Expanded Homicide Data

Data collection

The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program's supplemental homicide data provide information regarding the age, sex, and race of the murder victim and the offender; the type of weapon used in the murder; the relationship of the victim to the offender; and the circumstance surrounding the incident. Data gleaned from these supplemental data are provided in this section.

Justifiable homicide—Certain willful killings must be reported as justifiable, or excusable. In the UCR Program, justifiable homicide is defined as and limited to:

- The killing of a felon by a peace officer in the line of duty.

- The killing of a felon, during the commission of a felony, by a private citizen.

Because these killings are determined through law enforcement investigation to be justifiable, they are tabulated separately from murder and nonnegligent manslaughter. Justifiable homicide information is included in this section and in Expanded Homicide Data Table 14, "Justifiable Homicide, by Weapon, Law Enforcement, 2004–2008" and Expanded Homicide Data Table 15, "Justifiable Homicide, by Weapon, Private Citizen, 2004–2008."

Overview

- In 2008, law enforcement agencies submitted supplemental homicide data to the FBI for 14,180 murders.

- Of the 14,137 murder victims of 2008 for whom gender was known, 78.2 percent were male. (Based on Expanded Homicide Data Table 1.)

- Concerning murder victims for whom race was known, 49.0 percent were white, 48.6 percent were black, and 2.3 percent were from other races. Race was unknown for 239 victims. (Based on Expanded Homicide Data Table 2.)

- Single victim/single offender situations accounted for 48.9 percent of all murders for which the UCR Program received supplementary data. (See Expanded Homicide Data Table 4.)

- Of the offenders for whom gender was known, 90.0 percent were males. (Based on Expanded Homicide Data Table 3.)

- Of the offenders for whom race was known, 51.5 percent were black, 46.2 percent were white, and 2.4 percent were from other races. (Based on Expanded Homicide Data Table 3.)

- Of the homicides for which the type of weapon was specified, 71.9 percent involved the use of firearms. Of the identified firearms used, handguns comprised 88.3 percent. (Based on Expanded Homicide Data Table 8.)

- Concerning the relationships (if known) of murder victims and offenders, 23.3 percent of victims were slain by family members, 22.0 percent were murdered by strangers, and 54.7 percent were killed by acquaintances (neighbor, friend, boyfriend, etc.). (Based on Expanded Homicide Data Table 10.)

- Among female victims for whom relationships with their offenders were known, 34.7 percent were murdered by their husbands or boyfriends. (Based on Expanded Homicide Data Tables 2 and 10.)

- Concerning the known circumstances surrounding murders, 42.0 percent of victims were murdered during arguments (including romantic triangles) in 2008. Felony circumstances (rape, robbery, burglary, etc.) accounted for 22.9 percent of murders. Circumstances were unknown for 35.3 percent of reported homicides. (Based on Expanded Homicide Data Table 12.)

- Law enforcement reported 616 justifiable homicides in 2008. Of those, law enforcement officers justifiably killed 371 individuals, and private citizens justifiably killed 245 individuals. (See Expanded Homicide Data Tables 14 and 15.)

Expanded homicide data tables

The following tables were compiled using information from the Supplemental Homicide Data:

Expanded Homicide Data Table 1—"Murder Victims by Race and Sex, 2008"

Expanded Homicide Data Table 2—"Murder Victims by Age, Sex, and Race, 2008"

Expanded Homicide Data Table 3—"Murder Offenders by Age, Sex, and Race, 2008"

Expanded Homicide Data Table 4—"Murder, by Victim/Offender Situations, 2008"

Expanded Homicide Data Table 5—"Murder, Age of Victim by Age of Offender, 2008 [Single victim/single offender]"

Expanded Homicide Data Table 6—"Murder, Race and Sex of Victim by Race and Sex of Offender, 2008 [Single victim/single offender]"

Expanded Homicide Data Table 7—"Murder, Types of Weapons Used, Percent Distribution by Region, 2008"

Expanded Homicide Data Table 8—"Murder Victims by Weapon, 2004–2008"

Expanded Homicide Data Table 9—"Murder Victims by Age, by Weapon, 2008"

Expanded Homicide Data Table 10—"Murder Circumstances by Relationship, 2008"

Expanded Homicide Data Table 11—"Murder Circumstances by Weapon, 2008"

Expanded Homicide Data Table 12—"Murder Circumstances, 2004–2008"

Expanded Homicide Data Table 13—"Murder Circumstances by Sex of Victim, 2008"

Expanded Homicide Data Table 14—"Justifiable Homicide by Weapon, Law Enforcement, 2004–2008"

Expanded Homicide Data Table 15—"Justifiable Homicide by Weapon, Private Citizen, 2004–2008"

Table 20—"Murder, by State, Types of Weapons, 2008"

What you won't find on this page

- The estimated number of murders known to law enforcement.

- Clearance and arrest data for murder.