

METHODOLOGICAL ANNEX

This methodological annex provides information on data sources and selection criteria for the compilation of UNODC Homicide Statistics. Overall, the UNODC Homicide Statistics dataset presents data for 207 countries and territories.

Sources

A variety of national and international sources on homicide have been considered which conform to the extent possible to the definition of intentional homicide used by UNODC for statistical purpose: “unlawful death purposefully inflicted on a person by another person”.

All existing data sources on intentional homicides, both at national and international level, stem from either criminal justice or public health systems. In the former case, data are generated by law enforcement or criminal justice authorities in the process of recording and investigating a crime event while, in the latter, data are produced by health authorities certifying the cause of death of an individual.

The following mechanisms are used to collect the data included in the UNODC Homicide Statistics dataset:

Criminal justice data:

- Data regularly collected by UNODC through the United Nations Survey of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems (UN-CTS), including data on intentional homicides and—where available—complementary data on homicides by firearms, data on homicides by sex of victims and homicides in the most populous city of each country.
- Data collected through publicly available sources and produced by national government sources (police, national statistical office, ministry of interior, ministry of justice, etc.).
- Data collected and compiled by other international and regional agencies, including from Interpol, Eurostat, the Organisation of American States and UNICEF¹

Public health data

- Data on homicides derived from databases on deaths by cause disseminated by WHO², both at central level and through the regional office for the Americas (PAHO). Data included in deaths by cause datasets produced by WHO, though based on national data, are to some extent adjusted or estimated to ensure a greater degree of completeness and international comparability. For a number of countries, where cause of death data suffer from incomplete coverage or are inexistent, WHO estimates deaths by cause based on statistical models. In the WHO Causes of Death dataset, estimates through statistical modelling were produced for around 40 per cent of all countries, mainly located in Africa and Asia.

¹ In few instances, where data from official sources are not available, data from other sources are considered and used when meeting the quality criteria described in the following section.

² WHO, Causes of death 2008 dataset, 2011

Selection of reference data series

Homicide counts and homicide rates (207 countries)

In the process of selecting reference data the following criteria are followed:

- The definitions used to produce data are in line with the homicide definition used in the UNODC Homicide Statistics dataset. For example, reference data exclude categories of violent deaths such as manslaughter or death in conflict from the count of intentional homicides;
- Data are consistent across time: time series have been analysed to identify possible outliers and to assess robustness of the data series;
- Data timeliness: the inclusion of recent data was given a higher priority in the selection process than the length of the time series (number of years covered).
- An analysis of official reports and research literature is regularly carried out to verify homicide data used by government agencies and the scientific community.

On the basis of these selection criteria and subject to data availability, a long and continuous time series including recent data on homicide counts and rates has been identified or created at country level

Data included in the dataset correspond to the original value provided by the source of origin, since no statistical procedure or modelling was used to change collected values or to create new or revised figures³.

Homicides by sex (193 countries)

For the sex distribution of homicide victims, consistency has been ensured, to the extent possible, with data sources selected for homicide counts. In 57 countries the source is consistent with the criminal justice source selected for homicide counts. In total, data have been included for 193 countries. For the large majority of countries the source is public health (136).

Homicides by firearms (116 countries)

For data on firearms, consistency has been ensured, to the extent possible, with data sources selected for homicide counts. Data on homicides by firearm are compiled from a variety of sources but predominantly criminal justice data.

Homicides in the most populous city (112 countries)

For data for the most populous city, consistency has been ensured, to the extent possible, with data sources selected for homicide counts. Data for the most populous city are compiled predominantly from criminal justice sources.

³ In some instances, mortality rates included in the UNODC Homicide Statistics dataset may slightly differ from country data due to different population data used at the denominator

Calculation of rates per 100,000 population and population data

Data sources used for production of the dataset most commonly provided information in counts (absolute numbers of homicides per year). Where data sources provided information in the form of a rate (per 100,000 population) data was converted to count form using, wherever possible, population data supplied by that source. Where no population data was available, conversion to count was carried out using population data from the United Nations Population Division published in *World Population Prospects: 2010 Revision*⁴.

Homicide rates per 100,000 population published in the dataset were all calculated from counts using population data for the respective year from *World Population Prospects* according to the formula $\text{rate} = (\text{count}/\text{population}) * 100,000$. This method ensured application of a uniform set of global population data. As a result of the calculation process, rates presented in the dataset may not correspond exactly with those published in the cited source.

Regions and sub-regions

In various sections, this report uses a number of subregional designations. These are not official designations and they do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNODC concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The assignment of countries or areas to specific groupings is for statistical convenience and does not imply any assumption regarding political or other affiliation of countries or territories by the United Nations. The designations used in this study are based on the United Nations M.49 geographical regions for statistical use, developed used and maintained by the United Nations Statistics Division. They are defined as follows:

AFRICA

- Eastern Africa: Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- Middle Africa: Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Republic of), Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe.
- Northern Africa: Algeria, Egypt, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia.
- Southern Africa: Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland.
- Western Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

AMERICAS

- Caribbean: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, Montserrat, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands and United States Virgin Islands.

⁴ United Nations, *World Population Prospects, the 2010 Revision*, 2011

- Central America: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama.
- Northern America: Bermuda, Canada and the United States of America.
- South America: Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guiana, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

ASIA

- Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.
- Eastern Asia: China (including Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan Province of China), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, and the Republic of Korea.
- South-Eastern Asia: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.
- Southern Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.
- Western Asia: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Cyprus, Georgia, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

EUROPE

- Eastern Europe: Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia and Ukraine.
- Northern Europe: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom (sometimes disaggregated to United Kingdom (England and Wales), United Kingdom (Scotland) and United Kingdom (Northern Ireland)).
- Southern Europe: Albania, Andorra, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Montenegro, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
- Western Europe: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

OCEANIA

- Australia and New Zealand: Australia and New Zealand.
- Melanesia: Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.
- Micronesia: Guam, Kiribati, Micronesia (Federal States of), Nauru and Palau.
- Polynesia: French Polynesia, Samoa and Tonga.