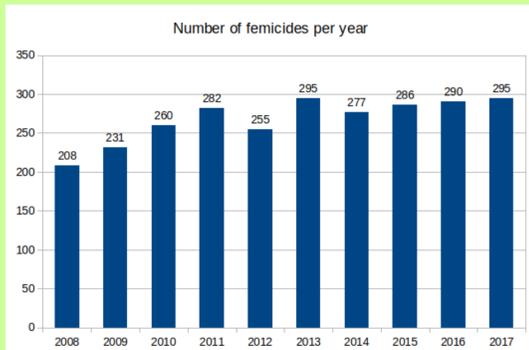


# Violence Against Women in Argentina: How does it relate to the economic system?

## Facts and Definitions

### Violence Against Women (VAW) in Argentina:

- Femicides/feminicides
  - The murder of women because they are women in a context of structural inequality and impunity/inactivity by the state (see Ciudad Juárez) (Lagarde 2006)
- Law against femicide since 2012



Source: Casa del Encuentro 2018

### Women's Economic Situation:

- Gender Pay Gap: 27.6% (2015)
- Women in informal employment: 39% (2017)
- 92% of women work in the service sector (2017)
- In Buenos Aires: 13% of women are domestic workers, 39% of those are migrants (2014)
- 76% of unpaid domestic labor is carried out by women (2013)

Sources: D'Alessandro 2016, World Bank 2017, Ministerio de Hacienda 2016, INDEC 2013

## Research Question and Starting Point

### Starting points:

- Femicides as „main scandal resulting from the crisis in the region“ (True 2012)
- Movement „Ni Una Menos“
  - Against violence, especially femicides
  - Active since 2015 with massive mobilizations
  - Latest slogan: „We want to be alive, free and without debt“
  - Strike as a tool, linking the question of work and violence
- Economic crisis, structural adjustment: context of a crisis of social reproduction (Vogel 2013)
- Interdisciplinary Approach

### Research question:

How do women in the Argentinean women's movement understand the relationship between the economic system and VAW?

### Method and Goal:

Generate theses on a (sometimes implicit) theory with guided expert interviews/literature research, compare those to existing theory/test hypotheses.

## Theoretical Background

### Theoretical considerations:

- Instrumental violence
  - used as a means to control and enforce certain behaviors (e.g. Hughes et al. 2015; they also cite empirical evidence)
- Expressive violence
  - used to express frustration, e.g. with the erosion of the male-breadwinner-model (e.g. Kabeer 2015)
  - Empirical evidence (MacMillan/Gartner 1999)
- Violence in bargaining settings
  - Violence is only accepted when the outside option (leaving) is too costly
  - Empirical evidence from Uruguay (Munyo/Rossi 2015)
- Violence as being rooted in the functioning of capitalism
  - Social relations shape the conditions of possibilities/expectations/emotions that lead to violence (e.g. Smith 1998)
  - Violence secures specific gender and class relations (e.g. v. Werlhof 1977)
  - Violence as rooted in the history of colonialism as a specific mode of capitalism (e.g. Segato 2016)
  - Violence as mechanism in the continued process of so called primitive accumulation (e.g. Federici 2012)

## Qualitative Interviews and Literature from the Movement

### Some exemplary material from field research, conducted in February and March 2018 in Buenos Aires:

Document 8M 2018: „We strike because we say stop to femicides and travesticides [the murder of trans persons], and to the economic and state violence that sustain them.“

Candelaria Botto (interview): „The majority of women are victims of economic violence, because they all participate in a social and economic system that does not allow them to have the same opportunities or conditions as men, leaving them in a situation of greater vulnerability.“

Andrea D'Atri (interview): „We say femicide is the ultimate link in a long chain of violences. [...] Capitalism needs *machista* culture to reproduce and therefore legitimizes this violence that sometimes culminates in a femicide, when a man thinks he is the owner of a woman's life.“

## Theses derived from Field Research

1. VAW takes **multiple forms** including economic violence. These forms are linked with each other (chains, network). They strengthen and sustain each other.
2. **Economic inequality** leaves women in a more vulnerable situation and stops them from escaping violent situations.
3. Austerity policies affect the possibilities of women to escape violent situations. **Austerity** is therefore **in itself violence**.
4. Supposed **ownership over women's bodies** is expressed in acts of VAW.
5. VAW is a mechanism that ensures the working of the **capitalist mode of production and reproduction**.

## Literature

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## Next steps?

- Compare to theoretical and empirical literature: Are there new theoretical contributions? Is there empirical evidence in similar cases?
- Operationalization of (some of the) theses to test empirically.
- But: Problem of data availability. Search for appropriate method.

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