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Israel Observatory on Femicide 2022 half year report finds a 71% increase in femicide relative to the same period last year

June 2022 is the deadliest month this year, with four murders in ten days

Prof. Shalva Weil: “Two years ago, we saw a rise in the number of femicide cases in Israel as a result of the coronavirus lockdowns. This year we have had no lockdowns, yet there has been an increase in femicide—men murdering women because they are women... We must stop the violence and eradicate this frightening trend, which is itself a pandemic.”

A new report from the **Israel Observatory on Femicide**, led by Prof. Shalva Weil of the Hebrew University’s Seymour Fox School of Education, warns of a significant rise in femicide—women being murdered by men because they are women—over the first half of 2022, relative to the equivalent period last year. The first six months of 2022 saw 12 cases of femicide, compared with seven during the first half of 2021—a **rise of 71%**. Four of the 12 cases occurred within a ten-day period in June (June 2–12). The killer’s identity is known in nine cases: In seven of them, the suspect was the victim’s partner or ex-partner, and in two cases the killer was the victim’s son, meaning these were cases of matricide. In the three remaining cases, a primary suspect has yet to be publicly identified by the police.

The report also found that:

- 58% of victims were Jewish, and 42% were Arab or Druze. In the three cases in which there is also suspicion of a criminal background to the murder, the victim was from the Arab sector. The ethnic identity of the suspect is similar to that of the victim in all cases, excepting one in which the victim was Jewish and her ex-partner, who is suspected in her murder (but is yet to be convicted of it), is of Arab origin.
- The victim’s age is known in all cases, and the average stands at 40.3. The youngest victim was 22, and the oldest, 64. The average age of the murder suspects is 41.3, with the youngest being 30 and the oldest 65.
- 33% of the cases involved killing by stabbing, and 16% by shooting. The rest of the cases involved different means, including use of an explosive device and drowning.

- In three cases, the suspect was known to the police from previous violent incidents. In two cases, the victim was known to welfare authorities due to their economic circumstances, but not due to complaints of violence.
- In a quarter of cases, at least one child of the victim was present during the event.

Dr. Weil issued a warning about this sharp increase in violence:

“Two years ago, we saw a rise in femicide in Israel as a result of the coronavirus lockdowns. This year we have had no lockdowns, yet there has been an increase in femicide—men murdering women because they are women. This happens mainly in the context of conflicts with partners, or ex-partners, but there have also been cases of sons murdering mothers. While we are not at the end of the year yet, and while the numbers are relatively small, every case of femicide wrecks an entire family. We must stop the violence and eradicate this frightening trend, which is itself a pandemic.”

“Femicide” is defined in the literature as the murder of women by men because they are women. That is, it does not include cases of women killed as a result of accidents or negligence, or who are victims of criminal activity. The database of the Israel Observatory on Femicide has been developed based on constant tracking of reports in local and national news websites, use of Google Alerts, and cross-referencing with other databases. As is accepted practice around the world, the data include cases of murder in which the victim was aged 18 and above. There are cases in which the circumstances of a woman’s killing are unclear, or no suspect was found, and occasions on which information is lacking as a result of a court order banning publication, obtained by the police or the public prosecutor. However, this report also includes cases of femicide for which the police do not currently have enough evidence. At time of writing, the authorities are examining the criminal background of three cases that were included in this report.

For more details, the Israel Observatory on Femicide can be contacted via email at: iof@mail.huji.ac.il | Website: <https://www.israelfemicide.org/>

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