encourage community figures, religious leaders, and media to speak out against femicide, helping to create a culture of zero tolerance for gender-based violence.

Implementing these and other strategies is essential for creating a lasting change. It requires collaboration among governments, civil society, and international organizations to address the root causes of femicide and build societies where all females can live free from the threat of gender-based violence.

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