



**In Focus Armed Violence Monitor**

**Firearm incidents in**

# **Criminal context**

**In South East Europe in 2022**

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# About the Armed Violence Monitor

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*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 focuses on **firearm incidents in the criminal context** in South East Europe (SEE) from **1 January to 31 December 2022**, including a comparative overview of 2021. The report draws attention to firearm incidents related to organized crime, armed robberies, firearm thefts, as well as other incidents with a criminal background.

## Methodology

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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 the police daily incident reports. 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 EU Council Decision (CFSP) 2016/2356 and EU Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/2111.

*\*For the United Nations Development Programme, references to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).*

*For the European Union, this designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.*

## HIGHLIGHTS

492

firearm incidents in  
the **criminal context**  
were reported in  
2022.

189

**armed robberies**  
were reported.

27

**people, all men, died**  
in firearm incidents in  
the criminal context.

146

incidents related to  
**organized crime**  
reported.

167

cases involved  
**handguns.**

69

**women** were  
**threatened in armed**  
**robberies.**

# 1. General overview

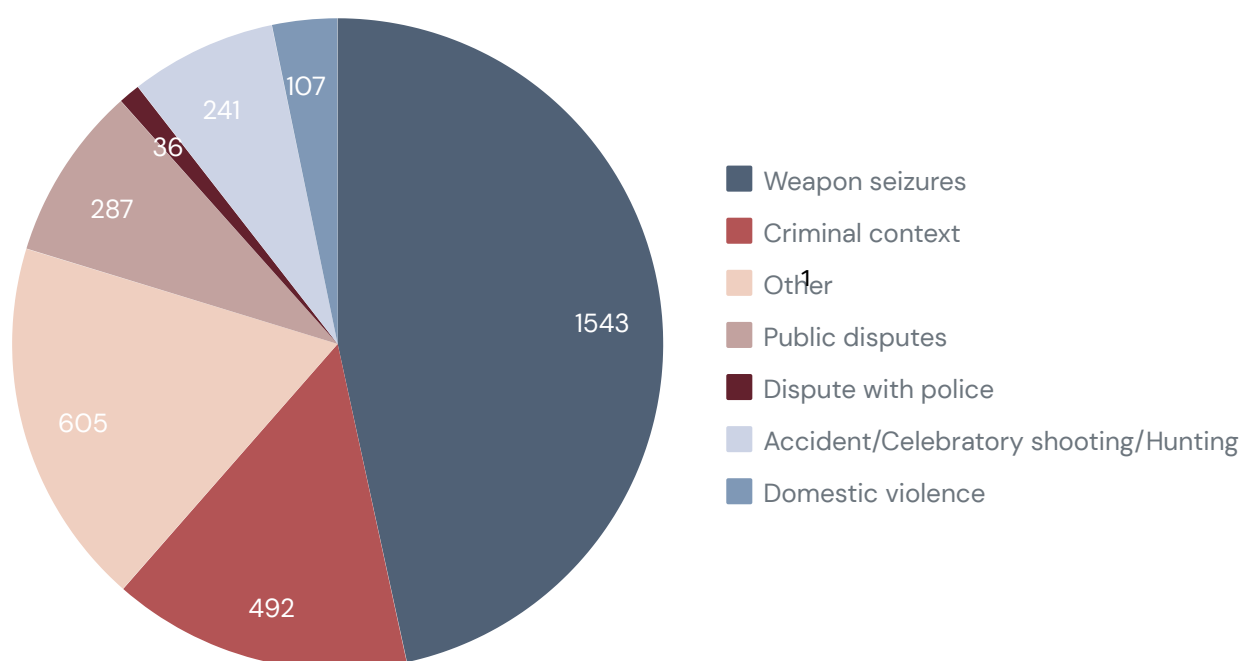
The AVMP differentiates four subcategories under the criminal context category:

- *Organized crime* subcategory covers firearm incidents related to human, drug and weapon trafficking, as well as organized criminal groups' clashes, among others.
- *Armed robberies* subcategory captures thefts that involve the use of firearms, ammunition, and explosives.
- *Firearm thefts* subcategory records incidents in which a firearm, ammunition or explosives were stolen.
- *Other incidents in the criminal context* subcategory includes firearm incidents with a criminal background that are not associated with any of the above (e.g., kidnapping, planned assaults, usury, racketeering and extortion, among others).

## 1.1 Firearm incidents in the criminal context vs other types of firearm incidents in 2022

In 2022, there was a 17% drop in the number of reported incidents in the criminal context when compared to 2021. The total number decreased from 594 to 492 incidents. Consequently, these incidents ranked third in terms of frequency of reporting, falling behind weapon seizures and incidents categorized under "Other".

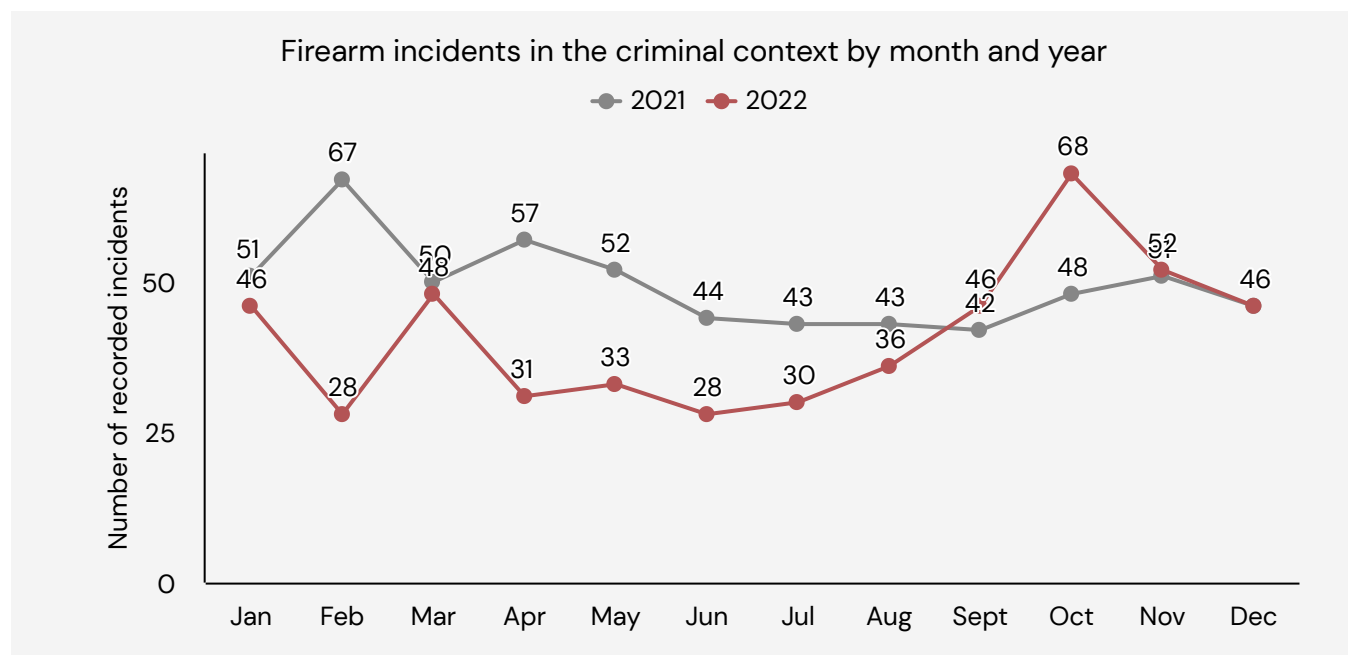
Firearm incidents in the criminal context vs other firearm incidents in 2022



<sup>1</sup> Other as a separate category under the Types of Firearm incidents refers to suicides, shootings under undetermined circumstances, non-hunting related shooting of animals, undetermined explosions, weapons used for defence, and all other incidents that cannot be classified under any of the categories above.

### 1.2 Firearm incidents in the criminal context throughout 2022

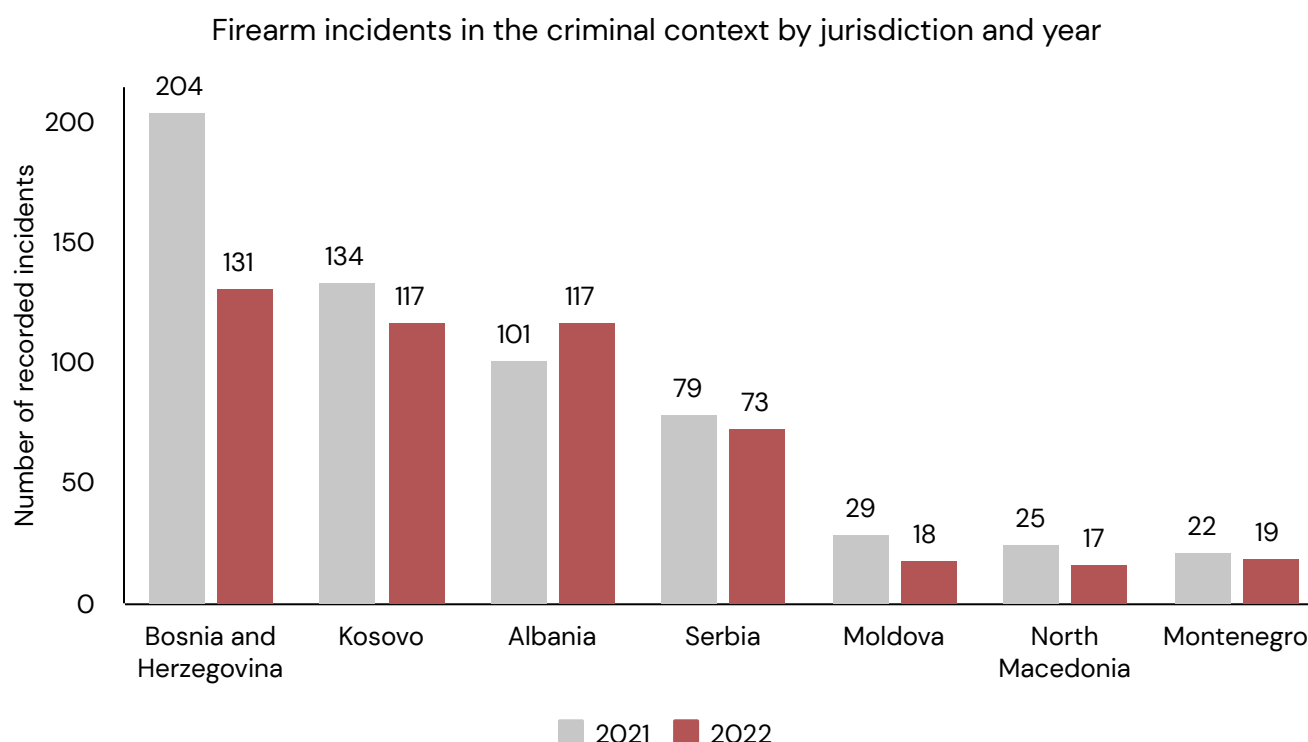
Overall, there was a general downward trend in the number of incidents throughout 2022 compared to 2021. February experienced a significant decrease, with only 28 incidents. The trend slightly increased in March and remained relatively stable until August, when it started to pick up, reaching its peak in October with 68 incidents.



### 1.3 Firearm Incidents in the criminal context by jurisdiction

All jurisdictions reflected the general drop in the number of incidents in the criminal context, with the exception of Albania, where an upward trend was observed. The most notable decrease was reported by Bosnia and Herzegovina (36%), Moldova (32%), and North Macedonia (32%).

Continuing the pattern from 2020 and 2021, Bosnia and Herzegovina reported the highest number (131) of firearm incidents in the criminal context. Albania and Kosovo were next, both with 117 incidents. Serbia (73) reported a comparable number of incidents in both years, while other jurisdictions reported less than 20 incidents.

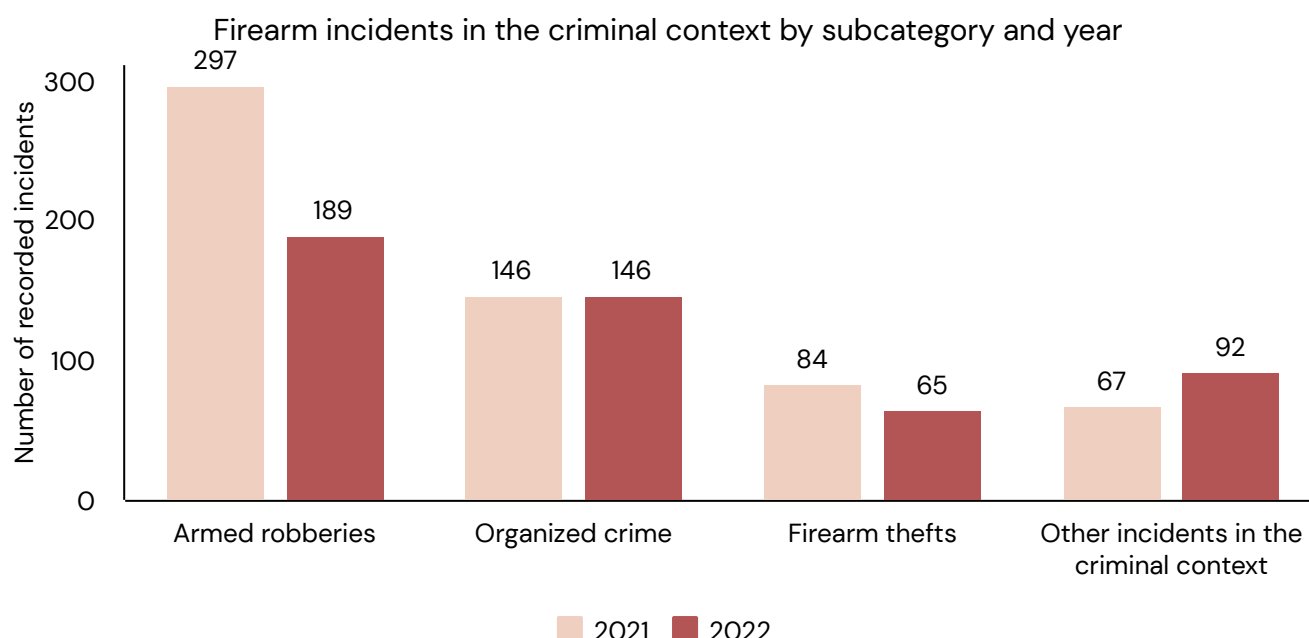


## 1.4 Firearm incidents in the criminal context by subcategories

A positive trend has been observed related to armed robberies. More specifically, since 2020, the number of armed robberies has been on the decline. As a result, armed robberies dropped from 297 in 2021 to 189 in 2022, indicating a 36% decrease.

In addition, firearm thefts showed a 23% decrease compared to 2021.

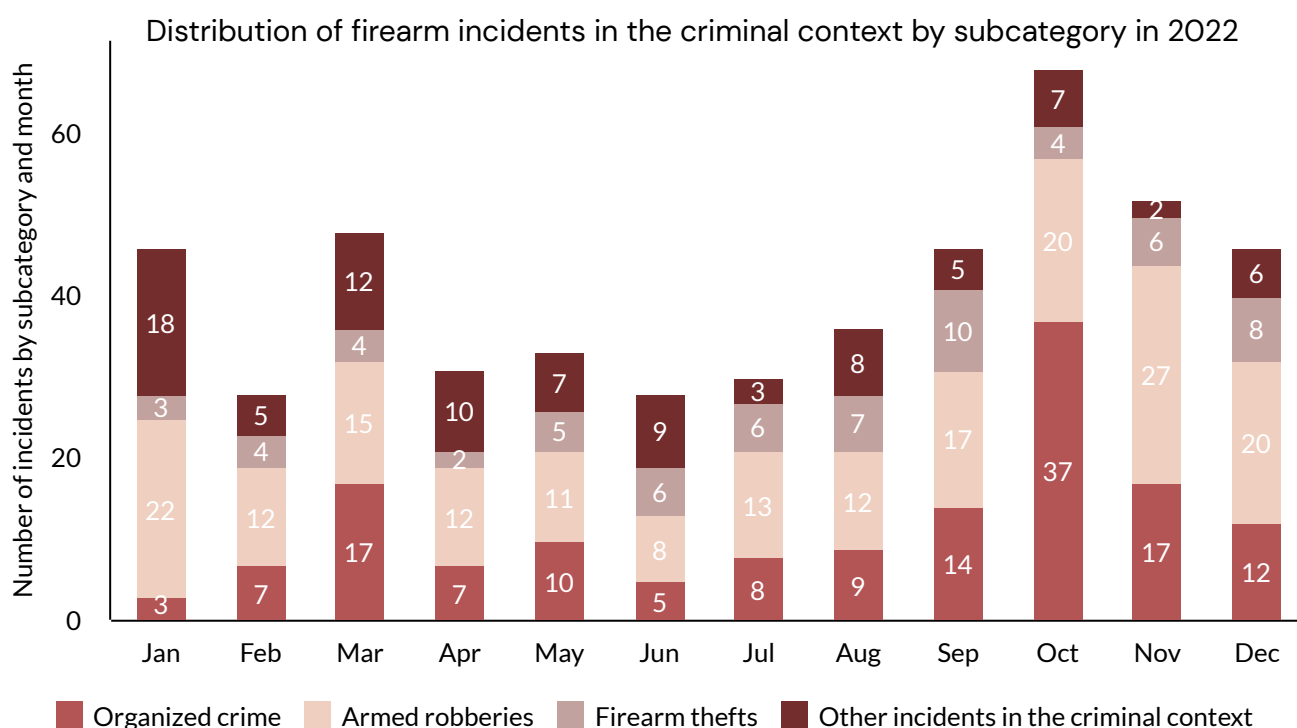
The number of organized crime incidents remained constant in 2022, with 146 incidents reported in both years. On the other hand, other criminal incidents displayed a rising trend, with a 37% increase in 2022.



Armed robberies remained the most often reported type of incident in the criminal context during 2022, despite a drop. The last quarter of 2022 saw the most armed robberies, with a peak in November (27). The fewest number of armed robberies was reported in June (8).

The trend related to organized crime incidents varied. The highest number of these incidents was reported in October (37 incidents), followed by November and March, with 17 incidents. January (3 incidents) and the summer months documented the fewest such incidents.

The number of firearm thefts nearly doubled in the second half of the year. The other incidents in the criminal context showed the reverse pattern, with 61 occurring in the first half of the year and 31 in the second half.

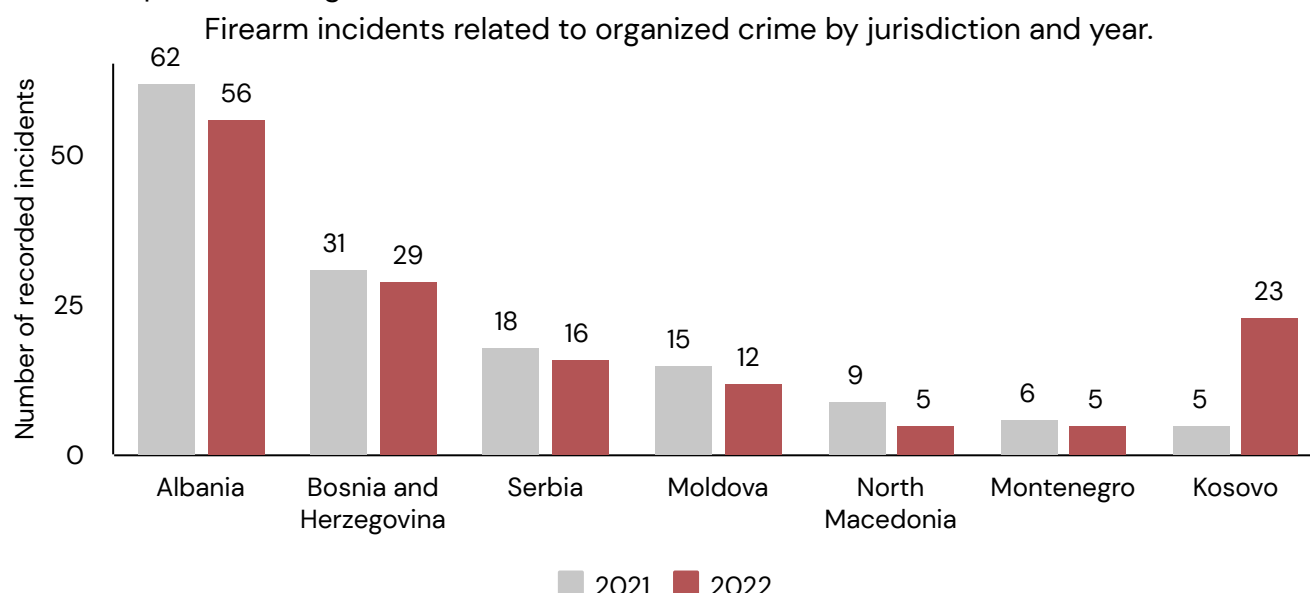


## 2. Organized crime incidents

### 2.1 Firearm incidents related to organized crime in jurisdictions

The number of reported incidents associated with organized crime was the same in both 2021 and 2022.

All jurisdictions documented a decline, except Kosovo, where the number increased more than four times, and Serbia, where a slight rise was noticed. Albania (56), Bosnia and Herzegovina (29) and Serbia (23) reported the highest number of these incidents.



### 2.2 Types of illegal activities recorded in the organized crime subcategory

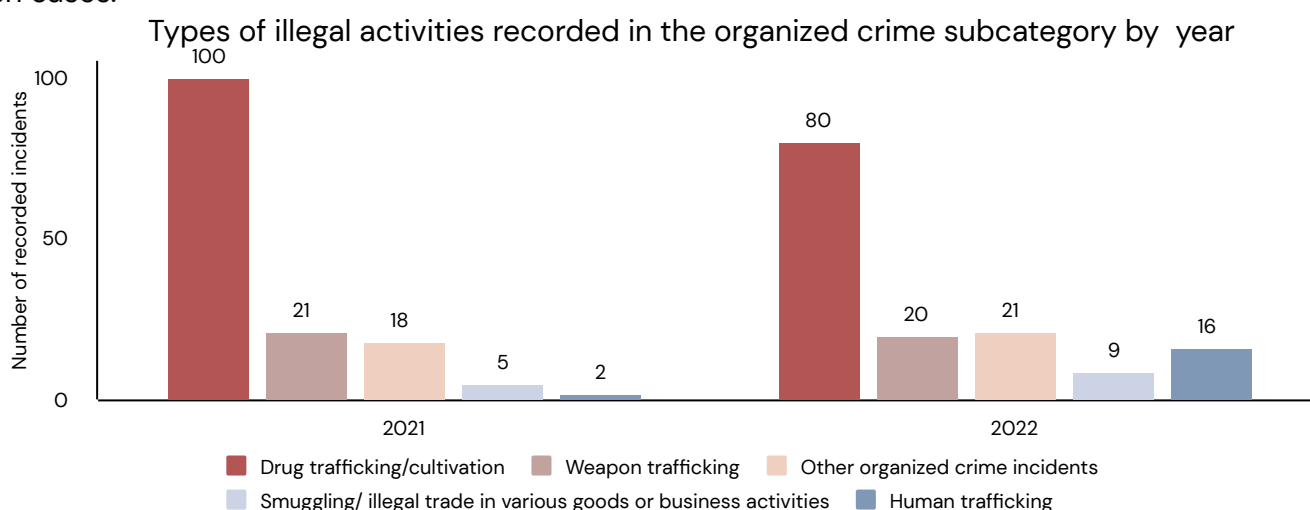
Drug trafficking/cultivation was the most widespread illegal activity in 2021 and 2022. However, in 2022, there was a 20% decrease in these activities. Although firearms, ammunition, and explosives were not commonly used in these incidents, law enforcement seized them during anti-drug trafficking operations. The majority of cases were reported in Albania (33) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (21), while Serbia and Kosovo reported 10 and 8 cases, respectively. Other jurisdictions reported five or fewer.

The number of cases related to weapon trafficking remained almost unchanged. Albania accounted for more than half of these cases (13). Other jurisdictions reported fewer than five, except Moldova and Montenegro, where no such cases were documented.

Other organized crime incidents, including law enforcement efforts to combat organized criminal groups, led to 21 reported cases, indicating a slight increase from 2021 (18 cases). The majority of these incidents occurred in Albania (5), followed by Serbia (4).

Incidents involving smuggling/illegal trade of various goods and illegal business activities increased from 5 in 2021 to 9 in 2022. North Macedonia and Montenegro did not report such cases, while they were sporadic in other jurisdictions.

There was a significant rise in cases of human trafficking, with 16 cases reported in 2022. Serbia reported 6 cases, Moldova 3, while other jurisdictions reported 2 or fewer. Montenegro did not report such cases.



## 2.3 Types of weapons used in organized crime incidents in jurisdictions

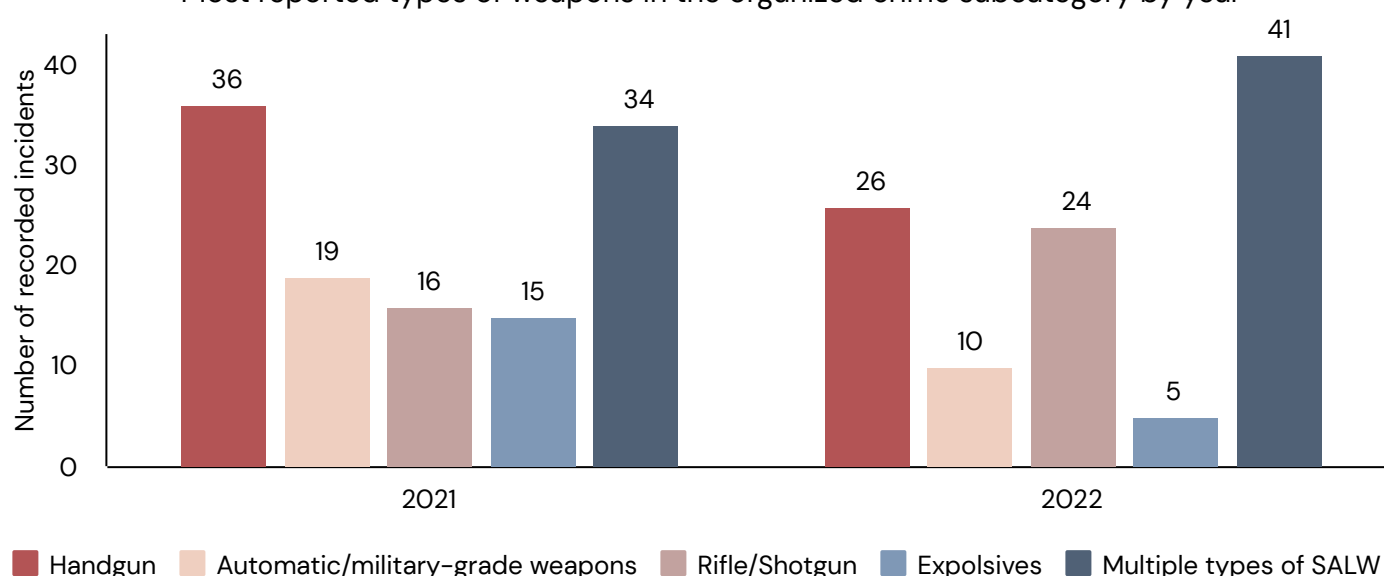
There were notable changes in the trends related to the use of firearms between 2021 and 2022. While there was a decline in the use of handguns, gas pistols, automatic/military-grade weapons, and explosives, an increase in the use of multiple types of SALW, rifles/shotguns and air guns was observed in 2022.

The trend revealed that incidents related to organized crime are characterized by the frequent use of multiple types of SALW. Thus, one-third of incidents in this subcategory involved the use of multiple types of SALW.

Handguns were reported in 26 cases, closely followed by rifles/shotguns (24 cases). Both types of weapons were mainly associated with drug trafficking. Automatic/military-grade weapons were also most commonly reported in incidents involving drug trafficking. The number of cases involving ammunition remained relatively stable, with 16 cases in 2021 and 17 in 2022.

In 98% of cases the weapons were in illegal possession.

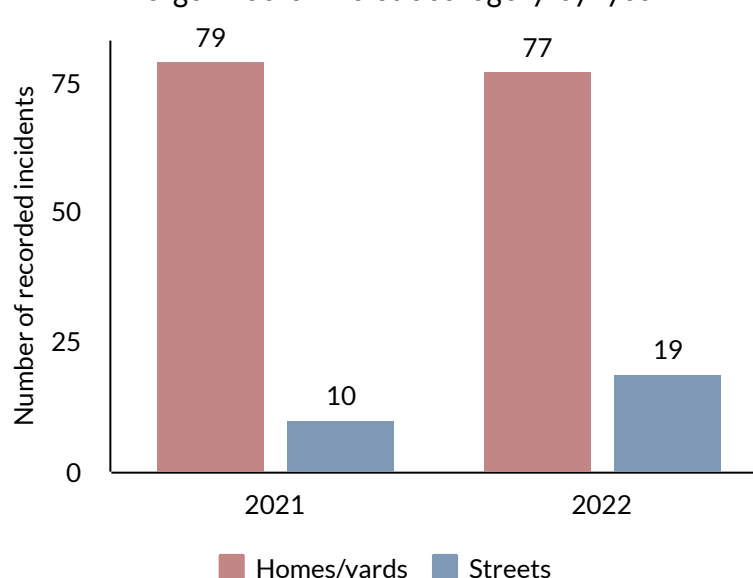
Most reported types of weapons in the organized crime subcategory by year



## 2.4 Macro and microlocation of firearm incidents in the organized crime subcategory

The prevailing pattern from both years showed that more than 67% of these incidents took place in urban areas. Homes/yards continued to be the most frequent microlocation in both years due to the fact that law enforcement investigations resulted in the raids of the homes/properties of perpetrators involved in organised crime activities. Incidents taking place on the streets followed at a distance, despite a 90% increase from 2021.

Most reported microlocations of firearm incidents in the organized crime subcategory by year

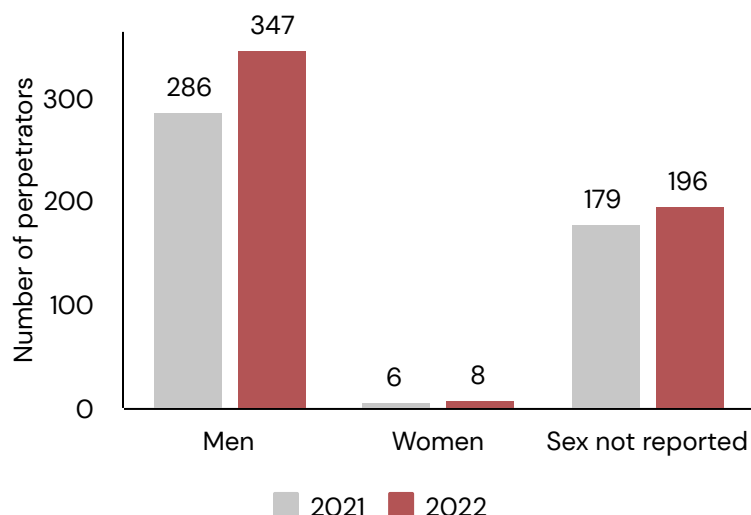


## 2.5 Perpetrators of firearm incidents in the organized crime subcategory

While the number of incidents in organised crime remained the same as in 2021, the number of perpetrators increased from 471 in 2021 to 551 in 2022. The rise was mainly due to an increase in incidents involving more than ten members of organised criminal groups, primarily engaged in drug trafficking.

Incidents in the organised crime subcategory were primarily committed by men, who made up 98% of all perpetrators when sex was indicated. Women accounted for 2% of perpetrators. As in 2021, 56% of the perpetrators were in the 19–35 age group. The other prominent group were those aged 36–60. In 2022, there was an increase in the number of perpetrators whose sex was unspecified (179 vs 196). Perpetrators were caught in 95% of cases in 2022.

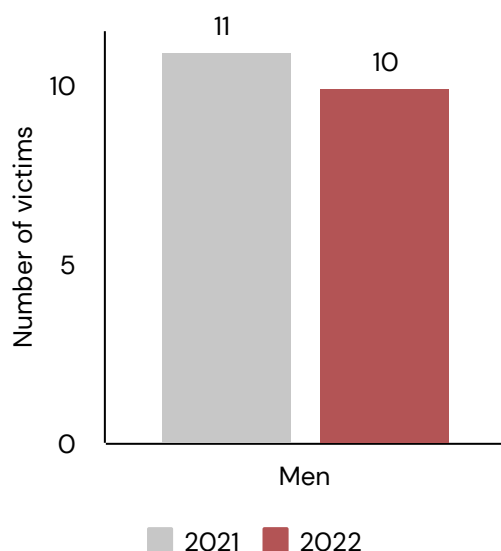
Perpetrators of firearm incidents in the organized crime subcategory by sex and year



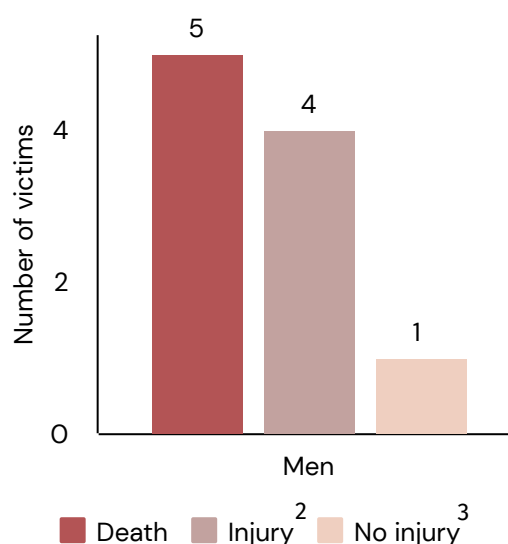
## 2.6 Victims of firearm incidents in the organized crime subcategory and outcomes

The number of victims decreased slightly in 2022, specifically from 11 to 10. During both years, all the victims were men. In 2022, five men were killed, and four were injured with firearms. One man did not sustain gunshot injuries when a firearm was discharged in his presence. Among the men who were killed, three men lost their lives in clashes involving organized criminal groups; one man was killed in an incident connected to drug trafficking, and another in an incident associated with human trafficking.

Victims of incidents in the organized crime subcategory by sex and year



Outcome for victims of incidents in the organized crime subcategory by sex in 2022



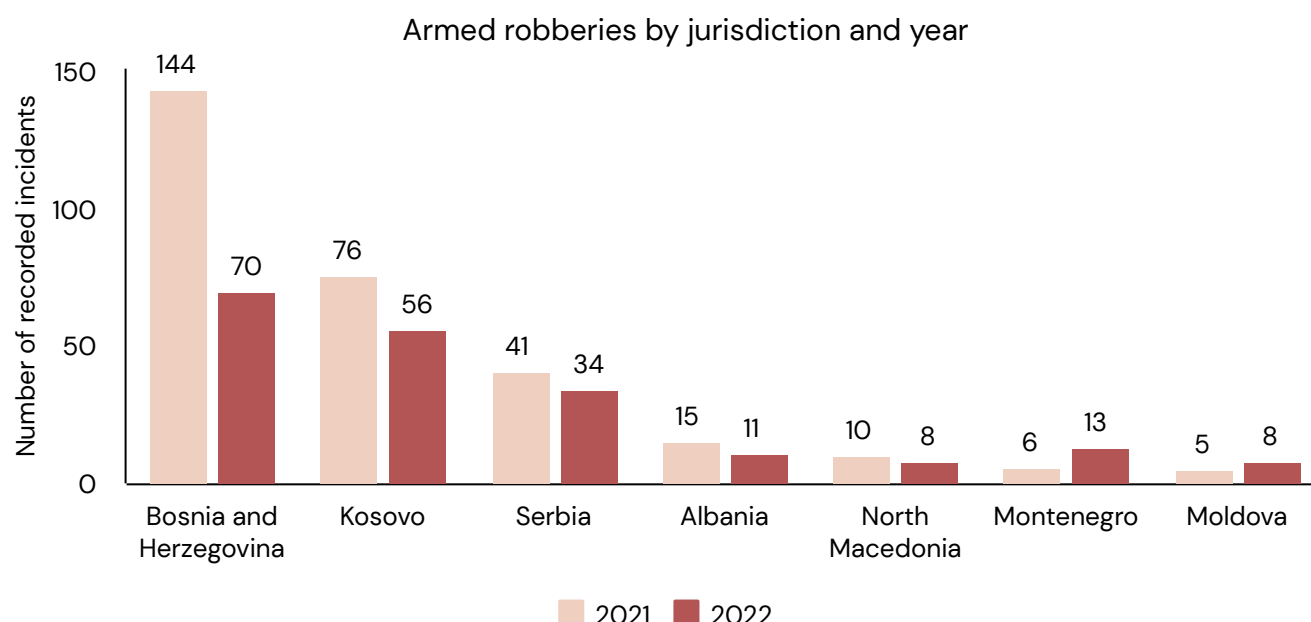
<sup>2</sup> Injury refers to all incidents in which an individual sustained an injury due to the use of a weapon.

<sup>3</sup> No injury refers to all incidents in which a weapon was discharged, but the victim did not sustain a gunshot injury.

## 3. Armed robberies

### 3.1 Armed robberies in jurisdictions

Armed robberies comprised 38% of all firearm incidents in the criminal context in 2022. Throughout the region, 189 armed robberies were reported, indicating a 36% drop from 2021, with 297 cases. While Montenegro documented a slight increase in armed robberies in 2022, almost all jurisdictions saw a downward pattern. Despite a substantial decrease of 51%, Bosnia and Herzegovina still reported the highest number of armed robberies, maintaining the pattern from previous years. Kosovo (56) and Serbia (34) followed.



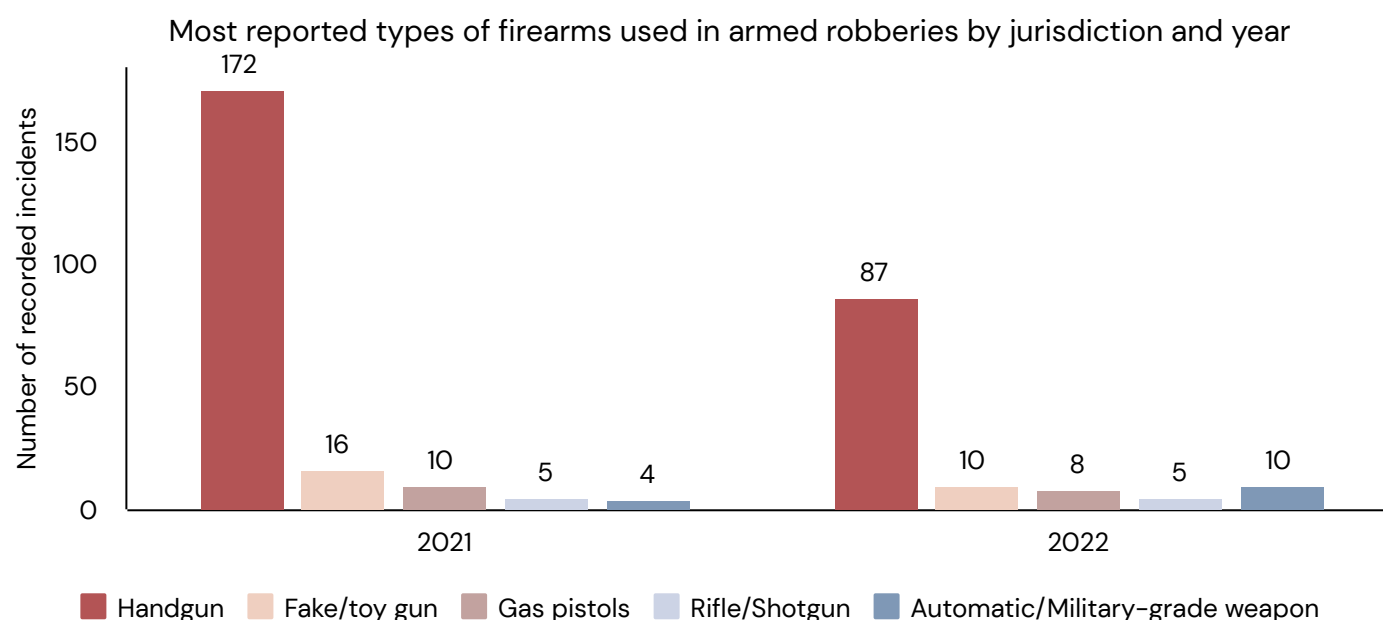
### 3.2 Type of firearms used in armed robberies

In both years, handguns were the most commonly used weapons in armed robberies. However, there was a 49% decrease in their use in 2022, dropping to 87 incidents compared to 172 cases in 2021. Nevertheless, nearly 70% of armed robberies were committed with handguns, when the type of weapon was specified. The majority of robberies with handguns were reported in Bosnia and Herzegovina (46) and Serbia (30).

Robberies involving fake/toy guns showed a 38% decline from 16 cases in 2021 to 10 cases in 2022. Nearly all robberies with this type of weapon were reported in Serbia (9).

The use of automatic/military-grade weapons saw a substantial rise from 4 incidents in 2021 to 10 cases in 2022. More than half of these robberies were reported in Albania (6).

The use of gas pistols and rifles/shotguns in armed robberies remained relatively stable between 2021 and 2022.



### 3.3 Micro and macrolocation of armed robberies

In 2022, 78% of armed robberies took place in urban areas. In terms of microlocation trends, the prevailing trends seen in 2021 continued in 2022.

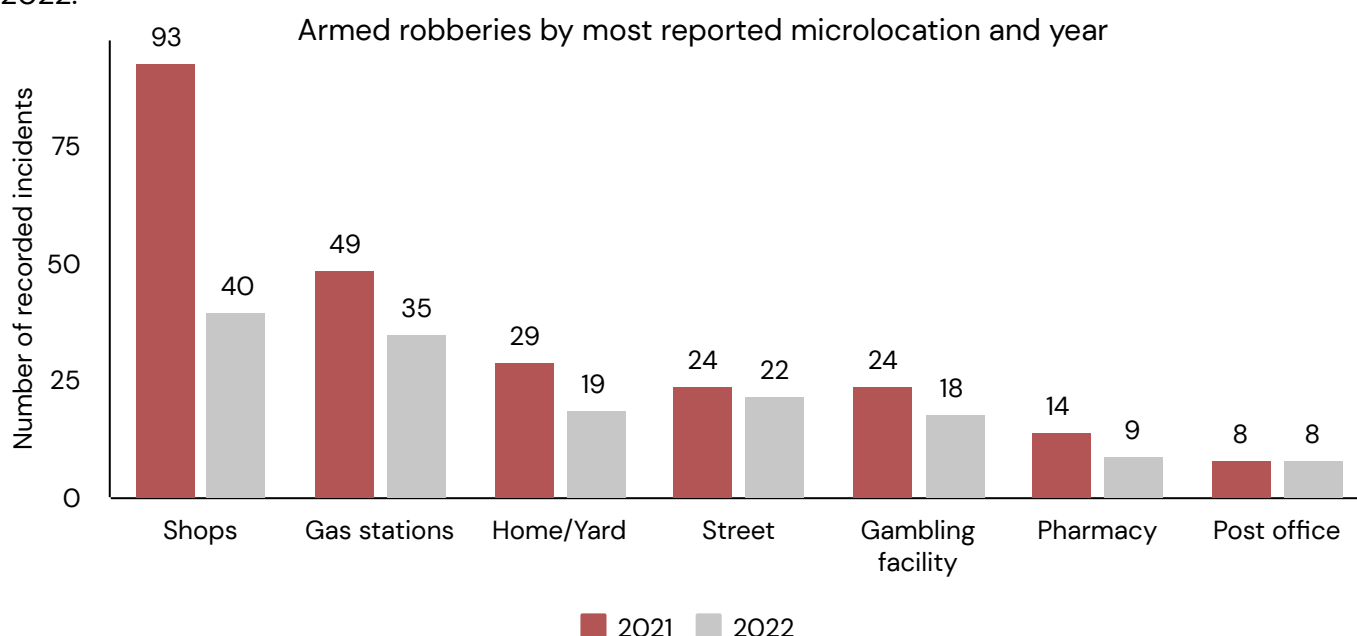
Notably, most armed robberies were committed in shops (40), although this number more than halved since 2021 (93). Shops were primary targets of armed robberies in Bosnia and Herzegovina (22), followed by Serbia (10).

Gas stations ranked second in both years, with 2022 seeing a decline in the number of gas station robberies. Both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo reported 15 armed robberies at gas stations.

Armed robberies on the street remained relatively consistent in 2022, with 22 cases reported, primarily occurring in Bosnia and Herzegovina (10) and Kosovo (7).

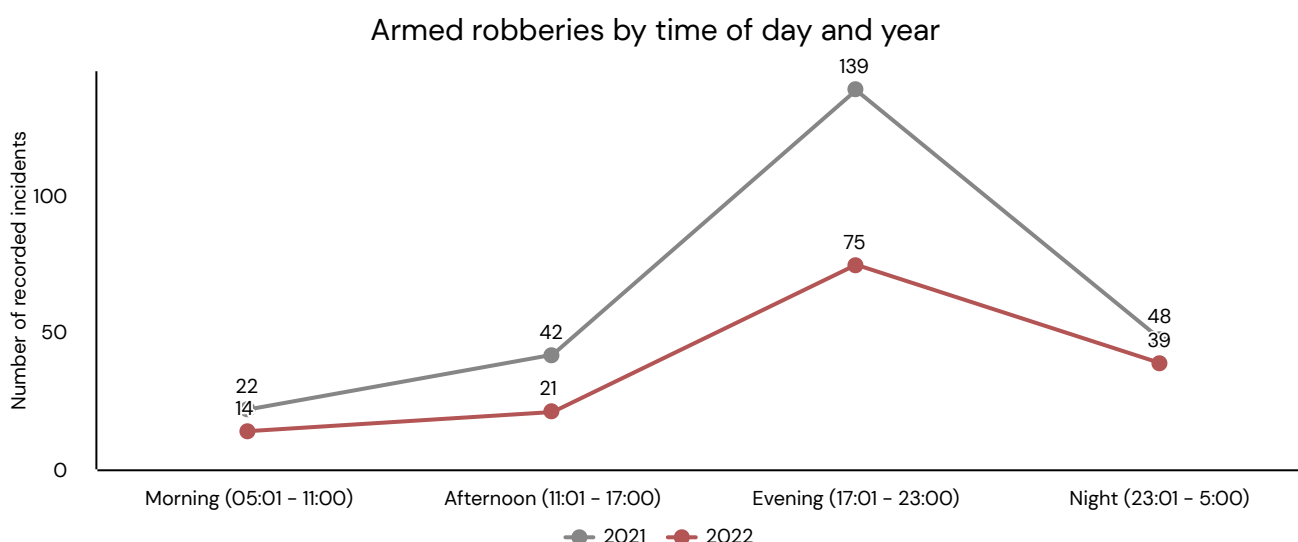
In 2022, homes were reported robbed with firearms in 19 cases, mainly in Kosovo (7), Albania (5) and Bosnia and Herzegovina (5).

The data showed a decrease in armed robberies targeting gambling facilities, with 18 cases reported in 2022.



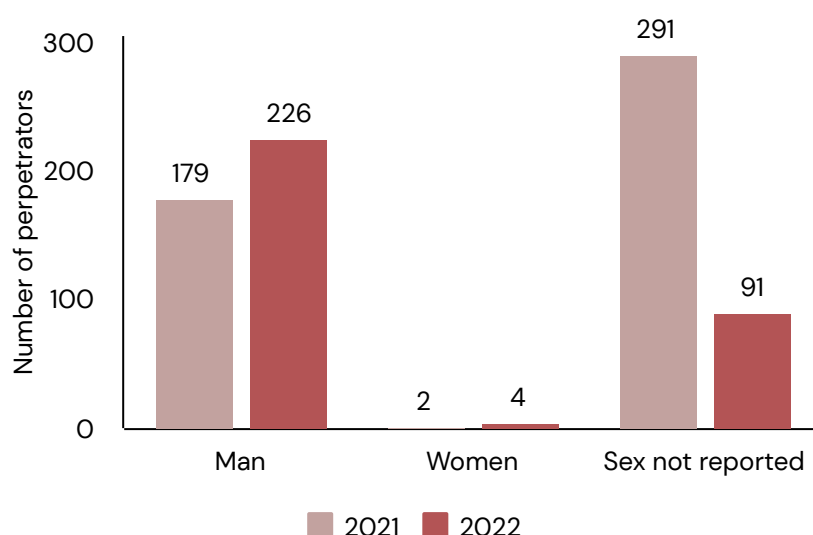
### 3.4 Time of day of armed robberies

The data available on the timing of armed robberies reveals a consistent trend observed in both 2021 and 2022. In both years, a clear pattern emerged, indicating that armed robberies reported in the evening were more prevalent compared to those occurring during the night, afternoon, and morning.



### 3.5 Perpetrators of armed robberies

In 2022, the number of perpetrators of armed robberies decreased due to the overall decline in such incidents. A total of 321 perpetrators were reported. The available data on the sex of perpetrators revealed that 98% were men, while women accounted for 2% of the perpetrators.



In both years, the most prominent age group among perpetrators was 19–35. This age group witnessed a significant increase, with 84 perpetrators reported, compared to 57 in 2021.

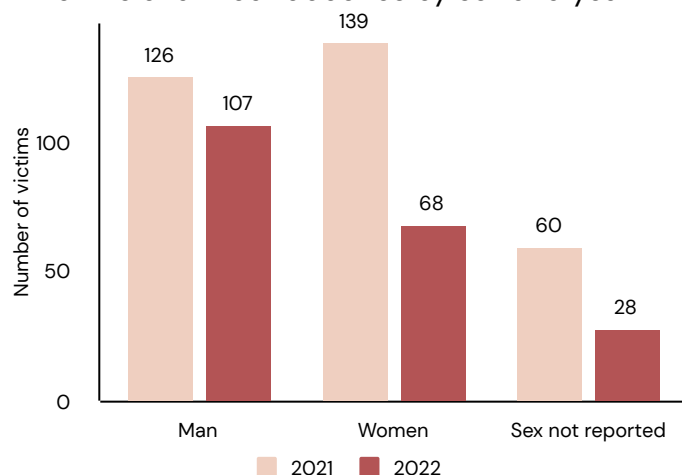
The number of perpetrators in the age range of 36–60 remained relatively stable, with 28 reported in 2021 and 25 in 2022. However, the number of perpetrators aged 18 and younger decreased by half in 2022, dropping from 26 to 13 incidents.

In 41% of armed robberies (78 cases), the perpetrators were caught.

### 3.6 Victims of armed robberies

In comparison to 2021, there was a significant decrease of 38% in the number of victims, declining from 325 to 203. This decline was particularly notable among women victims, with their numbers dropping by half to 68. Additionally, the number of victims whose sex was not reported also saw a twofold decrease. For the majority of the victims, totaling 185, the age was not indicated.

Victims of armed robberies by sex and year



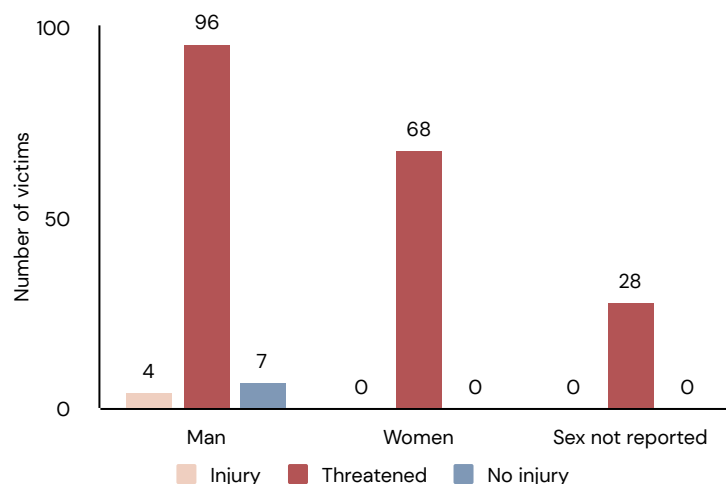
Armed robberies and firearm incidents in the domestic violence context are the only types of incidents covered by the AVMP with a significant number of women victims. In 2022, the highest number of women victims were reported in Bosnia and Herzegovina (26) and Serbia (21).

In 2022, there were no reported fatalities resulting from armed robberies, in contrast to 2021, when one man lost his life in such an incident.

An overwhelming majority of armed robbery victims, accounting for 95%, were threatened with firearms. Among these victims, nearly 40% were women when the data on sex was available.

Four men sustained injuries during these incidents, while a total of 192 individuals were threatened with a firearm. In addition, seven men did not sustain any injuries when a firearm was discharged in their presence during a robbery.

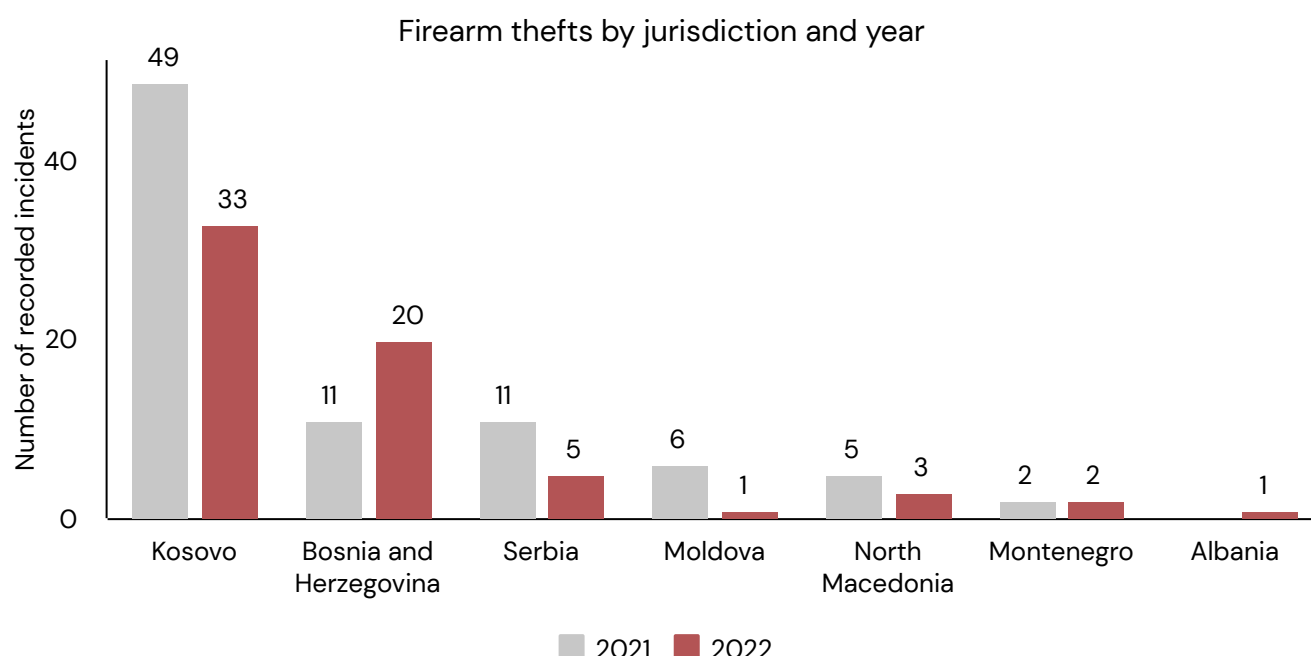
Outcome for victims of armed robberies by sex in 2022



## 4. Firearm thefts

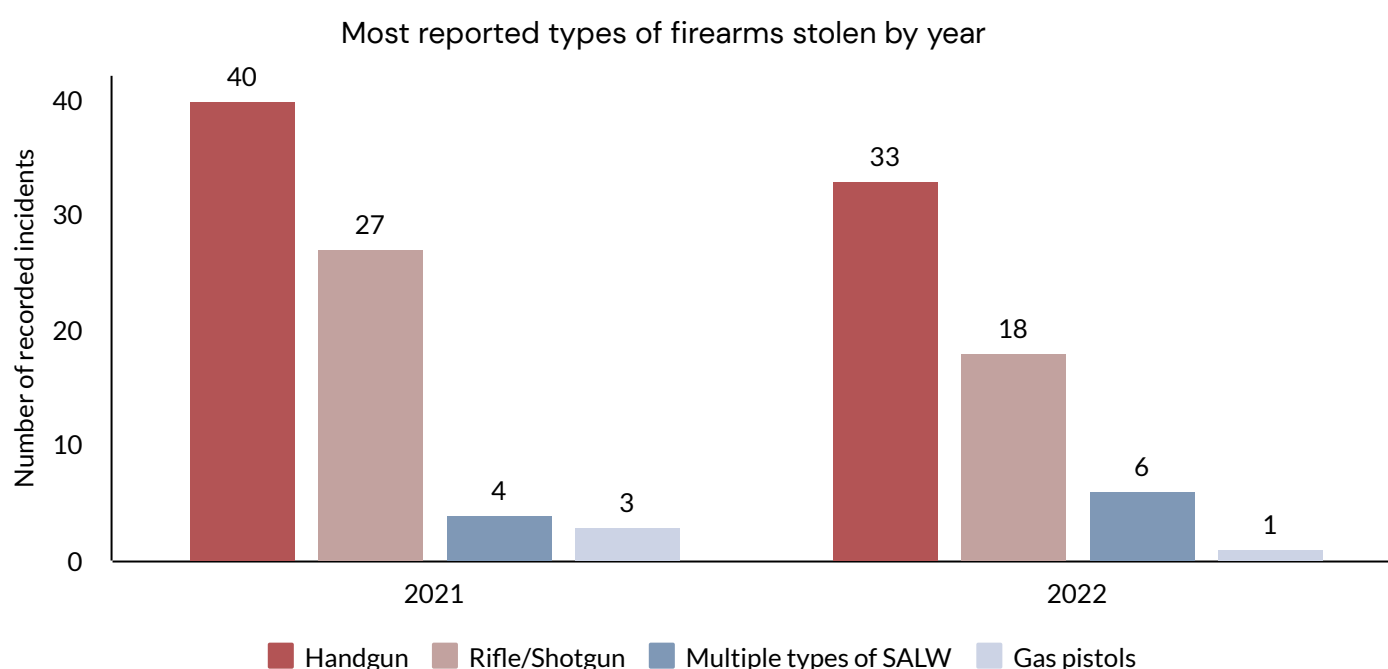
### 4.1 Firearm thefts in jurisdictions

A total of 65 firearm thefts were reported in SEE in 2022, showing a 23% decline from 84 such cases in 2021. While most jurisdictions documented a decrease, a notable rise of 81% was reported in Bosnia and Herzegovina and a modest one in Montenegro. Similar to 2021, Kosovo had the highest number of firearm thefts (33), comprising 51% of all such cases. Following was Bosnia and Herzegovina, with 20 firearm thefts. Other jurisdictions reported five or fewer such cases.



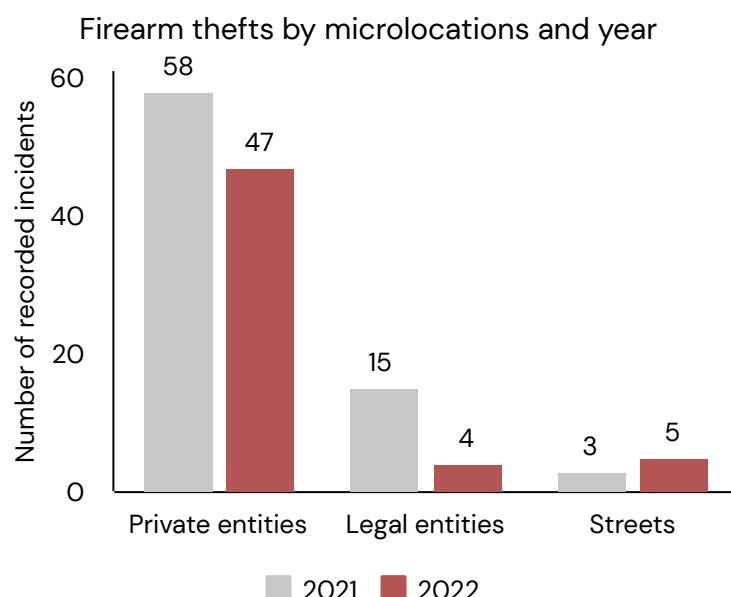
### 4.2 Type of firearms reported stolen

In both years, handguns were the most common type of weapon to be reported as stolen. In particular, handguns were reported stolen in 40 cases in 2021, whereas 33 cases of handgun thefts were recorded in 2022. Rifles/shotguns were the second-most-stolen type of weapon, with 27 cases reported in 2021 and 18 in 2022. Six cases involving the theft of multiple SALW were reported in 2022. In 2022, stolen weapons were in legal possession in 24 cases, with the majority being handguns (12 cases), followed by rifles/shotguns (9). A similar pattern was seen in 2021.



### 4.3 Micro and macrolocation of firearm thefts

Following the pattern observed in 2021, more than 70% of firearm thefts were reported in urban areas. In terms of microlocation, firearms were primarily stolen from private entities, particularly from homes. In 2022, there were 47 reported cases of citizens having their firearms stolen from their homes, indicating a 19% decrease compared to 2021. Out of these cases, handguns were the most commonly stolen type of firearm, accounting for 20 cases, followed by rifles/shotguns reported stolen in 15 cases. In addition, all six thefts of multiple types of SALW occurred in homes. In 18 cases, the weapons stolen from homes were in legal possession.



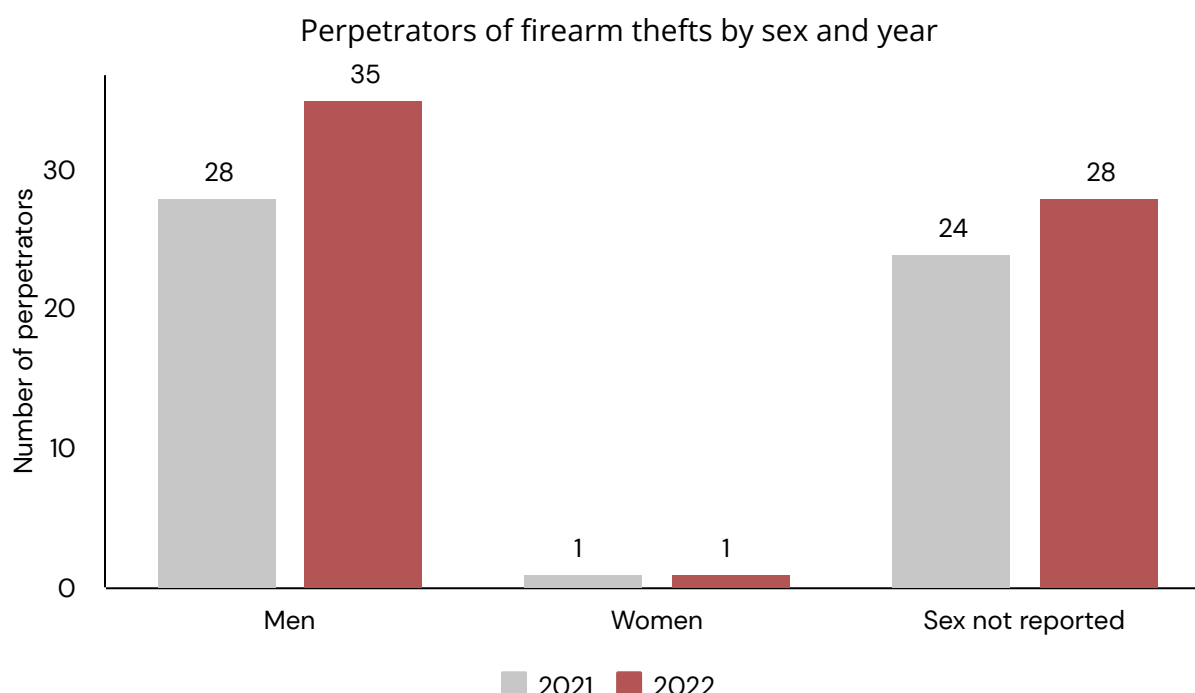
In comparison to 2021, the number of legal entities reporting firearm thefts significantly decreased in 2022, from 11 to 4.

These legal entities included a company, a firearm shop, military barracks, and a sports centre area. In most of these cases, the number of stolen firearms was not specified.

Bosnia and Herzegovina recorded two of these incidents, while Serbia and North Macedonia each reported one.

### 4.4 Perpetrators of firearm thefts

In 2022, the number of perpetrators of firearm thefts remained unknown in 70% of cases, which aligns with the pattern observed in 2021. Out of 64 reported perpetrators, the majority were men (35), with one woman perpetrator reported in 2022. Compared to 2021, there was a change in the trend concerning the perpetrators' age. Thus, perpetrators were mainly aged 18 and under (10 persons), followed by those aged 19–35 (7 persons).

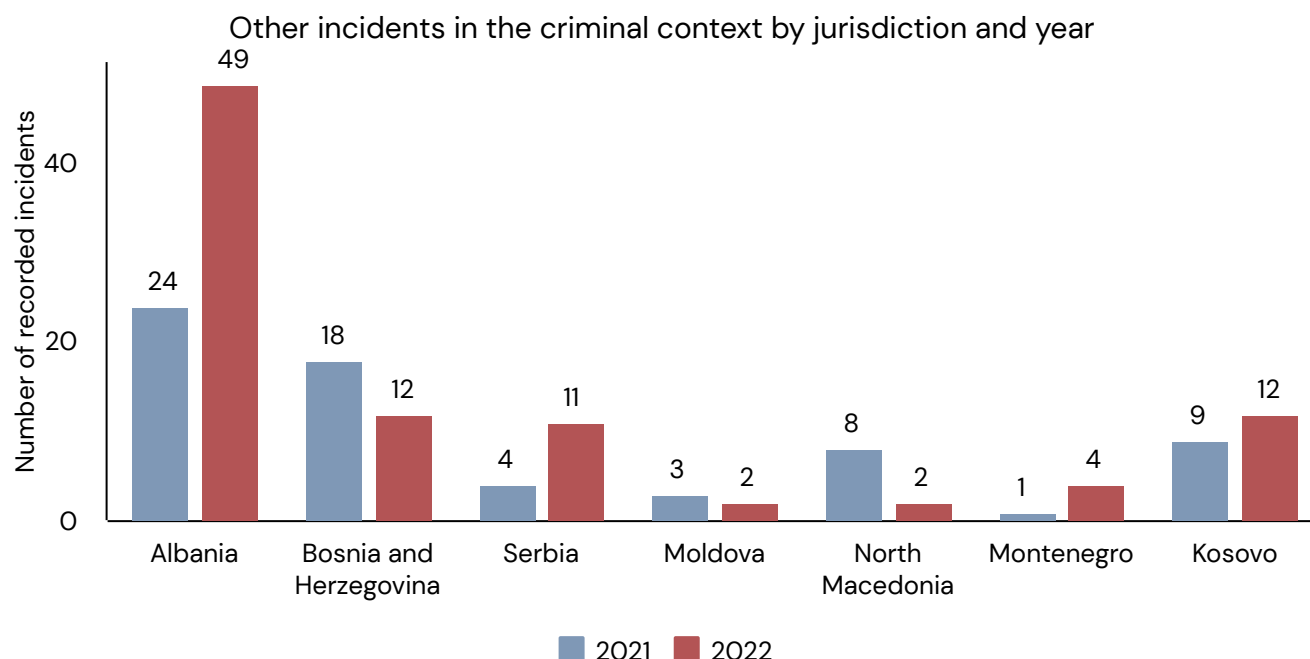


## 5. Other incidents in the criminal context

### 5.1 Firearm incidents in the subcategory – Other incidents in the criminal context

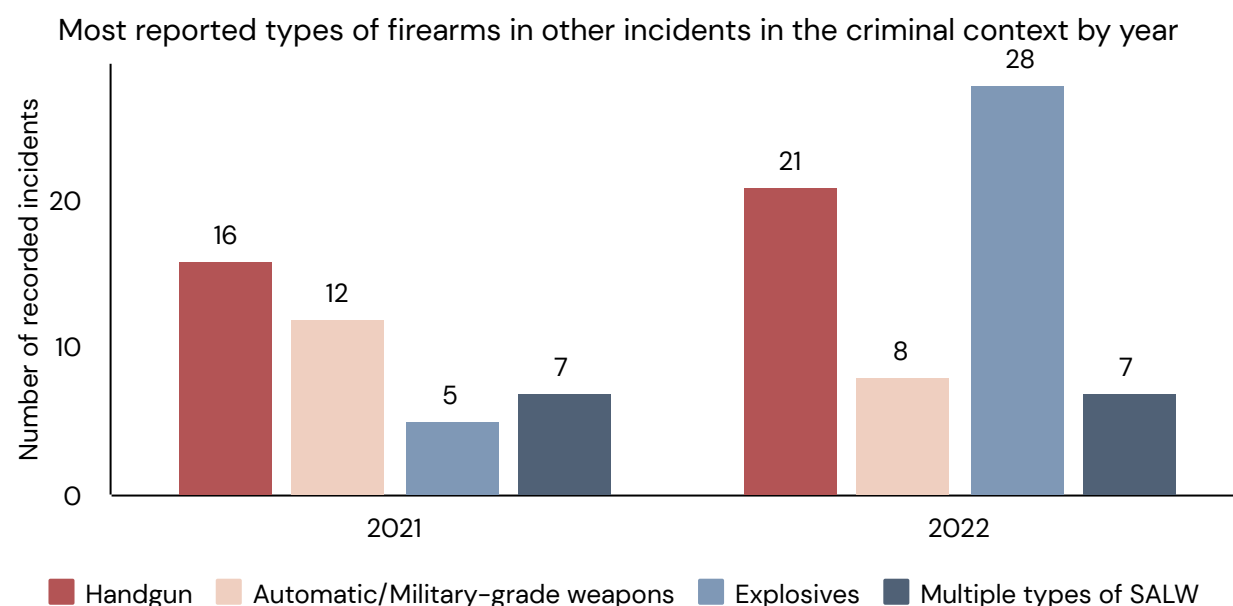
The number of incidents under the subcategory – Other incidents in the criminal context – rose by 37%, i.e. from 67 cases in 2021 to 92 cases in 2022.

Similar to 2021, most of these incidents occurred in Albania (49), where the number of incidents doubled in 2022. In Kosovo, these incidents increased three times in 2022, i.e. from 4 in 2021 to 12 in 2022. Serbia also saw a slight increase. Other jurisdictions experienced a decline.



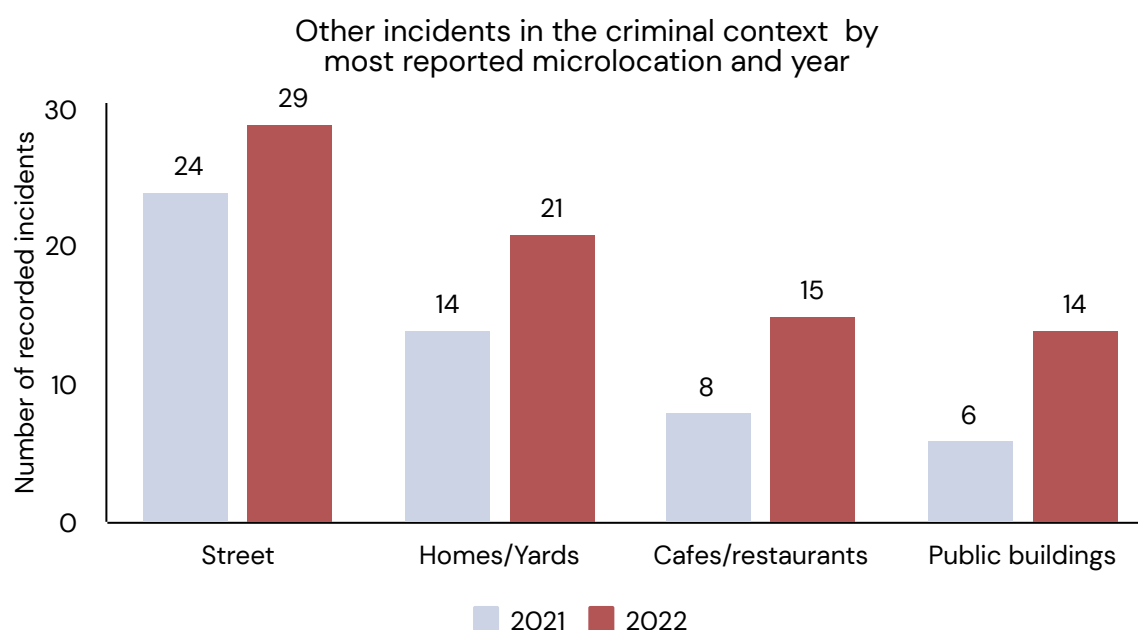
### 5.2 Types of weapons used in the other incidents in the criminal context

The trends in the use of weapons in incidents falling in the Other incidents in criminal context subcategory indicate a shift in the choices of weapons. The most striking change was a considerable rise in the use of explosives, which jumped from 5 incidents in 2021 to 28 incidents in 2022. As a result, 41% of these incidents were committed with explosives when the type of weapon was known. Albania reported nearly all of these incidents (24 cases). The use of handguns also rose, from 16 cases in 2021 to 21 cases in 2022. In contrast, the cases involving automatic/military weapons declined, dropping from 12 to 8 incidents over the same period. The cases with multiple types of SALW indicate a consistent pattern, with seven cases reported in both years.



### 5.3 Micro and macrolocation of other incidents in the criminal context

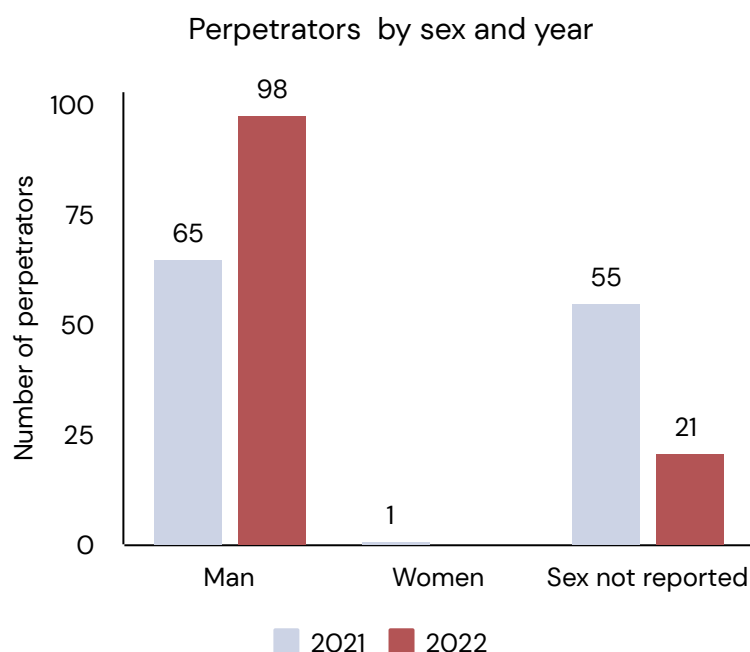
In both years, 76% of these incidents took place in urban areas. The trends regarding the microlocation noticed in 2021 prevailed in 2022. Thus, streets continued to be the most reported microlocation where incidents falling under this category occurred, with 29 such cases in 2022. Notably, 14 of these incidents took place in Albania. Homes/yards were the second most common microlocation in both years, with 21 cases in 2022. Incidents in cafes/restaurants nearly doubled, from 8 cases in 2021 to 15 in 2022. Additionally, there was a notable increase in the number of incidents taking place in public buildings, with 14 cases reported in 2022, compared to 6 cases in 2021.



### 5.4 Perpetrators of other incidents in the criminal context

The number of perpetrators of these incidents slightly decreased, from 121 in 2021 to 119 in 2022. According to the available data on sex, men were the only perpetrators of incidents in this subcategory in 2022. Similar to 2021, the majority of the perpetrators (27) were aged 19–35 in 2022, followed by those aged 35–60 (13%).

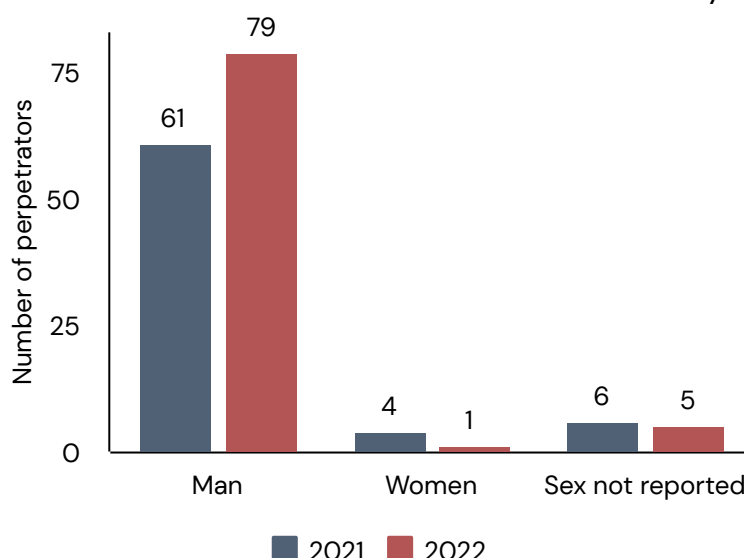
The perpetrators remained unknown in more than half of these cases (53). However, 34 cases resulted in the arrest of perpetrators.



## 5.5 Victims of the other incidents in the criminal context and their outcomes

The overall increase in these incidents resulted in a rise in victims. In 2022, 85 victims of these incidents were reported, while 71 victims were documented in 2021. When the sex was specified, men accounted for 99% and women 1% of victims in 2022. The data on age revealed that nearly the same number of victims were reported in the two prominent age groups. Therefore, 28 victims aged 36–60 were closely followed by those aged 19–35 (27). The opposite pattern was seen in 2021.

Victims of the other incidents in the criminal context by sex and year



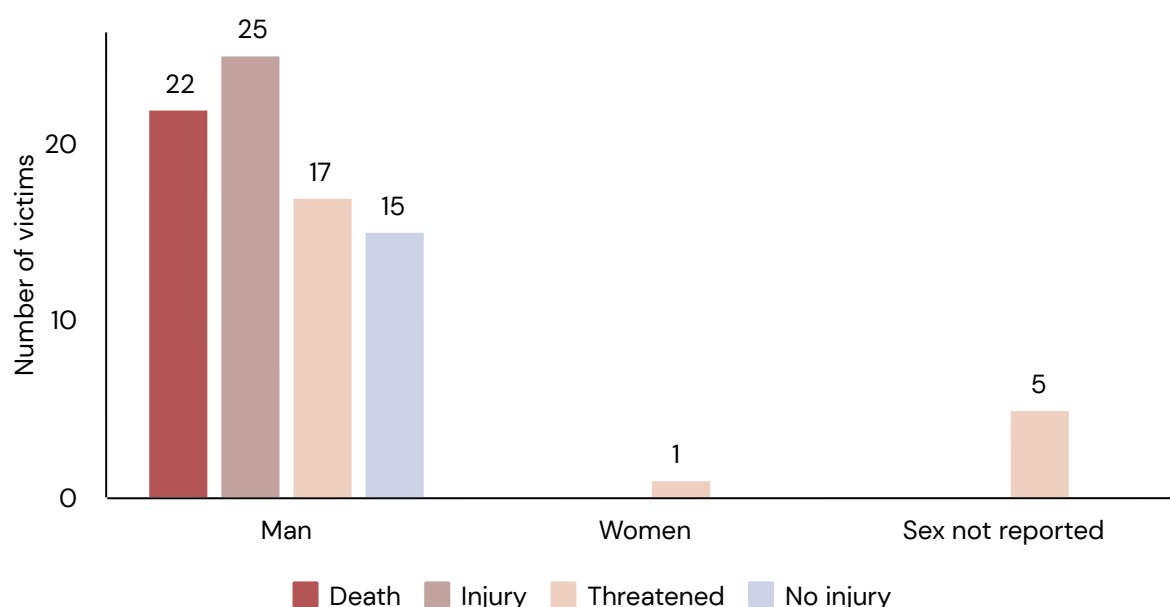
Compared to 2021, the number of firearm deaths resulting from other incidents in the criminal context decreased in 2022, from 24 to 22 victims. Specifically, 23 men were killed in these incidents. Albania reported 15 firearm deaths, Serbia four, Montenegro two, and Bosnia and Herzegovina one. The fatal consequences were mostly the result of ambushed murders in which either the target or the murderer—or both—had a criminal past.

In comparison to 2021, a similar number of victims were injured with firearms in both years, i.e. 23 victims in 2021 and 25 in 2022. In 2022, all injured victims were men; fifteen of these victims were reported in Albania.

The number of threatened victims increased to 23 in 2022 compared to 10 in 2021. Seventeen men, one woman and five persons of unspecified sex were threatened in incidents under this subcategory.

Fifteen men did not sustain a gunshot injury when a firearm was discharged in their presence in 2022. Almost the same number of such victims were reported in 2021.

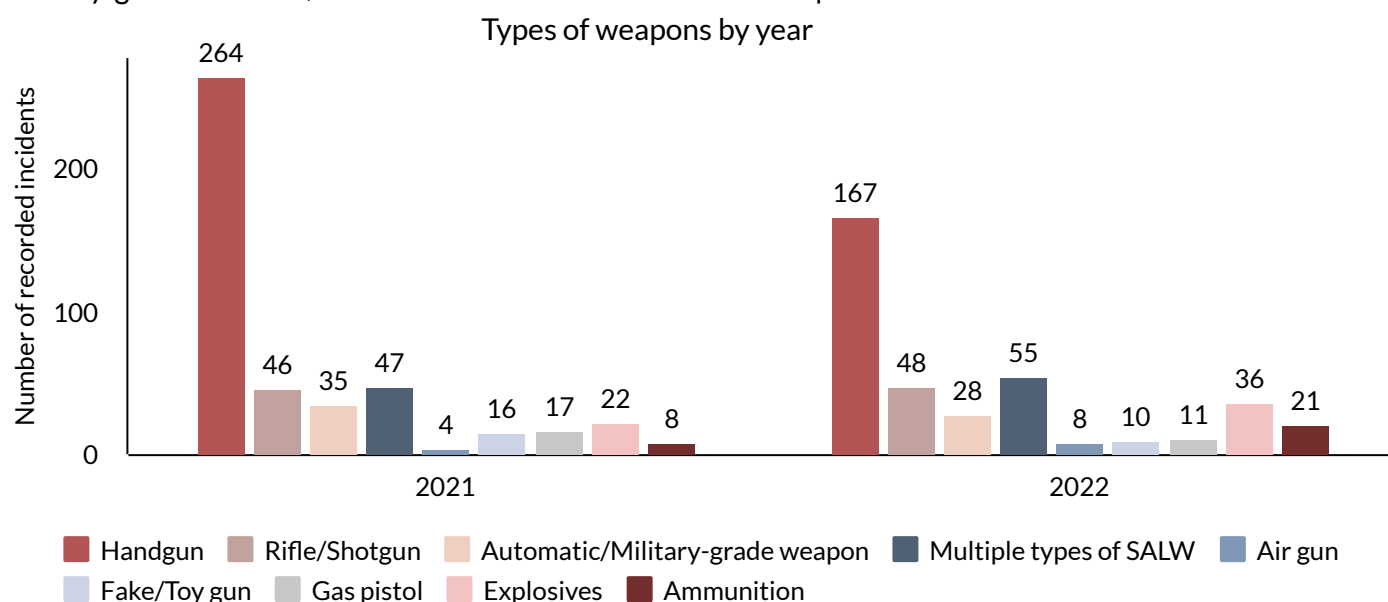
Outcome for victims by sex in 2022



## 6. Type of weapon in the criminal context

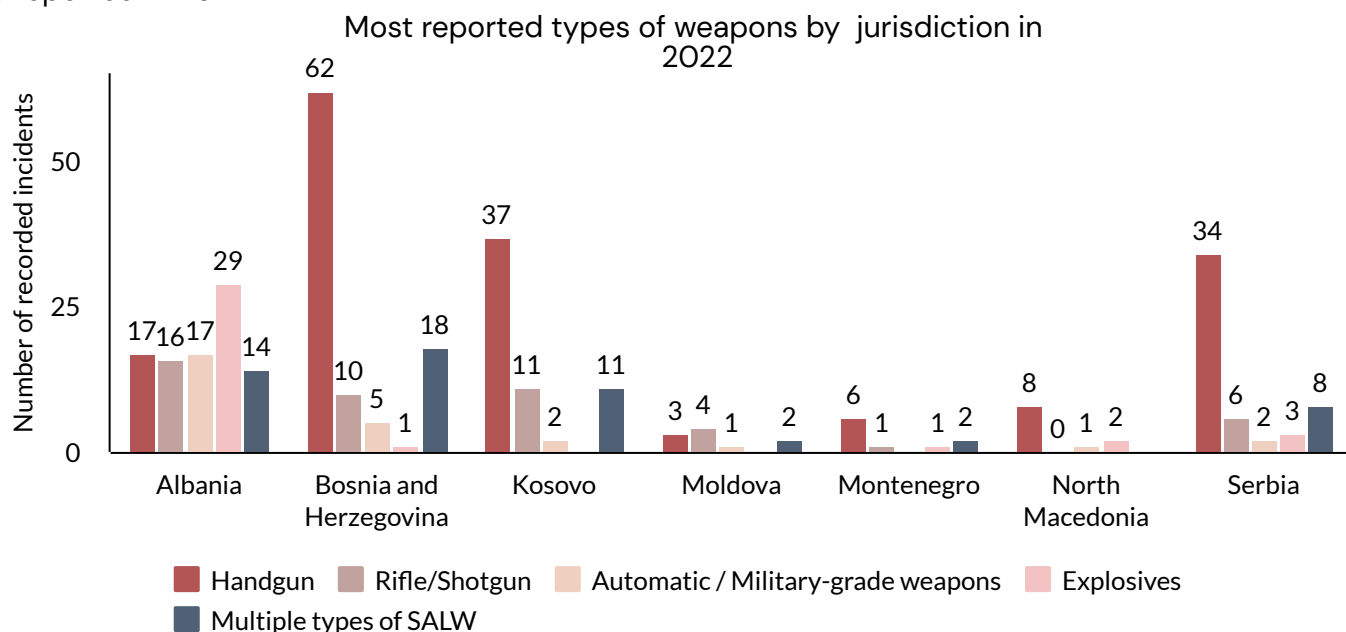
### 6.1 Types of weapons reported in the criminal context

The type of weapon was reported in 384 (78%) incidents in the criminal context in 2022. The patterns regarding the types of weapons observed in 2021 persisted in 2022. Handguns, as the most common type of weapon in the criminal context, were reported in 167 cases (43%). Rifles/shotguns were reported in 46 incidents, placing them second. The increased use of explosives in the criminal context observed in 2021 continued in 2022. Specifically, this type of weapon was reported in 36 cases. Automatic/military-grade weapons were involved in 38 cases, showing a 20% drop from 2021. The number of cases with multiple types of SALW remained stable. While the use of gas pistols and fake/toy guns declined, a rise was seen in the use of air weapons.



### 6.2 Types of weapons by jurisdiction

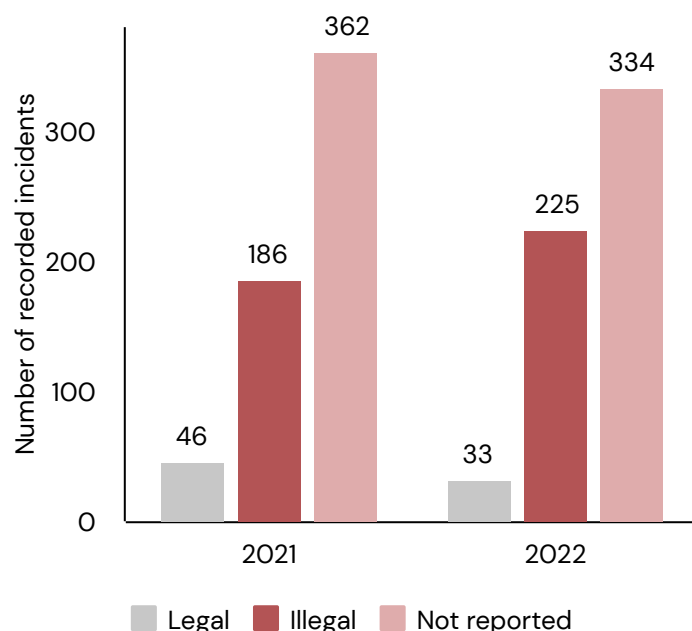
With 62 cases, Bosnia and Herzegovina reported the highest number of incidents involving handguns although this number represents a significant decrease from 2021, when 135 such incidents were reported. Kosovo (37 cases), Serbia (34 cases) and Albania (17 cases) followed. When it comes to rifles/shotguns, Albania had the highest number of cases with 16 incidents, followed by Kosovo with 11 cases, and Bosnia and Herzegovina with 10 cases. A total of 81% of all explosive-related incidents were reported in Albania (29 cases). In addition, more than half cases with automatic/military-grade weapons were reported in Albania (17 cases). Gas weapons were most frequently reported in Bosnia and Herzegovina (6 cases) and air guns in Moldova (4 cases). The incidents with fake/toy guns were primarily reported by Serbia (9 cases). Very similar patterns were also reported in 2021.



### 6.3 Legal status of weapon possession

In 2022, the legal status of weapon possession in 2021 was reported in 258 cases (52%), while it was not specified in 234 (48%). In cases when the legal status was indicated, weapons were in legal possession in 33 cases, while in 225, they were reported to be in illegal possession.

Legal status of weapon possession by year



Compared to 2021, there was a decrease in the use of weapons in legal possession in the incidents in the criminal context in 2022. Handguns were the most prevalent among legally owned weapons, being reported in 12 cases. Rifles and shotguns in legal possession were reported in nine cases, while fake/toy guns were involved in six cases. All reported incidents involving handguns and rifles/shotguns in legal possession were related to theft. Additionally, there was one incident where legally possessed explosives were stolen from a legal entity. Fake or toy guns were predominantly used in armed robberies. These trends closely correspond to those observed in 2021.

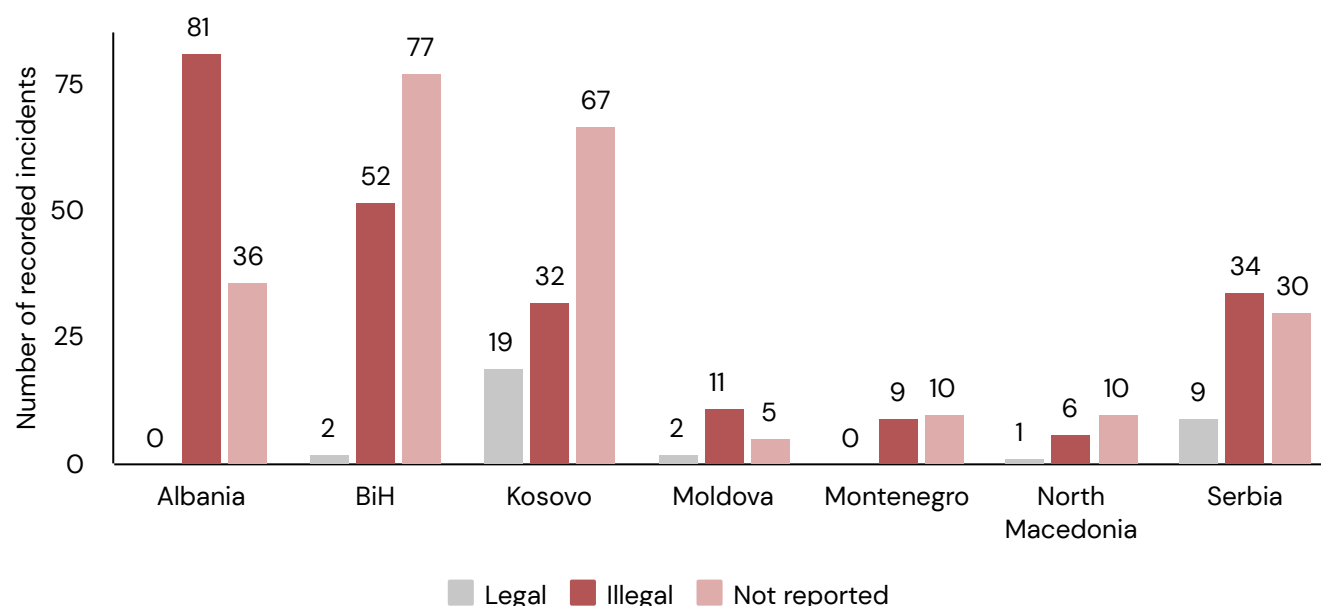
In 2022, law enforcement seized the weapons used in 191 (39%) incidents in the criminal context, slightly surpassing the 182 cases reported in 2021.

### 6.4 Legal status of weapon possession by jurisdiction

Similar to 2021, incidents involving weapons in legal possession were mainly reported in Kosovo (19 cases) and Serbia (9 cases).

More than 30% of weapons in illegal possession were reported in Albania (81 cases). Bosnia and Herzegovina (52 cases), Serbia (34 cases) and Kosovo (32 cases) followed. These jurisdictions documented an increase in the use of weapons in illegal possession in the criminal context in 2022.

Type of weapon possession by jurisdiction in 2022



## 7. Perpetrators of firearm incidents in the criminal context

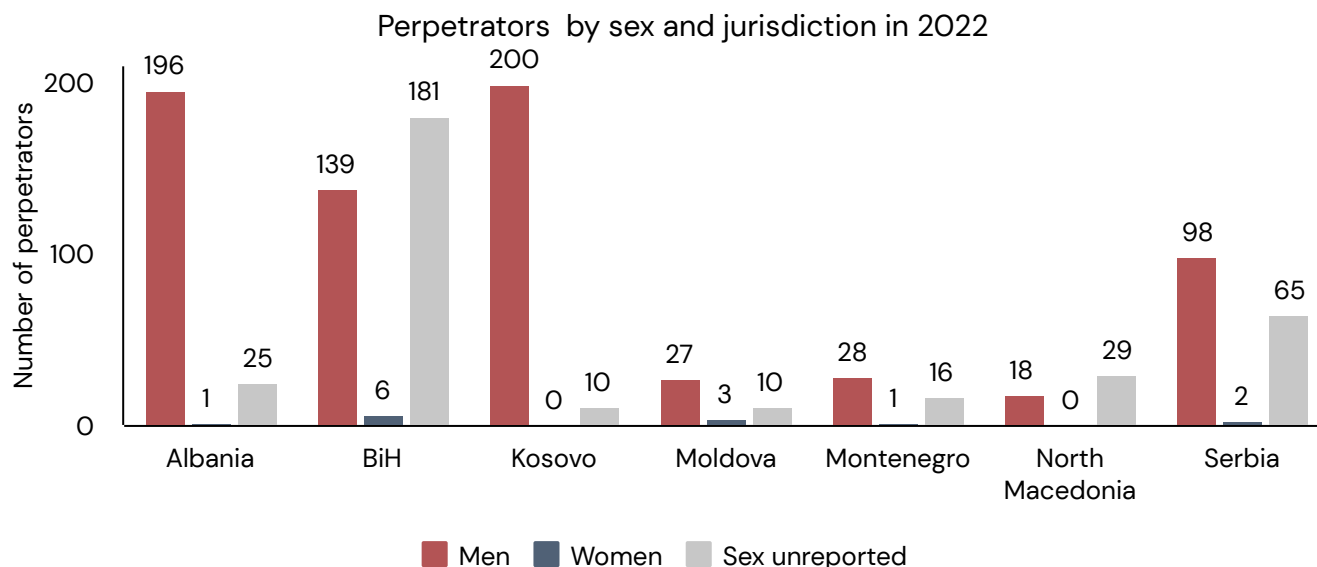
Perpetrator refers to any individual who has used a firearm/ammunition/explosive to commit any of the types of incidents covered by the AVMP.

### 7.1 Perpetrators by sex

Out of 1,055 perpetrators, sex was reported for 719 (68%) perpetrators, of whom 707 (98%) were men, and 13 (2%) were women. The sex of 336 (32%) perpetrators was not indicated. As is the case in all firearm incidents, the AVMP data highlights a strong gendered aspect of firearm incidents in the criminal context since men accounted for the majority of perpetrators in both years.

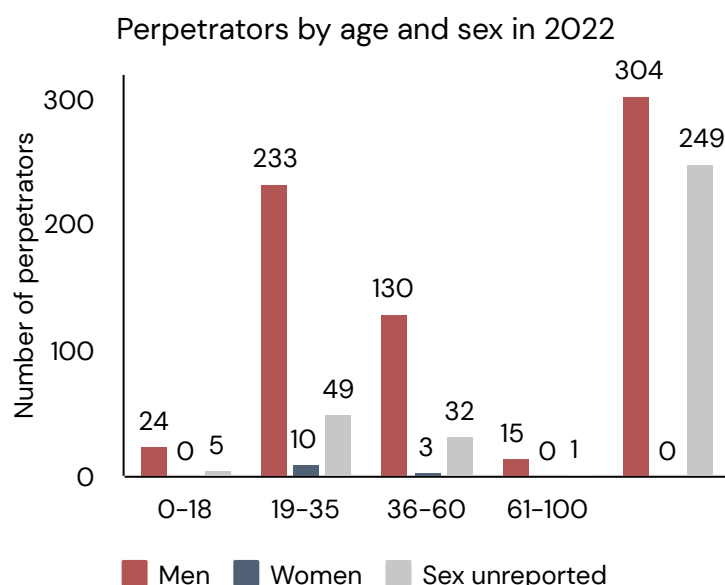
In 2022, the number of men perpetrators increased by 27% compared to 2021, i.e. rising from 558 to 706. The number of women perpetrators remained stable, with 10 in 2021 and 13 in 2022. In addition, there was a 45% decline in the number of perpetrators whose sex was unspecified, dropping from 455 in 2021 to 249 in 2022.

In 270 cases (55%), the perpetrators were reported as caught, while in 213 cases (43%), the perpetrators remained unknown. The perpetrators were known but not caught in nine cases (2%). A total of 199 incidents (40%) involved one perpetrator, while 224 (46%) incidents were carried out by two or more perpetrators. In 69 (14%) cases, the number of perpetrators remained unknown.



### 7.2 Perpetrators by age

The age of 502 (48%) perpetrators was indicated, while for 533 (52%) it remained unknown.



Among the perpetrators whose age was indicated, two distinct age groups emerged. The first one consisted of those aged 19–35, with 292 reported perpetrators, while the second group comprised those aged 36–60, with 165 reported perpetrators. In nearly all jurisdictions, the perpetrators in the 19–36 age range exceeded those in the 36–60 age group, except in North Macedonia, where a reversed trend was documented.

In 2022, there was a 26% decrease in the number of perpetrators aged 18 and younger, declining from 39 to 29. The majority of these perpetrators were reported in Serbia and Montenegro, with seven perpetrators each, followed by Albania with six, and Bosnia and Herzegovina with five. Additionally, sixteen perpetrators were aged 61 and older, with approximately half of them reported in Albania.

## 8. Victims of firearm incidents in the criminal context

Victim refers to any individual who has been threatened, injured or died as a result of the use of a firearm/ ammunition/explosives. Victims also include those who were present when a firearm was discharged but did not sustain a gunshot injury and those who were present during an incident in which a firearm was present but was not used.

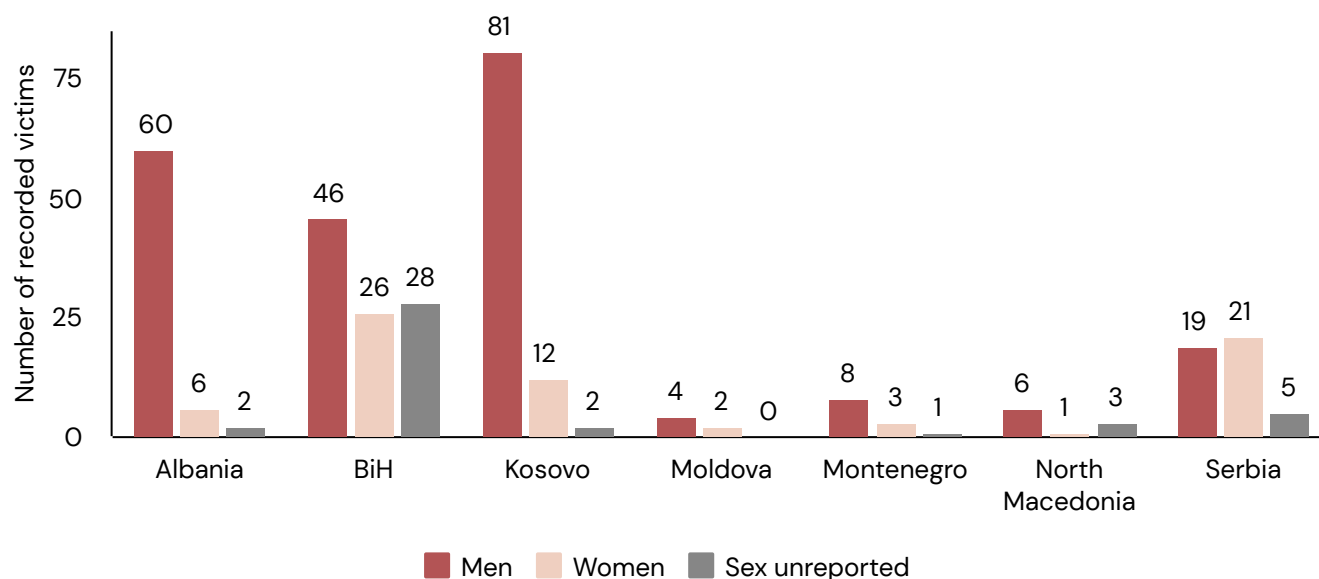
### 8.1 Victims by sex

In comparison to 2021, the number of victims of incidents in the criminal context decreased in 2022.

As a result, 332 victims were recorded in 2022, 29% less than the 465 victims reported in 2021. For 292 (88%) victims, the sex was indicated; however, for 69 (12%) victims, the sex was unknown. Among victims whose sex was reported, 72 (25%) were women, and 220 (75%) were men.

Similar to the pattern from 2021, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo recorded the largest number of victims, with 96 and 95 victims, respectively. Albania, with 68 victims, and Serbia, with 45, followed. Other authorities recorded less than 20 victims. Except for Albania, where there was a 21% increase, other jurisdictions had a decrease in the number of victims compared to 2021.

Victims by sex and jurisdiction in 2022



When comparing different types of firearm incidents covered by the AVMP, it was observed that incidents in the criminal context had the highest proportion of female victims. In fact, in certain jurisdictions, the number of women victims of incidents in the criminal setting surpassed that of men victims.

Specifically, there were 153 female victims in 2019, 135 in 2020, and 146 in 2021. In 2022, although the number of women victims in the criminal context remained relatively high at 72, it was half the amount reported in 2021. Women were mainly reported in armed robberies as being threatened.

Furthermore, the number of women victims in the criminal context was lower than the number of women victims of firearm incidents in domestic violence in 2022, which was not the case in previous years. In both 2021 and 2022, incidents in the criminal context in Serbia resulted in a greater number of women victims compared to men.

## 8.2 Victims by sex and age

The age was specified for 93 (28%) victims, while it was not indicated for 239 (72%) victims. In contrast to 2021, when the most prevalent age group was 36–60, in 2022 the victims aged 19–35 (40) slightly outnumbered those aged 36–60 (35). There was an increase in the victims aged 18 and under, rising from three to ten victims. As in 2021, eight victims were 61 and older.

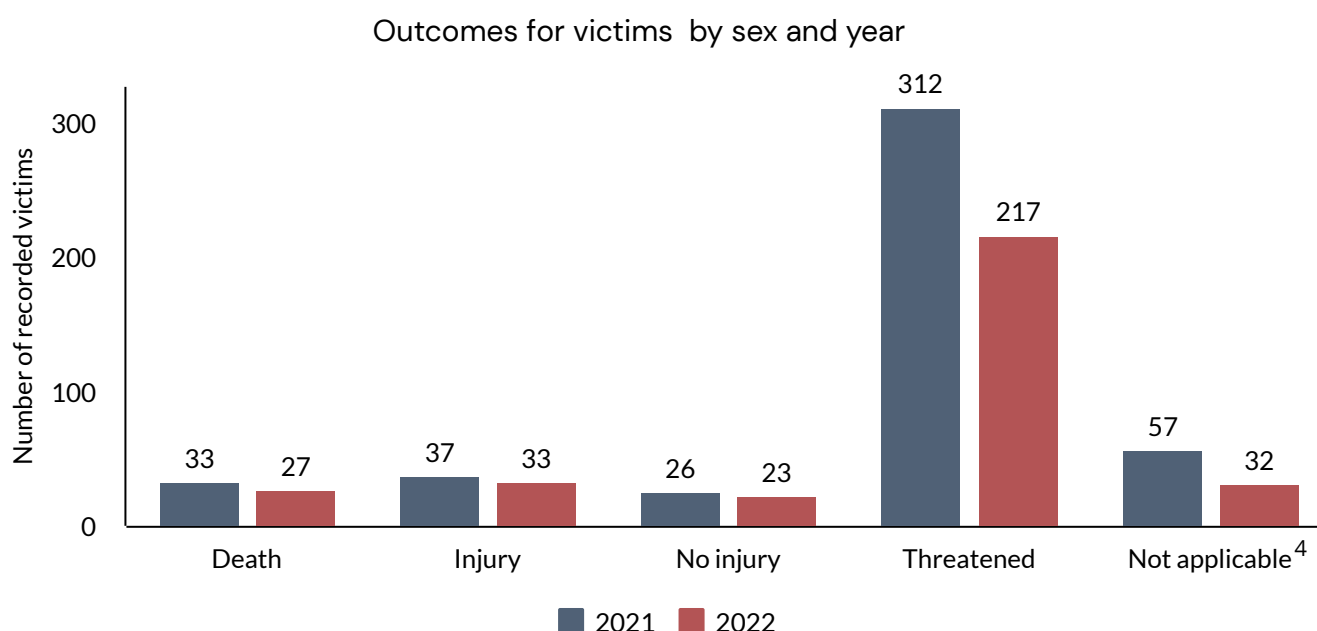


## 8.3 Outcome for victims

Over the years, the frequent severe outcomes have clearly demonstrated that the presence of firearms in the criminal context poses a grave danger to the lives and safety of citizens.

The trends related to the outcomes for victims of incidents in the criminal context revealed that the most significant decrease was seen in the number of victims who were threatened with firearms, falling from 312 reported in 2021 to 217 victims in 2022. Despite the noted decline, more victims in the criminal context were threatened with firearms than in any other type of incident.

In relation to other types of firearm incidents, the number of firearm deaths in the criminal context in 2022 closely followed those in undetermined shootings and domestic violence.



<sup>4</sup> Not applicable refers to all incidents in which a weapon is present but not used or discharged but also to cases in which citizens reported that their weapons were stolen.

## 8.4 Outcome for victims by jurisdiction

As the prevailing trend indicates, the highest number of victims was reported resulting from firearm incidents in the criminal context in both years.

### Outcome for victims by jurisdiction in 2022

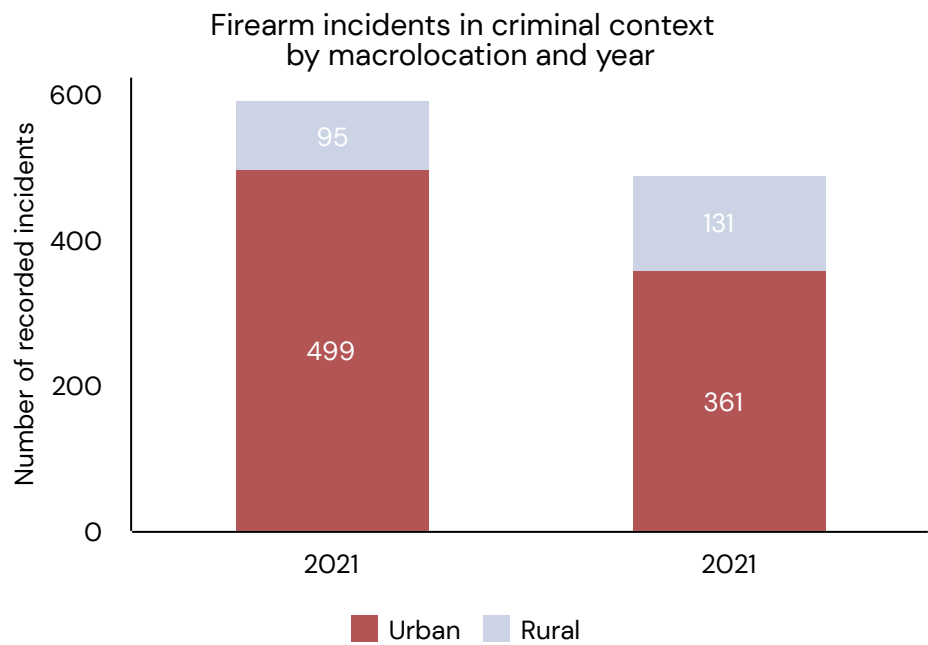
Location	Death	Injury	No Injury	Threatened	N/A	Total
Albania	18	17	8	24	1	68
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	4	3	82	6	96
Kosovo		4	7	63	21	95
Moldova				5	1	6
Montenegro	2	3	1	5	1	12
North Macedonia		1	1	8		10
Serbia	6	4	3	30	2	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>332</b>

- A total of 27 persons, all men, died as a result of the use of firearms in the criminal context. Albania reported the highest number of firearm deaths (18), accounting for 66% of firearm-related deaths in this context.
- Thirty-three injured victims were all men. As in 2021, Albania reported the highest number of injured persons (17), indicating a 42% increase. Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia reported four injured men each.
- Continuing the trends from previous years, people who were threatened with firearms were mainly reported in Bosnia and Herzegovina (82), Kosovo (63), Serbia (30) and Albania (24).
- The highest number of people who did not sustain an injury when a firearm was discharged was reported in Kosovo (8) and Albania (7).
- Out of 72 women victims, 69 were threatened. Unlike in 2021, no women were killed or injured with firearms in the criminal context. Three women reported their firearms stolen.

# 9. Macrolocation and microlocation in firearm incidents in the criminal context

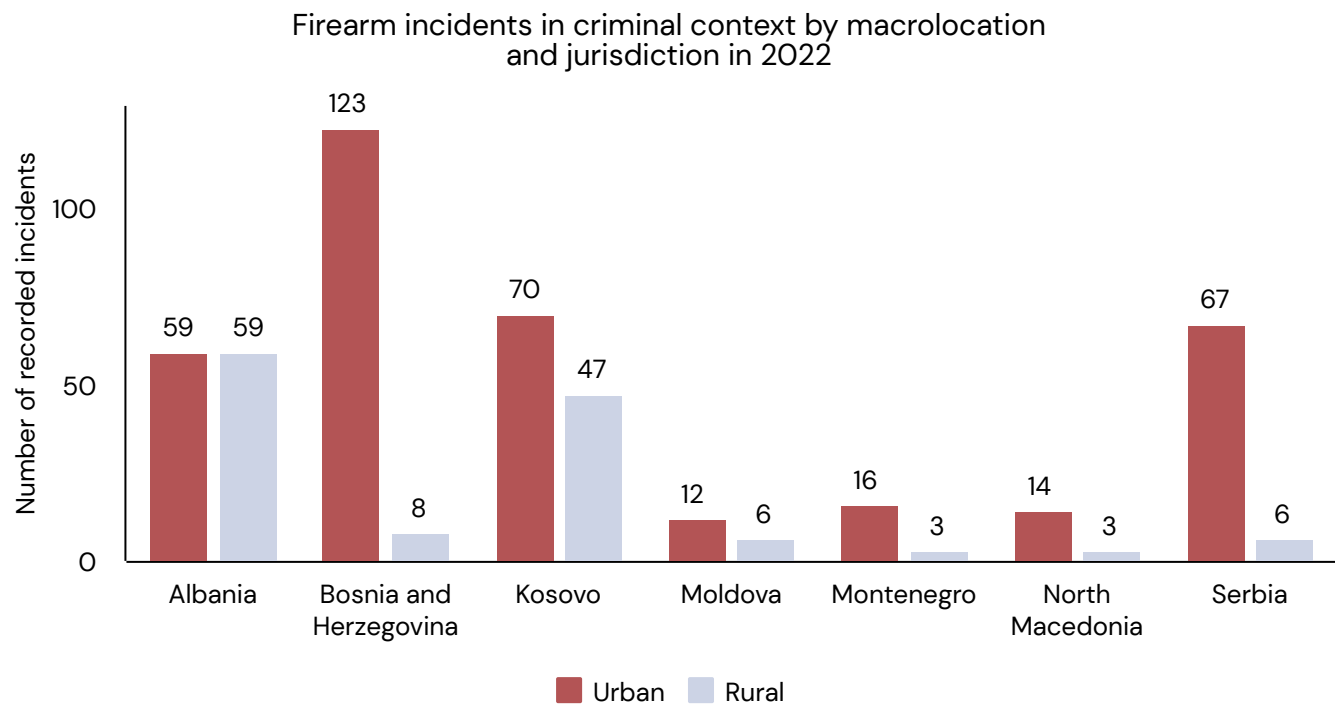
## 9.1 Macrolocation

In 2022, the prevalence of firearm incidents in the criminal context was higher in urban areas, accounting for 73% of all incidents, while rural areas comprised 27%. However, the share of urban areas decreased compared to 2021, where 84% of incidents were reported in urban areas.



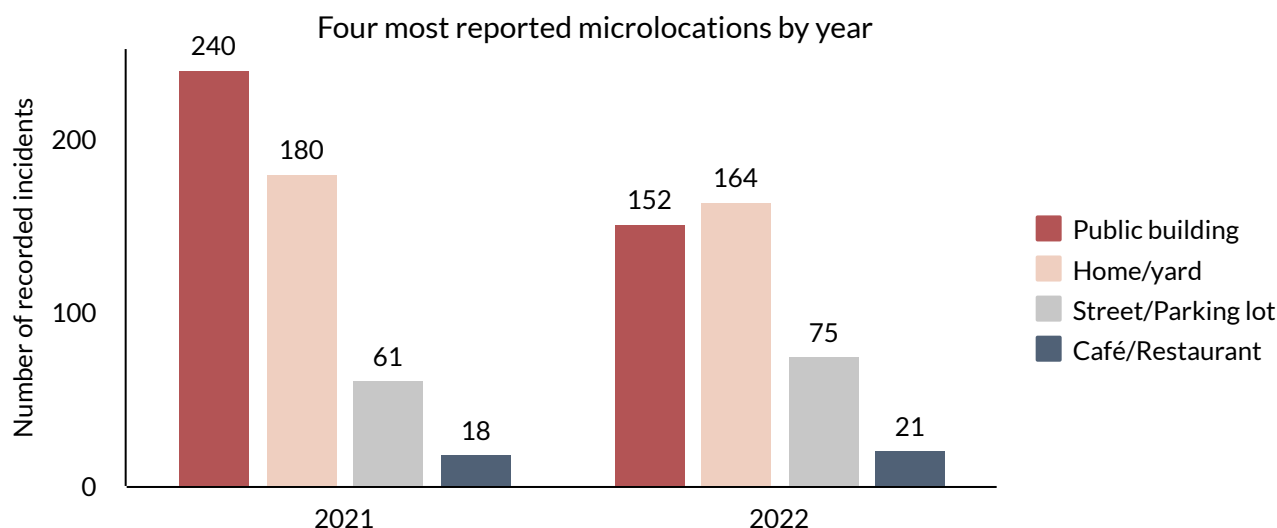
## 9.2 Macrolocation in jurisdictions

In all jurisdictions, urban areas had a higher frequency of incidents compared to rural areas. However, the disparity between the two areas was least pronounced in Albania, where a nearly equal number of incidents occurred in both urban and rural areas.



### 9.3 Microlocation

In 2022, the data on microlocation was specified for 418 firearm incidents in the criminal setting (85%), while for 75 (15%) cases, no such information was provided. A decline in armed robberies in 2022 led to a change in trends regarding the frequency of incidents in public buildings. As a result, the majority of incidents in the criminal context occurred in homes/yards, despite a 9% drop regarding this microlocation in 2022. The number of incidents in public buildings decreased from 240 cases in 2021 to 152 cases in 2022. Among public buildings where these incidents happened were shops (63), gas stations (38), and gambling facilities (18). Streets and parking lots came in third place with 75 incidents, showing a 23% increase compared to 2021. The frequency of incidents in cafés/restaurants rose from 18 incidents in 2021 to 21 incidents in 2022.



In terms of incidents occurring in homes or yards, the highest number of reports came from Albania with 49 incidents, closely followed by Kosovo with 42, and Bosnia and Herzegovina with 34 incidents. One-third of incidents that took place in public buildings in 2022 were reported in Bosnia and Herzegovina (55), largely due to armed robberies. Serbia, with 35 cases and Kosovo with 32 cases followed closely. When it comes to incidents on the streets or parking lots, Albania had the highest number of reports with 24 cases. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo trailed behind with 17 and 14 cases, respectively. Nearly all incidents that took place in cafes/restaurants were reported in Albania (17).

Most reported microlocations in 2022

Location	Home/Yard	Public building <sup>5</sup>	Street / Parking lot	Cafe / Restaurant
Albania	49	16	24	17
Bosnia and Herzegovina	34	55	17	2
Kosovo	42	32	14	0
Moldova	14	1	2	0
Montenegro	4	6	4	1
North Macedonia	6	7	1	0
Serbia	15	35	11	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>21</b>

<sup>5</sup> Public building refers to a building open and accessible to the public or building used as a place for commercial, professional work.



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