Global Study on Homicide 2013

Goals:

• To provide the international community with up to date, complete and comparable statistical information on intentional homicide

• To analyse trends/patterns and enablers in order to assist countries in identifying areas for action and prevention
Global and regional levels of homicide (2012)

- 437,000 homicides at global level in 2012
- Global rate: 6.2 per 100,000 population

Source: UNODC Homicide Statistics (2013). The bars represent population-weighted homicide rates based on the source selected at the country level, with low and high estimates derived from homicide rates based on additional sources existing at the country level.
Homicide rate by country or territory (2012)

Map 1.1: Homicide rates, by country or territory (2012 or latest year)

Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Dashed lines represent undetermined boundaries. The dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. The final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined. A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

Sub-regional homicide rates (2012)

- Southern Africa & Central America rate >25
- South America, Middle Africa, Caribbean rate 16-23
Homicide rates at the sub-national level (2012)

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Who is at risk?

- The gender bias:
  - 79% of homicide victims are male
  - 95% of homicide perpetrators are male
Homicide victims and population (2012)

- Countries with 11% of global population account for 46% of all homicides
  - All in Africa or the Americas

- Personal security: a problem for 1 in 10 people

Homicide rates, by region and by sex (2012)

- Male rates higher than female rates in every region.
- Globally, male rate 4x female rate.

Percentage distribution of homicide victims, by sex and selected age groups (2012)

- 43% of all homicide victims are aged 15-29
- More than 1 in 7 victims is a young male in the Americas

Homicides rates of children aged 0-14, by region (2012)

- 36,000 children (aged 0-14) were victims of homicide in 2012.
- Over half of all homicide victims are less than 30 years old, particularly in the Americas.
Homicide trends

- Stability in much of Asia, Europe and Oceania
- Increases in Eastern and Northern Africa
- Slight overall increase in the Americas, but with diverse trends sub-regionally
Homicide trends, by sub-region (2008-2012)

Fig. 1.14: Homicide rates, by sub-region (2008-2012)


Note: Number of countries is denoted in brackets. Homicide trends are not available for any country in Central or Western Africa.
Homicide trends (1995-2012)


- **Low and stable**
  - Europe
  - Asia

- **Steady decreases**
  - Americas

- **Overall increase since 1995**
  - South America
  - Central America
  - Caribbean
  - Northern America
  - South-Eastern Asia
  - Central Asia
  - Southern Asia
  - Western Asia
  - Eastern Asia

Long term trends in homicide

- Americas 5-8 times higher than Asia and Europe since 1955

Source: UNODC Homicide Statistics (2013) and WHO Mortality Database.
The many faces of homicide

- There is a need to qualify homicide in order to better understand it, and to reduce it.

- Complex under-taking:
  - Typologies often overlap
  - Multiple drivers

- Some typologies particularly relevant for crime prevention policies
Typologies of homicide

- Homicide related to other criminal activities
- Interpersonal homicide
- Socio-political homicide
Homicide typologies in selected countries (2001-2012)

- Variety of different regional and national experiences
- Crime-related in Americas
- Interpersonal-related in Europe

→ No “one size fits all” approach

Homicide typologies in selected cities (2008-2011)

- Homicides not all linked to crime in Americas
- City data shows variety of experiences in South America
Homicide typologies: Regional patterns

• Homicide linked to criminal groups: 30% of homicides in the Americas

→ OC/gang-related homicides can produce sudden changes (i.e. decline in homicides in El Salvador after 2012 gang truce; rapid increase in Central America 2007-2011)
Intimate partner/family-related homicide: 14% of all homicides (2012)

- Greater intensity in Americas (higher rate), larger share of all homicides in Asia, Europe, Oceania
- 2/3 of all victims are female
- 47% of all female victims of homicide are killed by these perpetrators
- Those most at risk: women aged 30+
- Very stable form of homicide

Male and female victims of IPFM (2012 or latest year)
Mechanisms and Enablers

- Cross-cutting factors that play a role in homicide
- Mechanisms of killing:
  - Not all homicides involve weapons, but many do
  - Some types of homicide are associated with different instruments of killing
- Enablers:
  - The role of psychoactive substances
    - Alcohol
    - Illicit drugs

→ Understanding of the influence of such elements in homicide can help target policies to reduce violence
Homicide mechanisms, by region (2012)

- Firearms account for 2/3 of all homicides in the Americas
- Sharp objects used in more than 50% of all homicides in Oceania

Percentage distribution of homicide mechanisms, by sub-region (2012)

- Firearms account for a larger share in the Americas
Psychoactive substances: alcohol

- Cross-cutting facilitator for all types of violence
- Alcohol: homicide rates influenced by both volume and patterns of consumption
  - Major risk factor for IPFM homicide
- Policy strategies: limiting availability/dry laws proven effective

Fig. 3.9: Annual victimization rates of alcohol-related and non-alcohol-related homicides, Finland and Sweden (2003-2006)

- Strongly alcohol-related (all persons involved were intoxicated)
- To some extent alcohol-related (some persons involved were intoxicated)
- Not alcohol related (all persons involved were sober)
- Unknown

Source: European Homicide Monitor.
Psychoactive substances: Illicit drugs

- Pharmacological effect
  - Some drugs more related to violence (cocaine, amphetamines)

- Homicide linked to (changes in) drug markets (production, trafficking, distribution)
Homicide, violence and conflict

• Difficult to disentangle conflict-related deaths from homicide (indistinguishable, overlapping)

• Crime a significant factor in violent deaths in post-conflict countries (high homicide rates)

• Weak rule of law: opportunities for crime and violence to take root (including OC)
  ex. West Africa drug trafficking routes

• In some cases, crime-related violence can surpass violence in times of conflict
Example: Haiti

• Vulnerability to instability

• Homicide rate doubled (5.1 in 2007 to 10.2 in 2012) in recent years

• Homicide is a largely urban phenomenon – associated with gang activity
  • 87% of homicides in capital committed by firearm
Criminal Justice Response

- It is important to monitor the State response to homicide: core responsibility of the State
  - Right to justice for victims
  - Reduce impunity
    - Impunity can be a trigger for further violence
  - Uphold the rule of law
Statistical indicators relating to four phases in the criminal justice process

- Recording of homicide offences
- Police investigation of homicide
- Prosecution of homicide suspects
- Conviction of homicide offenders

Homicide rate
Offences cleared out of all recorded offences (clearance rate)
Number of suspects per 100 homicides
Number of convictions per 100 homicides (conviction rate)
Homicides, suspects and convictions, by region (2011)

Clearance
- Global: 60% of homicides cleared
- 85% in Europe, 80% in Asia, 50% in Americas

Convictions
- Global: 43 convictions per 100 homicides
- 81 in Europe, 48 in Asia, 24 in Americas
→ impunity in the Americas
Homicide clearance rate

- Global: 60% of homicides cleared
- 85% in Europe, 80% in Asia, 50% in Americas
- Tend to be lower when homicide rates are higher

Note: Regional figures represent weighted averages; data on two countries in Africa and Oceania are included in the global total but not shown separately. The homicide clearance rate is the percentage of homicides cleared by the police, divided by all homicides recorded by the police in the same year.

Source: UN-CTS.
Homicide clearance rate cont’d

- Size of police force has no direct impact on clearance rates

- Police-to-homicide ratio
  - High homicide rate countries: 20 police per homicide case
  - Low homicide rate countries: 500 police per homicide case
Homicide suspects and convictions

• Global: for every 100 homicide victims, 97 persons are suspected/arrested; 43 are convicted

• For every 100 homicides:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Suspects</th>
<th>Convictions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
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</tbody>
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Note: Data on three countries in Africa and Oceania are included in the global total but not shown separately.
Source: UN-CTS.
Percentage of convictions, by sex (2011)

- 95% of homicide convictions are male (global)

Fig. 5.6: Percentage distribution of persons convicted of homicide, by sex and by region (2012 or latest year)

- 96% in Americas (9 countries)
- 95% in Asia (12 countries)
- 92% in Europe (28 countries)
- 95% in Global (53 countries)

Percentage of persons convicted of homicide

Note: Data on four countries in Africa and Oceania are included in the global total but not shown separately.
Source: UN-CTS.
Trends in the criminal justice response (2003-2011)

Americas:
• Widening gap between number of homicides and number of convictions

Asia:
• Little change 2003-2011

Europe:
• Homicide and suspect rates declined by half; conviction rate declined by 30%
  ➔ Narrowing gap
Trends in the criminal justice response (2003-2011) cont’d

Conviction rates:
• Decreasing trend: CJS performance is deteriorating → Americas
• Increasing trend: CJS effective → Europe
• Impunity is growing in Americas
Prisoners sentenced for homicide

• Share of homicide offenders in prison is similar across all regions (7-10% in Europe and Americas, 4% Asia)

• Homicide in prison:
  • Americas: 56.7 per 100,000 prisoners
    • 3 times higher than homicide rate in general population
  • Europe: 2.6 per 100,000 prisoners
Better data, deeper analysis, improved policies, less homicide

www.unodc.org/gsh

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