

Homicide

Homicide is defined by the FBI as **the willful killing of one human being by another**, and encompasses both murder and non-negligent manslaughter. The Supplementary Homicide Report (SHR), produced annually by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program, highlights statistical trends and patterns associated with homicides known to law enforcement in the United States. While the SHR has proven to be a reliable resource for researchers and policymakers, law enforcement agencies report this information voluntarily, which can mean the data are not always consistent or nationally representative. Mass shootings, which make up a small subset of homicide, have garnered a great deal of media attention in recent years; for more information, see the Mass Casualty Shootings fact sheet in this series.

CRIME TRENDS

Since 1995, the rate of murder and non-negligent homicide known to authorities has decreased. In 2015, 4.9 people out of every 100,000 were victims of murder or non-negligent homicide. In 2016, this rate increased slightly to 5.3 murders and non-negligent homicides for every 100,000 people.^A

1995

1998

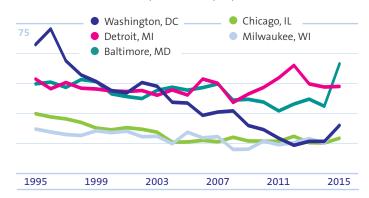
2001

While increases in homicide are concerning, this rise does not indicate an emerging national trend. Evaluating homicide rates at the city level, where localized exceptions can be found, is an important part of responsibly interpreting these statistics. In 2016, cities such as **Baltimore** (which had a 63% increase in the homicide rate from 2014-2015, then a 7.3% decrease in 2016), **Washington, DC, and New York saw decreases** in their homicide rates. **Chicago**, however, saw an increase in its homicide rate by 63% from 2015-2016, **accounting for 55.1% of the total increase** in urban murders. Despite crime rates declining at an uneven rate, Americans are overall safer today than they have been at nearly any time in the past four decades.^{B1}

rate per 100,000 people 10 8.2 4.9

Murder and Non-Negligent Manslaughter^A

Largest Cities with Highest Murder Rates^{A1} rate per 100,000 people



Largest Cities with Lowest Murder Rates^{A1} rate per 100,000 people

2007

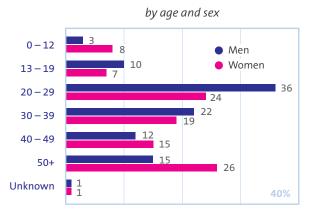
2010

2016

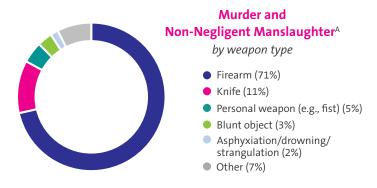


In 2015, there were **13,455 homicides**: 4% of victims were 12 years old or younger, 33% were age 20 – 29, and 17% were over the age of 50. Individuals **age 20 – 29** of either sex were killed more often than people in any other age range. For young men, homicide is the third-leading cause of death.

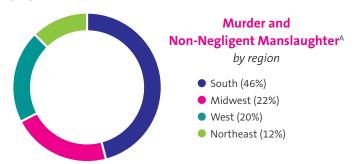
Homicide Victims^A



In 2014, **7 in 10 homicides** were committed with a **firearm**, and 1 in 10 were committed with a knife.^A



In 2014, the **majority** of murder and non-negligent manslaughter occurred in the **south** (46%). The **lowest** proportion occurred in the **northeast** (12%).^A



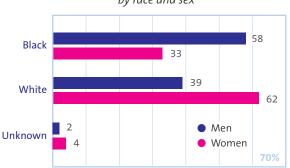
NOTES

- 1 In 1999, the UCR did not report the murder rate for Baltimore. This number is calculated using police data and the reported population of Baltimore for 1999.
- 2 The 26% total comprises the UCR categories of "Acquaintances" (which includes same-sex partners) and "Significant Others."

In 2015, rates of murder and non-negligent manslaughter known to law enforcement were **higher for men** than women.^A Of all known homicides, black men accounted for 58% of all male homicide victims, while white women accounted for 62% of all female homicide victims.^A Among young men, homicide is the **leading cause of death for African Americans** and the **second-leading cause for Latinos**.^B

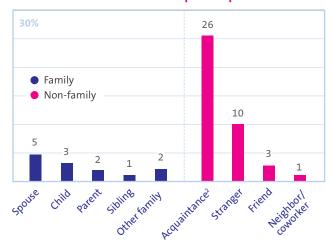
Homicide Victims^A





Of murder and non-negligent manslaughter victims, **42%** had some sort of relationship with the perpetrator, 10% had no relationship (i.e., strangers), and 48% had an unknown relationship.^{A2}

Victim Relationship to Perpetrator^A



SOURCES

- A FBI, Crime in the United States, 1995–2015, (U.S. Department of Justice), https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2015/crime-in-the-u.s.-2015/offenses-known-to-law-enforcement/expanded-offense
- B Thomas Abt, "Violent Crime: A Conversation," (The Marshall Project: Nov. 15, 2017), https://www.themarshallproject.org/2017/11/15/violent-crime-a-conversation
- C FBI, 2016 Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted, (U.S. Department of Justice), https://ucr.fbi.gov/leoka/2016/officers-feloniously-killed/tables/table-23.xls





