

Comparative Criminology: *HOMICIDE*

Homicide Rates per World Subregion

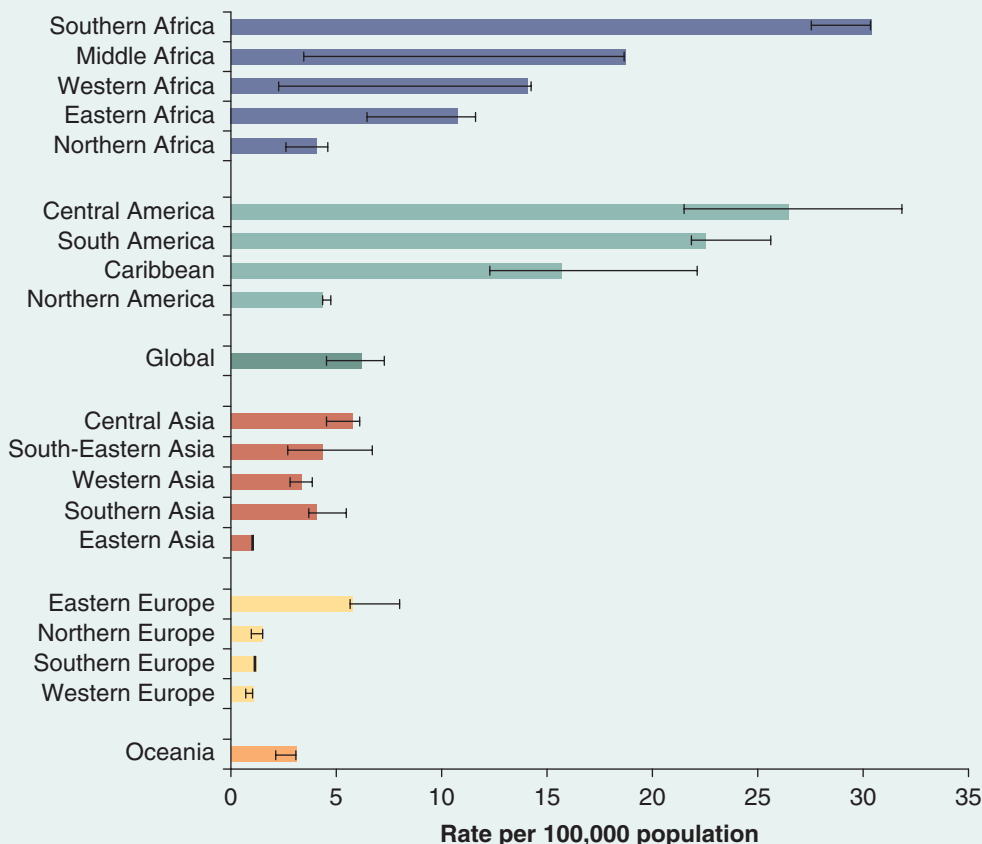
In this section, we examine findings from data provided by the sixth through eighth United Nations Crime Surveys and data from the World Health Organization³⁶ regarding homicide rates in various world subregions.³⁷

The data in Figure 10.2 reveal that of the world subregions included in this study, Southern Africa has, by far, the highest rate of homicide at 31 (per 100,000/year). The second-highest region—Central America—is a not-so-distant second at 26.5, and the third-ranking subregion—South America—is close to the second at 23.5. It is also notable that the world average is 6.2, which would likely be significantly lower if there wasn't such a high outlier at the top (Southern Africa). In fact, if we removed the world ranking from this report, and chose to use the median (instead of the mean or average) as our measure of central tendency of the 16 subregions presented in the report, then the world average would be about 5.8 (per 100,000/year).

Also notable is North America (which of course includes the United States) at a rate of 6.8, which is below the world average (8.2). Perhaps most interesting is the rate reported for North Africa (0.8), which is the lowest reported, despite being on the same continent as the highest recorded rate (Southern Africa). This just goes to show how certain locations, often in close proximity, can be entirely different in terms of crime. This can also be seen on a more local level, such as in cities in Southern California (e.g., Mission Viejo, Thousand Oaks) that are some of the safest communities in the United States virtually every year, while some close cities in that region (e.g., Compton, San Bernardino) typically have some of the highest rates of crime. It is quite amazing that some of the cities in our nation or regions in the world can have such drastic differences regarding crime rates. This just goes to show how variant places can be, even if they are relatively close in proximity or in the same geographic area.³⁸

FIGURE 10.2

Homicides per 100,000 Population per World Subregion



Source: 2013 Global Study on Homicide. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.