



Issue No. 2

CELEBRATORY SHOOTINGS

in South East Europe in 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- ABOUT IN FOCUS ARMED VIOLENCE MONITOR 3
- METHODOLOGY 3
- HIGHLIGHTS 3
- NOTABLE INCIDENTS 4
- CELEBRATORY SHOOTING INCIDENTS 5
- 1 1.1 General overview 5
 - 1.1.1 Celebratory shooting incidents throughout 2020 5
 - 1.1.2 Celebratory shooting incidents in jurisdictions 5
 - 1.1.3 Celebratory shooting incidents by macrolocation 6
 - 1.1.4 Celebratory shooting incidents by microlocation 7
 - 1.1.5. Celebratory shooting incidents by time 7
 - 1.1.6 Celebratory shooting incidents by type of event 8
- 2 TYPES OF WEAPONS USED IN CELEBRATORY SHOOTINGS 9
 - 2.1 Celebratory shooting incidents by type of weapon 9
 - 2.2 Celebratory shooting incidents by type of weapon and jurisdiction 10
- 3 PERPETRATORS IN CELEBRATORY SHOOTINGS 11
- 4 VICTIMS IN CELEBRATORY SHOOTINGS 12

ABOUT IN FOCUS - ARMED VIOLENCE MONITOR

In Focus - Armed Violence Monitors provide information on the specific types of firearm incidents and the related topics to illustrate the magnitude of firearms' adverse impact on civilians.

This issue brings into focus **celebratory shooting** incidents in South East Europe (SEE) from **1 January to 31 December 2020**. The practice of celebratory shooting refers to discharging a firearm into the air during celebrations, festivities, sports, religious or other public gatherings. In many cultures and geographic regions, including SEE, it is customary to shoot into the air to celebrate and mark the occasion by making loud noise with firearms. However, this practice comes with a range of consequences - from injuring and accidental death from stray bullets to property damage.

METHODOLOGY

The information provided in this report is gathered from the [Armed Violence Monitoring Platform \(AVMP\)](#), which captures data on firearm-related incidents happening in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, North Macedonia, Kosovo* and the Republic of Moldova.

The data is gathered daily from the relevant authorities' official websites, as well as print and online media. Data for Kosovo is also gathered from daily incident reports by police. Quality assurance is conducted rigorously by SEESAC. The platform has seen significant improvements in recent years in terms of data collection and categorization.

The AVMP has been established by SEESAC and funded by the European Union within the framework of the [EU Council Decision \(CFSP\) 2016/2356](#) and [EU Council Decision \(CFSP\) 2019/2111](#).

HIGHLIGHTS

65

celebratory shooting incidents were recorded on the AVMP in 2020.

17

celebratory shooting incidents were reported in **August**, making it the month with the highest number of such incidents.

38

celebratory shooting incidents took place during **family celebrations**.

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

NOTABLE CELEBRATORY SHOOTINGS IN 2020

“

Three men were arrested for discharging 71 shots during a wedding reception. No injuries were reported. During the perpetrators' home raid and a car search, the police found and seized two pistols.

28 March 2020
Vogošća, Bosnia and Herzegovina

“

A 29-year-old man was shot and killed by his 48-year-old cousin during a celebratory shooting. The police are investigating the case, but it is suspected that the incident happened by accident.

29 August 2020
Pećinci, Serbia

“

A 25-year-old man shot with a firearm during a party organized at his home with nearly 30 persons present. The police seized shell casings at the scene. No injuries were reported.

26 December 2020,
Lopate, North Macedonia

“

Three men were arrested for firearm shooting during a family celebration and posting a video about it on social media. Two gas pistols with a cartridge were found and seized from the suspects. No injuries were reported.

29 December 2020
Malishevë / Mališevo, Kosovo

“

A 17-year-old man was suspected of shooting with a gas pistol in the street during a celebration. No victims were reported.

21 May 2020
Berane, Montenegro

“

A 30-year-old man reportedly shot five times into the air after leaving a party. The police seized a legally owned 9.19mm pistol from the perpetrator.

8 November 2020,
Chişinău, Moldova

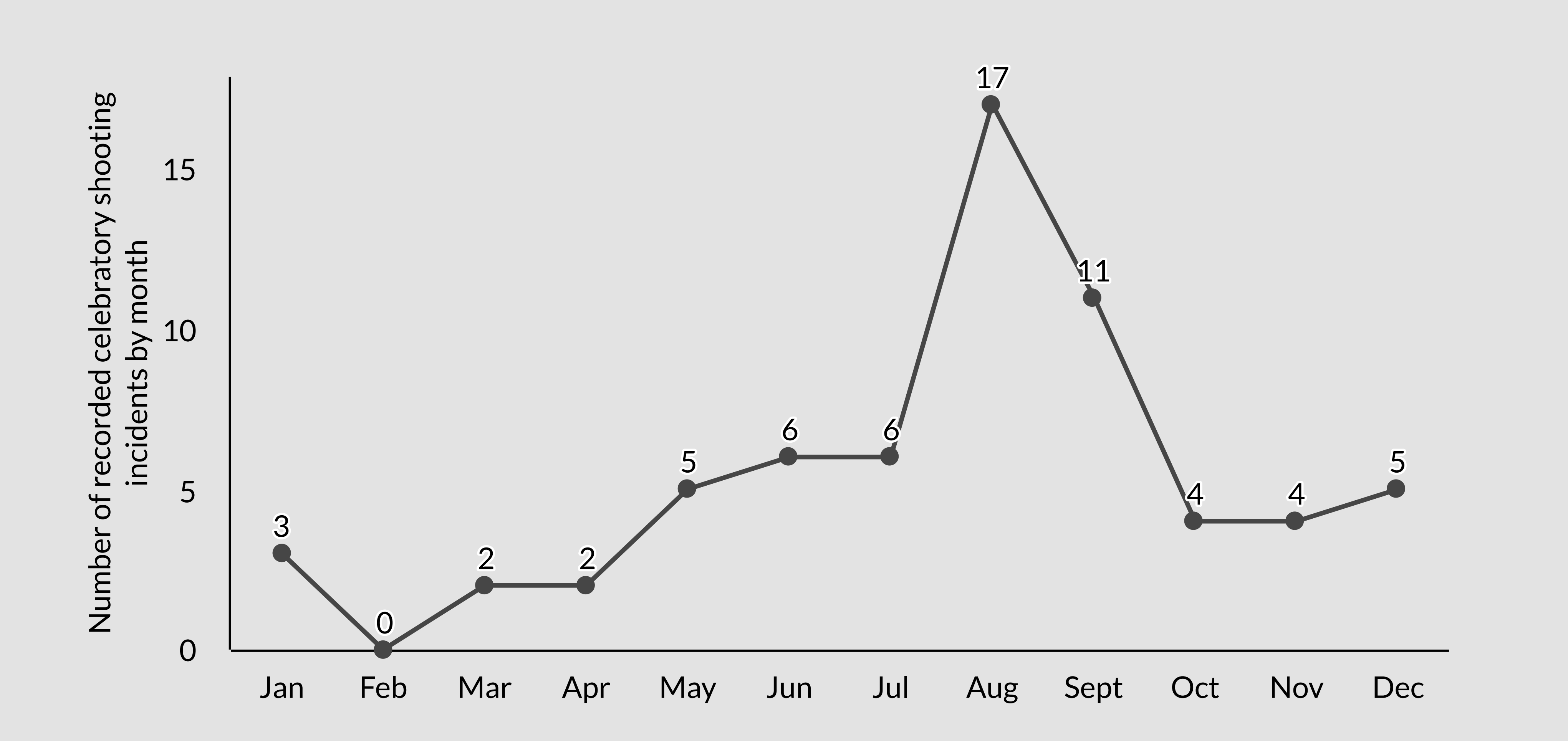
1. CELEBRATORY SHOOTING INCIDENTS

1.1 General overview

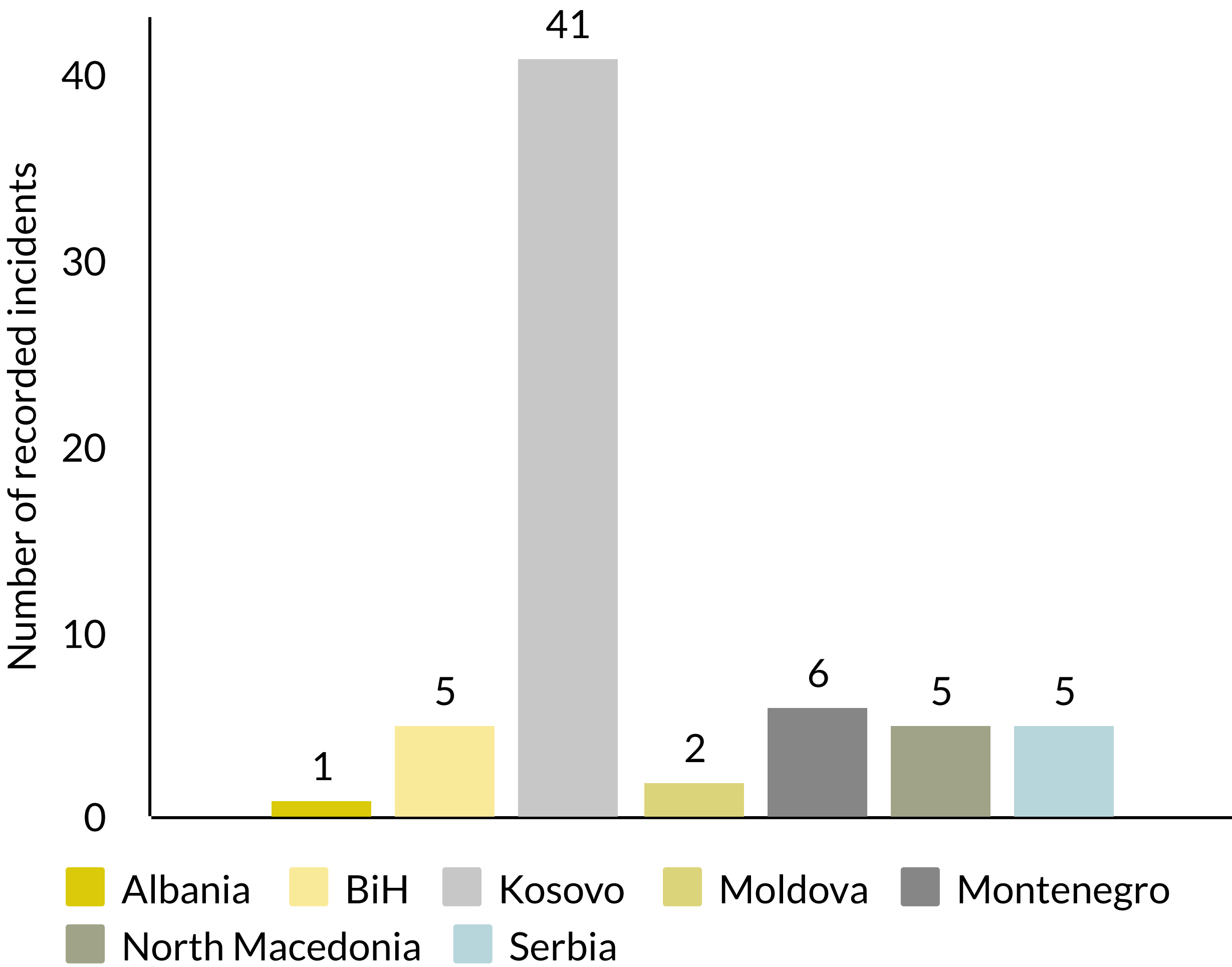
1.1.1 Celebratory shooting incidents throughout 2020

The number of reported celebratory shooting incidents throughout 2020 averaged to 5 per month, with the exception of February when no such incidents were recorded.

The highest number of celebratory shooting incidents was observed in August, when the number of incidents was more than three times average, mainly occurring at family celebrations, followed by September with 11 incidents.



1.1.2 Celebratory shooting in jurisdictions

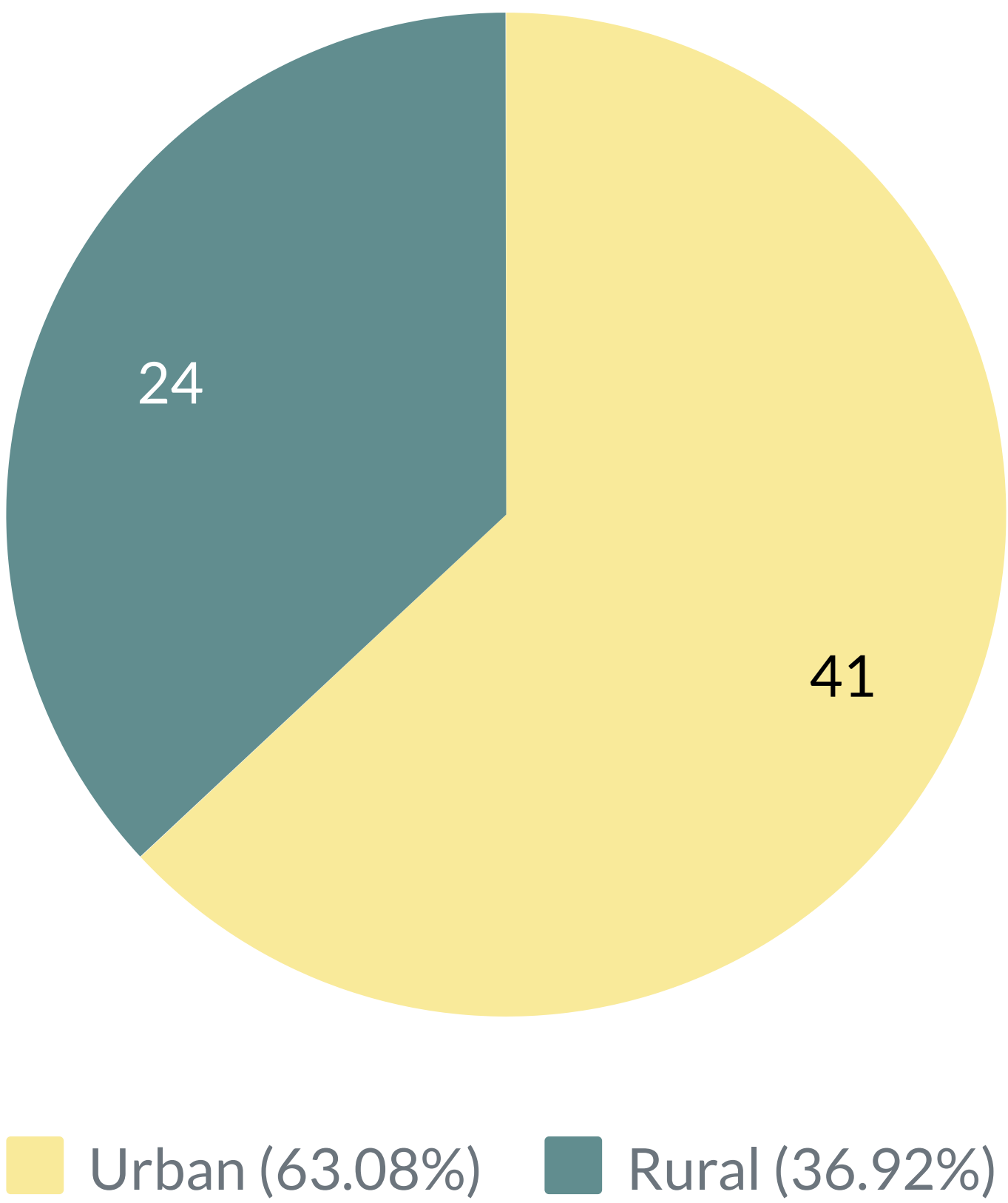


63%

of all recorded celebratory shooting incidents were reported in Kosovo (41). The rest of incidents (24) reported in 2020 were almost evenly distributed among Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, apart from Moldova where 2 such incidents were recorded and Albania with 1 reported incident.

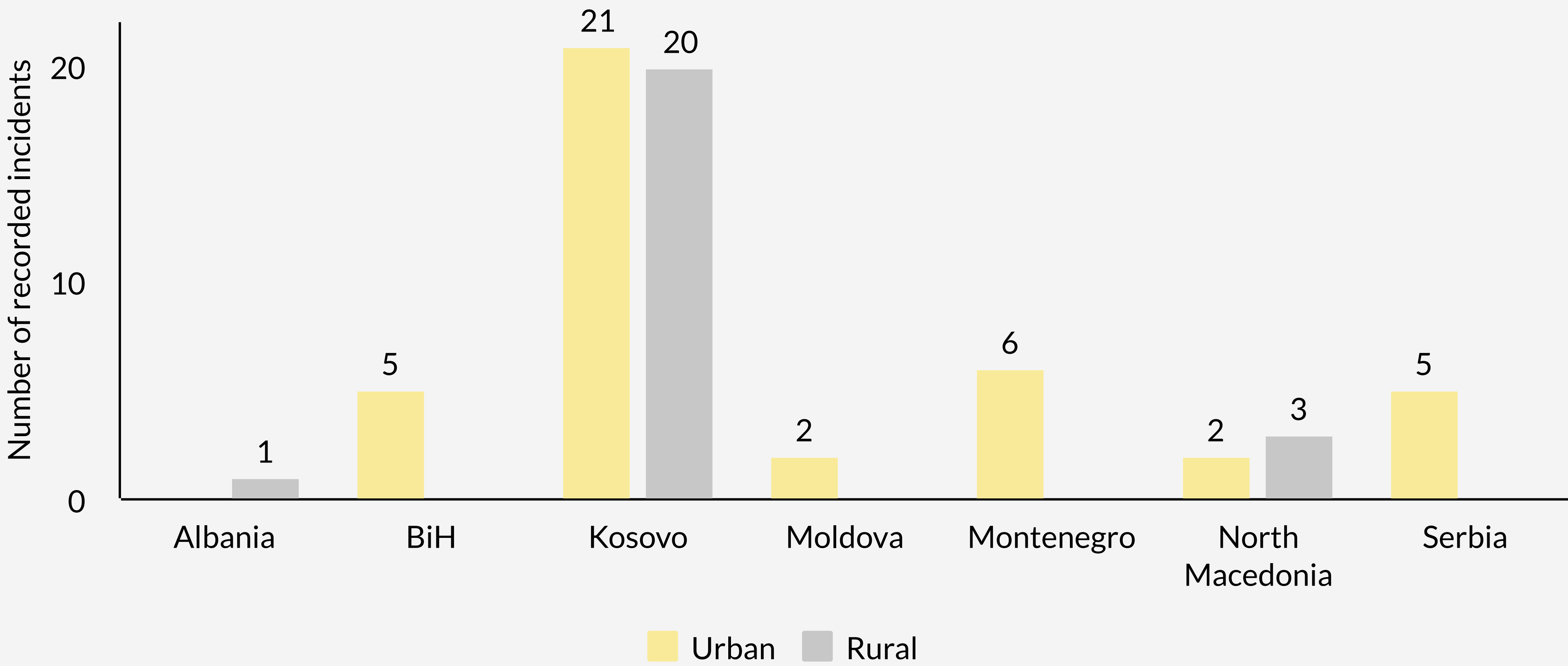
1.1.3 Celebratory shooting incidents by macrolocation

According to the data about macrolocation, incidents occurring in urban areas were more frequent (41) than those happening in rural areas (24).



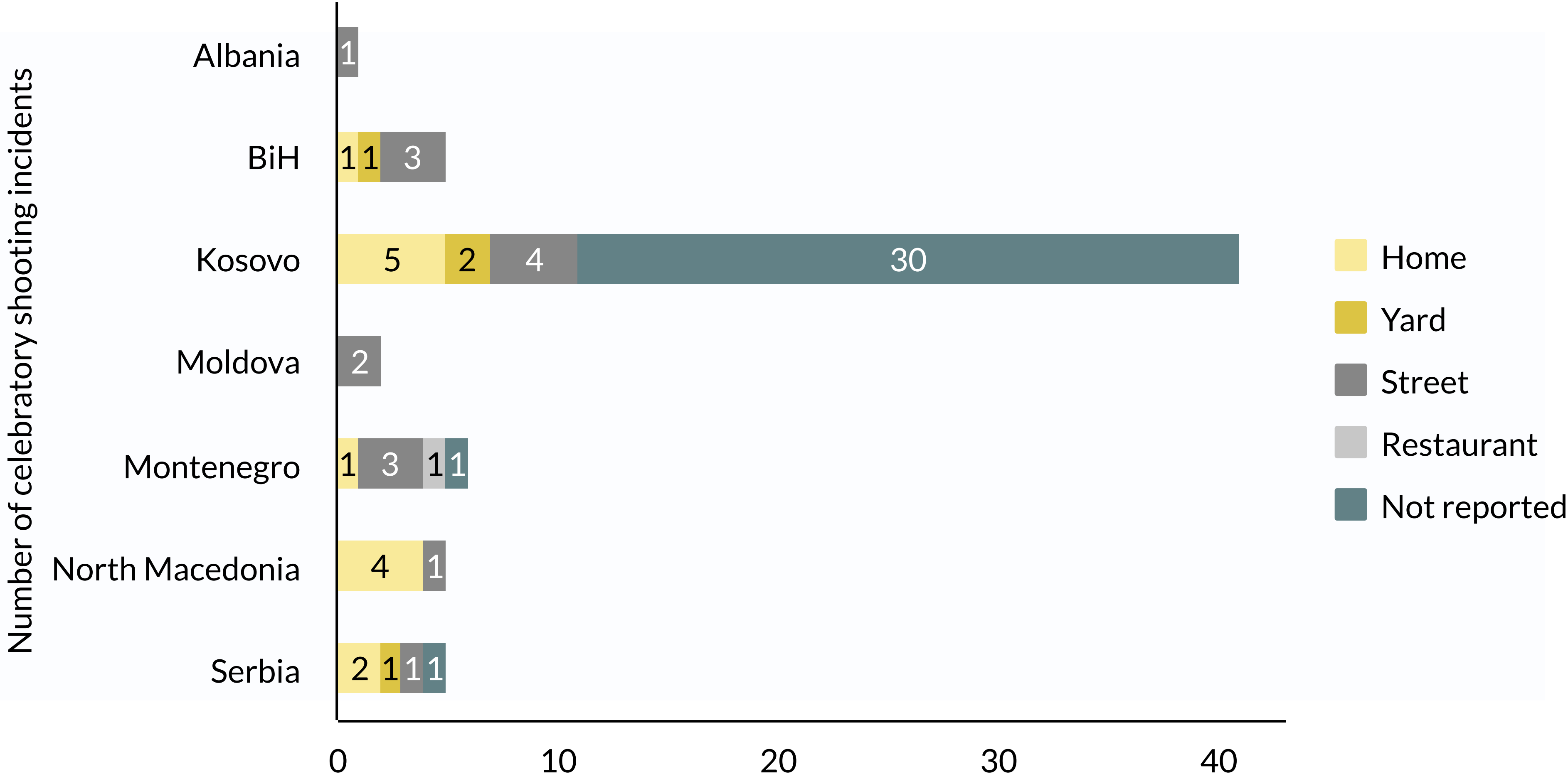
All reported celebratory shooting incidents in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro, and Serbia occurred in urban area. In Kosovo and North Macedonia, the number of reported incidents in rural and urban area was almost evenly distributed.

Celebratory shooting incidents by jurisdiction and macrolocation





1.1.4 Celebratory shooting incidents by microlocation

Information on microlocation was not reported for 31 (47.6%) of all celebratory shooting incidents. In incidents in which the microlocation was reported (34, i.e. 52.3%), 15 (44.1%) took place in the street, 13 (38.2%) at home and 4 (12%) in yards.



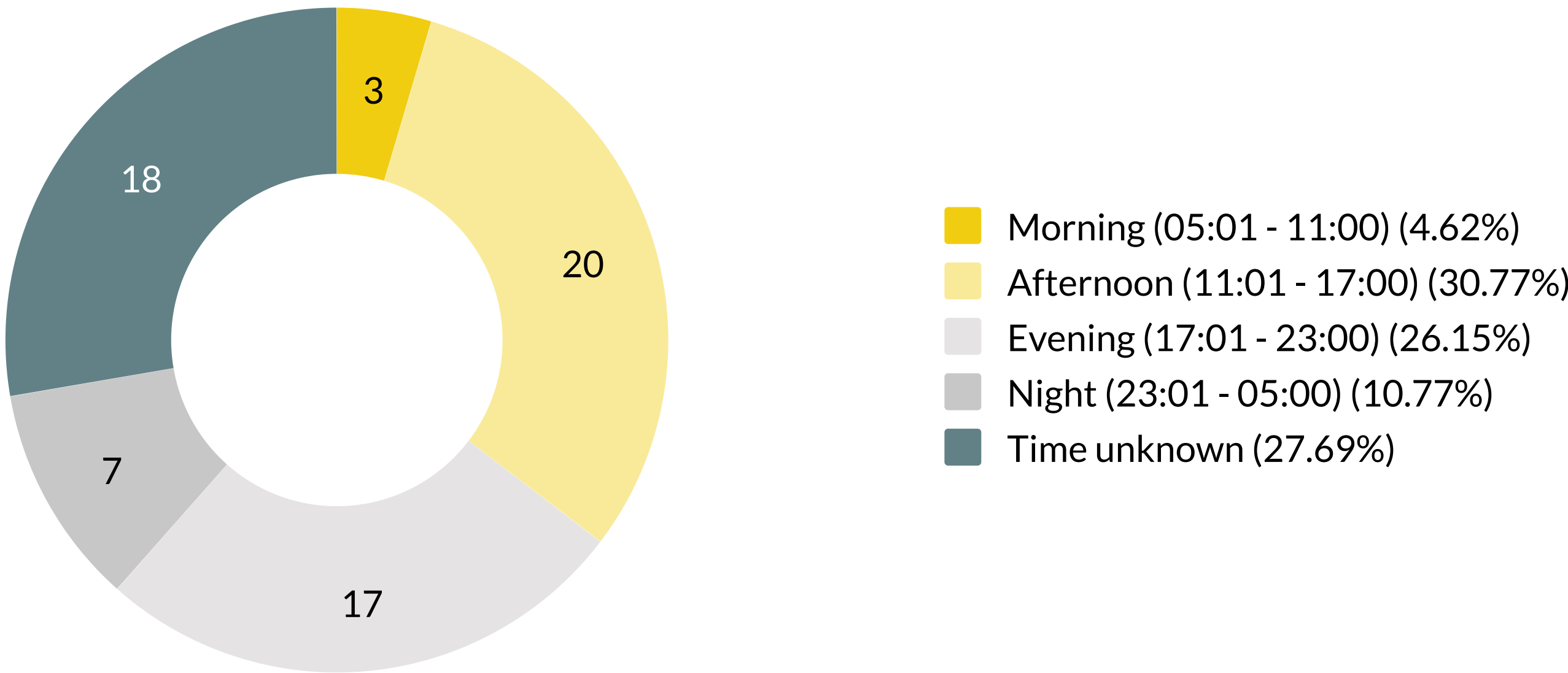
*The graph shows microlocations where celebratory shooting incidents took place in each jurisdiction in 2020.


With regards to microlocation of celebratory shooting incidents in urban areas (41), almost 31.7% of incidents took place in the street (13) and 8 (19.5%) at homes.


For 66.6% of celebratory shooting incidents in rural area, microlocation was not reported. When microlocation was specified, majority of incidents took place at homes (5).

1.1.5 Celebratory shooting incidents by time

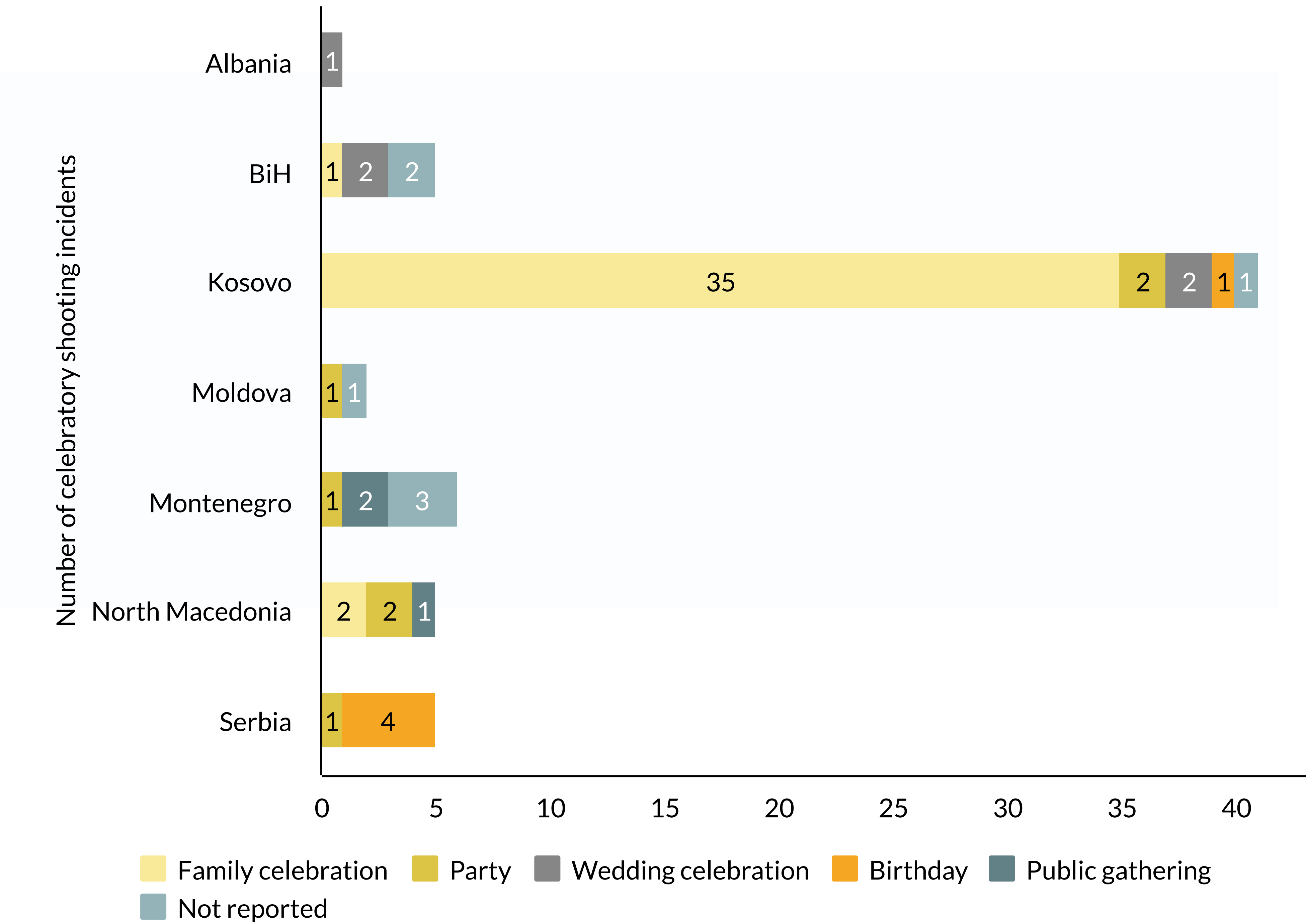
The reported incidents occurring in the afternoon and in the evening were clearly more prevalent (37) than those happening in the morning hours (3) and during night (7) – when such data was provided in the reports.



1.1.6 Celebratory shooting incidents by type of event

With 38 (58.45) incidents, family celebrations were the most commonly reported type of event at which celebratory shooting incidents occurred. Kosovo reported the highest number of celebratory shooting incidents at family gatherings, with 35 such incidents recorded.

Birthday parties (5), wedding celebrations (5), and parties (5) account for 7.6% of all celebratory shooting incidents, respectively.



*The graph shows types of events during which celebratory shooting incidents took place in each jurisdiction.

The total number of **incidents at family celebrations** (38) was **equally divided between the rural and urban area**, with 19 celebratory shooting incidents reported in each area.

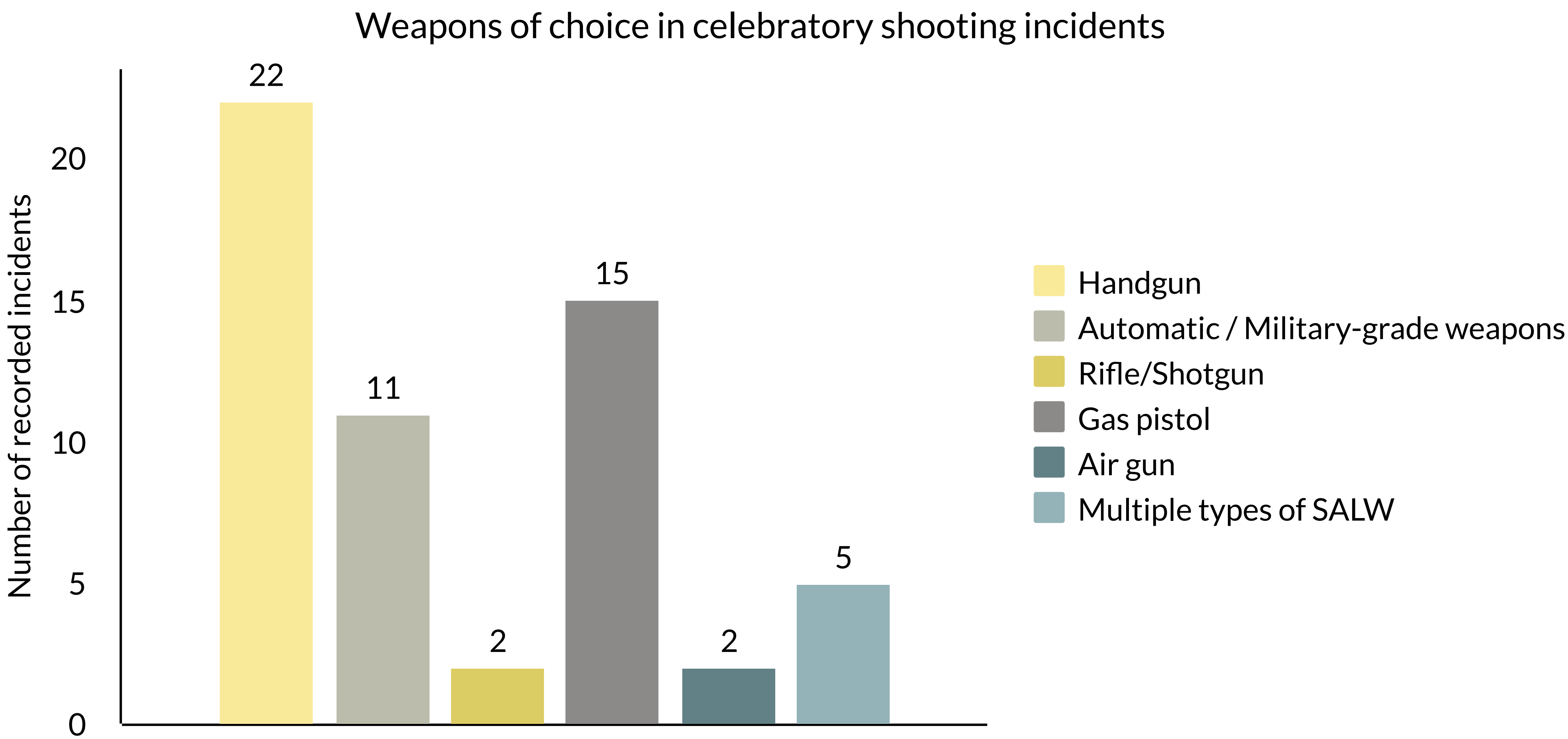
60% of all celebratory shooting incidents at **family celebrations** were reported in **summer months**, i.e. July (5), August (11), and September (7).

Nearly all celebratory shooting incidents in Serbia were related to **birthday celebrations**, 4 in total.

2. TYPES OF WEAPONS USED IN CELEBRATORY SHOOTING INCIDENTS

In 28 (43%) celebratory shooting incidents, the weapons used were reported to be in illegal possession, while in 33 (50.7%) of them, the type of possession was not reported. In 4 (7.6%) cases, the weapons were reported to be in legal possession.

2.1 Celebratory shooting incidents by type of weapon



- Handguns were the most reported type of weapon used in celebratory shooting incidents in all jurisdictions, with 22 (33.8%) reported incidents involving this type of firearm.
- Handguns were the second most reported type of weapon used in celebratory shooting incidents related to family celebrations (11 such incidents).
- In 4 (6%) incidents, the handguns were in legal possession.



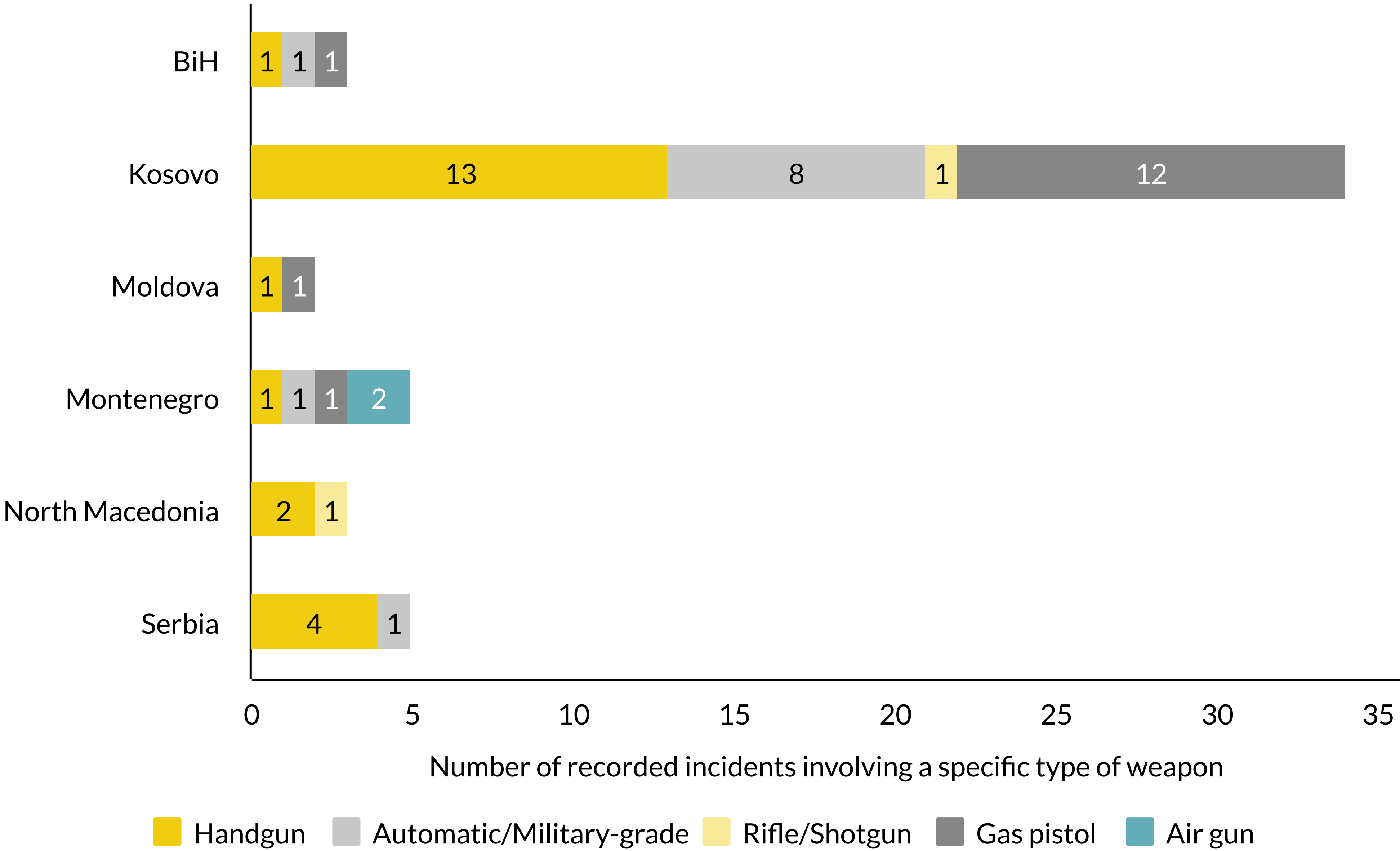
- Gas pistols were reported in 15 (23%) incidents, thus being the second most reported type of weapon in celebratory shooting incidents.
- Gas pistols were the main weapon of choice at celebratory shooting incidents related to family celebrations, with 12 such incidents reported.
- An Ekol gas pistol was reported as used in 5 (7.7%) incidents, and Zoraki in 3 (4.6%) incidents.



- Automatic/Military-grade weapons were reported as used in 11 (16.9%) celebratory shooting incidents, 8 (12.3%) of which took place in Kosovo all at family celebrations.
- Automatic/Military-grade weapons were mainly reported as used during family celebrations, in 8 (12.3%) incidents.
- The use of an AK-47 was reported in 6 (9.2%) incidents.

2.2 Celebratory shooting incidents by type of weapon and jurisdiction

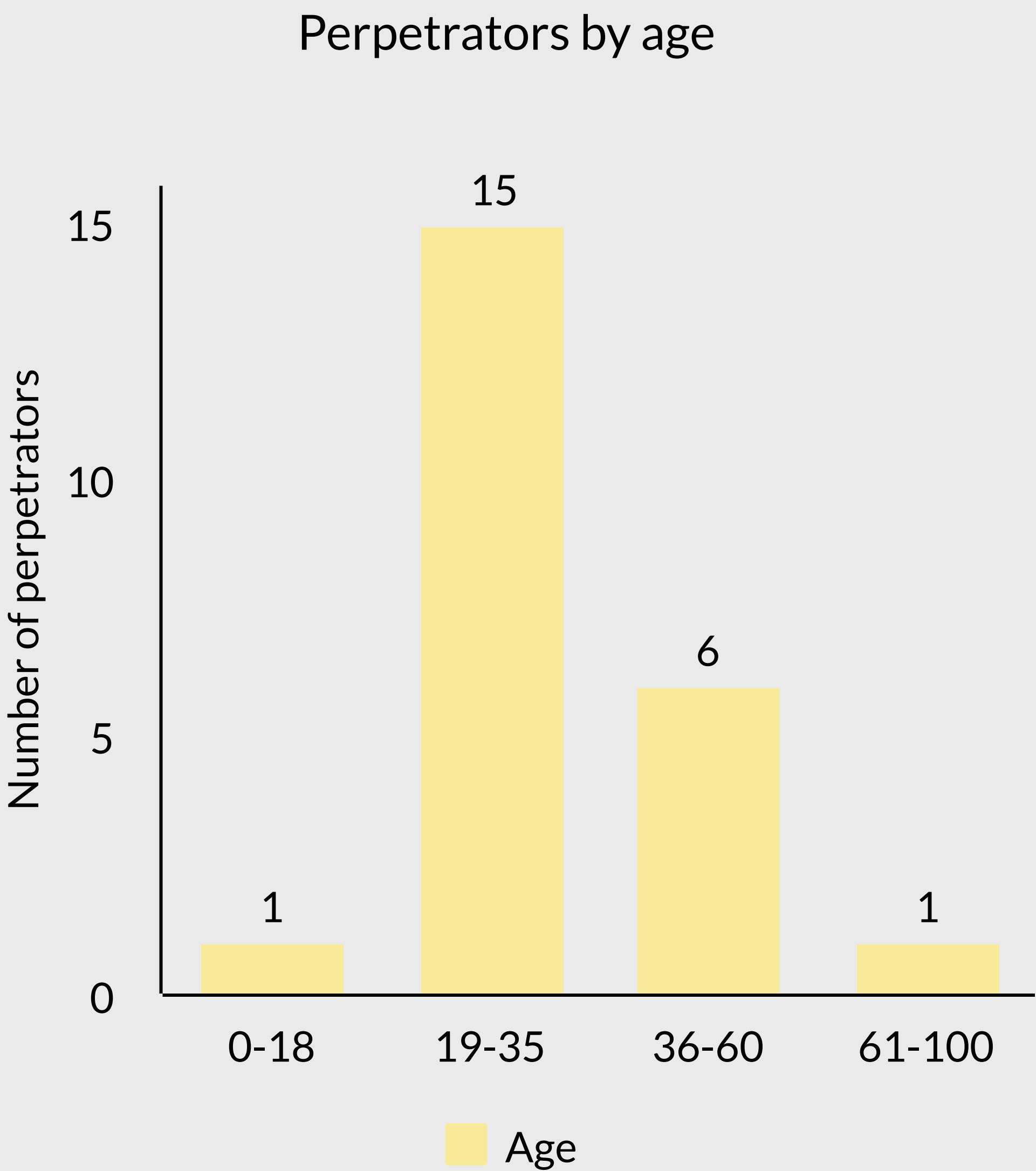
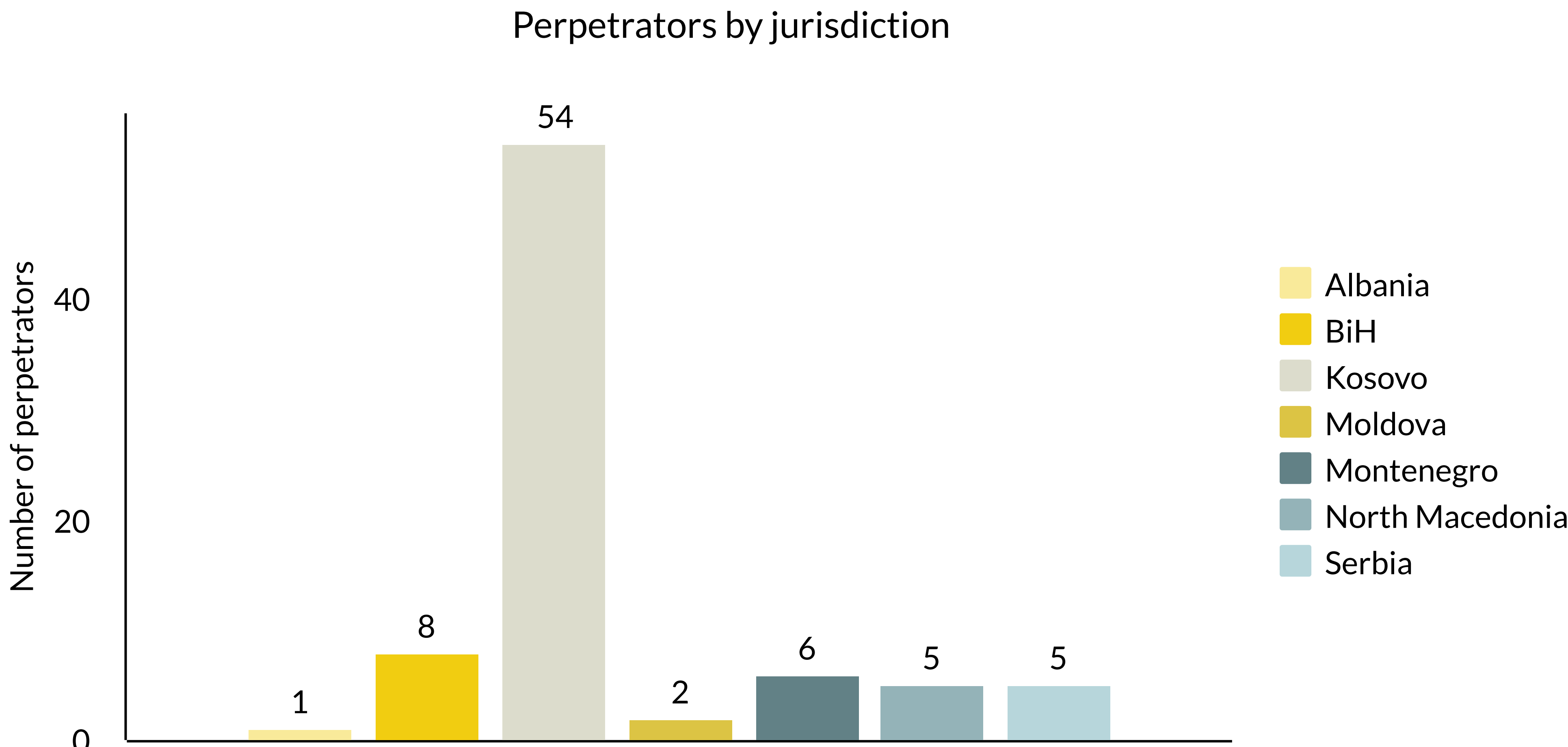
The graph shows the number of incidents by type of weapon reported in celebratory shooting incidents each jurisdiction in 2020. The type of weapon was either unknown or not reported in 10.7% of recorded celebratory shooting incidents, while in 7.7% cases the use of multiple types of SALW was reported.



Firearms were seized in 51 (78%) incidents related to celebratory shootings.

3. PERPETRATORS* IN CELEBRATORY SHOOTINGS

A total of 81 persons were reported as perpetrators of celebratory shooting incidents in 2020. Perpetrator refers to any individual who has used a firearm/ammunition/explosive to commit any of the types of incidents covered by the AVMP. According to the AVMP data, the phenomenon of celebratory shooting is highly gendered, considering that all perpetrators whose sex was reported were men.

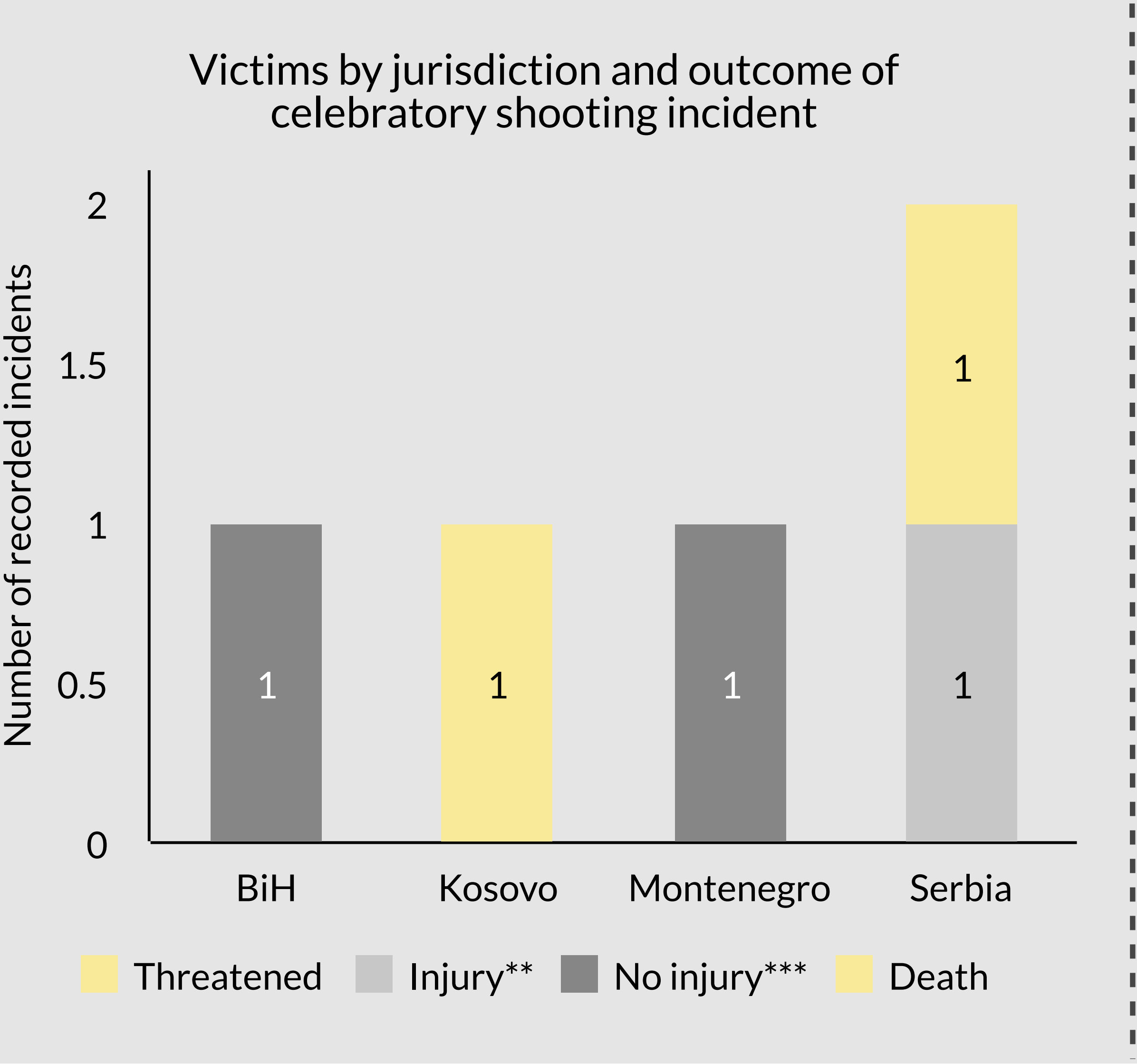


- Out of 81 perpetrators, 76 (94%) were men, while the sex was not indicated for 5 (6%) perpetrators.
- Age was reported for 23 perpetrators. Two-thirds of them (15) are in the 19-35 age group, and 6 in the 36-60 age group. One minor perpetrator was reported and one older than 61.
- 60% of all perpetrators were reported in Kosovo.
- In 93.8% of cases (61), the perpetrators were reported as caught, while in 4.6% of cases (3) the perpetrators remained unknown. The perpetrator was known but not caught in one incident (1.5%).

*Refers only to incidents for which the number and sex of the perpetrators were reported.

3. VICTIMS* IN CELEBRATORY SHOOTINGS

Five persons, all men, were reported as victims of celebratory shooting incidents in 2020. Victim refers to any individual who has been threatened, injured or died as a result of the use of a firearm/ ammunition/ explosives.



- Five victims of celebratory shooting incidents were reported in 5 (8%) incidents. In 60 (92%) of such incidents, no victims were reported.
- Celebratory shooting incidents resulted in one fatal outcome and one non-fatal injury, both reported in Serbia. No victims were reported in Albania, Moldova, and North Macedonia.
- For incidents for which the type of event was specified, two persons were reported as victims of celebratory shooting at family celebrations and two at birthday parties.
- The incidents in which the age of the victims was known (3) showed that they all fall in the 19-35 age group (3 men).

*Refers only to incidents for which the number and sex of the victims were reported.
**Injury refers to all incidents in which an individual sustained an injury due to weapon use.
***No injury refers to all incidents in which a weapon was discharged, but the victim did not sustain a gunshot injury.



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

Bulevar Zorana Đinđića 64
11000 Belgrade, Serbia

Tel: +381 11 4155300
Fax: +381 11 4155499

e-mail: seesac@undp.org

www.seesac.org



*This Project was funded by
the European Union*

This document was produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The views
expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union.

