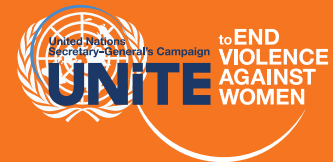




Bringing an end to violence against women and girls and femicide or feminicide

A key challenge for building a care society



Violence against women and girls and its most extreme expression, femicide, feminicide, or the gender-related killing of women and girls,¹ dramatically bring to light the persistence of the structural challenges of gender inequality and gender-based discrimination and violence against women and girls in Latin America and the Caribbean. The deep historical and structural roots of patriarchal, discriminatory and violent cultural patterns, grounded in a culture of privilege, have proven among the most difficult to dismantle.

Gender-based violence against women and girls is systemic and persistent in the region. It knows no borders, affects women and girls of all ages and happens everywhere, from the domestic setting to public places. It happens in workplaces, within the framework of political and community participation, on public transportation and in the street, in schools and other educational institutions, in cyberspace and certainly in the home. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, has called it a "shadow pandemic".

To overcome the structural challenges of inequality and transition towards a care society that integrates caring for people and the planet through a gender-responsive and human rights-based approach, public policies and social and fiscal compacts are needed to confront the various forms of inequality, enhance the autonomy of all women and girls in all their diversity and extend and guarantee their right to live a life free from violence.

The implementation of collective commitments by society as a whole to eliminate gender-based violence against women and girls is part of the invitation issued by the Secretary-General of the United Nations through the "UNiTE by 2030 to End Violence against Women" campaign (UNiTE). Recognizing and recalling the historic fight of women's and feminist movements to place the issue on the public agenda of the countries of the region, UNiTE calls for unified action in 2022 to bring an end to violence against women and girls.

¹ In Latin America, the terms "femicide" and "feminicide" have been codified in the criminal law of 17 countries, with no substantive difference in meaning. In effect, they both refer to the gender-based killing of women, giving political weight to a social phenomenon with its own characteristics that distinguish it from the generic term "homicide"; it is a category deriving from feminist theory that emerged amid the lack of gender perspective in the treatment of specific criminal acts. (UN-Women/ MESECVI, 2018). In the countries of the Caribbean, owing to the lack of classification of the crime, the expression "gender-related killings of women" is preferred.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the strength of feminist and women's movements has ensured that efforts to combat violence against women and girls continue. In light of the statistical silence in most countries, feminist organizations and activists began to gather data and compile information on femicides or feminicides in several countries in the region. Their actions, together with those of machineries for the advancement of women and of parliaments, have been and remain critical for the adoption of legislative reforms, the development of action plans and specific policies to address violence against women and girls in a comprehensive manner and the allocation of related funding.

The Regional Gender Agenda has also played a role, as a progressive, innovative and comprehensive policy agenda for the achievement of women's substantive equality and autonomy, developed over 45 years within the framework of the sessions of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The main frameworks related to the Regional Gender Agenda, which is linked to international human rights law, are the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (known as the Convention of Belém do Pará, 1994), the first binding international instrument that recognized the right of women to live a life free from violence in both the public and private spheres.

The legal reforms promoted in recent decades to address gender-based violence, in particular the adoption in 13 countries of comprehensive laws on violence and the promulgation in 17 countries of laws criminalizing femicide or feminicide,² play an important role in encouraging cultural changes that advance the transition towards societies in which such violence is no longer socially tolerated. However, the enforcement of laws to protect women's and girls' right to live a life free from violence faces various interlinked challenges, including in relation to women's access to justice and the capacity of justice administration systems to implement an intersectional and gender perspective that is also culturally relevant.

Diagram 1

Latin America and the Caribbean: legislative advances related to violence against women and girls



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of data from the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>.

^a Argentina, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay.

^b Argentina, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay.

^c Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay.

² The classification of the crime is not taken into consideration in the Dominican Republic (Law No. 550 of 2014), given that the country's constitutional court repealed the new Penal Code, which had contained a definition of feminicide, in its entirety. There is no specific legislation on the topic to date.

Important steps have also been taken in the region to break the statistical silence around violence against women and girls. In Latin America, 10 countries have laws that mandate that data be recorded, analysed and disseminated on the different forms of gender-based violence, including femicide or feminicide. In some countries, those laws assign sectoral responsibilities and establish the implementation of inter-agency data systems (Argentina, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay). However, inter-agency coordination and the availability of adequate financial, human and technological resources to generate quality data on the topic remain a challenge.

Despite the progress made in confronting violence against women and girls, national surveys in the region report that between 63% and 76% of women and girls have experienced gender-based violence in different settings in their lives.³ Moreover, estimates for 2018 show that in Latin America and the Caribbean, some 43 million women between the ages of 15 and 49 years —one in four women in that age range— have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner at least once in their lifetime (WHO, 2021). This figure, although striking, is a conservative estimate, since methodological constraints make it difficult to obtain information for the female population of all ages.

Estimates of the magnitude or prevalence of intimate partner violence show that it is fairly evenly distributed across Latin America and the Caribbean. In a small group of countries, estimates show that more than 30% of women have experienced intimate partner violence (Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru and Plurinational State of Bolivia), while in a large group of countries, this percentage varies between 20% and 29% (Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago). Finally, in seven countries, it is estimated to have affected less than 20% of women (the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay).⁴

These figures reveal the persistence of patriarchal, discriminatory and violent cultural patterns based on gender roles and stereotypes that undervalue the role of women in society. In this context, violence against women and girls plays a fundamental role in the reproduction of gender inequality. For example, data from the World Values Survey show that in at least three countries in Latin America (Argentina, Chile and Mexico), the proportion of people who consider that it is justifiable in some way for a husband to beat his wife has increased over the past decade. In two other countries (Brazil and Colombia), there has been no discernible decline in the values for this indicator (down by 2 and 4 percentage points, respectively) (EVS/WVS, 2022).

A. Femicide and feminicide in Latin America and the Caribbean: a shadow pandemic

For 15 years, Latin American and Caribbean States have recognized the seriousness of femicidal violence and the gender-related killing of women, which has been expressed in the institutional context through the adoption of laws and protocols and the development of specific institutional frameworks. Despite these advances, femicide or feminicide persists and there are no clear signs that it is declining.

In 2021, at least 4,473 women were the victims of femicide, feminicide or gender-related killings in 29 countries and territories in the region (4,445 in 18 Latin American countries and territories and 28 in 11 Caribbean countries and territories), according to the latest official data reported by countries to the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean.⁵ This represents at least 12 gender-related killings of women in the region every day.

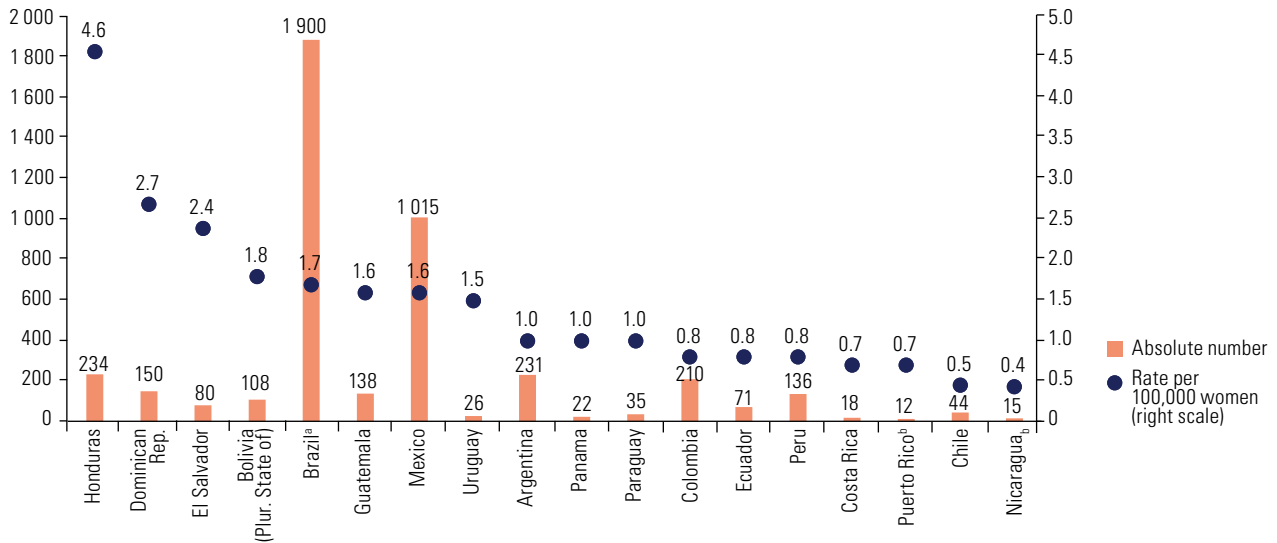
³ Information based on national surveys of family relationships or gender-based violence: Mexico, 2016; Dominican Republic, 2018; Ecuador, 2019; Peru, 2019; Uruguay, 2019.

⁴ Estimates of the World Health Organization (2021), on behalf of the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Violence against Women Estimation and Data (VAW-IAWGED) and on the basis of information from representative national and subnational studies of countries in the region.

⁵ In 2020, in the same 29 countries and territories, the figures officially reported to the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean indicated that at least 4,091 women had been the victims of femicide, feminicide or gender-related killings.

Figure 1

Latin America (18 countries and territories): femicide or feminicide, 2021
(Absolute numbers and rates per 100,000 women)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of data from the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>.

Note: Includes women of all ages.

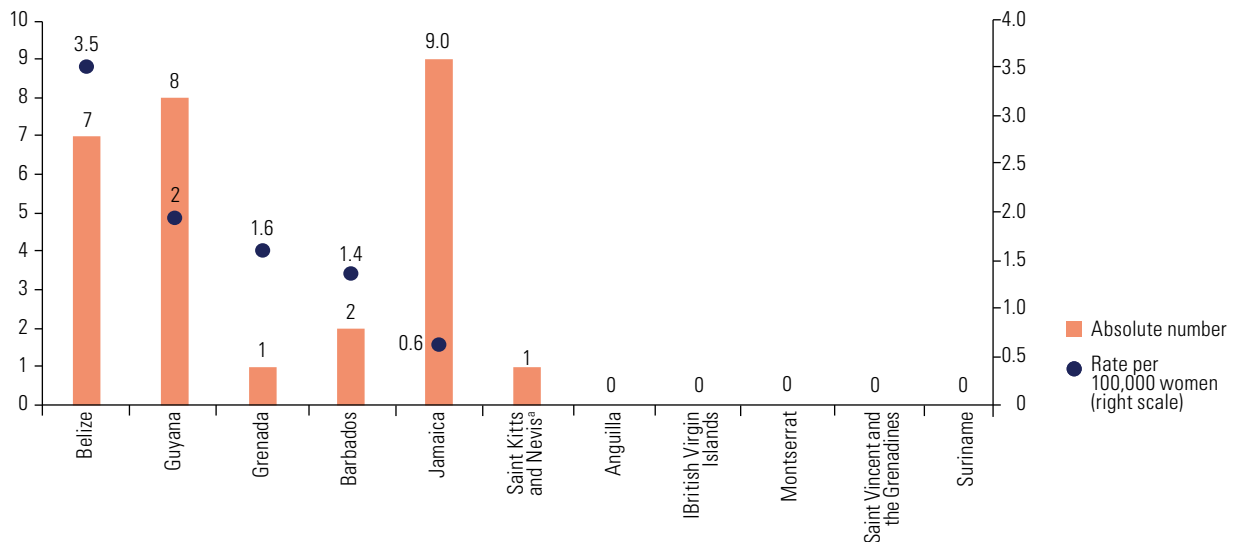
^a Brazil does not have a single registry of feminicide cases. The National Council of Justice only registers new procedural cases entering the legal system.

^b Nicaragua and Puerto Rico only report cases of feminicide committed by an intimate partner or former partner.

In 2021, of the 18 countries or territories in Latin America that provided data, 11 had a rate equal to or greater than 1 victim of femicide or feminicide per 100,000 women. The highest rates of femicide or feminicide in Latin America were recorded in Honduras (4.6 cases per 100,000 women), the Dominican Republic (2.7 cases per 100,000 women), El Salvador (2.4 cases per 100,000 women), the Plurinational State of Bolivia (1.8 cases per 100,000 women) and Brazil (1.7 cases per 100,000 women).

Figure 2

The Caribbean (11 countries and territories): gender-related killing of women, 2021
(Absolute numbers and rates per 100,000 women)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of data from the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>.

Note: Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname only report cases of feminicide committed by an intimate partner or former partner. In Anguilla, Belize and the British Virgin Islands, the data refer to gender-related killings of women without specifying the nature of the relationship with the perpetrator.

^a Saint Kitts and Nevis do not have the population estimates required to calculate the rate per 100,000 women.

In the Caribbean, 11 countries and territories provided information for 2021 on gender-related killing of women, reporting a total of 28 women victims of lethal gender-based violence in the subregion.

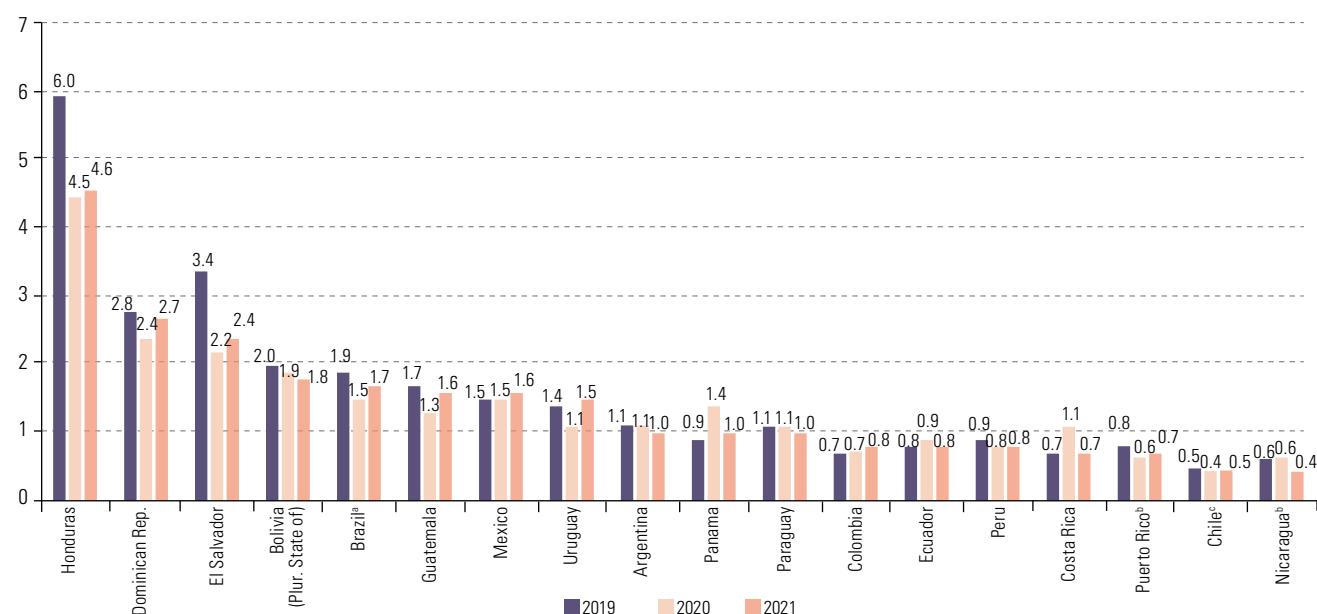
Belize and Guyana recorded the highest rates of gender-related killing of women in the Caribbean (3.5 and 2.0 per 100,000 women, respectively), while the highest absolute number of victims was recorded in Jamaica (9 victims in 2021).

An analysis of the femicide or feminicide rates in 18 countries and territories of Latin America over the period 2019–2021 shows that, in 10 countries, rates have remained equal to or above 1 per 100,000 women through the entire period (Argentina, Brazil, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Plurinational State of Bolivia and Uruguay).

Figure 3

Latin America (18 countries and territories): femicide or feminicide, 2019–2021

(Rates per 100,000 women)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of data from the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>.

^a Brazil does not have a single registry of femicide cases. The National Council of Justice only registers new procedural cases entering the legal system.

^b Nicaragua and Puerto Rico only report cases of femicide committed by an intimate partner or former partner.

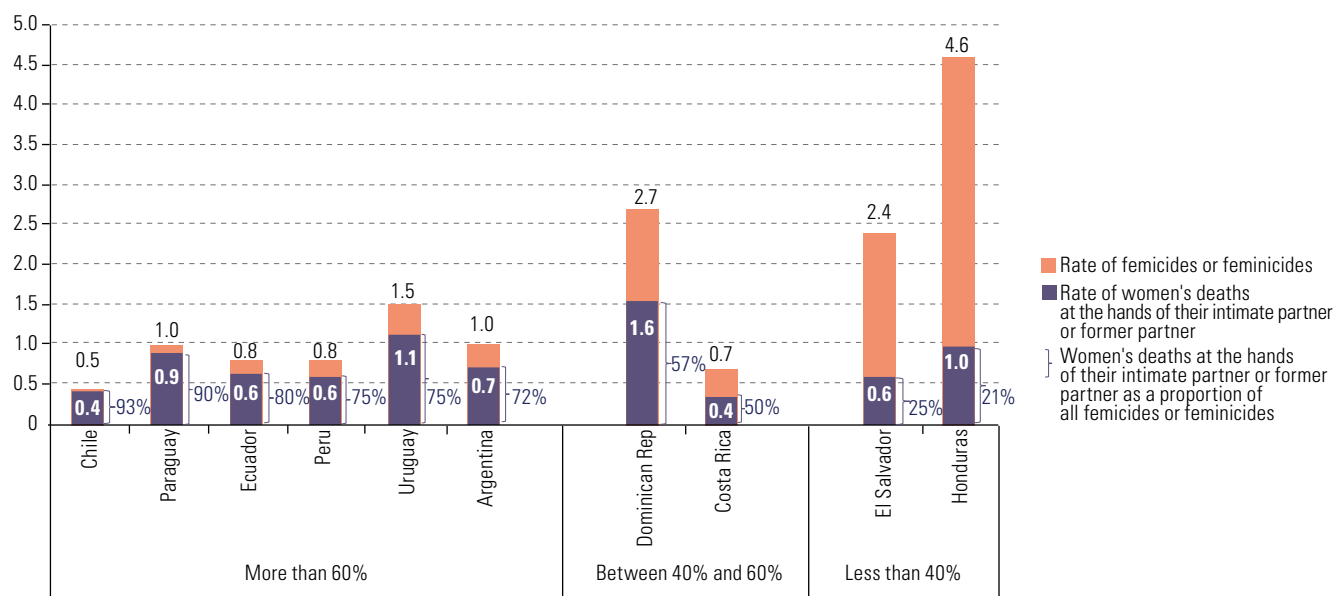
^c Chile amended its legislation in 2020 to include the generic concept of gender-based killing of women.

The available data show that femicide or feminicide persists in the region, an unacceptable and flagrant violation of the human rights of women and girls. Similarly, qualitative studies have identified "contexts of femicidal violence" in the region, which increase the numbers of gender-related killing of women. Those contexts include a strong presence of organized crime, chronic structural violence, public insecurity and intense migratory flows (Latin America Regional Programme of the Spotlight Initiative, 2021).

Based on the information provided by countries, no upward or downward regional trends in this extreme form of violence can be identified, despite high-impact events such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which could have been expected to lead to substantial changes in the behaviour of this indicator.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) is providing support to several countries in the region to improve their administrative records on femicide or feminicide, and the reliability of these records is generally improving, which enhances comparability at the regional level. It is noteworthy that countries are constantly updating information on femicide or feminicide.⁶ This relates mainly to advances in legal investigations that lead to corrections to the figures from previous years, which can alter the totals published each year by ECLAC for the region.

Figure 4
Latin America (10 countries): women's deaths at the hands of their intimate partner or former partner as a proportion of total femicides or feminicides, 2021
(Rates per 100,000 women and percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of data from the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>.

Regarding the relationship between victims and perpetrators, there are significant disparities in the trends across the different countries of the region. In one group, Chile, Paraguay, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay and Argentina reported that the majority of gender-related killings of women occurred in the context of intimate relationships. In the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica, the same link between victims and perpetrators was found in approximately half of femicides or feminicides. A particular trend was reported in El Salvador and Honduras: fewer than 25% of such cases involved situations where the victim and perpetrator were in an intimate relationship. This means that, in the latter two countries, a significant number of femicides or feminicides were perpetrated by individuals with whom the victims had no intimate relationship, and with whom they may or may not have resided, including strangers. In these cases, broader trends related to organized crime and social conflict, expressed through gender violence in the public sphere, play an important role.

Producing quality statistical data on femicide or feminicide requires going beyond counting the number of victims. For those data to be used in designing comprehensive public policies to address violence against women and girls, a series of key data points must be known, including the characteristics of victims and aggressors, the relationship between them, the context in which these crimes took place, the means used in the killing and whether the victim had previously filed a report about the aggressor, among other information.

⁶ In the process of updating the regional indicators for femicide or feminicide and women's deaths at the hands of their intimate partner or former partner in 2022, 10 countries corrected the information from previous years (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana and Uruguay).

Box 1**Financial reparation and care services for children and adolescents orphaned because of femicide or feminicide**

At least 781 children, adolescents and other dependents lost their mother or caretaker^a as a result of femicide or feminicide in 2021, in the only 10 countries in the region where data on the subject are available.^b This number reveals the huge impact of gender-based violence, not only for the women who are its victims, but also for their families and communities and for society as a whole.

Reparation is a fundamental pillar of comprehensive approaches to addressing gender-based violence and can mean monetary compensation, the provision of legal, social and health services, including mental health services, for full recovery, and guarantees of non-repetition (United Nations, 2017), all of which extend to indirect victims.^c In Latin America, a growing number of countries have been including guarantees in their legal frameworks and public policies that the children of women who are the victims of femicide or feminicide will receive economic reparation and comprehensive care. This is the case, for example, in Argentina (Law No. 27452, known as the Brisa Law, 2018), Costa Rica (Law for comprehensive reparations for survivors of femicide, 2022), Ecuador, (Decree 696, 2018), Peru (Emergency Decree 005, 2020) and Uruguay (Law 18850, 2011). Similarly, the criminal codes of three States in Mexico (Aguascalientes, the State of Mexico and Veracruz) mention some form of reparation of harm for children and adolescents.

The job of caring for children and dependent persons is mainly performed by women, which is evidence of traditional gender-related strictures expressed through the sexual division of labour and the unjust social organization of care. In this sense, the death of a woman by femicide or feminicide, in addition to violating her right to life, places her children at risk. It is crucial for States to assume the commitment and responsibility of caring for these children, providing the resources and attention needed for them to overcome the trauma they have undergone and move forward to live a dignified life.

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC), on the basis of official information submitted by the countries to the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean; Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, "General recommendation No. 35 on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19" (CEDAW/C/GC/35), 2017.

^a Refers to women who were caring for any dependent person, such as children, adolescents, older persons or persons with disabilities.

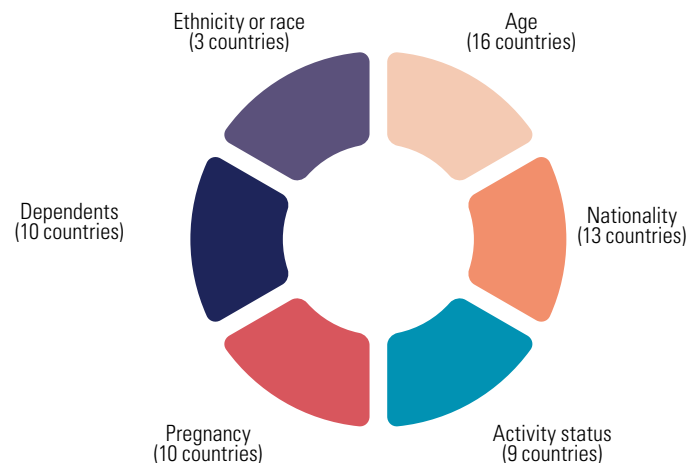
^b Argentina (185), Chile (22), Costa Rica (15), Guatemala (16), Nicaragua (14), Paraguay (61), Peru (353), Plurinational State of Bolivia (89), Saint Kitts and Nevis (1) and Uruguay (25).

^c The Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1985, establishes that "[t]he term "victim" also includes, where appropriate, the immediate family or dependants of the direct victim and persons who have suffered harm in intervening to assist victims in distress or to prevent victimization" (United Nations, 1985).

Diagram 2

Latin America and the Caribbean (20 countries): countries that report on gender-related killings of women, by variable associated with the victim, 2021

(Numbers)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of data from the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>.

The Gender Equality Observatory of Latin America and the Caribbean requests that countries provide disaggregated data in six categories. As of 2021, data on critical factors, including whether the victim was pregnant or had dependents, have only been reported by a small number of countries.

The data provided by countries also reflect significant underrecording of disaggregated variables, such as ethnicity or race and activity status. It reveals that the services that are involved in data gathering rarely apply intersectional approaches that would enable the provision of comprehensive responses to the complexity implicated in violence against women and girls.

Excluding data on the number of dependents of the victim, all the variables that the Gender Equality Observatory requests from countries are considered crucial in the International Classification of Crimes for Statistical Purposes and the *Statistical Framework for Measuring the Gender-related Killing of Women and Girls* (also referred to as “femicide/feminicide”) (UNODC, 2022), endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission. Several countries report on other variables through official reports and publications, as follows: type of weapon used to commit the femicide or feminicide (Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Panama, Peru and Uruguay), location of the crime (Argentina, Chile, Honduras, Peru and Uruguay), previous reports of violence (Argentina and Chile), and gender identity, sexual orientation and disability status of the victim (Argentina).

Among the 13 countries that report the nationality of women victims of femicide or feminicide in 2021 are Chile, the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica, where foreign women accounted for 18%, 13% and 11% of victims, respectively. Each of these countries has seen significant flows of migrants, either historically or recently. In the Caribbean, one victim in Belize was foreign, accounting for 14% of all gender-related killings of women. Among women in situations of human mobility, the factors that increase vulnerability to the risk of extreme gender-based violence include fear of seeking support from institutions owing to irregular status, lack of support networks, language barriers and intersectional discrimination related to ethnic, racial and social status, among others.

B. Girls and adolescent girls: gender-based violence begins at an early age

Gender-based violence is expressed in different ways and its effects on women are cross-cutting. In order to shed light on the different aspects of this serious violation of human rights, the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean focuses on the situation of girls and adolescent girls facing violence, given that gender-based violence takes on specific characteristics when it intersects with age and the phases of the life cycle, which are also determining factors in the distribution of well-being and power within the social structure (ECLAC, 2016).

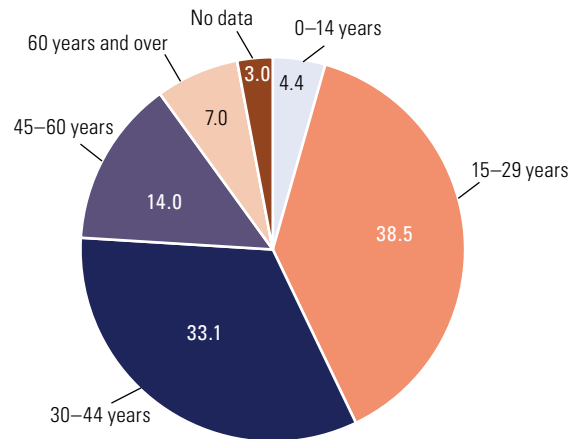
It is acknowledged that, compared to their male peers, girls and adolescent girls are the victims of a wider range of types of violence and are more exposed than any other group to specific forms of violence, such as sexual violence and child, early and forced marriages and unions (UNICEF, 2021).

Data from 16 countries and territories in the region between 2019 and 2021 show that the greatest concentration of cases of femicide or feminicide is in the age group of adolescents and young women between the ages of 15 and 29. In addition, more than 4% of these crimes involve girls under 14 years of age.

Sexual violence is one of the forms of violence in which gender inequality is most evident. Adult women, adolescent girls and girls are more exposed to this type of violence than men in the same age groups. In the particular case of girls, this is consistent with the information available in three countries in the region, which shows that this form of violence affects them disproportionately.

Figure 5

Latin America and the Caribbean (16 countries and territories):^a femicide, feminicide or gender-related killing of women, by age range of victims, 2019–2021
(Percentages)

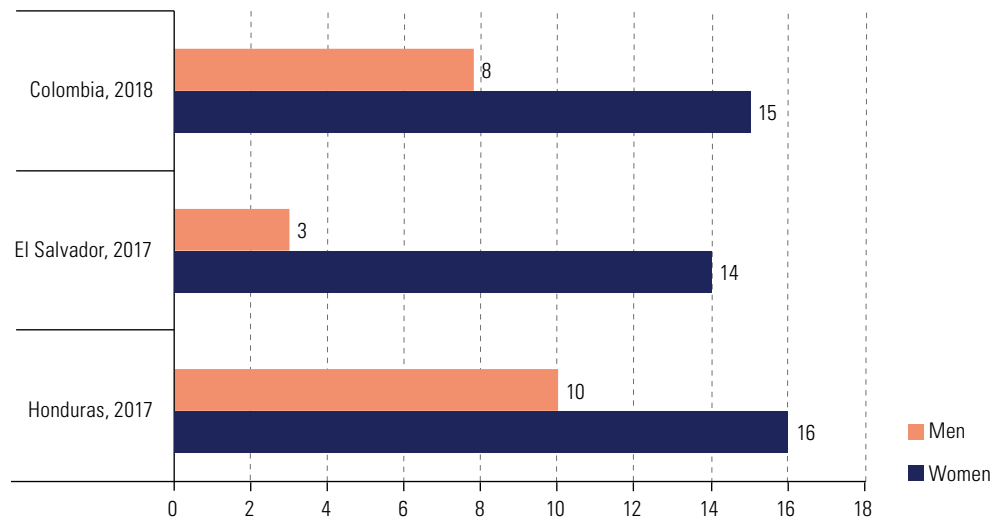


Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of data from the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <https://oig.cepal.org/en>.

^a Anguilla, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Uruguay.

Figure 6

Colombia, El Salvador and Honduras: prevalence of sexual violence experienced before the age of 18 among persons aged 18–24 years, by sex, latest year with available data
(Percentages)



Source: Together for Girls (TfG), Encuestas Nacionales de Violencia contra Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes (EVCNNA).

Child, early and forced marriages and unions are also a manifestation of gender-based violence and constitute a harmful and violent practice that significantly affects the overall development of girls and adolescent girls and exposes them to violence, unwanted pregnancy at an early age and an excessive burden of care work before their education trajectories or employment decisions have been established. Being confined to the home as the primary environment for personal development, along with school dropout, limits their ability to form relationships and social ties and affects their ability to develop autonomy and integrate into society.

Child, early and forced marriages and unions are common throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, affecting 1 in 5 girls and adolescent girls (ECLAC, 2022; United Nations, 2022) and perpetuating and deepening the gender inequalities that already exist in society (Working group of the Joint Inter-Agency Programme to End Child Marriage and Early Unions in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2022). Awareness of the issue remains low in most countries of the region, despite the availability of surveys that would enable the related data to be generated.

The available information shows a clear link between child marriage and early unions and the risk of intimate partner violence: women who marry or enter a union at an early age are more likely to suffer intimate partner violence than women who do so as adults (UNICEF, 2019). This harmful and violent practice affects the physical autonomy of girls and adolescent girls and the enjoyment of their sexual and reproductive rights, exposing them to higher risk of obstetric violence when they become mothers and to having their bodies and decisions controlled by their partner and their family. It also exposes them to social isolation, educational discrimination and other forms of exclusion that hinder their full development.

C. Profound transformations are urgently needed to guarantee freedom from gender violence

The unacceptable persistence of the various manifestations of violence, which is complex and has many causes, reveals how difficult it is to break down structural inequalities, specifically in relation to patriarchal, discriminatory and violent cultural patterns.

A surge in hate speech and the growth of the groups that promote it throughout the region is compounding the situation, heightening the hostilities against women's and feminist groups, in particular human rights defenders, LGBTQI+ activists, journalists, social media influencers, Indigenous leaders, leaders of African descent and other women leaders active in combating sexist violence.

For this reason, it is essential to increase efforts to support the effective exercise of the right of women and girls to live a life free from violence. The call of the Secretary-General for governments and other stakeholders to make commitments and take policy action remains in effect in four key areas (UN-Women, 2020):

- States have an obligation, under their duty of due diligence, to prevent violations of the rights of women and girls by adopting a wide range of legal, political, administrative and cultural measures to transform social gender norms that cause discrimination, in order to make gender-based violence unacceptable. In particular, it is crucial to advance in improving access to justice and its administration, since responses to crimes against women and girls that fail to include a gender-sensitive, intersectional and culturally informed approach perpetuate violence.
- Progress in the public response is urgently needed, through the design, implementation and assessment of robust and comprehensive public policies, which coordinate the different sectors of the State in prevention, care, punishment and redress for violence against women, and in driving the transformation of social and gender norms so that mutual care and respect for the autonomy of persons become foundational values.
- Formulating transformative policies that confront the structural factors that support gender-based violence requires disaggregated, timely, reliable and relevant data, which can play a key role in the creation of early warning mechanisms to avoid the escalation of femicidal violence. It is therefore key to strengthen data systems so that they shed light on the multiple manifestations of violence against women and girls in all their complexity and foster an understanding of their interaction and intersection with various drivers of discrimination and inequality.

- Sufficient financing is needed to implement policies that guarantee the rights and autonomy of women and girls in all their diversity. In particular, there is a need to ensure that every person in need can easily access inclusive services provided by trained personnel, providing special care to those who suffer from multiple forms of discrimination and violence, such as girls and adolescent girls, older women, women with a disability, rural women, Indigenous women, women of African descent, migrant women and trans women, among others. The implementation of plans to counter gender-based violence should also be guided by a gender-sensitive, generational, intercultural and intersectional approach; these plans should also become part of State policy and be protected from budget cuts.

Important progress has been achieved with regard to public policy, the creation of institutional frameworks dedicated to combating violence and the allocation of funding to finance these advances because States have included the demands and proposals of feminist and women's movements in the region. For that reason, public responses should consider these diverse views and guarantee robust and autonomous women's and feminist movements to enable them to continue on the path towards the transformations required in these changing times.

Achieving the autonomy and empowerment of women and girls in all their diversity is a commitment undertaken by the countries of the region under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Forging a care society and a new development model that puts the sustainability of life at its centre will only be possible if progress is made in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the right of all women and girls to live a life free from all forms of violence is guaranteed.

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