

Table of Contents

- [*Legalize abortion*](#)
- [*Femicides in Argentina reach 10-year high under coronavirus lockdown*](#)
- [*Argentina president to introduce bill to legalise abortion*](#)
- [*Abortion bill fails in Argentina, but movement takes hold across Latin America*](#)
- [*Argentina lawmakers in marathon abortion debate*](#)
- [*Public outrage shakes Argentina after murder of Anti-Femicide activist*](#)

Legalize abortion

End insurmountable barriers.

HRW (31.08.2020) - <https://bit.ly/33fazWD> - The life and health of anyone who is pregnant in Argentina will be at risk as long as access to abortion and post-abortion care remains heavily restricted, Human Rights Watch said in a report released today. Congress should legalize abortion to protect their fundamental rights, given the insurmountable obstacles they face when trying to access abortion under the limited exceptions authorized by law.

The 77-page report named "[A Case for Legal Abortion: The Human Cost of Barriers to Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Argentina](#)," describes the consequences of the Senate's rejection of a 2018 bill that would have fully decriminalized abortion during the first 14 weeks of pregnancy. Human Rights Watch documented cases of women and girls who have, since then, encountered an array of barriers to access legal abortion and post-abortion care. The barriers include arbitrarily imposed gestational limits, lack of access to and availability of abortion methods, fear of criminal prosecution, stigmatization, and mistreatment by health professionals.

"Since the Argentine Senate narrowly rejected the 2018 bill to legalize abortion, thousands of women and girls either had to overcome major barriers to access legal abortion or resort to clandestine, often unsafe, abortions that endanger their health and lives," said José Miguel Vivanco, Americas director at Human Rights Watch. "The Covid-19 pandemic and resulting lockdown have only exacerbated the limited access to reproductive health services, making legalizing abortion more urgent than ever."

During his presidential campaign, President Alberto Fernández promised to submit a bill to Congress to decriminalize abortion. Since taking office in December 2019, he has publicly supported decriminalizing abortion. One of the first measures by his health minister was to update and improve the "National Protocol for Comprehensive Care of People Entitled to Legal Termination of Pregnancy," which, if applied properly and consistently throughout the country, would contribute to improving access to comprehensive reproductive and sexual health services.

Submitting the bill was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but Fernández's top legal adviser has said that the government hopes to submit it this year.

Human Rights Watch visited the provinces of Salta, Chaco, Santa Fe, Entre Ríos, and Buenos Aires, as well as Buenos Aires City, in November and December 2019, and interviewed 30 people, including women and girls who sought abortion care in the public and private health systems, health workers, lawyers, and activists who support those seeking abortions. Human Rights Watch also conducted follow-up interviews, requested information from the Argentine government, and analyzed laws and policies, reports by United Nations agencies and nongovernmental organizations, official health data and public health studies, and medical journals and news outlets.

A nearly century-old “exceptions model” largely bans abortion in Argentina. The only exceptions, under Section 86 of the 1921 criminal code, are when a pregnancy endangers the life or health of a woman or girl, or when it results from rape. In all other circumstances, abortion is illegal and punishable with up to 15 years in prison. The sentence for self-inducing abortion or consenting to have an abortion is up to four years.

Human Rights Watch documented cases of women and girls whose situations fell within the legal “exceptions” but who faced insurmountable barriers to access abortion and post-abortion care. Obstacles included a lack of public information about the scope of legal grounds for abortion; health facilities imposing arbitrary hurdles or waiting periods; health officials illegally requiring production of police reports or court orders to proceed with the procedure under the rape exception; and lack of access to safe and legal methods or lack of nearby health facilities providing abortion services. The invocation of conscientious objection by providers also created severe burdens or delays.

Women, health professionals, and feminist activists said that stigmatization and fear of legal consequences, including criminal prosecution, deter people from seeking – and health professionals from providing – abortions, even when Section 86 of the criminal code exception requirements are met. Women and girls faced abuse and mistreatment, including cruelty and humiliation by healthcare providers, denial of access to legal health services, and violation of medical confidentiality in health care settings.

Access to legal abortion and post-abortion care depends heavily on a person’s location and socioeconomic background, Human Rights Watch found. A lack of clear and consistent regulations across the country has resulted in a patchwork of practices that disproportionately harms people with limited resources or little access to information about their rights.

In addition, the Covid-19 lockdown has made access to any reproductive health care more difficult. Furthermore, the need to visit multiple health centers and travel sometimes for hours to obtain access to services multiplies the risks of contagion.

Criminalizing abortion does not prevent people from ending unwanted pregnancies. It forces them to seek abortions outside the regulation of the state, and many are performed unsafely. Many, particularly those who live in poverty or in rural areas, resort to self-induced abortions or seek assistance from untrained providers.

Unsafe abortions can lead to short- or long-term health problems, and even death. In 2018, Argentina’s National Health Ministry reported 35 deaths from abortion, constituting 13 percent of maternal deaths. Many of these deaths are preventable.

In the latest available statistics, for 2016, 39,025 women and girls were admitted to public hospitals for health complications arising from abortions or miscarriages. Sixteen percent were ages 10 to 19. That is most likely a fraction of the total amount of pregnant people facing health consequences from illegal abortions, as stigmatization and fear of criminal prosecution often keep women who suffer complications from seeking care.

Authoritative interpretations of treaties ratified by Argentina have long established that highly restrictive abortion laws violate the human rights of women and girls, including their rights to life, to health, and not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment. As long as Argentina criminalizes abortion, pregnant people will confront unjust difficulties in exercising their rights, particularly those who rely on the public health system, and who live in provinces that lack or do not implement abortion regulations.

Argentina should decriminalize abortion in all circumstances and regulate it in a manner that fully respects the autonomy of those who are pregnant, Human Rights Watch said. Argentina should also ensure that pregnant people have access to legal abortion as currently regulated and that healthcare workers cannot invoke conscientious objection to refuse to perform abortions in public care services in a manner that imposes burdens or delays in accessing legal abortion services.

For selected cases documented by Human Rights Watch, see below.

Selected Cases

Veronica R. (pseudonym), 25, was receiving free contraceptive injections at a health facility when, in February 2019, the providers saw she had a new address and told her that, to continue getting free services, she would have to visit a health center closer to home. She went to a health center nearer her home and requested a tubal ligation, she told Human Rights Watch. A gynecologist there told her she was “too young and might want to have children in the future.” The gynecologist, because of his personal beliefs, also refused to provide any form of contraception. Veronica had neither the time nor the resources to find an alternative source of contraceptives, and, in April 2019, she became pregnant. At six weeks pregnant, Veronica sought a legal abortion, citing the health exception, at a clinic in a small provincial city. Healthcare providers there refused, offering no reason, so she went to another clinic, where a healthcare provider told her that she was too far along in the pregnancy to have an abortion there. Veronica became so desperate, she said, that she considered getting hit by a car to end the pregnancy. When she was 20 weeks pregnant, a feminist organization referred her to a medical team that performed the abortion in a city a 4-hour drive from where she lived.

In September 2019, Leticia H. (pseudonym), 19, went to a public hospital in northern Argentina to end a pregnancy caused by rape. She was 17 weeks pregnant. The hospital denied the abortion, citing an informal rule under which the hospital provided abortions only up to 16 weeks. The rule lacked a legal basis. Leticia took medication to induce an abortion, a lawyer involved in the case told Human Rights Watch, but the abortion was incomplete; tissue remaining in her uterus placed her at risk of infection. Recognizing that something was wrong and that she needed medical intervention, Leticia went to a hospital, where health personnel left her waiting for two hours before treating her. Bleeding profusely, she lost consciousness several times in the emergency room corridor. “If you liked having an abortion,” a hospital employee told her, “you’ll now have to wait.”

In November 2018, Carmela Toledo, 23, found out that she was carrying a fetus with anencephaly, a condition that makes it difficult for the fetus to survive. Carmela was 25 weeks pregnant. She went to a public hospital in Buenos Aires province to request a legal abortion, but doctors told her that the bill decriminalizing abortion had not passed and added, falsely, that abortion was completely illegal. They said she had to wait until she was seven months pregnant, so they could say she had had a premature birth. When she was seven months pregnant, health professionals tried unsuccessfully to induce birth. The doctor involved frightened Carmela by outlining the risks of the procedure, including the possibility of difficulties in having a child later. She decided to continue the

pregnancy, and whenever she felt the fetus move, she cried. She had a caesarean section at week 41 and delivered a daughter who died eight days later.

Femicides in Argentina reach 10-year high under coronavirus lockdown

By Oscar Lopez

Thomson Reuters Foundation (19.05.2020) - <https://reut.rs/3bUn2RU> - The number of women killed in Argentina has reached a 10-year high under coronavirus lockdown, a leading rights group said on Monday, with more than 50 femicides in less than two months.

Three of those women were murdered in just the last four days, according to La Casa del Encuentro, a Buenos Aires-based feminist group that said not only the numbers but the severity of the violence was hugely concerning.

"We're very worried. It's the highest number in 10 years," said Ada Rico, the group's president and director of the organization's Femicide Observatory watchdog project.

"(Women) are being beaten to death or strangled," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Twelve women are killed every day in Latin America because of their gender in a crime known as femicide, according to the United Nations, and the region is home to 14 of the 25 countries with the highest rates of femicide in the world.

The vast majority of killings go unprosecuted.

The data in Argentina follows a worldwide trend of rising gender-based violence under lockdown that has left women trapped at home with their abusers and unable to seek help while tensions due to COVID-19 escalate, experts say.

"She's isolated with the person who's attacking her," said Rico. "Sometimes when a woman's locked up, she can't make a phone call."

Along with the three most recent deaths, at least 49 women were killed between March 20 and May 14, the group said. That is up from 40 in the same period last year and an increase of nearly a third compared with 2018.

Calls to Argentina's emergency 137 line for domestic abuse victims increased by two-thirds in April versus a year earlier after shelter-in-place measures were ordered in mid-March.

U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres has called on governments to take urgent measures to tackle a "horrifying global surge" in domestic violence, adding that for many women, being in their own homes was often the most dangerous.

Argentina has recorded more than 7,800 confirmed coronavirus cases and about 360 deaths, according to a Reuters tally.

The number of femicides was calculated using local media reports, Rico said.

Argentina president to introduce bill to legalise abortion

If the bill is approved, Argentina will be the largest jurisdiction to legalise the procedure in Latin America.

By Natalie Alcoba

Al Jazeera (02.03.2020) - <https://bit.ly/2PL73NM> - Argentina's President Alberto Fernandez will send a bill to Congress in a matter of days that seeks to legalise abortion, marking the first time the initiative will have the backing of the president in what could be a significant breakthrough for abortion rights in Latin America.

Fernandez made the announcement in the National Congress on Sunday, with thousands of people gathered outside, including women brandishing the green handkerchief of abortion rights. Some wiped tears from their eyes during his speech.

In Argentina, abortion is illegal and can mean jail time, except in instances of rape, or if a mother's health is at risk.

The new bill comes two years after a dramatic debate in the home country of Pope Francis in which the legalisation of abortion was narrowly rejected by the Senate.

Fernandez called the current law "ineffective" because it has had no deterrent effect.

"It has also condemned many women, generally of limited resources, to resort to abortive practices in absolute secrecy, putting their health and sometimes their lives at risk," he said.

"A state that is present must protect citizens in general and obviously women in particular. And in the 21st century, every society needs to respect an individual's decision to make choices over their own bodies.

"That is why, within the next 10 days, I will present a bill for the voluntary interruption of pregnancy that legalises abortion at the initial time of pregnancy and allows women to access the health system when they make the decision to abort."

Advancing women's rights

Argentina's feminist movement is pushing to legalise elective abortion in the first 14 weeks of pregnancy.

The president will also send a project to Congress that will provide better support to mothers and newborns, as well as a plan to ensure sexual education is delivered in schools.

The Argentine government estimates that 350,000 illegal abortions take place every year in the third-most populous country in South America, putting women's lives at risk. Human rights groups estimate the number could be as high as 500,000. Many women who try to access abortions that are legal also face obstacles, with doctors invoking religious or moral objections.

Ana Correa, a women's rights activist who wrote *Somos Belen*, a book about an Argentine woman who was imprisoned after suffering a miscarriage said she was delighted with Fernandez's decision.

"We're very happy and hopeful," Correa told Al Jazeera. "We will have some important opponents, but it's going to be very difficult for legislators to oppose this project because there really is very compelling proof of how clandestine abortions impact women."

Daniel Lipovetsky, a legislator in the province of Buenos Aires, told Al Jazeera that Sunday's announcement showed how far Argentina had moved ahead on the issue.

"Just a few years ago, it would have been unimaginable that a president would send a project to legalise abortion to the Congress," said Lipovetsky, who forms part of the political opposition and in 2018 was part of the group who worked in favour of legalisation.

Argentina is in the midst of an important transformation around the advancement of women's rights. In 2015, a feminist movement known as Ni Una Menos (Not One Less) took to the streets to denounce high rates of violence against women and triggered a broader debate that set the stage for the vote in 2018.

Correa, one of the founders of Ni Una Menos, highlighted three cases that have served to "unmask" the truth of abortion in Argentina: that of Belen, who spent more than two years in prison after a court ruled that what doctors had diagnosed as a miscarriage was an abortion (her conviction was overturned in 2017 following a public outcry); that of Ana Maria Acevedo, who sought an abortion in 2007 in order to undergo chemotherapy, was refused, and died; and that of an 11-year-old girl known as Lucia, who was raped by her grandmother's partner and denied a legal abortion by health authorities in 2019, until a court finally intervened. An emergency caesarean section had to be performed, the baby did not survive, and the doctors were then accused of homicide. No indictments were filed.

Correa said Fernandez's project to provide support to new mothers also serves "to deconstruct that false notion that those of us who are in favour of legal abortion are against maternity - that's not true."

Influence of Catholic church

The president's speech opening the session of Congress addressed a slew of other issues in Argentina, which is in a deep recession and in talks with the International Monetary Fund and other international creditors to restructure its debt. He made repeated references to taking care of the most vulnerable.

"His discourse was steeped with his set of values, of an Argentina that is inclusive, that is innovative, of a state that is present, and a state that is attending to, and listening to the new demands," said political scientist Paola Zuban, director of the public opinion consultancy Zuban Cordoba & Associates. But the issue of abortion remains deeply divisive, according to polls she has conducted.

The Catholic Church is likely to play an influential role in the debate. During the president's speech, the Episcopal Conference of Argentina sent a tweet reminding people of the mass it is planning for International Women's Day on March 8 to express opposition to abortion and "yes to women, yes to life."

"The culture of death advances," Monsenor Jorge Eduardo Scheinig, an archbishop, said in a recorded message. "We need to pray so that in Argentina, the yes to life is stronger than death."

Lipovetsky believes that the votes are there for approval in the lower house, but the Senate will be close. Still, he is optimistic.

"The chances that this will finally become law are many," he said.

And Correa says the feminist movement will keep the pressure on.

"There's no doubt that we're going to stay present in the streets and we're going to keep insisting so that legislators vote in favour," she said.

Abortion bill fails in Argentina, but movement takes hold across Latin America

Analysts say movement's rise is changing the region in ways that would have been impossible just years ago

The Irish Times (12.08.2018) - <https://bit.ly/2MOgAQQ> - They narrowly lost the vote. But as supporters of a Bill to legalise abortion in Argentina began to shake off a stinging defeat in the Senate last Thursday, they took consolation in having galvanised a reproductive-rights movement across Latin America and began to consider how to redirect their activism.

A coalition of young female lawmakers who stunned the political establishment by putting abortion rights at the top of the legislative agenda this year seemed to be on the verge of a historic victory with the Bill. But intense lobbying by Catholic Church leaders and staunch opposition in conservative northern provinces persuaded enough senators to vote against it.

After a 17-hour hearing, the Bill was defeated early on Thursday by a vote of 38-31, with two abstentions. "We will no longer be silent and we won't let them win," said Jimena Del Potro, a 33-year-old designer who fought back tears as she spoke. "Abortion will be legal soon. Very soon."

Despite the setback, many proponents marvelled that Argentine lawmakers had come so close to passing the measure, which would have allowed abortion during the first 14 weeks of pregnancy and fractured the near-total prohibition on abortion in Latin America.

Demonstrators

The measure had already been approved in the lower chamber of Congress. Current law allows abortions only in cases of rape or when a mother's life is in danger. The Bill energised hundreds of thousands of demonstrators across Argentina in a women's rights movement known as Ni Una Menos – Not One Less – and enthused women from Brazil to Mexico.

"What Argentina did was mobilise young women and create the memory that we almost won," said Debora Diniz, an anthropologist at the University of Brasília who helped write a petition now before Brazil's supreme court that challenges the constitutionality of its anti-abortion laws.

"They changed the way we talk about abortion," Diniz said. "It's not just feminists, intellectuals. It's young women, your daughter, your sister."

Ninety-seven per cent of Latin American women live in countries that ban abortion or allow it only in rare instances. Only Uruguay, Cuba, Guyana and Mexico City allow any woman to have an early-term abortion.

Priority

"Abortion rights was a priority and it will be deeply discouraging to have come this far and fail," said Benjamin Gedan, an Argentina expert at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington. But he said women's rights advocates already had achieved successes, such as the passage of a law that seeks to have an equal number of male and female lawmakers.

"If we make a list of the things we've gained and the things we've lost, the list of things we've gained is much bigger," said Edurne Cárdenas, a lawyer at the Centre for Legal and Social Studies, a human rights group in Argentina that favours legal abortion. "Sooner or later, this will be law."

President Mauricio Macri of Argentina opposed the Bill, but said he would have signed it. After the vote, administration officials said they planned to ease abortion penalties in an overhaul of the penal code that will be presented on August 21st. Women getting abortions can be charged with a crime and imprisoned under the current law, although that happens very rarely.

The penal code changes had been in the works for some time, but they appeared to reflect Macri's realisation that the reproductive-rights movement in Argentina was now an established force.

"The women's movement mobilised all regions of Argentina; it was intergenerational and exceeded everybody's expectations," said Françoise Girard, the president of the International Women's Health Coalition, which supports legal abortion. "The new generation of teenage girls who came out in such numbers will not be stopped."

Violent death

The organised movement that pushed the Bill started in 2015 with the brutal murder of a pregnant 14-year-old girl by her teenage boyfriend. Her mother claimed the boyfriend's family didn't want her to have the baby. A journalist, Marcela Ojeda, despairing over yet another woman's violent death, posted a tweet: "Aren't we going to raise our voice? They're killing us."

Her anger struck a chord. Within weeks, hundreds of thousands of demonstrators marched across Argentina, after organising on social media around the hashtag #NiUnaMenos. The slogan spread to neighbouring countries, including Mexico, Peru, Chile and Colombia, where it was used to denounce violence against women, demand reproductive rights and draw attention to related causes.

Analysts said the movement's improbable rise already had begun to change the region in ways that would have been impossible just years ago. The campaign is credited with inspiring debate on a variety of women's issues, including domestic violence, a subject that has long been taboo.

Ahead of the vote, supporters rallied in Uruguay, Brazil and neighbouring Chile, where they gathered in front of the Argentine embassy in Santiago, chanting and wearing the green handkerchiefs that symbolised the movement. Many couped their disappointment at the outcome in Argentina with optimism.

"When you undergo a process like this, you must keep fighting," said Susana Chávez, an activist in Lima, Peru, who directs the Centre for the Promotion and Defence of Sexual

and Reproductive Rights, a nongovernmental group. She said activists were already planning a march in Lima on Saturday.

Public outcry

The abortion debate in Mexico has been accompanied by a public outcry over violence against women and a renewed push for gender equality, led mostly by women's and human rights groups. Last autumn, protests under the Ni Una Menos banner in at least five Mexican cities demanded an end to violence against women. The protests were a response to the rape and murder of Mara Castillo, a college student, after a taxi ride in the city of Puebla.

In El Salvador, which bans abortion under all circumstances, two Bills were proposed in Congress this spring that were pushed by women's rights groups and their allies, opening debate on the issue for the first time.

For Argentina, the debate over abortion tugged at the country's sense of self. It is the birthplace of Pope Francis, who recently denounced abortion as the "white glove" equivalent of the Nazi-era eugenics programme. But the country in recent years has inched away from a close church-state relationship.

In 2010, Argentina became the first country in Latin America to allow gay couples to wed – a move the church fought with a vigour similar to its battle against abortion. Francis, then the archbishop of Buenos Aires, called that Bill a "destructive attack on God's plan."

'Very emotional'

The church had many allies in the abortion debate, including women who spent hours outside Congress in the Argentine winter cold as the debate got under way on Wednesday night. Many expressed relief at the result. "It was a very emotional day," said María Curutchet, a 34-year-old lawyer. "We were out in huge numbers and showed that we will defend the two lives, no matter the cost."

Some prominent female political leaders also came out against the measure, including vice-president Gabriela Michetti. But Macri's health minister, Adolfo Rubinstein, testified in Congress in favour of legalisation and estimated that some 354,000 clandestine abortions are carried out every year in the country.

Complications as a result of those abortions are the single leading cause of maternal deaths in the country, according to Mariana Romero, a researcher at the Centre for the Study of State and Society, a nonprofit organisation.

While the measure failed in the Senate, it made some inroads. Among the senators who voted for it was Cristina Kirchner, who as president had opposed legalising abortion. "The ones who made me change my mind were the thousands and thousands of girls who took to the streets," she said.

Argentina lawmakers in marathon abortion debate

Lawmakers in Argentina spent Wednesday afternoon and the entire night debating whether to allow women to have abortions in the first 14 weeks of pregnancy.

BBC (14.06.2018) - <https://bbc.in/2MrAv0U> - A vote on a draft bill is due to be held in the lower house later on Thursday.

Deputies have been split almost evenly in the highly divisive debate and the result could go either way.

If approved, the bill will still have to go to the Senate.

President Mauricio Macri is strongly opposed to the bill but has said that he would not veto it if it was passed by Congress.

Abortion is currently illegal in Argentina, except in cases of rape or when the life or health of the woman is at risk. Women seeking abortions also have to apply to a judge for permission, which critics say can unnecessarily delay the procedure.

Divided, but not along party lines

Lawmakers for and against the bill had five minutes each to outline their position and try to sway deputies from the other side.

President Macri had told members of his party to vote according to their conscience.

The debate was rare in Argentine politics in that it was not divided along party lines, but that there were opponents and supporters both on the left and the right.

Before the session started at 11:30 local time on Wednesday (14:30 GMT), more than a dozen lawmakers had said that they were still undecided.

It is these that the lawmakers speaking are trying to convince. More than 200 took to the podium in the first 19 hours of the debate.

Axel Kicillof of the Justicialist Party urged his colleagues to "give women the right to decide over their bodies".

But Mario Horacio Arce of the Radical Civic Union argued that the bill would be unconstitutional.

"The national constitution does not distinguish between different phases of pregnancy, it protects life from the moment of conception," he said.

Silvia Martínez, also of the Radical Civic Union, disagreed: "This is a great opportunity. I ask you to reflect, let's not tell women making these demands 'no'."

The divisions inside the chamber were mirrored on the streets outside, where opponents and supporters gathered for all-night vigils.

Police had earlier erected barricades to keep the two sides apart but that did not prevent the occasional shouting match.

Growing momentum

The vote comes a year after lawmakers in neighbouring Chile approved lifting that country's total ban on abortions.

The momentum in favour of a change in the law in Argentina has grown over the past months and was further boosted by the overwhelming vote for overturning the abortion ban in Ireland.

There have been huge marches backing the bill led by #NiUnaMenos (#NotOneLess), a movement first created to fight violence against women but which has since expanded across much of Latin America to stand up for women's rights.

Tens of thousands of people have shown their support by wearing green handkerchiefs but there has also been stiff opposition led by the Catholic Church.

Non-governmental organisations say an estimated 500,000 abortions a year are carried out clandestinely, often in conditions which pose a health risk for women and girls.

In most of Latin America there are tight restrictions on abortions and in some countries such as the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Honduras there is a total ban.

If Argentina were to pass the bill it would be the most populous nation in the region to lift restrictions on abortions.

Public outrage shakes Argentina after murder of Anti-Femicide activist

The latest victim of gendered violence in the country was an anti-femicide activist who had been missing for a week.

To Μωβ (09.04.2017) - <http://bit.ly/2nEJDxB> -

"Ni una menos!" ("Not one less!")

"Vivas nos queremos!" ("We want ourselves alive!")

"Estado responsable!" ("The state is responsible!")

These were some of the chants heard in the town of Moreno, Buenos Aires, where thousands gathered Saturday (8/4) to protest the femicide of **Micaela Garcia**, who herself was an activist against sexist violence.

The 21-year-old Argentine had been missing for a week after she had attended a nightclub in nearby Gualeguay. Her naked body was found Saturday morning in a rural area with signs of having been strangled.

Her suspected killer, Sebastian Wagner, arrested the same day, is a serial rapist with previous charges of rape against him. While his original sentencing was to be imprisoned for those instances of rape until at least 2020, when he was convicted in 2010, a judge had reduced his sentence. As such, the target of the protests in Moreno was also Judge Carlos Rossi, who had been responsible for releasing Wagner early.

"Here are two people responsible: the murderer of Micaela and a judge who released him despite being advised against doing so," said Fabiana Tuñez, the president of the National Women's Council.

Garcia, a university student, was involved with various social movements and championed the struggle against femicides of women in Argentina, her father told reporters.

"We are going to live to try to achieve a more just society, as Micaela intended. Pain has to serve us to change society," explained Nestor Garcia, the young woman's father.

A recent documentary by Alejandra Perdomo, titled "Every 30 Hours," found that gendered violence in Argentina kills one woman every 30 hours.

According to Casa del Encuentro, almost 3,000 women have been killed since 2008, when the organization started to monitor femicides. Despite the inclusion of "femicide" in the criminal code in 2012, only one man has been sentenced for femicide charges since then.

According to Pedromo, the anti-femicide movement "Ni Una Menos" made the issue more visible, resulting in a surge of complaints.

While Argentina has been a pioneer in implementing laws defending the rights of the LGBTI community over the past decade during the progressive administrations of Nestor Kirchner and Cristina Fernandez, the country only recently started to measure the extent of the femicide issue, after an accumulation of horrendous murders were covered in the media.

The movement against femicide saw a resurgence in Argentina last year, sparking a wider uprising across the region against gender violence and the systemic impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators of femicide and domestic abuse.

For additional, important information, from "Newsweek", 10 April:

Pope Francis—one of Argentina's best-known citizens—telephoned Garcia's parents, Yuyo Garcia and Andrea Lescano. Writing on Facebook, Yuyo Garcia said: *"This is how far your fight and message has come, my beautiful. Thank you Holy Father for your humility and your respect!"*

Speaking to the Argentinian Radio Mitre on April 9, Argentine President Mauricio Macri argued that "the laws we have are enough" but criticized the judge for releasing Wagner early.

"We cannot keep these kinds of judges. We all have to understand that we have to take responsibility, there is not a president or a government that solves the problems magically, we all are."

According to La Casa del Encuentro, an Argentinian feminist organization monitoring femicides in the country, 230 women were murdered between January 1 and October 31, 2016—roughly one every 30 hours.
