

*Press Release for the International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women, 25 November, 2021*

**התצפית הישראלית על רצח נשים**

**Israel Observatory on Femicide**

**In 2021, a decrease in femicides, an increase in matricides.**

***Fifteen women have been murdered in 2021 because they are women, a decrease by a quarter from 2020. Approximately, half of the victims were Jewish, and half Israeli Arab. One third of all femicides in 2021 were matricides i.e. the murders of a mother.***

**Background:** In November 2020, Dr. Shalva Weil, Senior Researcher at the School of Education at the Hebrew University established the **Israel Observatory on Femicide (IOF) (**[**www.israelfemicide.org**](http://www.israelfemicide.org)), an initiative funded by private donors but directed from the Hebrew University. Weil had chaired a COST (Cooperation on Science and Technology), European Union-funded initiative entitled on femicide (2013-8), is the co-editor of a 2018 book *Femicide across Europe* (Bristol University: Policy), has spoken on femicide in the UN three times, and is the author of scientific publications on femicide.

**Israel Observatory on Femicide (IOF):** The Israel Observatory aims to be that country’s official body providing qualitative and quantitative data on intentional femicide in Israel. The numbers of women murdered for other reasons rather than their gender e.g. accidental murder or involvement in crime, are omitted. Femicide is restricted to age 18 and above, in line with international guidelines.

**2021-Statistics:** 15 women have been killed in Israel in 2021, including one woman last night (21.11.21), eight by their partners and two others by family members in order to protect “family honor”. All the victims knew the perpetrators. Except for one case from the African Israelite community, half were Jewish and half were Arab or Druze. Half of the femicides were “intimate partner femicides” carried out by the victim’s partner or ex-partner. 13% were carried out by family members, and **one third were matricides, or murder of mothers.** The average age of the victim was 45.6. The youngest victim was 27 and the oldest 76. One third were killed by gunshot, a third were stabbed and a quarter were strangled.

**2021 vs 2020:** The femicide rate in 2021 was lower by a quarter than the numbers of women killed at the same time in 2020, when there were 19 cases (two more femicides were perpetrated up to 31.12.2020). In 2021, there were 1.3 femicide cases per month, while in 2020, there were 1.7. In 2020, there was one matricide case.

**Opinion:** “There may be several explanations for the 2021 decrease in femicide. One may be the end of the lockdown and the easing of covid-19 regulations. Another may be the unprecedented media coverage of domestic violence and femicide in the wake of a surge of activity highlighting violence among NGOs”, says Dr. Shalva Weil. “We have to recognize femicide as a pandemic, just as lethal globally as covid-19, and allocate funds to its elimination accordingly. We have to educate to respect our elderly mothers. One of the most alarming features of femicide in 2021 is the murder of mothers”.

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