

TEMPORARY ANALYSIS OF THE MURDERS OF WOMEN DUE TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN SPAIN OVER 15 YEARS (2003-2017)

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

The study “TEMPORARY ANALYSIS OF THE MURDERS OF WOMEN DUE TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN SPAIN OVER 15 YEARS (2003-2017)” responds to the commission created by the Government Delegation against Gender-based Violence for the Carlos III Health Institute.

Carried out by researchers from the National School of Health, in collaboration with the University of Alicante and Biodiversia S. Coop. Mad. The study aims to respond to measure 173 of the Congress of Deputies to the State Pact against Gender-based Violence of the year 2017, which urges “Studies be carried out by the Government Delegation against Gender-based Violence on the effect of accumulation of murders in a short period of time of two to four consecutive days”.

In the first place, the study consists of a description of the murders of women due to gender-based violence that occurred in Spain during the period 2003-2017, taking as a reference point for gender-based violence the definition of article 1 of Organic Law 1/2004, of 28 December, on Comprehensive Protection Measures against Gender-based Violence. Second, it assesses the existence of clusters of murders in short periods of time using two complementary approaches: the existence of sporadic temporal clusters or the existence of a widespread pattern of increased risk of murder on successive days. Finally, it analyses the evolution of mortality due to gender-based violence between 2003 and 2017 and identifies the temporal variables associated with an increase in the risk of murder.

Description of the murders of women due to gender-based violence in Spain (2003-2017)

Description of the victims

- In Spain, **928 women were murdered due to gender-based violence during the 2003-2017 period.**
- **67.8% of the victims were born in Spain, 32.2% were born abroad.**
- **The average age of the victims was 42.3 years,** although those who were born abroad were 9.6 years younger than those born in Spain (36.0 vs 45.6 years, respectively).

- During the 15-year period analysed, 4.3 women aged 35-44 were murdered for every million women in that age group, this being the age group with the highest murder rate.
- After age 45, this rate decreases, increasing again after age 65.
- 64.6% of the victims lived with the aggressor at the time of the event.

Description of the aggressors

- **The average age of the aggressors was 46.3 years.**
- **68.6 % of the aggressors were born in Spain**, 31.4 % were born abroad.
- 9.3% of Spanish victims were killed by a foreign-born man, while **23.4% of foreign victims were killed by a Spanish-born man.**
- There is an **age difference of 4 years between the victims and the aggressors, the victims being younger.** This age difference is especially clear at younger ages. Victims aged 15 to 34 were on average 6.9 years younger than their assailants, while victims aged 65 and over were 1.4 years younger than their assailants.
- Approximately one in five assailants (21.7%) commits suicide after committing the murder.

Criminal records

- **A quarter of the women murdered during the 2006-2017 period had previously filed reports against their aggressor (26.3%).** Of these, 77.5% had requested protection measures. 88.5% of them obtained the measure. 71% of the women who had obtained a protection measure had the measure in force at the time of the murder. Overall, **12.8% of all murdered women had a protection measure in force at the time of the murder.**

Description of the temporal characteristics of murders due to gender-based violence

On the annual distribution of murders

- **In Spain, between 2003 and 2017, a woman was murdered due to gender-based violence every 6 days** (62 murders due to gender-based violence on an annual average). In 2008,

the highest number of murders of the entire period was registered (76 victims), while in 2016 the lowest number was registered (49 victims).

- The average annual murder rate over the analysed time period was 3 victims per million women aged 15 and over.
- In population terms, in **2003, 2004 and 2008, 3.8 women were murdered for every million women aged 15 years or over**. The lowest rate is observed in **2016, when there were 2.4 murders per million women aged 15 or over**.

On the monthly distribution of murders

- In the monthly distribution of murders, it is observed that **the summer months (July and August) are the ones that accumulate the most murders throughout the entire period** (86 and 81 victims, respectively), in addition to January (83 victims). At the opposite extreme, April is the month with the fewest murders (64 victims).

On the distribution of murders in days of the week

- **In the distribution of murders by day of the week, Sunday and Monday stand out as the days with the highest number of murders** (146 and 145 respectively). After these days, the frequency decreases until reaching the minimum on Thursday (110 victims), then increasing again.

Identification of murder clusters in short periods of time

- Out of the total of 5,479 days analysed (from 2003 to 2017), 29 specific periods of 2, 3 and 4 days in duration have been detected in which the number of murders was unusually higher compared to the daily distribution of murders of the rest of the period studied. The statistical analyses carried out confirm that this is the greater number of murders observed in these 29 periods. Although they are noteworthy because of their unusually high number of murders for their short duration, it is found that they are simply a reflection of the effect derived from the higher frequency of murders in certain years, months and, very especially, on certain days of the week. In this sense, no evidence has been found on the existence of specific murder clusters due to gender-based violence.
- On the other hand, in relation to the analysis of the existence of a general pattern of increase in the risk of murder on successive days, **no evidence has been found that the**

occurrence of a murder due to gender-based violence on any given day leads to an increase in the risk on consecutive days.

Description and analysis of the time series of fatalities due to gender-based violence (2003-2017)

- In Spain, during the 2003-2017 period, **the murder rate due to gender-based violence has decreased at a constant rate of 3% per year.**
- **Sundays and Mondays are associated with a greater increase in the daily risk of murder** due to gender-based violence (increases with respect to Thursday at 25% and 26%, respectively).