



UNECE



Workshop on Disseminating, Communicating and Using Gender Statistics in Kyrgyzstan

Bishkek, 29-31 May 2018

Practical exercise: calculating and interpreting the maternal mortality ratio

You will work for approximately 30 minutes in small groups (about 5 people per group) to calculate the maternal mortality ratio, compare it across countries, and consider some questions about data needs and policy implications.

The table overleaf shows estimates of the numbers of maternal deaths and live births in the countries of Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus in 2015.

1. Using the formula below, calculate the maternal mortality ratio for the countries in the table.
 - *In which country of the region is the maternal mortality ratio the highest?*

$$MMR = \left(\frac{\text{annual number of maternal deaths}}{\text{annual number of live births}} \right) \times 100,000$$

The maternal mortality ratio (MMR) measures the risk to women's lives due to being pregnant, carrying a pregnancy to term and delivering a baby.

It is the ratio of the number of women dying *from causes related to or aggravated by pregnancy or delivery of their child* during a specified period (usually a year), to the number of live births during that same period.

The ratio is expressed per 100,000 live births because, fortunately, the numbers of maternal deaths are so small that we need to multiply by 100,000 to make the results easier to understand and work with.

Maternal mortality in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus, 2015¹

Country	Number of maternal deaths	Number of live births	Maternal mortality ratio
Armenia	10	40,000	
Azerbaijan	48	192,000	
Belarus	5	125,000	
Georgia	19	52,778	
Kazakhstan	45	375,000	
Kyrgyzstan	120	157,895	
Rep. Moldova	10	43,478	
Tajikistan	82	256,250	
Turkmenistan	47	111,905	
Ukraine	120	500,000	
Uzbekistan	240	666,667	

To put these figures in context:

- The worldwide MMR in 2015 was 216 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births
- The highest MMR was in Sierra Leone, with a ratio of 1,360 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births.
- The lowest MMRs were in Finland, Greece, Iceland and Poland with a ratio of 3 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births.

¹ UNICEF (2015) estimates available from <https://data.unicef.org/topic/maternal-health/maternal-mortality/>

