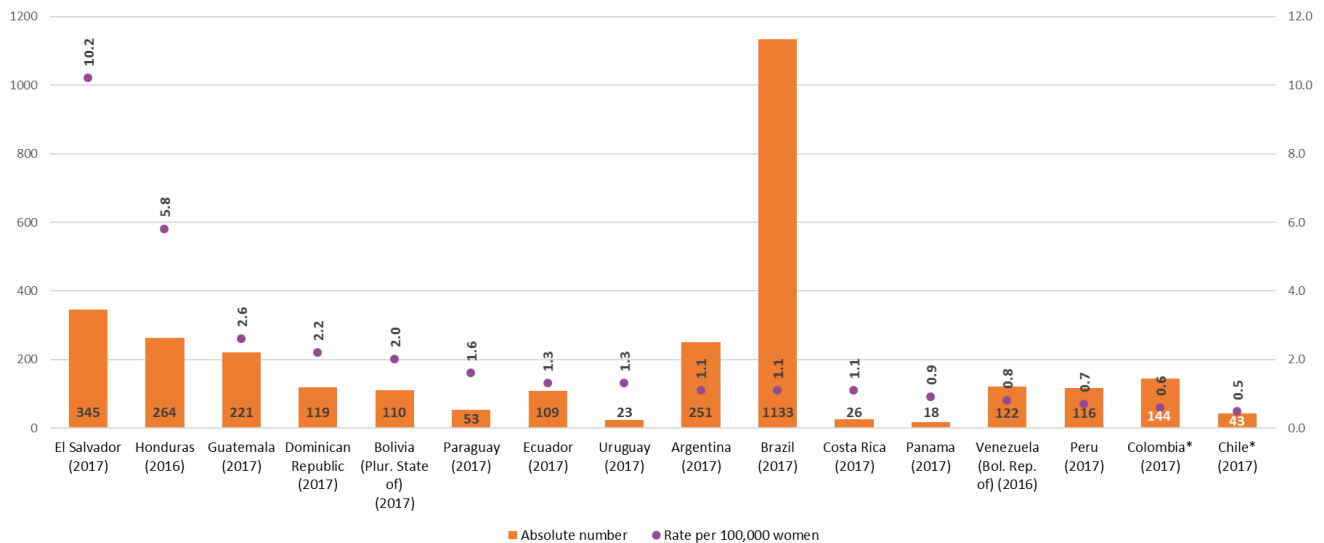


Femicide, the most extreme expression of violence against women

At least 2,795 women were victims of femicide in 23 Latin American and Caribbean countries in 2017, according to data provided by national public agencies to ECLAC's Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean.

In El Salvador this phenomenon is particularly acute, finding no other parallel in any country in the region, with a rate of 10.2 femicides per 100,000 women in 2017. This is followed by Honduras, which in 2016 registered 5.8 femicides per 100,000 women. In Guatemala, the Dominican Republic and Bolivia (Plur. State of) high rates were also observed for 2017, which are equal to or greater than 2 cases per 100,000 women. Venezuela, Panama and Peru are the only countries in the region with rates below 1.0.

Figure 1
Latin America (16 countries): Femicides, last year with available information
(Absolute numbers and rates per 100,000 women)



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

* Chile and Colombia record information only on cases of intimate femicide, committed by intimate or former intimate partner.

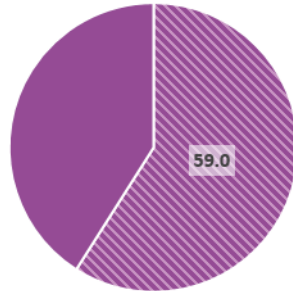
The data shows that femicides (homicides of women perpetrated for gender-based reasons) usually correspond to a majority of the total intentional homicides of women. In most countries of the region with available data, femicides are committed by someone with whom the victim had or had had an intimate relationship. This is reversed in El Salvador (2017) and Honduras (2016), where intimate femicides correspond to 6% and 18% of total femicides respectively.

In the Caribbean, 4 countries registered 35 victims of femicide in 2017: Belize (9 victims), the British Virgin Islands (1), Saint Lucia (4) and Trinidad and Tobago (21). Guyana and Jamaica, which only have data on intimate femicide, reported the deaths of, respectively, 34 and 15 women at the hands of their partner or former intimate partner in the same year.

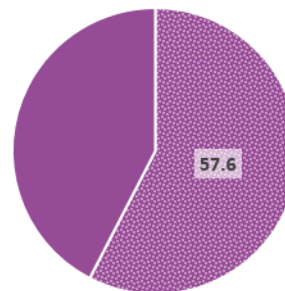
Comparing the prevalence of femicides in Latin America and the Caribbean against other regions is still difficult. European Union countries only record the number of deaths of women caused by an intimate partner in their regional statistics, posing a comparability challenge with the indicator published by ECLAC, which refers to deaths of women caused both in the public as well as private sphere. While intimate femicide rates in Latin America in 2017 range from a maximum of 1.98 per 100,000 women in the Dominican Republic to a minimum of 0.47 in Chile, most European countries registered rates below 0.5 in 2016.

Figures 2 and 3

Latin America (7 countries^a): Femicides as proportion of total intentional homicides of women, 2017-2016
(Percentages)



Latin America (10 countries^b): Intimate femicides as proportion of total femicides, 2017-2016
(Percentages)



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

^a Costa Rica (2016), Ecuador (2017), El Salvador (2017), Guatemala (2017), Honduras (2016), Paraguay (2017) and Uruguay (2017).

^b Argentina (2017), Costa Rica (2017), Ecuador (2017), El Salvador (2017), Honduras (2016), Paraguay (2017), Peru (2016), Dominican Republic (2017), Uruguay (2017) and Venezuela (2016).

The severity of the phenomenon has forced 18 Latin American countries to modify their laws to sanction femicide: Costa Rica (2007), Guatemala (2008), Chile and El Salvador (2010), Argentina, Mexico and Nicaragua (2012), Bolivia (Plur. State of), Honduras, Panama and Peru (2013), Ecuador, Dominican Republic and Venezuela (Bol. Rep.) (2014), Brazil and Colombia (2015), Paraguay (2016) and Uruguay (2017).

In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, countries defined goals and indicators for gender equality and for the construction of peaceful and inclusive societies. Measuring femicides is particularly important to address goal 5.2: *Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation*, and goal 16.1: *Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere*. In the context of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, the femicide indicator has been incorporated in the set of indicators prioritized by the Statistical Coordination Group for the 2030 Agenda, which encourages countries to improve their administrative records and their national indicator.

Challenges

- Understand that, beyond their sexual and gender condition, all forms of violence affecting women are determined by differences in economic status, age, race, culture, religious affiliation, as well as other differences. This would allow for the advancement of public policies for its eradication that consider women's diversity and the varied characteristics in which violence against them is expressed.
- Generate inter-institutional agreements to strengthen the analysis of femicide at the regional and national levels.
- Raise awareness and build capacity of public officials, especially justice operators, to improve the recording of femicide and generate responses that reflect a rights-based approach and a culture of equality.
- Generate reparation policies targeting minor children of women victims of femicide, that consider monetary allocations to face their daily expenses.

"Without gender equality, sustainable development is neither development nor sustainable"

ECLAC Division for Gender Affairs

<http://www.cepal.org/en/work-areas/gender-affairs>

<http://oig.cepal.org/en>