FEMICIDE IN DENMARK AND GREENLAND 2024

Center for Violence Prevention



Femicide Watch.

Center for Voldsforebyggelse

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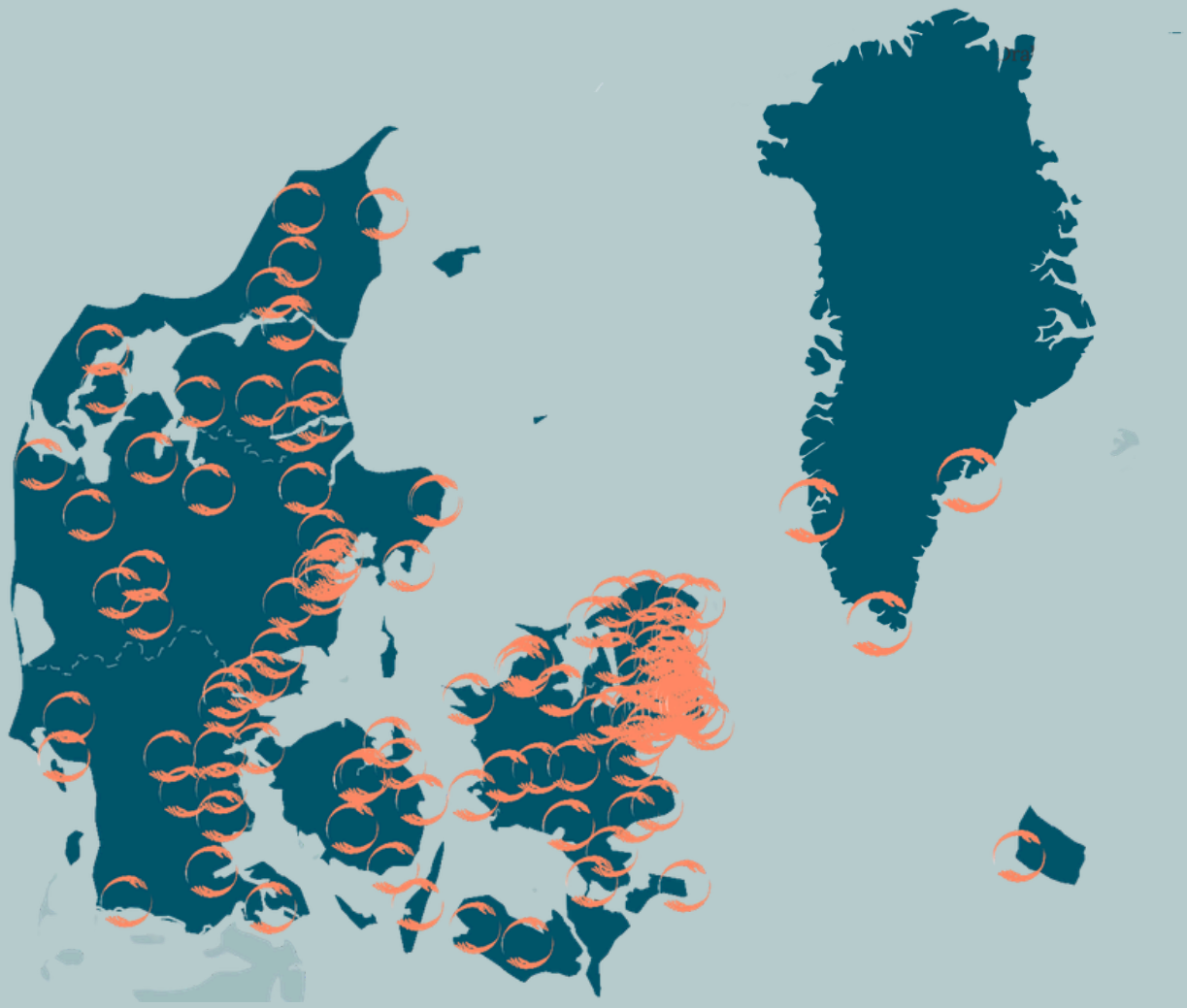
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In memory of the murdered women



See the mapping at www.femicidewatch.dk

READ MORE

Memorial plaques for women who were killed

centerforvoldsforebyggelse.com/femicide-watch/memorial

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FOREWORD

Since 1966, Femicide Watch Denmark has registered and documented 532 killings of women in the Danish Realm through media monitoring. The figure therefore only includes the killings that have been reported in the media, not all killings of women. This report brings together what we know about the eight killings of women we are aware of from 2024, five in Denmark and three in Greenland, and describes the victims, the perpetrators and the patterns that recur across the cases.

Because our knowledge is based on media coverage, there is a hidden number. Only 56 % of the killings of women in 2010–2024 were reported in an online news story (Bjerregaard, 2026b). Killings that the media do not report are not visible in public debate, and therefore not in the knowledge that policy and prevention are based on.

Systematic monitoring is therefore needed. In 2025, the Center for Violence Prevention entered into a partnership with the IT University of Copenhagen to build a comprehensive database of killings of women and to examine the relationship between risk factors and opportunities for prevention.

We would like to thank the bereaved families who have shared their knowledge and experiences with us. We also thank our partners in Denmark, in Greenland and in the international Femicide Watch network.

We hope that the report will be used by politicians, public authorities, professionals and everyone working to ensure that no more women are killed.

Ditte Bjerregaard and Cecilie Kramer
Founder and Director
Copenhagen, November 2026

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION

The Center for Violence Prevention (CFV) is a Danish civil society organisation working to prevent violence. Our work is based on knowledge, data and human rights. We work to change attitudes and culture and to strengthen the opportunities of victims of violence, bereaved families and professionals.

Femicide Watch Denmark registers killings of women in Denmark and Greenland through media monitoring. Since 1966, we have registered and documented 532 killings of women in the Danish Realm. Because the registration is based on the media, the figures only include the killings that have been reported, and not necessarily all killings. We use the UN method for registering femicide and adapt it to conditions in Denmark and in the countries we work with.

Internationally, CFV hosts the secretariat of Femicide Watch Global, a consortium of researchers, NGOs and public authorities from more than 30 countries. We have helped establish femicide watches in Finland and Lithuania and have trained around 100 people to register femicide.

How we work

1 Register

Media monitoring, court judgments and contact with bereaved families.

2 Analyse

Annual reports on figures and trends and special publications on how the courts handle the cases.

3 Prevent

Recommendations to politicians and authorities and training of partners in other countries.

Selected milestones

2021 — **The Femicide Map**
Every killing of a woman in Denmark is recorded and shown on the map at femicidewatch.dk.

2022 — **Annual reports**
Figures, trends and recommendations for prevention, every year.

2023 — **Memorial plaques**
Memorial plaques for the women who were killed, created with designer Lise Skovgaard and put up in the municipalities.

2025 — **The documentary »En overset krise« (An Overlooked Crisis)**
Femicide from Denmark to Mexico, with experts, survivors and lawyers.

2025–2029 — **Industrial PhD with the IT University of Copenhagen**
Systematic monitoring and a single database of killings of women.

Contact: kontakt@talomvold.dk · femicidewatch.dk · centerforvoldsforebyggelse.com

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READING GUIDE

This report is structured so that it can be read both as a whole and in separate parts. The introduction presents the challenges and purpose, while the method section describes the data, criteria and ethical considerations. The mapping provides a statistical overview of the victims and perpetrators in the cases, as well as method, identification of motive, crime scene, sentencing and more. The analytical part examines patterns, risk factors and the course of events in all cases based on the relationship between victim and perpetrator. After the analysis, trends in media coverage of femicide cases and challenges in gathering knowledge about femicide are summarised. The conclusion summarises the main points. The report ends with a review of the Center for Violence Prevention's overall recommendations for the prevention of gender-based violence.

The report in figures

Selected key figures from Femicide Watch: Analysis 2024

532

killings of women in the Danish Realm recorded through the media from 1966 to date

12 → 8 → 6

women died of unnatural causes, confirmed killings and femicides in 2024

4 of 8

killings in 2024 were committed by a current or former partner

65 %

of femicides in the past 25 years were committed by a partner or ex-partner

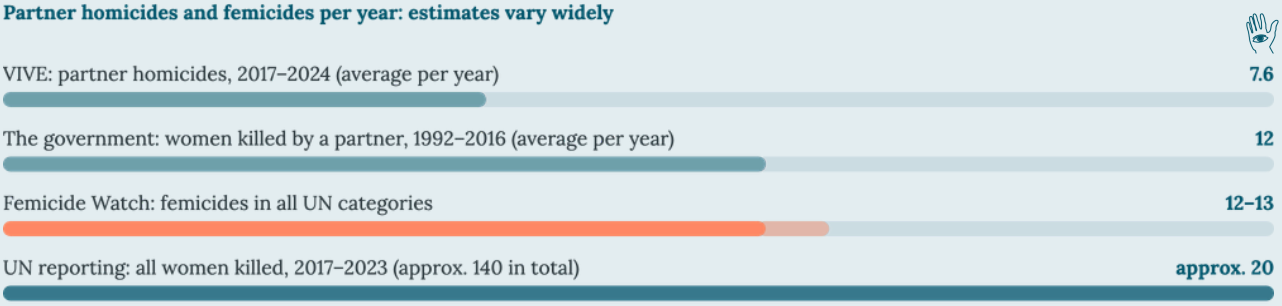
6 of 8

killings from 2024 have been decided by a court. In the other two, the perpetrator died by suicide

56 %

of killings of women 2010–2024 were reported in an online news story

Partner homicides and femicides per year: estimates vary widely



Sources: VIVE for the Danish Social and Housing Authority; the government (2023); Denmark's report to the UN; Femicide Watch Danmark (n.d.).

INTRODUCTION

Femicide describes gender-based killings of women and constitutes the most extreme form of gender-based violence against women. It is estimated that globally around 83,000 girls and women were intentionally killed in 2024 (UNODC & UN Women, 2025). Of these, almost 50,000 girls and women (60 %) were killed by their partner or a family member. Experts in the field estimate that a femicide occurs as often as every six minutes (Dawson & Mobayed Vega, 2023). The general underreporting and invisibility of the phenomenon led the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences, Dubravka Šimonović, to call on all member states in 2015 to establish a national Femicide Watch (Šimonović, 2016) with the purpose of collecting and publishing publicly available data on femicide. This was to be done in order to examine trends and formulate recommendations for the prevention of gender-based killings of women.

The Danish state did not establish a Femicide Watch, so the Center for Violence Prevention (CFV) did so in 2021. As in most of Europe, the state's current classification of femicide is limited to intimate partner homicide. The 2026 government platform focuses on long-term strategies against intimate partner violence and homicide (Statsministeriet, 2026). However, this is limited to intimate partner homicide rather than femicide in general. UNODC & UN Women (2025) point out that although several countries have implemented statistical frameworks for registering gender-related killings, data on killings committed outside partner and family relationships remain limited, which makes it impossible to give a comprehensive assessment of the scale of the problem.

Five EU countries, Spain, Malta, Cyprus, Croatia and Italy, have defined femicide in their criminal codes (Zamfir, 2026), and Denmark is not among them. In Denmark, the limitation is partly due to the absence of a specific offence code for femicide. Other forms of femicide remain overlooked, including femicides committed by family members or by strangers. In practice, this means that groups of female victims are made invisible. It also means that official Danish data are part of the global problem of underreporting in this field. VIVE found 7.6 intimate partner homicides per year in 2017–2024, while the government, based on data from 1992–2016, has reported 15 per year, twelve of them women (Bjerregaard, 2026a). Femicide Watch Denmark registers an average of 12 to 13 femicides per year (Femicide Watch Danmark, n.d.). The figures cannot be compared directly, as the official statistics only cover intimate partner homicide. When men kill women because they are women, this constitutes a violation of human rights principles such as the right to life, gender equality and non-discrimination; the right not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; and the right to a life free from violence (Šimonović, 2023).

This human rights-based focus is important for understanding a state's obligation to prevent men's violence against and killing of women. The gender-neutral approaches to violence and homicide in Danish national legislation conceal the gendered nature of femicide, remove a sense of responsibility and weaken prevention.

Since 1966, Femicide Watch Denmark has registered and documented 532 killings of women in the Danish Realm through media monitoring, across intimate partner femicide, family-related femicide, non-intimate femicide and other gender-related types of femicide. What these often have in common is that they are the culmination of long courses of events marked by control, threats, stalking, psychological violence, gaps in the system and lack of help. Femicide Watch's annual analyses from 2021, 2022 and 2023 are based on reviews by experts and professionals who identify opportunities for prevention. Femicide Watch is therefore also a prevention project.

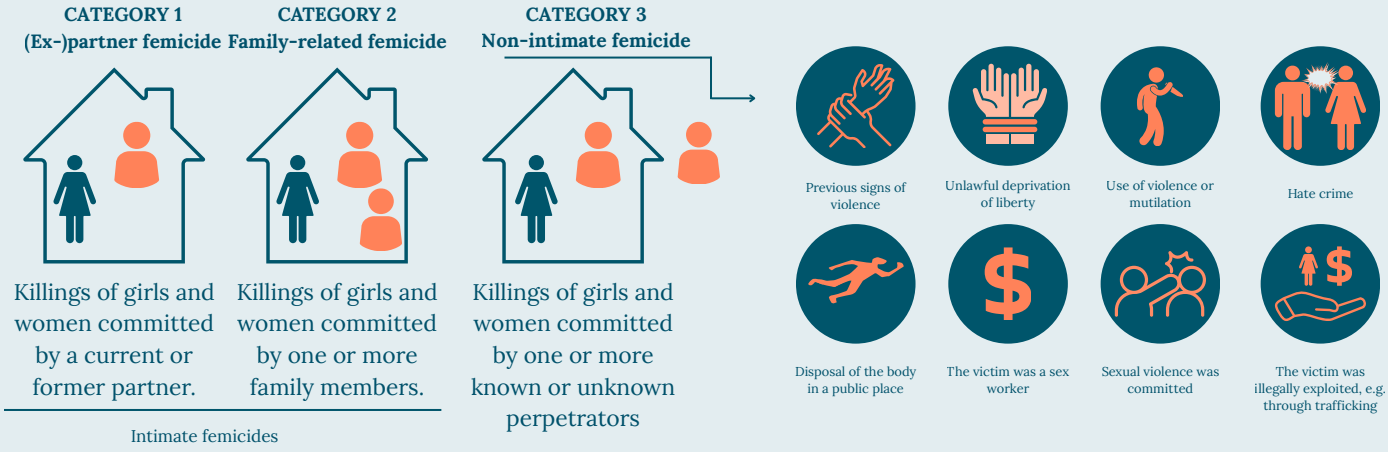
In this year's analysis, Femicide Watch for the first time includes cases from the entire Danish Realm. The analysis is therefore based on cases from Denmark and Greenland, as no femicides were registered in the Faroe Islands in 2024. Although the Greenland and Faroe Islands Police are independent police districts, both are subject to the Minister of Justice, the Danish National Police and the Public Prosecutor in Copenhagen (Politi, n.d.-a; Politi, n.d.-b). The Danish state thus has a responsibility to prevent and investigate killings of women throughout the Danish Realm. In the report's mapping, data for Denmark and Greenland are reported separately in order to highlight geographical differences, while also making it possible to show overlapping patterns in risk factors, courses of events and motives across the two countries.

Although other forms of violent crime have generally declined in Europe, the number of femicides has remained largely unchanged over the past 20 years (Naudi et al., 2023). Opportunities for prevention exist, but they require us to act and implement them. All too often, action plans are formulated but never followed up, and the expertise of civil society is absent from state efforts against femicide (GREVIO, 2024). The same applies to the unique insights of survivors and bereaved families, which the Center for Violence Prevention (CFV) has encountered through interviews and support work. These collective knowledge resources can and should inform the development of policies, practices and prevention strategies to prevent future killings of women. Most importantly, this development and these preventive measures must not restrict women's lives further, but instead allow them to live lives in which they do not have to organise their daily lives around how best to avoid violence. With this publication, the work to combat gender-based violence and femicide in Denmark continues. The goal is for knowledge to lead to change.

METHOD

There are different classifications of femicide. Femicide Watch Denmark works from an understanding of femicide that is consistent with the UN framework. The UN statistical framework was developed by UN Women in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and aims to promote and improve data collection on killings of women (UNODC & UN Women, 2022). According to the UN framework, the decisive factor in a femicide is a gender-related motivation for the killing. This may consist of ideologies of men's rights and privileges over women; social norms regarding masculinity; the need to exercise a particular control or power; enforcing gender roles; or preventing, discouraging or punishing what the perpetrator considers unacceptable behaviour for a woman (ibid.).

Femicide thus takes place in many different situations and contexts, in both the private and the public sphere, and in different relationships between victim and perpetrator. The gender-related motive in a femicide is not always explicit, and UNODC and UN Women (2022) therefore present three overall categories of femicide:



According to this framework, femicide is divided into the following three categories:

1. Women killed by a current or former partner, e.g. spouse, boyfriend or sexual partner
2. Women killed by other family members, e.g. a son, father or uncle
3. Women killed by other known or unknown perpetrators, where at least one of the following criteria is met:

- The victim had previously been subjected to physical, psychological or sexual violence by the perpetrator
- The victim was subjected to a form of exploitation, e.g. trafficking or slavery
- The victim was in a situation where she was deprived of her liberty, e.g. kidnapping
- The victim was a sex worker
- The victim was subjected to sexual violence before, during or after the killing
- The killing was followed by mutilation of the body, e.g. indecent handling of a corpse
- The victim's body was disposed of in a public space
- The killing constituted a gender-based hate crime, e.g. motivated by transphobia or homophobia

The cases analysed in this report have been selected on the basis of the UN criteria above. Categories 1 and 2 are defined by the relationship between victim and perpetrator: an (ex-)partner killing or family killing is therefore counted as femicide even when the perpetrator's specific motive is unknown.

According to Femicide Watch Denmark's records, partner and ex-partner femicides (category 1) account for 65 % of the registered femicides over the past 25 years. In the same period, family-related femicides (category 2) account for around 10 % of all femicides. In the remaining 25 % of cases, the killings were committed by other known or unknown perpetrators (category 3), e.g. acquaintances, neighbours, colleagues, clients, strangers, etc. (Femicide Watch Danmark, n.d.)

Suspicious deaths of women are also continuously registered by Femicide Watch Denmark, but are not categorised or referred to as femicide until developments in the case establish the necessary criteria for femicide. Killings of women committed by female perpetrators are also registered by Femicide Watch Denmark, but are not counted as femicide unless a gender-related motive is identified. This rule is Femicide Watch Denmark's own. Such perpetrators are very rare.

DATA

Femicide Watch's mapping of femicide in Denmark, Greenland and the Faroe Islands is carried out through continuous monitoring of killings of women and suspicious deaths of women, and is based on media reports, testimonies from bereaved families and judgments, which are requested after the killing has been registered in the media. The judgments vary in level of detail and length, and judgments in cases with a confession are particularly short. If the perpetrator died by suicide, there is no judgment.

The mapping is based on killings reported in the media and may not cover all of them. Judgments were obtained via Domsdatabasen.dk in two cases.

Data from the cases consist of:

- Basic information, including the date, time and place of the killing
- Characteristics of and background information on the victim, and whether there were other victims in connection with the femicide
- Characteristics of and background information on the perpetrator
- Situational factors, including details about the crime scene, method of killing, witnesses and motive, as well as details such as pregnancy, sexual violence in connection with the killing, suicide of the perpetrator, and influence of alcohol or drugs
- Background information, such as a possible relationship or history between victim and perpetrator, including previous violent incidents, threats or stalking, separation, previous convictions, as well as categorisation of the femicide and other comments
- Legal data and outcomes, including the date of the perpetrator's arrest, date of conviction, plea, charges, sentence, appeals, etc.

The data categories are based on the analytical framework developed in connection with the European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) Action research project *Femicide Across Europe* (2013–2017) (see Naudi et al., 2023), with a few additions.

The systematic data collection aims to identify trends in order to find opportunities for future prevention. Femicide exists in all parts of the world, but there are variations in how the killings take place and which women are at highest risk (Dawson & Mobayed Vega, 2023). Because gender relations are socially constructed, the specific characteristics of femicide are also shaped by the social and cultural conditions in which the killings occur, and these killings should therefore be interpreted beyond their immediate individual context (OHCHR & UN Women, 2014: 6).

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Working with femicide raises fundamental ethical questions. When examining killings of women, one deals with both human loss and complex narratives that neither can nor should be reduced to statistics or sensation. This requires constant consideration for those left behind, for the women whose stories can no longer be told by themselves, and for the ethical pitfalls that can arise when the consequences of violence are documented, analysed and communicated. There are significant differences in the availability of material in the cases. Only two of the judgments have been publicly available. In addition, two presumed perpetrators died by suicide, and no judgments exist in these cases. Furthermore, the cases differ greatly in their exposure in

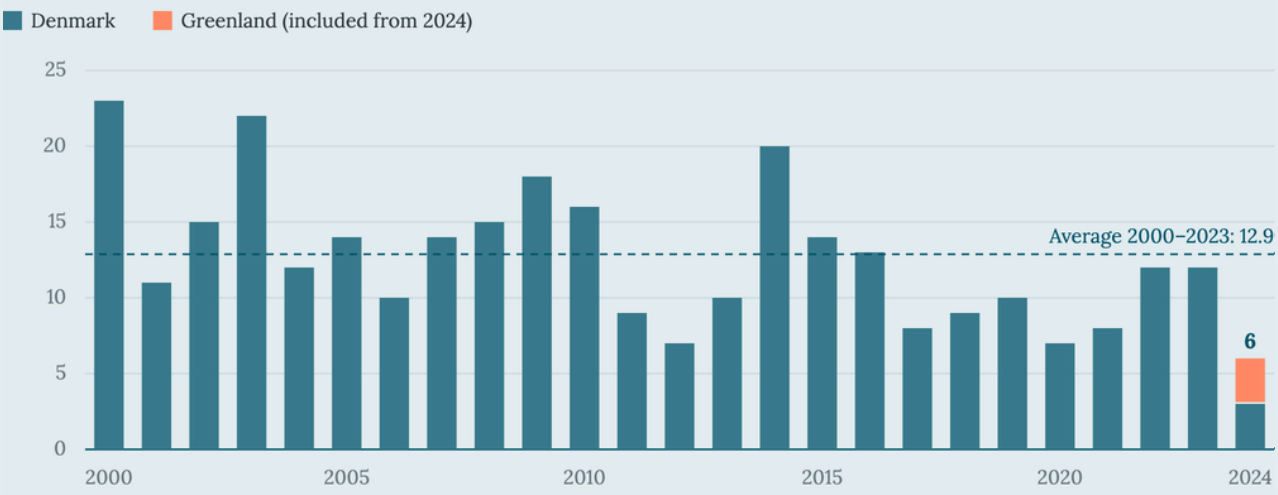
the media. These different levels of insight are not unusual in themselves, and the report makes clear where there are gaps in knowledge.

Judgments provide knowledge about the characteristics of both victim and perpetrator. They may contain information about the situation and background of the killing, including the perpetrator's statements and the relationship between victim and perpetrator, the events leading up to the killing and other relevant contextual factors. This knowledge makes it possible to understand how risks develop over time and where the system could have intervened. At the same time, judgments can paint an incomplete and distorted picture, as the victim is not there to tell her own story. Furthermore, access to judgments involves administrative requirements and procedures. The detailed descriptions of violence, the lack of protection of the victim and the killing itself can also be psychologically distressing for those reviewing the material.

This analysis does not publish the names of either the women who were killed or the perpetrators. This is out of consideration for the bereaved families, who often describe the public and media sensationalism surrounding the event as difficult. Each of the women who were killed represents a personal and collective loss for those left behind and for the communities they were part of, but also for the wider society and the state, which must address the violence that continues to be committed against women in the country.

Femicides registered by Femicide Watch, 2000–2024

Number of femicides per year



2024: 6 femicides (3 in Denmark, 3 in Greenland) out of 8 registered killings of women.

Source: Femicide Watch Danmark (n.d.).

READ MORE

Femicide Watch Analysis 2023 · Mini-analysis of Danish femicides 2022 · Data on killings of women
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CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

Why the UN definition
Femicide Watch Denmark uses the UN statistical framework for three reasons. Danish authorities only register intimate partner homicide separately, and the UN categories make it possible to also see killings committed by family members, acquaintances and strangers. The framework makes the figures comparable with countries that use the same method. And it supports the Istanbul Convention's requirement that states collect disaggregated statistical data at regular intervals (Europarådet, 2011, art. 11).

Gender-based violence against women
The Istanbul Convention defines gender-based violence against women as violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately (Europarådet, 2011, art. 3(d)).

Gender-related motive
A motive rooted in ideas of men's right to control women, in norms of masculinity, or in a wish to punish a woman for behaviour the perpetrator considers unacceptable for a woman. According to the UN, it is this motive that distinguishes a femicide from other killings of women (UNODC & UN Women, 2022).

Misogyny
In this report, misogyny is not understood as a personal feeling in the individual perpetrator, but as the norms and actions that control and punish women who break with the expectations attached to their gender (Manne, 2018).

Hate crime and hate motive
A hate crime is a crime in which the perpetrator is wholly or partly motivated by the victim's actual or perceived membership of a group. Under section 81(6) of the Danish Criminal Code, it is an aggravating circumstance if the offence is rooted in another person's ethnic origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics. Gender is not mentioned in the provision (Retsinformation, 2025).

Misgendering
Referring to a person by a gender other than the one the person identifies with.

Other concepts
Coercive control is explained on p. 25, transgender and transfeminine on p. 27, and non-intimate femicide and the continuum of violence on p. 35.

MAPPING

NUMBER OF KILLINGS OF WOMEN IN 2024

Femicide Watch is aware of 12 women who died of unnatural causes and where one or more men and/or women have been charged, convicted or died by suicide in the Danish Realm in 2024. This concerns nine cases in Denmark and three in Greenland. Unnatural deaths cover cases that were originally investigated as suspicious deaths. These cases may be closed without charges or lead to a conviction. When cases are closed without charges, this is often due to a lack of evidence of homicide or because the death is assessed to have been an accident.

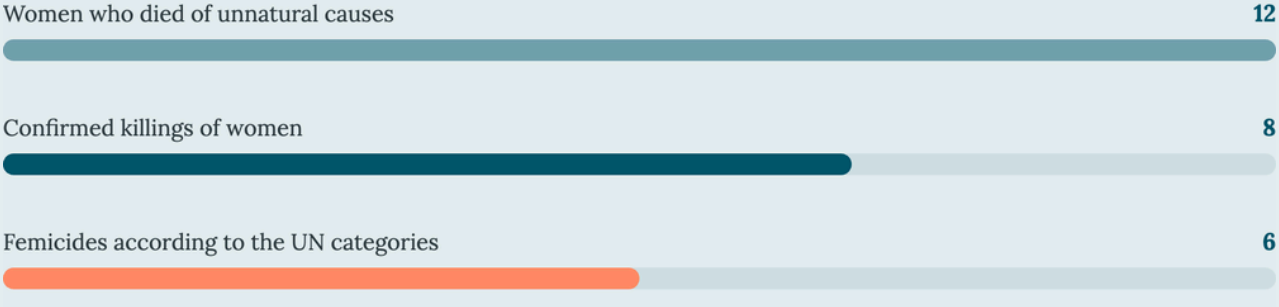
In eight of the twelve cases of unnatural death, the killing has been confirmed. These may be cases decided as homicide in court or cases closed because the perpetrator died by suicide.

Six of the eight confirmed killings are femicides according to the UN categories.

Statistics Denmark registered 10 killings of women and girls in Denmark in 2024 (Danmarks Statistik, 2026). Through media monitoring, Femicide Watch is aware of five killings of women in Denmark. In addition, Femicide Watch has mapped four suspicious deaths that have not been confirmed as killings. The actual figures are therefore higher than those Femicide Watch can see.

From unnatural deaths to femicide

Cases in the Danish Realm, 2024



Source: Femicide Watch; media coverage and publicly available judgments.

Femicides in the past 25 years by UN category



The following mapping and analysis include all confirmed killings of women, regardless of whether it has been possible to identify a clear gendered motive. Lack of information about the circumstances of the killing can complicate the identification of gendered motives, and it therefore cannot be ruled out that gendered motives were involved in the killing. The analysis makes clear which cases have identifiable gendered motives.

VICTIMS

Femicide Watch is aware of eight killings of women in 2024 through media coverage and publicly available judgments. These are five Danish and three Greenlandic cases.

Killings of women in the Danish Realm, 2024

Eight confirmed killings in chronological order

Denmark · Greenland



1 18 February

65-year-old woman

Nanortalik · Greenland

2 11 March

13-year-old girl

Hjallerup · Denmark

3 4 April

57-year-old woman

Tasiilaq · Greenland

4 18 May

54-year-old woman

Rebild · Denmark

5 31 May

36-year-old woman

Nuuk · Greenland

6 9 July

42-year-old woman

Copenhagen · Denmark

7 23 November

67-year-old woman

Sønderborg · Denmark

8 30 December

42-year-old woman

Gjern · Denmark

Source: Femicide Watch; media coverage and publicly available judgments.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VICTIM AND PERPETRATOR

In all eight cases, it has been possible to establish a relationship between victim and perpetrator through media coverage.

Denmark

- **2 of the 5** perpetrators had **no relationship** to the victim
- **1 of the 5** perpetrators was the victim's **partner**
- **1 of the 5** perpetrators was the victim's **ex-partner**
- **1 of the 5** perpetrators was **an acquaintance** of the victim

Greenland

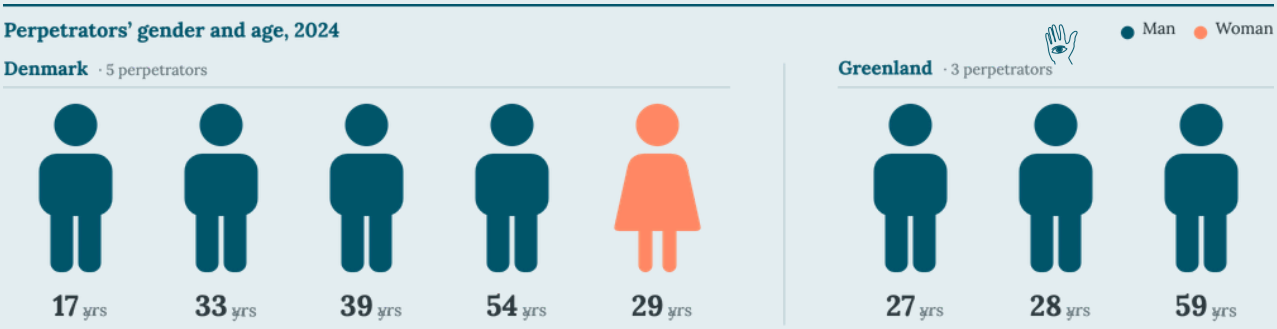
- **1 of the 3** perpetrators had **no relationship** to the victim
- **2 of the 3** perpetrators were the victim's **partner**

In half of the killings, the perpetrator was a partner or ex-partner of the victim, which is the most common relationship in femicide in Denmark (Bernsen et al., 2022) and globally (UNODC & UN Women, 2024). In addition, three of the cases are non-intimate killings, and in one of these the perpetrator met the victim as a client without any prior relationship to her.

PERPETRATORS

GENDER AND AGE

In 7 out of 8 killings of women in 2024, the perpetrator was a man, and in one case the perpetrator was a woman. In the mapping of femicide in the period 2000–2021 (Bernsen et al., 2022), female perpetrators appeared rarely and most often together with a man. In this case, however, the female perpetrator acted alone.



READ MORE

Jealousy and violence: A qualitative study of the links between jealousy and violence in intimate relationships
centerforvoldsforebyggelse.com/udgivelser

The perpetrators ranged in age from 17 to 59 years in the cases from 2024. One perpetrator was a minor. Three perpetrators were in their 20s. Two perpetrators were in their 30s. Two perpetrators were in their 50s.

MOTIVE

In four of the cases from 2024, it has been possible to identify a motive through media coverage and/or the judgment. The mapping highlights the motive assessed to have been the primary trigger for the killing. However, there may have been several overlapping motives, which are also highlighted in the analysis. The perpetrators' motives are not always clear in either the media or the judgment. This is particularly the case where the perpetrator dies by suicide, as the perpetrator is not there to give an account, and media coverage is often limited in these cases. In addition, the perpetrator's own account is not always credible. Motives for femicide are rarely simple and may consist of a combination of different causes, circumstances and incentives.

DENMARK

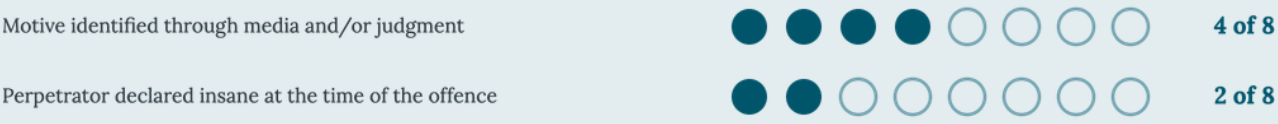
In two of the cases, the perpetrator was declared insane at the time of the crime. Insanity is a legal assessment of criminal responsibility and not in itself a motive. In one of these cases there are signs of a possible sexual motive and hate motive, while the motive in the other is unknown. One killing was motivated by separation. A further two killings have an unknown motive. In one case, this is due to a lack of media coverage and of a judgment because the perpetrator died by suicide. In the other case, the perpetrator was charged with attempting to rob the victim of cash prior to the killing, but was acquitted of this, so it is not possible to conclude a definitive motive.

GREENLAND

In one of the cases there are signs of a sexually motivated non-intimate femicide. One of the killings is described as triggered by an argument. One of the killings has an unknown motive.

Studies from Denmark and England show that separation and jealousy are common motives in (ex-)partner femicides (Bernsen et al., 2022; Hedegård Thomsen, 2020; Monckton-Smith, 2020). Two of the cases with an unknown motive from 2024 are partner femicides followed by the perpetrator's suicide, one in Denmark and one in Greenland. It therefore cannot be ruled out that several of the killings may have had similar motives.

Motives in the eight killings from 2024



METHOD OF KILLING

DENMARK
Three of the killings were committed with sharp force. One killing was committed with blunt force and asphyxiation. One killing has an unknown method.

GREENLAND
One killing was committed with sharp force. One killing was committed with blunt force and exposure to cold. One killing has an unknown method.

The most common methods of killing in femicide in Denmark are sharp force, asphyxiation and poisoning (Bernsen et al., 2022: 10). However, there were no confirmed cases of poisoning in 2024. The most common method in 2024 was sharp force, with four out of eight killings committed with this method. **Sharp force** is caused by sharp or pointed objects, for example cuts and stab wounds. **Blunt force** includes punches, kicks or blows with blunt objects, which were involved in two of the killings. **Asphyxiation** here refers to blocking the supply of oxygen through the airways, and this analysis does not distinguish between manual strangulation (e.g. with the hands) and ligature strangulation. Asphyxiation was used in one killing.

CRIME SCENE

DENMARK
- **2 out of 5 killings were committed** in a **public street**
- **1 out of 5** killings was committed in **a hotel**
- **1 out of 5** killings was committed in **a brothel**
- **1 out of 5** killings was committed in **the shared home of the victim and perpetrator**

GREENLAND
- **1 out of 3** killings was committed in a **public street**
- **2 out of 3** killings were committed at a **private address.** In both cases this was most likely the shared home of the victim and perpetrator, but this could not be confirmed through the media.

The most common crime scenes in 2024 were a public street or a private address/the woman's shared home with the perpetrator. Two of the cases with killings in a public street are non-intimate killings. In all three cases where the killing took place at

a private address, the killings were intimate partner femicides. In the two cases where the crime scene was a hotel and a brothel respectively, the women worked as sex workers. These crime scenes can therefore also be regarded as their workplaces.

SUICIDE

In two of the cases, the perpetrator died by suicide in connection with the killing (*homicide-suicide* or *femicide-suicide*), one case in Denmark and one in Greenland. Both cases were intimate partner femicides.

JUDGMENT AND SENTENCING

Of the eight killings highlighted in the analysis, judgments have been delivered in six. In two of the cases, the perpetrator died by suicide in connection with the killing, and there has therefore been no trial.

DENMARK

- **Four perpetrators** have been convicted of homicide (section 237 **of the Criminal Code; Retsinformation, 2025)**. One of the perpetrators was also convicted of raping the victim, indecent handling of a corpse, sexual abuse of girls under 15 other than the victim, and robbery. Another perpetrator was also convicted of a road traffic offence for hitting a male pedestrian.

Two perpetrators were declared insane at the time of the crime and sentenced to psychiatric treatment orders without a maximum duration. Two perpetrators were sentenced to 12 years in prison; at the time of writing, one of these cases has been appealed to the Supreme Court with a request for indefinite detention.

GREENLAND

- **One perpetrator** has been convicted of homicide (section 86 **of the Criminal Code for Greenland)** as well as trespass, indecent exposure and vandalism against another woman, and sexual relations with a child under 15.
- For the other perpetrator, it has not been possible to establish through the media which offences the person was convicted of.

One perpetrator was sentenced to placement in an institution for seven years and six months. The other perpetrator was sentenced to placement in an institution for eight years.

Legal outcome of the eight killings from 2024



THE GREENLANDIC CRIMINAL CODE

- Under the Greenlandic Criminal Code, perpetrators are sentenced to placement in an institution instead of imprisonment where other measures, such as a fine, community service or supervision, are not sufficient
- The measure aims to prevent the person from committing new crimes rather than to punish. The sentence is served in open institutions
- In Greenlandic homicide cases, the perpetrator is as a rule sentenced to 7 years' placement in an institution

Sources: Danmarks Fængsler (n.d.); Justitsministeriet (2025); SE og HØR (2025)

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

In three of the killings committed in Denmark, it has been possible to confirm various forms of mental health problems in the perpetrator. One perpetrator had an intellectual disability and had previously been treated for depression. One perpetrator had been diagnosed with schizotypal disorder and was under the influence of cannabis and alcohol at the time of the crime. One of the perpetrators is described as having cognitive difficulties, but did not have an intellectual disability (TV2 Nyheder, 2025b).

In one of the killings committed in Greenland, the perpetrator was under the influence of alcohol during the killing. For the other two Greenlandic cases, it has not been possible to establish through the media any information about the perpetrator's mental health or substance abuse, or whether the perpetrators had been in contact with the health or social services before the killings. This reflects the sparse media coverage of the Greenlandic cases and cannot be interpreted as an absence of such factors.

In two of the Danish cases, it is known with certainty that the perpetrator had been in contact with the health services within a year before the killings and had received medical treatment and/or been hospitalised. In a third Danish case, the perpetrator, as a foster child, had been in contact with the municipality and psychologists throughout his upbringing, and a fourth Danish perpetrator had spent a period in a children's home. Mental health problems and substance abuse are recorded here as possible risk factors and points of contact for prevention, not as causal explanations for the killings.

ANALYSIS

RELATIONSHIPS

The analysis covers the eight confirmed killings of women in 2024. Six of them are femicides, namely four (ex-)partner femicides and two non-intimate femicides. The other two, a non-intimate killing without an identifiable gendered motive and a killing committed by a woman, are included but not counted as femicide (see pp. 28–29). With so few cases, the findings are illustrative and not statistically generalisable.

(EX-)PARTNER FEMICIDE

FEMICIDE-SUICIDE

In 2024, Femicide Watch identified four (ex-)partner femicides through the media. Two of the killings are partner femicides in which the perpetrator died by suicide in connection with the killing, one Danish and one Greenlandic case. In both cases, the victim and perpetrator were a couple in their 50s (Nordjyske, 2024; Sermitsiaq, 2024). In one case, the perpetrator set fire to their shared home before taking his own life.

In their review of partner homicides followed by suicide (homicide-suicide), American and Canadian research (Salari & Sillito, 2016; Dawson, 2021) found that these are almost exclusively committed by male perpetrators against female victims, often with power and control in the relationship combined with the perpetrator's own wish to die. In the cases from Denmark and Greenland, the media coverage does not show whether there had been prior violence in the relationship.

HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

In two of the (ex-)partner femicide cases from 2024, one Danish and one Greenlandic, there is knowledge of prior violence or control. Monckton-Smith (2020) describes how relationships with coercive control are more likely to end in partner femicide, and that violence in previous relationships is an indicator of future violence.

In the Greenlandic case, the perpetrator had previously been convicted of violence, including against the victim (SE og HØR, 2025). Four children were in the house during the killing, two of whom witnessed it. Three were the victim's and two the perpetrator's.

In the Danish case, the perpetrator had no previous convictions for violence, but besides the killing he was convicted of sexual abuse of underage girls and of robbery with violence and threats. He was also found guilty of raping the victim

before the killing. In addition, the victim's family and friends have described the perpetrator as controlling (TV2 Nord, 2025). The killing also shows possible signs of "overkill", as the perpetrator used both asphyxiation and blunt force and poured soft drink over the body. However, it cannot be established whether the violence went beyond what the killing required, and the soft drink may have been an attempt to remove traces. Monckton-Smith (2020) describes how such extreme violence is also observed in cases with no previous physical violence.

COERCIVE CONTROL

Coercive control aims to break down, isolate and deprive a person of the right to physical safety, dignity and respect. This causes fear and a sense of powerlessness in the victim. Coercive control can be exercised, for example, through surveillance, social isolation, threats and restricting access to financial resources, work, education or medical treatment.

Sources: Lohmann et al. (2024)

MOTIVES

It has been possible to identify motives in two of the cases, one Danish and one Greenlandic. In the Danish case, the victim had ended their relationship a week before the killing. Separation is often seen as a *trigger* for escalating violence and partner femicide, as the woman's wish to end the relationship challenges the male partner's power (Monckton-Smith, 2020). Historically, women have not had the same opportunity to leave a male partner, and this expectation is still seen in men who commit (ex-)partner femicide (Monckton-Smith, 2020). The killing thus becomes an extension of their control over the woman. The notion of women as subservient caregivers for men can lead to violence when a woman breaks with this norm (Manne, 2018). Women who "challenge" the man's power are thus seen as defiant and deserving of punishment for deviating from the normative expectation.

The perpetrator himself describes that "he was not himself" and that "something snapped". There are also signs of a sexual motive, as he was also convicted of raping the victim before the killing. The sexual violence can thus be seen as part of his punishment of her.

In the Greenlandic case, SE og HØR, the only available source, describes the killing as occurring during an argument (SE og HØR, 2025). The argument cannot be seen in isolation, as the perpetrator had previously been convicted of violence against the victim, and four children were in the house. As in the Danish case, the course of events points to control, where an argument is experienced as a loss of control that is met with violence (Monckton-Smith, 2020).

NON-INTIMATE FEMICIDE

In 2024, Femicide Watch Denmark identified three non-intimate killings of women through the media, two in Denmark and one in Greenland, and in two of the cases it has been possible to identify gendered motives. These are sexual motives and the killing of a gender minority. In all three cases, the victims are described as random victims by the perpetrators and/or the media. In both cases from Denmark, the perpetrators were declared insane at the time of the crime and sentenced to psychiatric treatment orders. In the case from Greenland, the perpetrator was sentenced to placement in an institution for seven years and six months (Kalaallit Nunaata Radioa, 2025; Kristeligt Dagblad, 2025).

CRIME SCENE

All three non-intimate killings from 2024 took place outside the home. Two killings took place on or near a public road, and one took place in a hotel. It is not unusual for non-intimate femicides to take place outside the victim's home. A study of femicide in Australia found that when women are killed by a male stranger, almost 75 % of the killings take place outside a private residence (Mouzos, 1999).

METHOD OF KILLING

Two of the non-intimate killings were stabbings, and one was committed with blunt force from punches and kicks combined with exposure to cold. In non-intimate femicides in England and Wales, sharp force is also the most common method of killing (Miles & Cook, 2026). A Swedish study found that sharp force was used in more than half of all non-intimate homicides, regardless of the victim's gender, in cases where the perpetrator was mentally ill and in cases that were politically motivated or hate-motivated (Rodre et al., 2025). In a third of the Swedish cases, non-intimate homicides with sexual motives were committed with sharp force. In two of the non-intimate cases in 2024, the perpetrator was declared insane, one case has a hate motive, and two of the cases show signs of sexual motives.

AGE

In all non-intimate killings in 2024, the victim was older than the perpetrator, and two of the victims were 65 and 67 years old respectively. In Femicide Watch's review of femicide in 2023 (Bjerregaard et al., 2025), around half of the femicide victims were over 60 years old (across all types of femicide).

International research indicates that victims of non-intimate femicides are generally older than the perpetrator (Mouzos, 1999; Miles & Cook, 2026). In England and Wales, 1 in 4 victims of non-intimate femicide were over 65, while 98.8 % of perpetrators were under 66 (Miles & Cook, 2026). A frequently cited risk factor in homicides of older people is reduced mobility due to age (Rogers & Storey, 2019).

HATE MOTIVES

In one case from 2024, there are possible signs of a transphobic hate motive in the killing of a transgender female sex worker. The Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability (n.d.) defines transphobic femicides (also called *transfemicides*) as killings where the perpetrator is motivated by hatred towards or rejection of the victim's gender identity. Sexual violence may also be part of the killing because the perpetrator believes that the victim has violated traditional sexual and/or gender norms. In the case from 2024, hate motives and sexual motives coexist.

Possible signs of a sexual motive are seen in the fact that the victim was found partially undressed in a hotel; the escort website is the context of the sex work, not a motive. The transphobic hate motive can be seen in the fact that he continually misgenders her after the killing (TV2 Nyheder, 2024) and refers to her as a "demon that had to be killed" (Presse-fotos.dk, 2025). In this case, the perpetrator was declared insane by the court and himself claims that the killing was not motivated by the woman's gender identity. Since the court found him insane, the statement about a "demon" may also be an expression of psychosis. However, the repeated misgendering after the killing suggests that gender identity may have played a role.

TRANS PEOPLE

Transgender: A person who identifies with a gender other than the one they were assigned at birth. A transgender woman was thus assigned the gender "male" at birth but identifies as a woman.

Transfeminine: An umbrella term for a person who identifies with a gender other than the one they were assigned at birth, but who identifies or expresses themselves primarily through their feminine side. The term can thus include people who are transgender, gender-diverse, genderqueer, non-binary, etc.

Sources: LGBT+ Danmark (n.d.-a); LGBT+ Danmark (n.d.-b)

Trans Europe and Central Asia's Trans Murder Monitoring project (TGEU, n.d.), which monitors killings of trans and gender-diverse people, found that transfeminine people and transgender sex workers globally are disproportionately exposed to far higher homicide rates than transmasculine people. In their 2025 report, sex workers (both transmasculine and transfeminine people) were the most exposed group by occupation (34 %), and 90 % of all reported killings were of transgender women or transfeminine people (Trans Europe and Central Asia, 2025). Transgender ethnic minorities and migrants are also strongly

over-represented. The victim in this case is described in the media simply as "foreign" (TV2 Nyheder, 2024). TGEU points out that killings of trans people are under-represented in the media, which can lead to a large hidden number (Trans Europe and Central Asia, 2025). This may be due to stigmatisation, or to public authorities and/or the media misgendering the victim. In the case from 2024, for example, the victim was referred to as a man in the first public reports (TV2 Nyheder, 2024).

SEXUAL MOTIVES

In two of the non-intimate killings from 2024, one in Denmark and one in Greenland, there are possible signs of sexual motives in the form of exposure of the victim's intimate body parts or sexual behaviour immediately before or after the killing. International research shows that around 80–90 % of victims of sexual homicide are women and that the perpetrators are most often men and unmarried (Ploeg et al., 2026), which applies in both cases.

Chan (2015) sets out the following criteria, at least one of which must be present to identify a sexual motive:

- Physical evidence that the victim was sexually assaulted (vaginally, orally or anally) before, during or after death
- Physical evidence of substitute sexual activity against the victim (e.g. mutilation of the genitals, exposure of the victim's intimate body parts, sexual positioning of the victim, penetration with objects) or near the victim (e.g. masturbation) reflecting the perpetrator's deviant or sadistic sexual fantasies
- The perpetrator makes a legally valid confession of sexual motives
- An indication of sexual elements of the killing is found in the perpetrator's personal belongings (e.g. computer, diary, etc.)

In cases of sexual homicide, "personal/intimate weapons" such as hands to strangle the victim, knives and violence are often used (Rossouw et al., 2025). In the Greenlandic case, blunt force and exposure to cold were used, and in the Danish case stabbing. In addition, sexual violence was confirmed by judgment in one partner femicide, where the perpetrator was convicted of raping the victim.

KILLINGS NOT COUNTED AS FEMICIDE

Two of the killings from 2024, both in Denmark, are not counted among the six femicides: a non-intimate killing of a 67-year-old woman and a killing of a sex worker committed by a woman. Both killings are nevertheless included in the analysis.

In the non-intimate killing, the woman's age may have made her particularly vulnerable. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) notes that older women killed outside the family are often targeted because they are both older and women (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2021a).

The interplay of older women's gender and age thus makes them particularly vulnerable to lethal violence, which is why Femicide Watch includes this killing in the analysis. Killings of older women (65+) are so frequent that EIGE has created a separate category for this type of killing, with subcategories such as older women killed by men younger than themselves or by men with mental health problems (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2021b). In this case, the perpetrator was in his 30s and had a cognitive disability (TV SYD, 2025). However, the killing is not counted among the six femicides, as it does not meet the UN criteria, which are the report's primary classification framework.
As homicide cases can often have several interlinked motives, it can be difficult to point to clear gendered motives in individual cases that may also be motivated by more gender-neutral incentives such as financial gain or mental illness. The cases are therefore often more complicated than the UN's three categories of femicide. Seen in connection with other cases, however, patterns are observed in the type of violence and killing women are exposed to. Hidden gendered motives can therefore also be more structural, including particular groups of women who are especially exposed to violence, e.g. because of their age, occupation, migration status or gender identity. Although gendered motives cannot be demonstrated on the basis of the available material, it is still important to focus on these cases.

KILLING COMMITTED BY A FEMALE PERPETRATOR

The other case concerns the killing of a 42-year-old woman in a brothel where she worked (Berlingske, 2026; Ekstra Bladet, 2026; TV Midtvest, 2026). A then 29-year-old female acquaintance has been convicted of the killing.

According to the UN statistical framework, one of the criteria for femicide is that the victim worked in the sex industry, and killings of sex workers are therefore, as a starting point, counted as femicides (UNODC & UN Women, 2022). However, Femicide Watch Denmark only counts killings committed by female perpetrators when a gender-related motive can be identified (see p. 13). Diana Russell sets out three typologies of female perpetrators who commit femicide (Russell, 2001):

- Women acting on behalf of patriarchy, e.g. dowry killings, infanticide, deaths related to female genital mutilation
- Women who kill under the influence of male perpetrators, e.g. dowry killings, gang killings, honour-related killings
- Women acting in their own interest, e.g. motivated by jealousy, financially motivated, crime-related, ideologically motivated

The perpetrator was charged with attempted robbery of the victim but was acquitted, and the motive is therefore unclear. The killing is therefore not counted as a femicide. The case shows that the line between femicide and other killings of women is not always clear-cut, and that classification depends on which criteria are given weight.

TRENDS

LACK OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION COMPLICATES THE MAPPING OF FEMICIDE

MEDIA COVERAGE

A recurring problem in the data collection for this report has been the lack of access to judgments in the cases. In 2024, Femicide Watch Denmark is aware of 8 cases of femicide or potential femicide through media monitoring. However, there is a risk of a hidden number in this count. First, not all killings are reported in the media. This applies, for example, to suspicious deaths where it has not been clear that a killing took place. Second, killings followed by the perpetrator's suicide are often underreported in the media because there is no trial in these cases (Femicide Watch Danmark, n.d.). The analysis is therefore complicated by limited information, which makes it harder to detect patterns in these cases. In addition, there may be limited information about gendered motives in particular, such as sexual motives, even in cases that are otherwise covered in the media. In one of the cases from 2024, Femicide Watch Denmark is aware of details that give a clearer picture of the motives than the information presented in the media. However, these details are not included in the analysis itself.

In some cases, media coverage is also influenced by stereotypical narratives, where cases are covered unevenly on the basis of emotions rather than facts. A study of media reporting in 532 cases of killings of women in the Danish Realm since 1966 shows that there are large differences in which types of homicide cases are exposed in the media (Bjerregaard, 2026b). This is often linked to the type of victim, where some women are portrayed as more innocent victims, while other women are given part of the blame (e.g. for having provoked the perpetrator into a partner femicide) or are dehumanised, especially if they are ethnic minorities. Femicide is thus often sensationalised in the media, where partner femicides, for example, receive more coverage if there is a "wild" element such as a killing in a public place rather than in the home. Femicide Watch assesses that this may also be linked to notions of privacy and a lack of tradition in Denmark of getting involved in other people's private lives. Certain types of victims (such as children) thus arouse greater public sympathy than other types of victims who are more often portrayed as more culpable in their victimisation, such as sex workers, migrant workers and gender minorities, even if these are also covered in the media. At the same time, the more "ordinary" cases such as (ex-)partner femicides are rarely covered to an extent that leads to significant media attention, as they lack a sensational element.

The sensationalisation of individual cases helps create a picture of femicide as isolated incidents rather than a structural problem. In addition, the media help reproduce notions of achieved gender equality in the Nordic countries, which is why gender equality issues are under-represented (Bjerregaard, 2026b). This leads to a lack of focus on the systemic nature of violence against women, where, for example, cases of intimate partner violence are individualised. Structural explanations are primarily used in cases where the perpetrator has an ethnic minority background. The individualisation of causal explanations for femicide also risks making the gendered circumstances behind the killing invisible. This also complicates the possibility of identifying gendered motives in these cases.

In 2025, there was increased focus on femicide in the media, especially after four women were killed within two days in June (Ekstra Bladet, 2025). This has also contributed to greater political focus, including in the most recent government platform, which focuses on long-term strategies against intimate partner violence and homicide (Statsministeriet, 2026). However, the focus is still limited to intimate partner homicide rather than femicide in general. As the analysis shows, four of the eight highlighted cases of killings of women were committed by a current or former partner.

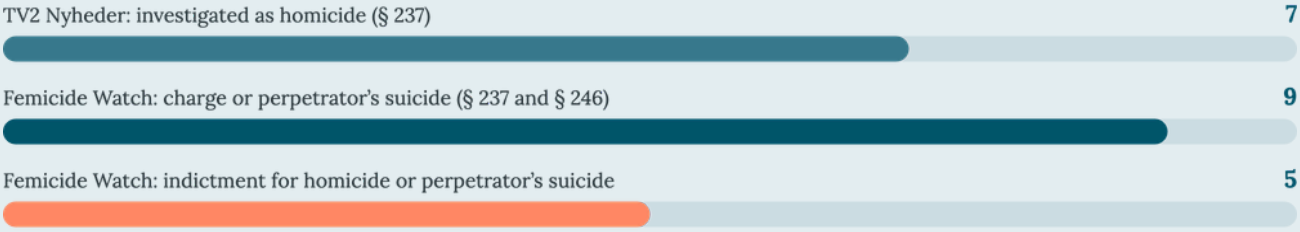
PUBLICLY AVAILABLE INFORMATION

A lack of access to statistics on the extent of femicide in Denmark complicates the mapping, giving both authorities and organisations an unclear overview of the extent of femicide.

TV2 Nyheder has reported on seven cases in Denmark that were initially investigated as the killing of a woman under section 237 (homicide) in 2024 (TV2 Nyheder, 2025a). TV2's count thus does not take into account cases investigated as violence resulting in death (section 246).

Femicide Watch is aware of nine cases in Denmark in 2024 in which one or more persons were initially charged (under both section 237 and section 246). Five of these cases led to prosecution or were closed because the perpetrator died by suicide. In the remaining four cases, the charges were dropped.

Three counts of deaths of women in Denmark in 2024



Differences in the underlying data, and in whether the statistics are based only on homicide rather than also including, for example, cases of violence resulting in death, thus lead to very different figures, which makes it difficult to get a real overview of the number of killings of women in Denmark. Precise figures from the authorities are particularly important in cases where the perpetrator dies by suicide in connection with the killing. In these cases there is no trial, so it is not possible to request access to the judgment. The mapping of femicide therefore cannot rely solely on access to judgments or limited media coverage, which is why official statistics are particularly important for gaining an overview of the extent of the problem.

LACK OF ACCESS TO JUDGMENTS

Of the six cases known to Femicide Watch in which a judgment has been delivered, it has been possible to access two of the judgments through Domsdatabasen, the Danish courts' judgment database. Domsdatabasen only publishes decisions of particular public interest, which is why most femicide cases cannot be found in the database (Domstolsstyrelsen, n.d.). Both available judgments concern Danish cases. For the two Greenlandic cases in which a judgment has been delivered, it has not been possible to access the judgments, and the information is therefore based solely on media coverage, especially in Greenlandic media such as Sermitsiaq and KNR.

One of the judgments available at the time of writing concerns the killing of a 13-year-old girl, which has been appealed to the Supreme Court, as the perpetrator was 17 at the time of the killing. The case has received considerable media attention because of the young ages of the victim and the perpetrator. At the same time, a question of principle will be decided when the case comes before the Supreme Court. However, it is not only decisions of principle that are published in Domsdatabasen, as other cases with high media attention have also been published, even if they did not decide questions of principle. What is of particular public interest is thus largely governed by the focus and priorities of the media. When the media choose to focus on one type of killing or victim, they also help determine what is of general interest.

The other case that has been publicly available through Domsdatabasen concerns the case with a female perpetrator. This case also has a sensationalising element, as the victim was a sex worker and was killed by a woman.

However, media coverage and the publication of details from court cases must always be weighed against consideration for the victims and their bereaved families.

PROBLEMS WITH DATA COLLECTION METHODS

As discussed in the previous sections, there are large differences in which cases receive attention in the media. Media reporting therefore cannot be regarded as neutral data. Not all killings are reported in the media, and there is therefore a hidden number in the extent of femicide based on this method of data collection.

The analysis is based on cases in which it has been possible to identify a killing of a woman through media reporting: five Danish and three Greenlandic cases. This should therefore be seen with the reservation that it hardly reflects the complete picture. Without access to court documents, it is not possible for a non-state monitoring body to register all femicides in the Danish Realm.

Dubravka Šimonović, former UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, points to the importance of a systematic method for collecting data on gendered killings:

"*Accurate data collection is the foundation of effective femicide prevention. States should begin by recording all homicides disaggregated by the sex of both the victim and the perpetrator including the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, distinguishing intimate partner and family-related killings from other homicides. Where no such relationship exists, cases should be further assessed to determine whether the killing was gender-motivated. This methodology was first recommended in my 2016 report to the United Nations General Assembly on the establishment of Femicide Watches or Femicide Observatories* (A/71/398), *prepared in my capacity as the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences. It provides an objective and evidence-based methodology for identifying and classifying femicides and was subsequently reflected in the United Nations Statistical Framework for Measuring the Gender-related Killing of Women and Girls (Femicide/Feminicide), which establishes internationally agreed standards for collecting and analysing such data.*" (D. Šimonović, personal communication, July 14, 2026).

Šimonović emphasises that, under CEDAW General Recommendations No. 19 and No. 35, states have a due diligence obligation to collect, analyse and publish comprehensive data on all forms of violence against women, including femicide (D. Šimonović, personal communication, July 14, 2026).

CONCLUSION

In 2024, Femicide Watch identified eight killings of women, five in Denmark and three in Greenland, six of which are femicides according to the UN categories. In both countries there are examples of partner femicides followed by the perpetrator's suicide and of non-intimate femicides with possible sexual motives. The gender-based killings of women have been concentrated in partner femicides and non-intimate femicides, and family-related femicides have therefore not been as present as in other years.

In 3 out of 8 killings, sexual violence or possible sexual motives are seen. Sexual violence was confirmed by judgment in one killing, and in two there are possible signs. The sexual motives did not necessarily stand alone and could be combined with other motives such as separation or hate motives. Even where sexual violence was not a primary motive for the killing, it is therefore often part of the violence women are exposed to.

4 out of 8 killings took place in an (ex-)partner relationship. This thus applies to two thirds of the femicides, which also reflects the distributions of previous years. In the two cases where Femicide Watch has knowledge of the relationship leading up to the killing, there are signs of prior violence or control.

Killings of women largely reflect which groups of women are particularly exposed to violence. In 2024, there were thus killings of both older women (65+ years) and sex workers, with two killings of sex workers and two killings of older women.

Identifying gendered motives

The analysis has included two killings of women where it has not been possible to identify a clear gendered motive. The killings are nevertheless included because both reflect groups of women assessed to be particularly exposed to violence and killing, namely sex workers and older women. However, limited information about motives in media reporting and judgments makes it difficult to collect sufficient data for a comprehensive assessment of any motives. Even where individual cases do not immediately appear gendered, clear trends are seen in the way women are killed and which women are killed. Limiting the analysis of femicide to individual motives thus risks making the structural aspect of killings of women invisible.

8+ **Not all killings of women are reported in the media**

The report's figures are based on media coverage and are therefore minimum figures. Official statistics are essential.

Lack of systematic registration of femicide

Femicide is a structural problem in both Denmark and Greenland. Opaque and limited data from the authorities and different counting methods make it difficult to form an accurate overview and thus to prevent. As only 56 % of the killings of women in 2010–2024 were reported in an online news story (Bjerregaard, 2026b), this year's eight registered killings must be regarded as a minimum figure.

Sensationalising media coverage

Media coverage is both limited and sensationalised. This shifts the focus from femicide as a structural problem to individual explanations such as mental illness or family conflicts and makes it harder for both the public and professionals to identify risk factors.

What the media do not show

KILLINGS OF WOMEN 2010–2024



Source: Bjerregaard (2026b).

Concept: Non-intimate femicide

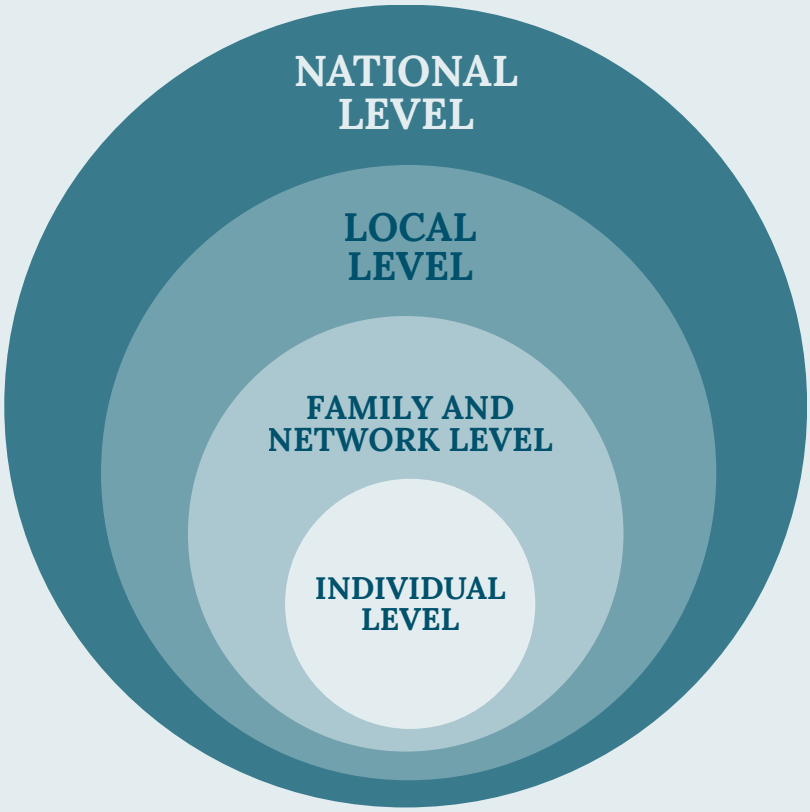
Killings of women committed outside partner and family relationships, both by strangers and by acquaintances, neighbours, colleagues, clients or carers. The category is often defined negatively as everything that is not partner or family-related femicide, and is therefore less studied. In England and Wales, 55 % of adult women killed in 2022–23 were not recorded as domestic homicides (Miles & Cook, 2026).

Concept: The continuum of violence

The concept describes how different forms of men's violence against women, from control and harassment to sexual violence and killing, are connected rather than separate phenomena. The approach does not rank forms of violence, but makes visible common patterns of misogyny across, for example, age, sexuality, ethnicity and disability, and challenges the distinction between private and public violence (Kelly, 1987, and Boyle, 2019, both cited in Miles & Cook, 2026).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Center for Violence Prevention works from a socio-ecological model of violence prevention at four levels: the national level, the local level, the family and network level and the individual level. Several institutions and researchers recommend using the socio-ecological model in preventive work against gender-based violence, with a focus on the ecosystem of drivers of violence against women (OHCHR & UN Women, 2014; Dawson, 2021; Brysk & Moreira, 2023).



FIVE PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE DANISH PARLIAMENT

Five recommendations can be initiated in the current parliamentary session. The remaining recommendations elaborate on them. Criminal law recognition of femicide (p. 38) requires longer preparation and is therefore not among the five.

They build on previous analyses and this year's findings. In 2024, prior violence or control was known in two of four partner femicides, and half of the killings took place outside intimate relationships and the family.

Five priority recommendations to the Danish Parliament

Recommendations that can be implemented in the current parliamentary session

1 Right to rapid help: free, specialised support for all victims of violence with first contact within 24 hours.

RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY	INSTRUMENT	TIMEFRAME
Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing	Rights provision in the Social Services Act	Bill in the current session

2 Nationwide MARAC and mandatory risk assessment in cases of violence, threats, stalking and control, with a statutory duty to act and deadlines.

RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY	INSTRUMENT	TIMEFRAME
Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing	Legislative amendment and appropriation	Pilot in four police districts within 12 months

3 A separate registration category for gender-based killings and a national monitoring body for the Istanbul Convention.

RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY	INSTRUMENT	TIMEFRAME
Ministry of Justice	Executive order and departmental circular	12 months

4 Violence prevention as a mandatory topic in the executive orders for primary and upper secondary school.

RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY	INSTRUMENT	TIMEFRAME
Ministry of Children and Education	Amendment of executive orders	Next revision of the subject executive orders

5 Access to protection regardless of residence status, including a clear separation between the support system and the immigration authorities.

RESPONSIBLE MINISTRY	INSTRUMENT
Ministry of Immigration and Integration	Amendment of the Aliens Act

Source: Center for Violence Prevention. The other recommendations elaborate on and support the five priority recommendations.

READ MORE

Tal om Vold: group programmes and counselling
talomvold.dk

READ MORE

Violence prevention toolkit
centerforvoldsforebyggelse.com/tal-om-vold

CRIMINAL LAW RECOGNITION OF FEMICIDE

Femicide should be recognised as a gendered crime in Danish legislation. When the gendered mechanisms are not clearly set out in the legal framework, gender-based motives, prior control and previous violence often disappear in investigations, statistics and prevention. We therefore recommend two tracks that can be implemented independently.

TRACK 1. RECOGNITION IN CRIMINAL LAW

Gender-based motive and prior controlling and violent behaviour should be explicitly set out as aggravating circumstances in homicide. Section 81 of the Criminal Code already allows motive to be given aggravating weight, but it does not mention gender-based motive and is not applied systematically in homicide cases with prior intimate partner violence. We recommend either an explicit addition to section 81 or a qualified offence covering killings in a context of prior intimate partner violence, control or stalking.

- Responsible ministry: Ministry of Justice
- Instrument: amendment of the Criminal Code

TRACK 2. REGISTRATION, RISK ASSESSMENT AND DUTY TO ACT

The practical benefits often attributed to a separate criminalisation do not require a new criminal provision and should not wait for one. We recommend a mandatory registration category for gender-based killings in the registers of the police and Statistics Denmark, uniform reporting requirements across police districts, including Greenland and the Faroe Islands, mandatory risk assessment in cases with a known risk of serious violence or homicide, and a clear duty to act with deadlines and responsible bodies.

- Responsible ministry: Ministry of Justice and the Danish National Police
- Instrument: executive order, circular, Administration of Justice Act

Recommendations from the UN, the EU and the Istanbul Convention all stress separate registration of gender-based killings. Today, femicide is registered inconsistently across the Danish Realm, hiding the extent and the risk patterns. Track 2 can be delivered within a year and is needed to measure the effect of track 1.

A separate legal framework for femicide has broad civil society support. With organisations such as Bedre Psykiatri, Zonta Denmark and the Danish United Nations Association, the Center for Violence Prevention has sent the Danish Parliament a joint proposal backed by 1,208 citizens, experts and organisations (Center for Voldsforebyggelse, 2026).

NATIONAL LEVEL

Recommendations at national level focus on four things: criminalisation of certain forms of violence, securing the rights of victims of violence through legislation, knowledge production and registration, and a focus on the language used to describe femicide. In addition, there are the national frameworks for training authorities and professionals and for cross-sectoral cooperation, which are set nationally but implemented locally.

BETTER LEGAL PROTECTION FOR VICTIMS OF ECONOMIC VIOLENCE

Economic violence has been punishable as psychological violence under section 243 of the Criminal Code since 2019, but victims' legal position has not improved in practice. Cases are hard to prove, and victims often lack the means to pursue financial claims (Justitia, 2023). In line with Justitia, we recommend guidance from the Director of Public Prosecutions on securing evidence, that victims are always asked about economic violence in interviews, automatic assignment of a victim's counsel, also for compensation claims, and special access to debt relief.
Responsible ministry: Ministry of Justice
Instrument: guidance from the Director of Public Prosecutions, Administration of Justice Act and Bankruptcy Act

NON-FATAL STRANGULATION AS A RISK INDICATOR AND AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCE

Strangulation can cause permanent injury and is one of the strongest single predictors of partner femicide (Glass et al., 2008). Charges cannot be made automatic, as prosecution depends on an assessment of intent and the principle of objectivity. We instead recommend three mechanisms: registering strangulation as a separate category, not as simple assault; automatic risk assessment and medical examination after any report of strangulation; and strangulation in close relationships as an explicit aggravating circumstance in sentencing.
Responsible ministry: Ministry of Justice and the Danish National Police
Instrument: departmental circular, police guidelines and Criminal Code amendment

READ MORE
Economic intimate partner violence in Denmark: knowledge base on economic control, debt and violence
centerforvoldsforebyggelse.com/udgivelser

STRENGTHENING THE RIGHTS OF VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE IN LINE WITH INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Denmark has ratified the Istanbul Convention, but GREVIO (the Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence) has repeatedly pointed to gaps in implementation, particularly regarding risk assessment, data collection and support for particularly vulnerable groups. The four recommendations below close the gaps that matter most for protection against lethal violence. Experience from other countries cannot be transferred mechanically, and each recommendation therefore states the Danish legal instrument required.

Clare's Law

In 2014, England and Wales introduced the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (also known as Clare's Law), which gives individuals the right to ask the police about an (ex-)partner's history of violence. The law is named after Clare Wood, who was killed by her ex-partner in 2009. Clare's Law aims to inform potential victims of intimate partner violence and homicide about relevant information in their partner's criminal record and convictions with a view to prevention. The Center for Violence Prevention recommends a Danish preliminary study of a similar disclosure scheme. The scheme requires a separate legal basis, as disclosure of criminal records to private individuals is regulated by Article 10 of the General Data Protection Regulation and the Danish Law Enforcement Act. It should therefore be limited to documented prior intimate partner violence, accompanied by a risk assessment before disclosure and evaluated after three years.
Responsible ministry: Ministry of Justice
Instrument: preliminary study followed by a separate legal basis

Documentation requirements

In cases of psychological violence, the burden of proving the violence is largely left to the victim, often without sufficient support from the authorities (Center for Voldsforebyggelse, 2024). For women in vulnerable positions such as migrant women and sex workers, documenting violence can be particularly difficult. We recommend that the Danish National Police draw up national investigation guidelines for psychological and economic violence with standardised methods for collecting digital traces, financial transactions and witness statements, so that the burden of proof does not in practice rest on the victim. The guidelines should be accompanied by mandatory further training in all police districts.
Responsible ministry: Ministry of Justice and the Danish National Police
Instrument: national guidelines, which do not require legislative amendment

READ MORE
UDSAT: Victims of violence navigating Danish law
centerforvoldsforebyggelse.com/udgivelser

Residence permit

The right to protection should not depend on citizenship or a residence permit. Migrant women avoid seeking help from the authorities for fear of deportation (Institut for Menneskerettigheder, 2023). The Aliens Act already makes it possible to keep a residence permit obtained through family reunification when cohabitation ends because of violence, but the provision has been applied restrictively. Since 2025, there has been a presumption that cohabitation ended because of the violence, but the woman must still prove the violence itself. We recommend that this requirement is eased, that psychological and economic violence are treated on an equal footing with physical violence in the assessment, and that a clear separation is introduced between the support system and the immigration authorities, so that contacting the police, shelters or the health service does not in itself trigger a notification to the immigration authorities.

Responsible ministry: Ministry of Immigration and Integration

Instrument: amendment of the Aliens Act and changed practice at the Danish Immigration Service

Specialised support for victims of violence

Legal protection should include the groups that currently fall between support services: survivors of attempted homicide, women with disabilities, older women, migrant women, women in vulnerable occupations and women with addiction. We recommend that the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing requires each of these groups to be covered by a named specialised service with known capacity, and that coverage is reported annually.

Responsible ministry: Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing

Instrument: executive order and appropriation

- Support schemes for victims of violence with disabilities: including legal, social and psychological assistance. Victims of violence with disabilities should have a free consultation with a lawyer before reporting a case. In addition, an action plan should be drawn up for how the authorities handle cases involving victims with disabilities, with requirements for accessible communication, involvement of a guardian without the guardian being able to block the report, and referral to a specialised shelter place.
- Stronger protection of women in vulnerable occupations: operating grants for outreach services modelled on The Red Van, which offers safe spaces, contact with health professionals and counselling without any requirement to report.
- Funding of services for women with addiction: funding of safe, 24-hour drop-in centres for women with addiction, such as Reden, and drug consumption rooms intended exclusively for women.
- Stronger protection of older women: violence in care relationships should be included explicitly in the violence provisions of the Social Services Act and in municipal supervision of nursing homes and residential facilities.

Stronger aftercare
Support typically ends when a woman leaves a shelter, although the risk of renewed violence is highest in the months after a separation (Campbell et al., 2003). We recommend a statutory right to aftercare for at least 12 months after a shelter stay or a police report, covering psychological treatment, legal counselling and housing support, with a permanent municipal contact person for the whole process.
Responsible ministry: Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing
Instrument: amendment of the Social Services Act and appropriation

A STATUTORY RIGHT TO RAPID HELP

The first objective of the Center for Violence Prevention is free, specialised support for all victims of violence, with first contact within 24 hours. This is not met today: access to shelter places, psychological help and legal counselling varies considerably between municipalities, and waiting times for specialised treatment can run to months. Help therefore often arrives after the risk has peaked.

We recommend a rights provision in the Social Services Act giving every victim of violence the right to contact with a specialist violence counsellor within 24 hours, regardless of municipality, residence status and form of violence. The right should cover psychological, physical, sexual and economic violence, and "specialised" should mean counselling by staff trained in violence. The scheme should be supported by one nationwide 24-hour point of contact and state funding, so that it does not depend on municipal budget priorities.
Responsible ministry: Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing
Instrument: amendment of the Social Services Act and appropriation in the Finance Act

KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION

Monitoring bodies
- Establishment of a national monitoring body that reports on Denmark's implementation of the articles of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention)
- A national database for all forms of femicide
- Separate statistics on the extent of economic violence

Research
- A ring-fenced research fund for violence prevention under the Independent Research Fund Denmark, with priority themes: effects of preventive measures, men's exposure to violence and risk factors prior to partner femicide

- Prevention of systemic bias: funders should require that research on violence includes marginalised groups and that data are broken down by disability, ethnicity, age and residence status
- A recurring Danish in-depth review of all partner homicides over a five-year period modelled on the British Domestic Homicide Reviews, with published lessons for the authorities

CALL FEMICIDE BY ITS NAME

- A common definition of violence for the authorities that covers physical, psychological, sexual, economic and digital violence, and which is applied consistently in the registration and guidelines of the police, the municipalities and the health service
- Femicide and partner homicide are named as such in the authorities' own communication, including police press releases, court reports and ministerial statements
- Victim-blaming wording is removed from the authorities' guidance material and campaigns, so that responsibility for the violence is placed with the perpetrator and not with the victim's behaviour, clothing or choice of partner
- Responsible reporting on femicide: lethal violence against women should not be presented as romantic or excusable. So that responsibility does not remain diffuse, we specifically recommend that Danske Medier and the Press Council draw up guidance on reporting on partner homicide modelled on the existing guidelines for reporting on suicide, that the Danish National Police stop using terms such as "family tragedy" in press releases, and that journalism programmes include violence-informed reporting in their teaching

TRAINING AUTHORITIES AND PROFESSIONALS TO RECOGNISE WARNING SIGNS

Training of the police and the courts

- A mandatory module on psychological and economic violence in police training and in the further training of emergency response and investigation staff, with annual reporting of completion rates per police district
- Economic violence should be described in police guidelines on psychological violence
- Mandatory training of frontline police staff in handling victims of violence with cognitive, physical or sensory disabilities, including interviews with a support person
- The police and the courts should be trained to recognise signs of violence against older women

Training of professionals

- Training care staff to recognise warning signs of, for example, so-called "mercy killings"
- Violence-informed treatment and diagnostics: specialised knowledge of older women's exposure to violence for authorities, health professionals and staff in residential facilities
- Screening and risk assessments at older women's most frequent points of contact (training doctors, nurses and social and healthcare workers to recognise warning signs)
- Training professionals and authorities in the specific signs of violence for the groups of women they work with (such as older women, migrant women, women in sex work and women with addiction), and figures on how many staff have completed training should be publicly available
- Violence prevention teaching aimed at professional groups in direct contact with citizens. Implementation of the eight-stage model as a practical risk tool to prevent violence and homicide



Jane Monckton-Smith's eight-stage timeline to an (ex-)partner femicide (Monckton-Smith, 2020)

Based on 372 (ex-)partner femicides in England between 2012 and 2015, the British professor of criminology Jane Monckton-Smith (2020) found that the killings typically did not happen on impulse or in the heat of the moment, but were often the culmination of a preceding period of psychological or physical violence, threats or stalking. In addition, the killings were typically motivated by the perpetrator's need for control, which is why a loss of control (e.g. separation) can escalate the violence.

CROSS-SECTORAL COOPERATION BETWEEN AUTHORITIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY

The Center for Violence Prevention recommends cross-sectoral cooperation between civil society organisations, the authorities and professionals. National action plans should be based on cross-cutting cooperation between the authorities and civil society. In addition, we recommend a coordination centre anchored in civil society, which receives enquiries from victims of violence, refers them to the right service and follows up, so that the victim does not have to navigate between the municipality, the police, the shelter and the health service on her own. The centre should have a multi-year operating grant and a permanent place in the national action plans.

Responsible ministry: Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing
Instrument: appropriation in the Finance Act

STRENGTHENING COOPERATION WITH THE EU

The Danish opt-out on justice and home affairs means that Denmark is not bound by EU legal acts in this area, but it does not prevent Denmark from implementing their content nationally. We recommend that Denmark voluntarily implements the minimum standards of the EU directive on combating violence against women and domestic violence (2024/1385), in particular the provisions on protection measures, support services and data collection, and that the government reports on the level of implementation to the Danish Parliament every second year.

Responsible ministry: Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing
Instrument: national legislation and report

> *National action plans should be based on cross-cutting cooperation between authorities and civil society.*

LOCAL LEVEL

Recommendations at local level focus in particular on training authorities and professionals to recognise warning signs and on cross-sectoral cooperation between authorities and civil society.

STRENGTHENING COOPERATION BETWEEN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS AND MUNICIPALITIES

- Four-year operating grants instead of one-year project grants for civil society organisations working on violence, so that services do not close between grant periods. Responsible ministry: Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing
- Nationwide counselling and support groups for victims of violence, perpetrators and relatives, with an obligation for each municipality either to offer them itself or to have a referral agreement with a service within reasonable travelling distance.
- National minimum standards for violence counselling, drawn up by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing in cooperation with Local Government Denmark and civil society, with annual reporting on municipal compliance. Instrument: executive order, which does not require legislative amendment

INTRODUCING THE MARAC MODEL AND STRENGTHENING RISK ASSESSMENTS

The Center for Violence Prevention proposes a mandatory risk assessment in cases of violence, threats and stalking, as well as systematic screening of high-risk women (duty to act). In countries such as England and Finland, the *Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference* (MARAC) model is used, where representatives from different sectors meet to make a plan for high-risk victims of violence.

The MARAC model enables knowledge sharing between sectors to combat future violence. The Center for Violence Prevention recommends the following:

- Mandatory risk assessment in all cases involving violence, threats, stalking or controlling behaviour, across the police, the municipality and the health service.
- A clear duty to act and duty to coordinate between authorities in high-risk cases, with specific deadlines and responsible bodies.
- National roll-out of the MARAC model (*Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference*) as a structured framework for cooperation in high-risk cases.
- Statutory local cooperation agreements that formalise coordination and are not merely advisory.
- A legal basis for faster exchange of health information between the police, the municipality and the health service in documented high-risk cases. Access should have an explicit legal basis in the Health Act, be limited to the information necessary for the risk assessment, require a specific suspicion of serious violence and be logged with subsequent supervision.
- Risks should be assessed by professionals with knowledge of violence to ensure specialised support for victims based on their needs.

To ensure systematic use of screening tools in high-risk cases, which should be a minimum standard when a victim of violence contacts the police, the Center for Violence Prevention recommends the following:

- A stronger focus on the perpetrator in risk assessments: the risk assessment should focus on the perpetrator's behaviour, history and access to weapons rather than on the victim's actions, and should be followed up with a restraining order or treatment for the perpetrator.
- Registration of perpetrators' suicide threats as a risk indicator.
- Increased psychiatric supervision when family members act as the primary carer for adults with psychiatric diagnoses.
- Identification and treatment of substance abuse and comorbidity in family and intimate partner violence cases (screening of diagnoses in interaction with substance abuse). A distinction should still be made between risk factors and causal explanations so that people with substance abuse are not further stigmatised.
- Earlier assessment of residents in nursing homes and residential facilities who move in without clarification of dementia or other cognitive difficulties.
- Care relationships should be risk assessed (care relationships in older women's lives may, for example, be a son or a male partner)

FAMILY AND NETWORK LEVEL

Recommendations at family and network level focus in particular on strengthening the public's knowledge of early signs of violence, so that relatives, colleagues and networks can act before the violence escalates.

STRENGTHENING PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE OF SIGNS OF VIOLENCE

- Economic violence is included in the authorities' public information on psychological violence, including on borger.dk, politi.dk and in banks' guidance on shared finances.
- Initiatives that increase the likelihood of reporting psychological violence, including a permanent description on politi.dk of what a report requires and what happens afterwards.
- Accessible and understandable resources for guardians on how they can support victims of violence with disabilities. The police should also be able to advise guardians.
- Teaching in schools: violence prevention as a mandatory topic in the executive orders for primary, lower secondary and upper secondary school. See the Center for Violence Prevention's website for teaching in schools, workplaces and organisations (centerforvoldsforebyggelse.com)
- Strengthening the public's recognition of early signs of violence: implementation and funding of teaching in schools and educational institutions, in organisations and in workplaces.
- A multi-year national information effort on violence and signs of violence with a permanent annual grant, anchored in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing and carried out in cooperation with civil society, rather than one-off campaigns.
- Targeted campaigns on psychological and economic violence, as the least recognised forms of violence, with measurement of the public's recognition before and after.
- A single, publicly available overview of support services and rights for victims of violence, which the police, the municipalities and the health service are obliged to hand out at first contact.

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Recommendations at individual level focus in particular on early socialisation and on treatment for perpetrators of violence. Much gender-based violence against women is rooted in men's feelings of jealousy, loss of control and entitlement. The violent disciplining of women who do not live up to men's expectations is a societal problem rooted in gendered norms. This can partly be addressed through early socialisation aimed at emotional regulation, for example teaching children about bodily autonomy, consent, harmful gender stereotypes and non-violent conflict resolution.

EARLY SOCIALISATION AND EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Prevention at individual level is about changing the norms and the emotional regulation that may later turn into violence. Efforts should start early, before the violence occurs.

- Teaching bodily autonomy, consent and non-violent conflict resolution from the first school years, with progression through primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education.
- Work on harmful gender stereotypes and masculinity norms in the training of early childhood educators and teachers and in day care.
- Targeted efforts for young men on jealousy, loss of control and entitlement, including digital controlling behaviour in young relationships.

TREATMENT FOR PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE

Preventing repeated violence requires services for the person who commits the violence. Waiting times for treatment are long today and services are unevenly distributed geographically, and there is no systematic service for perpetrators who seek help themselves.

- Nationwide, free treatment for perpetrators of violence with a guaranteed maximum waiting time.
- Systematic referral to treatment in connection with restraining orders, contact bans and risk assessments.
- Treatment aimed at perpetrators with co-occurring substance abuse or a psychiatric diagnosis, without the diagnosis or substance abuse being presented as the cause of the violence.
- Follow-up and impact measurement of treatment services, so that grants can be based on documented effect.

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