

Current work

Regional Cooperation

Stockpile Security

Marking and Tracing of SALW

Collection and Awareness Raising Campaigns

➤ Celebrate with Your Heart, Not Your Gun 2021

➤ Slavi srcem, ne oruzjem - Ne Budi Kao Miki

➤ Festosh me zemër, jo me armë! Mos vepro si Beni

➤ ПРОСЛАВУВАЈ СО СРЦЕТО, НЕ СО ОРУЖЈЕ! - Не Биди Како Аце

➤ Celebrate with Your Heart, Not Your Gun 2022 - Be the Star of the Party

As we enter one more holiday season, and as you head out to celebrate with people you most care about - your friends and family - we appeal to you to:

CELEBRATE WITH YOUR HEART, NOT YOUR GUN!

Consider, do you really want to be THAT guy who spoils the party?

Please, **#DontBeLikeJoe**



Even though celebratory shooting is illegal throughout the Western Balkans, and the use of pyrotechnics is forbidden or restricted in a number of jurisdictions, the use of firearms and pyrotechnics in times of celebration is a common occurrence in the region.

At the same time, we cannot deny the fact that **both firearms and pyrotechnics are highly dangerous**. We know this because we witness a number of deaths, injuries, property damages and arrests linked to celebratory shootings every year.

So, if you are getting ready for this year's celebration with a nonchalant attitude thinking, 'oh, nothing is going to happen' - consider some of the things that DID HAPPEN to someone who thought the same as you.

DEATHS

- A woman was accidentally shot in the head and killed in her own family home during a celebration near Jagodina, **Serbia**.
- Two men attended a celebration for the birth of a child in Zmajevu **Serbia**. It appears that one of them shot into the air, hitting a high-voltage power cord, which then fell on the ground and killed both men.

INJURIES

- In Skopje, **North Macedonia**, a 36-year-old woman was shot by a stray bullet on 31 December while at home, whereas in Kosovo* on 1 January a woman was shot by a stray bullet as she stood on her balcony during the New Year's celebration.
- In Foča, **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, a 65-year-old man was shot by a stray bullet on 6 January, as he was making 'rakija' in his yard.
- In Zvornik, **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, a 78-year-old man accidentally shot and injured a 22-year-old

man during a holiday celebration.

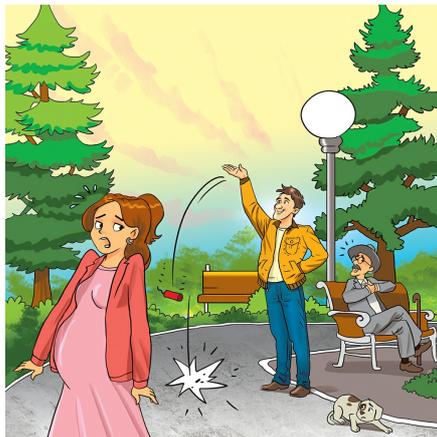
- In Nikšić, **Montenegro**, a 56-year-old man was arrested after it was determined that he had accidentally shot and injured a woman at a celebration.
- In Guncati, **Serbia**, as he was bringing a 'badnjak' into the house on Orthodox Christmas morning, a man shot in celebration. His bullet ricocheted hitting and injuring two people



If you think setting off firecrackers and pyrotechnics is harmless child's play, think again.

- In early 2021, in Pučile, **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, two boys were wounded after playing with firecrackers; one of them was hospitalized with serious hand injuries.
- A 10-year-old girl's life was endangered when a guest at a family celebration in Čačak, **Serbia**, detonated an explosive device. The girl was transported to the hospital with life-threatening injuries to her chest cavity.

Pyrotechnics are a type of explosives and inherently should be handled with utmost caution. Unfortunately, even in places where they are legal, pyrotechnics are often purchased on the street from unregulated sources – street sellers. That also means that the quality of these explosive contraptions, and the ways in which they are kept, are also unregulated. Do you really want to risk your safety, or even worse, that of someone you love, by using them?



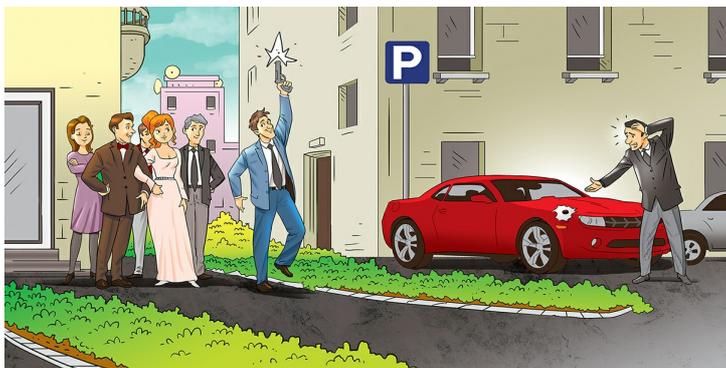
'LUCKY SAVES'

Injuries and deaths will most certainly be reported. But IMAGINE how many 'celebratory' bullets miss us thanks to nothing but pure luck. These are the bullets we seldom hear about, but they are just as real.

- On 9 January in Prnjavor, **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, a man's car was hit by a stray bullet suspected to be linked to a celebratory shooting. The bullet pierced the car windows hitting the backseat of the car where three of his kids had been seated only a few minutes before.

PROPERTY DAMAGE

That bullets 'rain' all around us during the holiday season can also be seen in reports of property damage. In **Kosovo**, where tracking of such events is encouraged by the law enforcement, on 1 January 2021 alone at least 8 people reported their cars or houses being hit and damaged by celebratory fire



ARRESTS

If you think celebrating with a firearm is generally accepted and that those who do it bear no consequences, consider this. Throughout the region, people are arrested for celebratory shooting, including when there are no injuries or property damage involved. SEESAC's Armed Violence Monitoring Platform documents many such arrests in every jurisdiction. Here are only a few from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Kosovo. Then the party is over.

More recently, perpetrators have posted their illegal activities on social media, and as a result, have been identified, tracked and detained by law enforcement using those very platforms.

- In Bogovinje, **North Macedonia**, a 39-year-old man was arrested after **posting a video on social media** showing him teaching a small boy how to shoot from a pistol.
- Three men were arrested for shooting during a family celebration and **posting videos about it on social media**, in Malishevë/Mališevo, **Kosovo**.



Finally, before you 'add' to the celebratory atmosphere by firing a few rounds into the air, bringing a gun into someone's home or establishment, or setting some pyrotechnics off, consider how people around you might feel. After all, arrests happen because someone feels unsafe and reports celebratory shooting to the authorities. In a recent survey, thousands of people across the region shared their attitudes about security, including about firearms. This is what they said:

- In **Albania** – 95% of respondents would not consider owning a gun, and 55% say they feel threatened/very threatened by illegal possession and misuse of weapons in their neighbourhoods, including for celebratory shooting.
- In **Bosnia and Herzegovina** – 92% of respondents would not consider owning a gun, and 50% say they feel threatened/very threatened by illegal possession and misuse of weapons in their neighbourhoods, including for celebratory shooting.
- In **Montenegro** – 90% of respondents would not own a gun, and 22% say they feel threatened/very threatened by illegal possession and misuse of weapons in their neighbourhoods, including for celebratory shooting.
- In **North Macedonia** – 82% of respondents would not own a gun, and 55% say they feel threatened/very threatened by illegal possession and misuse of weapons in their neighbourhoods, including for celebratory shooting.

- In **Serbia** - 91% of respondents would not own a gun, and 39% say they feel threatened/very threatened by illegal possession and misuse of weapons in their neighbourhoods, including for celebratory shooting.
- In **Kosovo** - 93% of respondents would not own a gun, and 55% say they feel threatened by illegal possession and misuse of weapons in their neighbourhoods, including for celebratory shooting.[1]

SEESAC collects information on celebratory shooting incidents on its Armed Violence Monitoring Platform, which reveals numerous trends, including:

- Celebratory shooting is most often reported in **urban areas**, and these incidents usually take place on the **street or at a home**.
- The weapon most frequently used is **a handgun**, and usually one in **illegal possession**. The exceptions are in Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina where gas pistols and automatic weapons are more often found.
- In the vast majority of cases, **perpetrators are men ages 19-35** followed by those **36-60** old, while as many as **26% of victims** of celebratory shooting are **women**.

You can also find out more about celebratory shooting from SEESAC's In Focus Armed Violence Monitor focused on Celebratory Shootings in South East Europe.

This campaign is implemented under a project funded through the EU Council Decision 2018/1788 in support of SEESAC for the implementation of the Regional Roadmap on combating illicit arms trafficking in the Western Balkans.

* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

[1] See: Security Public Opinion Survey (#SecuriMeter) 2021: "Attitudes towards security: Perceptions of security and threats in Western Balkans."

See KPI 14 in the 'Key Performance Indicators Report', for the period 1 July – 31 December 2020, (SEESAC).

South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC)

Bulevar Zorana Đinđića 64
11000 Belgrade
Serbia
Telephone:
(+381) 11 415 5300
Fax: (+381) 415 5499
E-mail: seesac@undp.org

[Disclaimer](#)



Newsletter

[SUBSCRIBE](#)

[News](#)
[Vacancies](#)
[Procurement](#)
[Contact](#)
[Who we are](#)
[Publications](#)

This website is funded by the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of UNDP SEESAC and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

SEESAC.org ©2024

This site uses cookies for better performance and user experience. Do you agree to use of cookies?

Find out more

<input type="checkbox"/> I agree	<input type="checkbox"/> I don't agree
----------------------------------	--

[Cookies on our web page](#)

[What is Cookie?](#)

A cookie is a small piece of data sent from a website and stored in a user's web browser while a user is browsing a website. When the user browses the same website in the future, the data stored in the cookie can be retrieved by the website to notify the website of the user's previous activity

How do we use cookies?

A visit to a this page could generate the following types of cookie.

Strictly necessary cookies

These cookies are essential in order to enable you to move around the website and use its features, such as accessing secure areas of the website. Without these cookies services you have asked for, like shopping baskets or e-billing, cannot be provided.

2. Performance cookies

These cookies collect information about how visitors use a website, for instance which pages visitors go to most often, and if they get error messages from web pages. These cookies don't collect information that identifies a visitor. All information these cookies collect is aggregated and therefore anonymous. It is only used to improve how a website works.

3. Functionality cookies

These cookies allow the website to remember choices you make (such as your user name, language or the region you are in) and provide enhanced, more personal features. For instance, a website may be able to provide you with local weather reports or traffic news by storing in a cookie the region in which you are currently located. These cookies can also be used to remember changes you have made to text size, fonts and other parts of web pages that you can customise. They may also be used to provide services you have asked for such as watching a video or commenting on a blog. The information these cookies collect may be anonymised and they cannot track your browsing activity on other websites.

4. Targeting and advertising cookies

These cookies are used to deliver adverts more relevant to you and your interests They are also used to limit the number of times you see an advertisement as well as help measure the effectiveness of the advertising campaign. They are usually placed by advertising networks with the website operator's permission. They remember that you have visited a website and this information is shared with other organisations such as advertisers. Quite often targeting or advertising cookies will be linked to site functionality provided by the other organisation.

Cookie management

Cookies can be managed via the web browser settings. Please, see you browser help how to manage cookies.

On this site you can always turn cookies on/off on menu item "Cookie Management".

Website management

This website is managed by:

The South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC)

