

**SMALL ARMS AND  
LIGHT WEAPONS, THEIR AMMUNITION  
AND EXPLOSIVES CONTROL  
STRATEGY  
2019 – 2024**

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## **Executive Summary**

The fight against crime and improving public order and safety in Albania continue to be strategic priorities of the Albanian Government.

Illicit firearms and military ammunition owned by citizens and their misuse, continue to be a serious source of risk to the lives of the citizens and also to public order and safety.

Considering this risk as a serious obstacle also for the social and economic development of the country, which affects the public safety, and with a negative effect in the safety of the citizens, the State Police has continuously paid special attention to the prevention of criminal offences related to illicit possession of firearms, but also to other criminal offences related to the trafficking of weapons, ammunition, etc.

Although the illicit trafficking and possession of firearms, gun crimes, explosives and their precursors have decreased on each year, they still present a threat to human life and public order and safety. When illicit weapons, ammunition and explosives are analysed in the context of national safety and threats, such as the fight against terrorism, then the control, management and fight against the illegality of this sector receive a new dimension, to which special attention and resources should be provided.

The interaction and cooperation between crime and terrorist groups, knows no boundaries and that is why this strategy follows an inter-agency approach.

Apart from national demand to increase public safety, this strategy shall also contribute to the regional and EU safety through improved border control, and also fighting against illicit exports and imports of weapons, ammunition, explosives and their precursors.

Apart from the control, management and fight against illicit weapons, ammunition and explosives, the fight against terrorism requires additional control and supervision measures on the personnel, state and private legal persons that import and use explosives and their precursors.

The priority of the State Police has been and shall always be the provision of a safe environment, for local or foreign citizens, businesses and the whole society.

Currently, the illegal possession of firearms in Albania is a concern due to the situation inherited over the years, but also due to the increase of the flow of people and goods, which has resulted in the increase of criminal activity in the area of illicit trafficking of weapons and ammunitions.

The State Police continuously works to minimize the number of criminal offences related to the illegal possession of firearms, by identifying the persons that carry them illegally and organizing the work to catch these people in the act, but also to reduce the number of other criminal offences related to firearms trafficking, etc.

The possession of firearms and their misuse indicate a clear gender dimension. In Albania, the majority of firearms license holders are men (99.9%). Also, men account for the overwhelming majority of the perpetrators of incidents committed with firearms (98%) and are more prevalent among victims (89%). On the other hand, women own only a small part of firearms. They misuse them rarely but are disproportionately represented among victims (11%). Most of the women victims are domestic violence victims and the misuse of firearms happens within this context.

The Parliament of Albania has approved a number of laws on weapons, which aim to provide a more effective control, such as:

- a. The Criminal Code, which has provisions that define criminal offences related to illicit possession of weapons and ammunitions, and also firearms and ammunition trafficking.
- b. Law No. 74/2014 “On Weapons”.
- c. Law No. 72/2014 “On the use of firearms”.
- d. Law No. 9126, dated 29/07/2003 “On civil use of explosives, pyrotechnic compositions and fireworks in the Republic of Albania”, as amended by Law No. 10 388, dated 03/03/2011 and Law No. 73/2014.
- e. Law No. 9020, dated 06/03/2003 “On the accession of the Republic of Albania, in the “Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the purpose of detection”.

With the normative acts of the Council of Ministers and with the Instructions of the Minister of Interior or other institutions mandated by the law, the legal acts and by-laws package in Albania is now complete to allow the use of weapons in legal activities, for the category that fulfils the conditions and criteria, but also to penalize those citizens, who intend to exercise and organize illegal activities in this regard.

Albania has joined the main international agreements on firearms control, including: the Arms Trade Treaty, United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the Firearms Protocol, and has embraced the regional initiatives to strengthen small arms and light weapons (SALW) control in the territory of the Republic of Albania and in the entire region.

In 2016, the Republic of Albania disposed the surplus of weapons and ammunitions inherited by the previous system. The Ministry of Defence has closely cooperated with international partners to fulfil this commitment. During the SALW reduction and disposal process, the Armed Forces (AF) of the Republic of Albania, have been assisted by international organizations and partner countries, such as NATO, UNDP SEESAC, Germany, USA, Norway, Great Britain, Canada, OSCE, etc.

Also, there are legal procedures regarding the surplus of ammunition, which are generated periodically due to inventorying and confiscations.

The National Commission for Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), which is an inter-ministerial body responsible for planning, coordinating, monitoring and reporting all activities related to arms control in the Republic of Albania, was established by order of the Prime Minister, in order to ensure a safe environment and therefore to create favourable conditions for the

sustainable development of the country. The main goals of the National Commission for Small Arms and Light Weapons are:

- To formulate the National Strategy and Action Plan for the Control of SALW, in compliance with the areas of responsibility and based on a full assessment of the firearms control situation in Albania, and also to monitor and report the implementation of the goals of this Strategy.
- To fulfil Albania's commitments in the framework of the UN, the obligations for EU integration, and also in the framework of promoting regional cooperation to enhance understanding, peace and stability.

The Strategy and Action Plan ensure and monitor the fulfilment of Albania's obligations under different international conventions and documents in the area of firearms control (including the UN Programme of Action, the OSCE Document on SALW, the Arms Trade Treaty, the United Nations Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in SALW, the EU Code of Conduct etc., and also the alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

In particular, the Strategy and the Action Plan refer to the "Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and their ammunition in the Western Balkans, by 2024".

The Goals of the Strategy and Action Plan are the same with the regional Roadmap and also with the performance indicators.

Although Albania has approved the Law 74/2014 "On Weapons", the approval for the first time of the private ownership on weapons, requires amendments, not only due to the experience gained during its implementation, but also because of harmonization with the European Firearms Directive which was amended in 2017.

**Goal 1:** By 2023, ensure that arms control legislation is in place, fully harmonized with the EU regulatory framework and other related international obligations, and standardized across the region.

**Goal 2:** By 2024, ensure that arms control policies and practices in Albania are evidence based and intelligence led.

**Goal 3:** By 2024, significantly reduce illicit flows of firearms, ammunition and explosives (FAE) into, within and beyond Albania.

**Goal 4:** By 2024, significantly reduce the supply, demand and misuse of firearms through increased awareness, education, outreach and advocacy.

**Goal 5:** By 2024, substantially decrease the estimated number of firearms in illicit possession in Albania.

**Goal 6:** Systematically decrease the surplus and destroy seized small arms and light weapons and ammunition, adhering to environmental standards.

**Goal 7:** Significantly decrease the risk of proliferation and diversion of firearms, ammunition and explosives.

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**List of Abbreviations:**

<b>MoI</b>	Ministry of Interior
<b>MoFE</b>	Ministry of Finance and Economy
<b>MoJ</b>	Ministry of Justice
<b>MoESY</b>	Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth
<b>MoEFA</b>	Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs
<b>MoD</b>	Ministry of Defence
<b>MoHSW</b>	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
<b>MoTE</b>	Ministry of Tourism and Environment
<b>SP</b>	State Police
<b>GDC</b>	General Directorate of Customs
<b>GDP</b>	General Directorate of Prisons
<b>AKSHE</b>	State Export Control Authority
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>UN</b>	United Nations Organization
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Program
<b>OSCE</b>	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
<b>CoE</b>	Council of Europe
<b>SALW</b>	Small Arms and Light Weapons
<b>FAE</b>	Firearms, Ammunitions, Explosives
<b>SELEC</b>	Southeast European Law Enforcement Centre
<b>SEESAC</b>	South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons
<b>SEEFEN</b>	South East Europe Firearms Expert Network
<b>SEEFEG</b>	South East Europe Firearms Experts Group
<b>FFP</b>	Firearms Focal Point

## **1 Introduction**

### **1.1 Scope**

The main scope of this six-year Strategy is the total control on small arms and light weapons, ammunitions and explosives based on the national requirements and the EU, UN and OSCE standards.

This strategic document aims to define overall directions for the institutions and agencies, which will implement the activities of the Strategy in the coming years.

The document presents the Albanian Government's vision on the control of weapons, ammunitions and explosives and the respective action plan.

The approval and the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan, which follows the establishment of the National Commission for Small Arms and Light Weapons, is also stated in the European Union progress reports of the recent years.

The Republic of Albania has undertaken to promote stability and safety, not only nationally, but also to be an important contributor for the safety in the region and beyond. The international cooperation in the area of control and fight against illegal trafficking of SALW and explosives remains one of the priorities of the Government.

### **1.2 Vision**

The Republic of Albania is a country with a safe environment and sustainable capacities to prevent, control and prosecute the misuse, illicit possession and trafficking of firearms, ammunitions and explosives, fully harmonized with the European Union and other international standards.

### **1.3 Methodology**

The Strategy and the Action Plan for the Control of SALW and Explosives is drafted based on the assessments and analysis of specialized agencies, statistical data from the government and international institutions that operate in Albania and abroad.

This strategy is based on the European Union requirements, which stem from the “**EU Action plan against illicit trafficking in and use of firearms and explosives**”, and also from the **UN Programme of Action**.

This strategy is also based on other international practices and standards (UN). In this context, this Strategy aims to be fully harmonized with the respective EU and other international standards and regulations.

In particular, the Strategy and the Action Plan refer to the “Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and their ammunition in the Western Balkans, by 2024”.

The Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania through Order No. 69, dated 22/05/2017, decided the establishment of the National Commission for Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), its composition and to be chaired by the Deputy Minister of Interior.

## **2 Situation Analysis**

### **2.1 Threats against national security and the obligations under the EU integration process**

If it is not kept under control, Small Arms and Light Weapons may pose a threat to national security or it may be a source of danger to the region and the EU. Weapons have an impact on people, communities and businesses. They continue to cause loss of lives, economic and social damages and fear among the public.

Albania has determined the procedures of dealing with the stockpiles of seized and confiscated weapons, ammunitions and explosives and by Decision of the Council of Ministers, these ordnance are periodically submitted to the Ministry of Defence to be dismantled in military factories.

The survey on the distribution of weapons and their impact concluded on January 2018 and the results show that there is incomplete information on specific armed incidents and this shall remain one of the obligations in the Action Plan of the SALW Strategy, to standardize statistics.

The Strategy and the Action Plan aim to give a comprehensive solution to the problem of illegal possession of firearms and the activities to reduce the illicit possession of firearms through confiscation, legalization, voluntary surrender and deactivation.

Between 2006-2017, a total of 9,380 criminal offences of illicit possession of firearms were identified nationwide, of which 8,268, or 88.1%, were detected, with 9,687 perpetrators. What is striking is that the trend of this criminal offence increased after 2012, compared to previous years.

During 2017, 1,090 perpetrators who had committed the criminal offence of illegal possession of firearms were identified, of which 587, or 54%, were arrested, 111 or 10%, were detained, 246, or 23%, were released under investigation, and 139 perpetrators, or 13% of the total, were wanted.

### **2.2 Voluntary surrender of weapons**

After the events of 1997, when weapons, ammunitions, grenades and military equipments were looted from the state warehouses in Albania, several amnesties on the voluntary surrender of weapons have been implemented in our country, in order to avoid a mass penalization of the Albanian citizens, giving them the opportunity to surrender the illegal weapons in their possession, which are a state property.

The time frame of the first amnesty was August 1998 - August 2002, and during this period it was also finalised and approved Law No. 8388, dated 05/08/1998 "On the Collection of Military Ammunitions and Weapons", a law which established the principles and methods for voluntary surrender of weapons, the registration for a category of businessmen and the methods to be employed by the police for collection of weapons.

The second amnesty was drafted on December 2002, but the amnesty and the law were approved on 6 March 2003, Law No. 9018 "On the collection of weapons, ammunitions and other military equipments". This law contained similar aims, principles, duties for the police and military, and the

same structure of weapons collection commissions in Albania. The law remained in force until 31 May 2005.

Weapons collected during both amnesties:

	Ammunitions	Explosives	Weapons
Looted in 1997	839,310,038	16,000,000	549,775
Collected: March 1997 – June 2005	118,134,222	1,539,828	222,918 or 40.54 %

A third amnesty was enacted between January-April 2017 and as a result of the work and awareness campaigns, the following weapons and ammunitions were voluntary surrendered nationwide:

- 1,603 different types of firearms.
- 1,558 hand grenades.
- 580,634 different types of ammunition.

On average, 13 different firearms were surrendered each day nationwide. This situation shows that there are still considerable amounts of illegally possessed firearms and military ammunitions, in the hands of the citizens.

The public opinion survey conducted in 2016 by SEESAC through the leading global polling agency “IPSOS”, showed that over 60% of Albanian citizens are opposed to firearms possession under any circumstance, while 78% believe that the State Police is the main contributor of security in the country.

The periodic application of the amnesty on the illegal possession of firearms for a 2-3 months period, the cooperation of the State Police with international organizations, media, other state institutions and different NGOs towards raising citizens awareness, would increase the number of voluntarily surrendered weapons and ammunitions, which are illegally possessed by the population.

The situation of firearms, ammunitions and explosives trafficking in the territory of the Republic of Albania was assessed taking into account factors such as the existence of firearms inherited from the past, new weapons and Albania’s geographic location.

Based on the technical-ballistic expertise of the weapons sequestered by the police in different criminal offences, it was also determined the firearms manufacturing origin. Based on these measures, we create a general overview which provides answers to the following questions: what types of firearms are in circulation in the Republic of Albania, their movement trend, in what types of criminal offences are weapons used, the age groups, areas where weapons are concentrated, etc.

An issue continues to be the presence of explosives inherited from the past, such as TNT and dynamites that are used by criminals, who are difficult to be identified during investigations.

Based on the analysis of the criminal offences occurred during 2017 in the territory of the Republic of Albania, it was observed that criminal groups are increasingly using remote control explosives to

protect their activity and also to eliminate their rivals. The investigations carried out in some criminal offences have confirmed that some explosives originate from the former arsenal inherited in 1997.

Also, the investigations carried out have found that in some cases the remote detonation mechanism in these explosives was installed by people within the country.

### **2.3 Firearms trafficking methods**

In general, based on the cases identified, firearms traffickers use the green border, by hiding weapons in vehicles, buses, trucks, cars or keep them in their body and cross the border illegally. Based on the investigated cases, it was observed that firearms trafficking is carried out in small amounts, 1-2 pieces. The identified age groups are mostly men, aged from 16-45 years old.

Based on the analysis of the operational situation and the identified cases, firearms enter the territory of Albania from the border between: Macedonia-Albania, Kosovo-Albania and Montenegro-Albania. Firearms (pistols) manufactured in the European countries and also firearms and explosives coming from the territory of Montenegro, are trafficked at this part of the border, while converted pistols are mainly trafficked from Kosovo and Macedonia. While, from the territory of Albania, through the Albania-Greece and Albania-Italy borders, perpetrators smuggle pistols and sub machine guns that were looted from the military warehouses in 1997, in Albania.

Based on the data, it was concluded that the criminal offence of firearms trafficking has decreased over the years for several reasons:

- a. The criminal activity of firearms trafficking has become a secondary activity.
- b. The profit from this activity is lower compared to other criminal activities.
- c. The severity of punitive measures for this criminal offence (amendments in the Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania, have increased the duration of prison sentences).
- d. Albania is not a manufacturer of firearms.
- e. The geopolitical position of the country has not supported firearms trafficking since Albania is far from conflict countries.
- f. Increased effectiveness of law enforcement agencies in the country, especially of the State Police Structures.

### **2.4 Challenges ahead**

Special attention should be paid to the increase and strengthening of human capacities, specialists that investigate firearms trafficking and to enhance their expertise.

The firearms tracing process at international level, the integration of the national firearms registration system, called SIMA, with the systems of our counterparts.

To strengthen border controls with a focus on: enhancing the professionalism of the BCP employees and logistic support in border control by installing equipments such as scanners, detectors etc., which shall increase the safety of border controls.

To register all firearms, including those that are traded, in use, declared stolen, lost, seized in criminal offences, into a single database called SIMA. So, all these measures should serve to close

the firearms cycle, starting from determining their manufacturing origin, until the end users or the final disposal of firearms.

## **2.5 International cooperation with partners in the area of firearms trafficking**

The international cooperation in the fight against firearms, ammunitions and explosives trafficking is considered very important, mainly in the following directions:

1. Cooperation in the area of information collection, based on which, it shall be carried out a detailed analysis of the cases and it shall be identified the presence of criminal activities related to firearms trafficking.
2. Establishment of joint investigation teams with the participation of investigators from each country where the development of firearms trafficking criminal activity is likely to occur. Instead of organizing regional operations including many countries, it would be more productive to establish joint investigation teams, to:
  - Increase information exchange quality.
  - Increase the credibility of the investigation team members.
  - Avoid bureaucratic obstacles.
  - Exchange experiences.
3. In the area of enhancing investigators professionalism on the criminal activity of firearms trafficking, where a special focus should be given to the investigations in the area of DARK NET.
4. Strengthening the Firearms Registration Database for each country and unifying them into a single International Database.

## **3 General Principles**

The structure and the content of this document are based on the following principles:

**Constitutionality and Legitimacy principle** - the provided measures are based on the provisions set out in the Constitution of the Republic of Albania, the legislation in force and international agreements.

**National security principle** - the control of SALW and explosives is part of the national security, supports the operation of the state and society based on order and law, economic competitiveness and innovation. This principle ensures the right to security and protection for all citizens, through prevention, fighting and control.

**Principle of human rights and freedoms** - is guaranteed under the Constitution of the Republic of Albania and guarantees the right and fundamental freedoms, and also protects individual freedoms, personal data and identity regardless of ethnicity, sex, age, religion and sexual orientation. Children and youth have the right to live in an environment, which is protected and safe from the misuse of SALW.

**Principle of responsibility** - due to its complexity, the state cannot be the sole responsible for preventing, protecting and increasing awareness on the danger that poses the misuse of SALW and

explosives. Therefore, different segments of the society and the private sector have responsibilities to prevent, protect and increase awareness on the danger of SALW and explosives.

**Principle of all-inclusiveness** - it is crucial to develop a comprehensive approach to address the threats coming from SALW and explosives that are considered as a risk towards national security.

**International cooperation principle**- the fight against illicit trafficking of SALW and explosives and the standardization of the legislation and practices can be furthered through international cooperation with partners. Through cooperation, Albania will play an important role in promoting national and regional security.

## **4 Legal framework and institutional mechanisms**

### **4.1 Legal framework**

In the area of SALW and explosives control, the Republic of Albania implements an extensive legal basis, such as:

- a. The Constitution of the Republic of Albania, as amended;
- b. Law No. 7895, dated 27/01/1995 “Criminal Code of the Republic of Albania”, as amended;
- c. Law No. 7905, dated 21/03/1995 “Criminal Procedure Code of the Republic of Albania”, as amended
- d. Law No. 9887, dated 10/03/2008, as amended by Law No. 48/2012, as amended by Law No. 120/2014 “On personal data protection”;
- e. Law No. 108/2014 “On State Police”, as amended;
- f. Law No. 43/2016 “On international agreements in the Republic of Albania”;
- g. Law No. 71/2016, “On border control”;
- h. Law No. 74/2014 “On Weapons”;
- i. Law No. 72/2014 “On the use of firearms”;
- j. Law No. 10253, dated 11/03/2010 “On hunting”, as amended;
- k. Law No. 9126, dated 29/07/2003 “On civil use of explosives, pyrotechnic compositions and fireworks in the Republic of Albania”, as amended by Law No. 10 388, dated 03/03/2011 and Law No. 73/2014;
- l. Law No. 9020, dated 06/03/2003 “On the accession of the Republic of Albania, in the “Convention on the Marking of Plastic Explosives for the purpose of detection”;
- m. Law No. 9126, dated 29/07/2003 “On civil use of explosives, pyrotechnic compositions and fireworks in the Republic of Albania”, as amended by Law No. 10 388, dated 03/03/2011 and Law No. 73/2014.
- n. Law No. 46/2018 “On state control of international transfers of military goods and technologies and goods of dual-use”;
- o. Law No. 9272, dated 16/09/2004, “On the accession of the Republic of Albania in the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR) and the implementation protocol”.
- p. Law No. 6/2014, dated 30/01/2014 “On the ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty”
- q. Law No. 102/2014, “Customs Code of the Republic of Albania”
- r. Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 275 dated 01/04/2015, which approves the regulation on the weapons safety rules and conditions;

## 4.2 Institutional commitments

Institutional commitments imply all mechanism that have a primary and secondary role and importance in the implementation of the strategy. The institutional commitments on the drafting and implementation of the strategy are as follows:

### **National Commission for Small Arms and Light Weapons.**

It is responsible for preparing the policies on small arms and light weapons in Albania. Coordinates and gathers information and statistics from respective institutions on the manufacturing, trade, deactivation, disposal, illegal use of weapons, control of legal weapons, control of the import and export of weapons. It is responsible to coordinate, guide, monitor and report the implementation of SALW related policies.

**Ministry of Interior** is responsible for proposing, preparing, monitoring and implementing the policies and legislation in the area of arms and explosives.

**The State Police** is the main institution in charge of the fight against illegal trafficking of weapons, ammunitions and explosives, in cooperation with other law enforcement institutions for preventing and detecting illegal traffickings in the border and inside Albania. The SP issues licences and authorizations on eligible weapon activities, for natural persons and legal entities in compliance with the national and international legislation. The SP exercises controls at PSC and other legal entities licensed to carry weapons, on the safety conditions for the possession of firearms.

**Firearms Focal Point (FFP):** the establishment of this focal point falls under the responsibility of the Minister of Interior and the General Director of the State Police. The FFP shall work to refine the forms and procedures for the registration of the data on the distribution and the impact of firearms, SALW, gender statistics and the procedures on the compulsory exchange of information with the countries of the region. The procedures on the information exchange within systems that contain data on firearms.

**Ministry of Defence** is responsible for the safety of military ammunition warehouses, the disposal of the surplus of weapons, ammunitions and explosives, in compliance with the NATO standards. The MoD is also an important actor in the blue border safety, assisting law enforcement institutions.

**AKSHE** is the responsible institution for the implementation of the state's policy in the control of exports and imports of military goods and technologies and goods of dual-use. Its establishment and activity is based on Law No. 46/2018, dated 23/07/2018 "On state control of international transfers of military goods and technologies and goods of dual-use" and on the Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 43, dated 16/01/2008 "On the organisation, functioning and status of the State Export Control Authority". AKSHE is the institution that issues licences for imports, exports, transit, transshipment, brokering of military goods and dual-use goods and technologies, pursuant to Law No. 46/2018. Based on the expertise results, State Export Control Authority, identifies the goods,

defines their international transfer conditions in specific countries and either issues or not the respective licences to these entities.

Also, pursuant to the Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 658, dated 29/07/2015 “On determining the procedures for issuing licences for weapons manufacture, deactivation and repair”, provides to entities licences for the weapons manufacture, deactivation and repair.

**Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs** helps with special assignments to fulfil the goals of this strategy, especially in the area of cooperation between Albanian institutions with partner institutions and international organizations, international reports and entering in bilateral agreements on the end control of the weapons, ammunitions and explosives exports.

**Ministry of Justice** helps with activities for the necessary cooperation between the Prosecution, Interpol and foreign justice authorities in issues related to the fight against illegal trafficking of weapons. MoJ is also an important actor for aligning the legal acts on weapons, ammunitions and explosives control with the EU directives and other international acts.

**Ministry of Finance and Economy** is responsible for planning and implementing the tasks related to legal and normative acts according to the specific directions of its subordinate institutions, serving to the prevention of illegal trafficking of weapons, ammunitions and explosives.

**General Directorate of Customs** is responsible to cooperate with other law enforcement structures in function of ensuring green, blue and air border safety, with the purpose of preventing and fighting the illegal trafficking of weapons, ammunitions and explosives.

**Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth** is responsible for drafting, pursuing and implementing the state policy on awareness-raising and education of the young generation against weapons, having in its focus schools, sports and youth centres, also considering the inclusion of the threat from weapons, ammunitions and explosives in special curricula.

**Ministry of Health and Social Welfare** is responsible for identifying the damages caused by firearms to the health of the citizens by delivering awareness campaigns on the dangers from weapons, ammunitions and explosives.

## **5 Strategy and Action Plan Goals**

The Strategy and Action Plan have the following goals:

Goal 1: By 2023, ensure that arms control legislation is in place, fully harmonized with the EU regulatory framework and other related international obligations, and standardized across the region.

Goal 2: By 2024, ensure that arms control policies and practices in Albania are evidence based and intelligence led.

Goal 3: By 2024, significantly reduce illicit flows of firearms, ammunition and explosives (FAE) into, within and beyond Albania.

Goal 4: By 2024, significantly reduce the supply, demand and misuse of firearms through increased awareness, education, outreach and advocacy.

Goal 5: By 2024, substantially decrease the estimated number of firearms in illicit possession, in Albania.

Goal 6: Systematically decrease the surplus and destroy seized small arms and light weapons and ammunition, adhering to environmental standards.

Goal 7: Significantly decrease the risk of proliferation and diversion of firearms, ammunition and explosives.

**Goal 1: By 2023, ensure that arms control legislation is in place, fully harmonized with the EU regulatory framework and other related international obligations, and standardized across the region.**

The activities in the framework of this goal include:

**Continuous legislation and policy review** – aims to analyse and amend the primary and secondary legislation, as well as current strategies and mechanisms, and to synchronize them with the EU legal framework. In particular, the following laws will be harmonized and complemented, such as the Law on Weapons, which will be complemented in accordance with the requirements of the EU Directive on Firearms, and the Regulation on Deactivation of Weapons; the Law on dual-use goods; the Law on civil use of explosives, which should be aligned with the relevant EU legislation, in particular with the regulation on precursors and the List of permitted explosives (UN). Also, the legislation shall be reviewed in accordance with the United Nations Protocol on Firearms, International Tracking Instrument and also the Arms Trade Treaty.

**Goal 2: By 2024, ensure that arms control policies and practices in Albania are evidence based and intelligence led.**

The activities in the framework of this goal include:

**Continuous improvement of law enforcement institutions' work** – by paying attention to intelligence, risk analysis and establishment of the Firearms Focal Point and also strengthening the exchange of operational and strategic information, of the data and intelligence with international agencies and organisms such as Europol, Frontex, Eurojust and EMPACT.

**Goal 3: By 2024, significantly reduce illicit flows of firearms, ammunition and explosives (FAE) into, within and beyond Albania.**

The activities in the framework of this goal include:

Strengthening border control in border crossing points and also at green and blue borders – establishing priorities and identifying needs to increase human capacities, equipments and technology for Border Police, customs and agencies for the identification, detection, analysis and investigation of weapons, ammunitions and explosives for the supervision of border control.

Strengthening cooperation with existing bilateral, regional and international mechanisms and exchanging best practices to fight firearms trafficking.

**Goal 4: By 2024, significantly reduce the supply, demand and misuse of firearms through increased awareness, education, outreach and advocacy.**

The activities in the framework of this goal include:

Media and awareness-raising campaigns, educating the young generation on the dangers of weapons. Awareness-raising shall be an objective of all institutions, which shall plan measures for citizen awareness, especially the youth and schools, with a larger commitment of the media and with extensive support from the embassies.

**Goal 5: By 2024, substantially decrease the estimated number of firearms in illicit possession, in Albania.**

The activities in the framework of this goal include:

Creating legal opportunities that allow for the voluntary surrender and/or legalization of weapons;  
Planning and organizing campaigns for voluntary surrender of weapons;  
Using the deactivation method in compliance with the EU standards and the OSCE guidelines, to reduce the illegal possession of firearms;  
Increasing detection capacities to confiscate illegally possessed weapons.

**Goal 6: Systematically decrease the surplus and destroy seized small arms and light weapons and ammunition, adhering to environmental standards.**

The activities in the framework of this goal include:

Continuing the good practice of disposing the surplus of weapons and ammunitions that result from periodic inventorying and confiscated weapons, in compliance with the safety and environmental standards.

With regards to this objective, Albania has already accomplished a lot by disposing completely the surplus of weapons inherited by the previous system. There are established and approved procedures for the disposal of surplus that is generated from confiscations and voluntary surrender.

**Goal 7: Significantly decrease the risk of proliferation and diversion of firearms, ammunition and explosives.**

The activities in the framework of this goal include:

Improving the weapons warehouses safety infrastructure, mainly of the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defence and also the controls during the legal trade of firearms to the “end user”.

UNDP SEESAC through funding from the European Union has enabled the upgrade of three weapons warehouses in 2018, the State Police firearms storage locations and the evidence rooms, focusing on security conditions. There have also been donations for the upgrade of the Armed Forces warehouses and other upgrades are planned for the coming year.

## **6 Strategy monitoring and evaluation**

### **6.1 Monitoring and evaluation indicators**

14 performance indicators will be used to measure the implementation of Goals:

1. The number of laws on arms control in Albania, which are fully harmonized with the EU legislation, the Arms Trade Treaty and the UN Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition (the Firearms Protocol)
2. The number of evidence-based arms control policy documents, drafted in Albania, which also address the needs of men, women, boys and girls.
3. The number of cases, individuals and quantity of misused and trafficked firearms, ammunition and explosives (FAE) prosecuted and adjudicated in comparison to the number of law enforcement reports on seizures;
4. The number of cases and quantity of FAE seized inland compared to the number of cases and quantity of FAE seized at the borders.
5. The number of cases of FAE seized in the European Union, originating from Albania.
6. The number of FAEs, for which export licences have been issued by Albania, identified as diverted through the post-shipment control procedure.
7. The Firearms Focal Point in Albania already established and operational;
8. The number of inter-institutional cooperation cases at operational level, including investigation, prosecution and pretrial phases;
9. The number of cases of operational cooperation sourced from intelligence information including ballistic intelligence in the fight against firearms related crimes, with authorities in the region, EU member states and agencies as well as international law enforcement agencies.
10. The number of incidents involving firearms and victims affected by the misuse of firearms, disaggregated by gender and age, in Albania;
11. The number of FAE voluntarily surrendered, as well as firearms legalized or deactivated;

12. The number of firearms, ammunitions and explosives reported as confiscated or surplus systematically destroyed;
13. The number of SALW/firearms and their ammunition storage facilities in line with international safety and security standards;
14. The percentage of citizens satisfaction (disaggregated by age and gender) or feeling of safety on armed violence in Albania.

The National Commission for Small Arms and Light Weapons shall monitor the implementation of the Strategy every 6 months, based on these indicators.