



In Focus Armed Violence Monitor

Firearm incidents in the context of

Domestic violence

In South East Europe in 2023

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About the Armed Violence Monitor

*In Focus – Armed Violence Monitors*¹ 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 addresses **firearm incidents in the context of domestic violence** in South East Europe (SEE) from **2023, also offering a comparative overview of 2022**. The Monitor provides an overview of firearm-related incidents committed by intimate partners and other close family members. The Monitor aims to shed light on firearm misuse in the domestic context and underscores its disproportionate effects on women, especially in the context of intimate partner violence.

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 various sources, including 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 report aims to provide a comprehensive overview of incidents in the context of domestic violence involving firearms in Southeast Europe by utilizing a comparative analysis of the data to identify changes in trends between 2022 and 2023, highlighting the consequences of these incidents, their frequency, and geographic distribution, among other aspects.

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.

¹ This publication, produced by UNDP with the European Union, is consistent with the United Nations rules, practices and procedures. References to Kosovo in this document 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

120

firearm incidents in the **context of domestic violence** were reported in 2023, an **12% increase** from 2022.

71

incidents were committed by **intimate partners, a 15% rise** from 2022.

49

incidents were **committed** by other **family members, a 9% increase** from 2022.

19

women were killed in a domestic setting, while 18 were killed in 2022.

11

murder suicides, all committed by men following domestic violence, a 10% more than in 2022.

33

people were killed with **firearms** in the domestic setting, **exceeding** the firearm **fatalities** resulting from other contexts.

1. Key definitions

Domestic violence² means all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim.

Violence against women³ is understood as a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination against women and shall mean all acts of gender-based violence that result in, or are likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

Gender-based violence against women⁴ shall mean violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately.

In its broader sense, domestic violence relates to violence against intimate partners, children, parents, and family members.⁵

Intimate partner violence refers to physical, sexual, or psychological abuse by a current or former partner or spouse that can occur among heterosexual or same-sex couples and may not imply sexual intimacy.

While domestic violence can affect everyone, regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, social status or educational level, it disproportionately affects women and girls who account for the majority of victims.

Domestic violence manifests itself as a pattern of behaviour through which the abuser intends to obtain or retain power and control over a partner or other family member.

² Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, Article 3. p.3.

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid

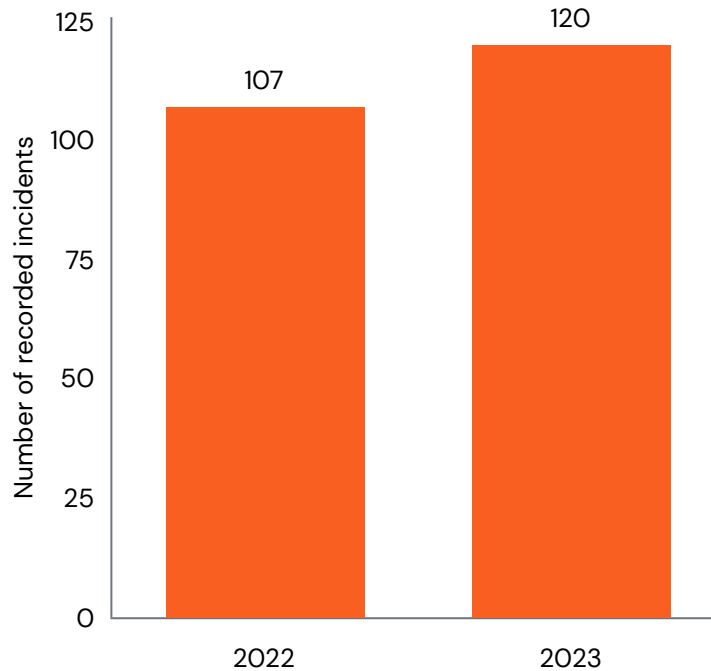
⁵ Ibid

⁵ Family members, in the context of this report, refer to: 1. spouses or former spouses; 2. children, parents and other blood relatives, in-laws or adoptive relatives, and persons related by foster care; 3. persons who live or have lived in the same family household; 4. cohabitantes or former cohabitantes; 5. persons who have been or still are in a mutual emotional or sexual relation, or have a common child, or the child is to be born, although they have never lived in the same family household. An intimate partner can refer to: husband/wife, former husband/former wife, partner/former partner, boyfriend/girlfriend, former boyfriend/ former girlfriend.

2. Firearm incidents in the context of domestic violence

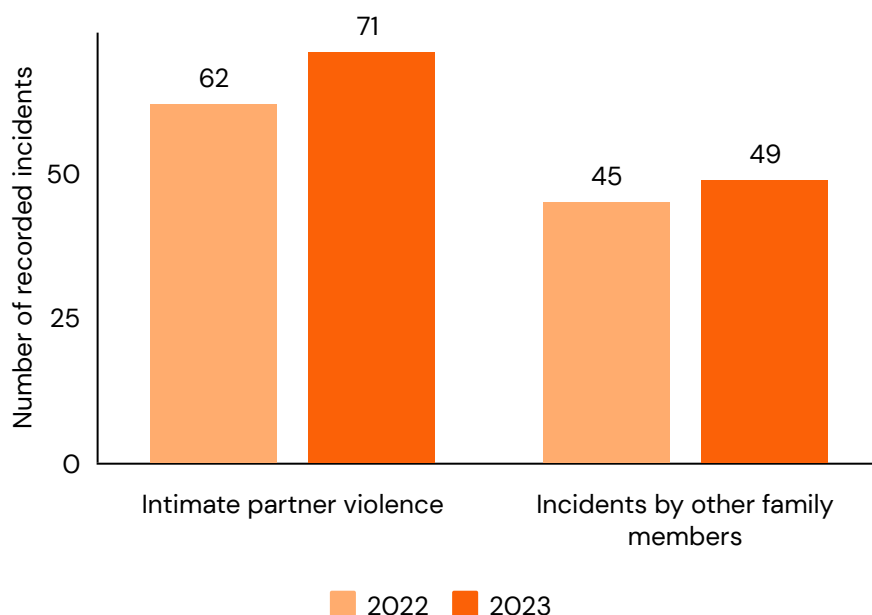
The reported number of firearm incidents linked to domestic violence increased by 12% from 2022 to 2023, rising from 107 to 120 cases.

Graph 1: Firearm incidents in the context of domestic violence, by year



Out of 120 firearm incidents reported in domestic settings in 2023, 59% incidents were committed by intimate partners, while 41% incidents were perpetrated by other family members. Compared to 2022, incidents by intimate partners rose from 62 to 71, while incidents involving other family members saw a modest increase, rising from 45 to 49.

Graph 2: Firearm incidents in domestic setting by context and year



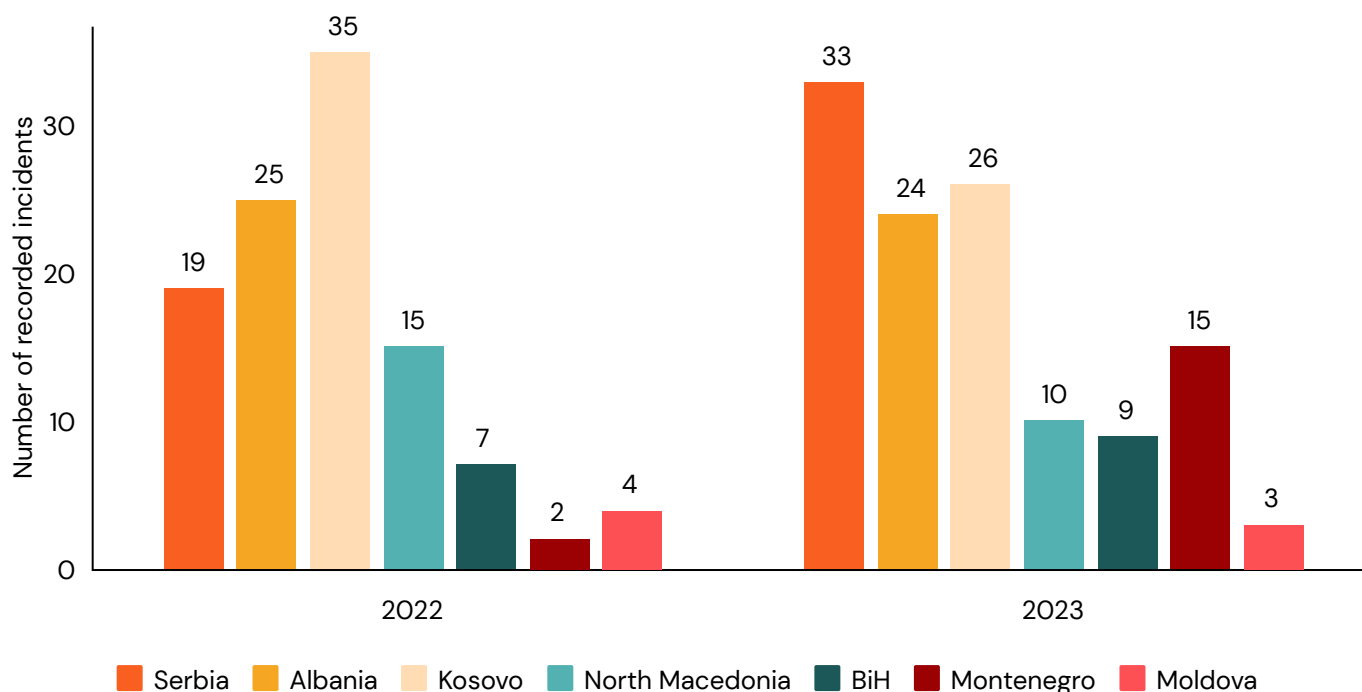
2.1 Firearm incidents in the context of domestic violence by jurisdictions

The analysis of firearm incidents in domestic settings in SEE reveals important trends when comparing 2022 and 2023 data.

Montenegro recorded the most dramatic rise, with incidents increasing from 2 in 2022 to 15 in 2023. Serbia saw a significant increase of 74%, with cases nearly doubling from 19 to 33. A 29% rise was noted in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where incidents increased from 7 to 9.

Kosovo and Moldova both observed a 25% decrease in incidents. Kosovo saw cases drop from 35 to 26, while Moldova's cases fell from 4 to 3. North Macedonia reported a 33% decline, with incidents decreasing from 15 to 10. Albania showed relative stability, with a slight 4% decrease in cases, from 25 in 2022 to 24 in 2023.

Graph 3: Firearm incidents in the context of domestic violence by year and jurisdiction



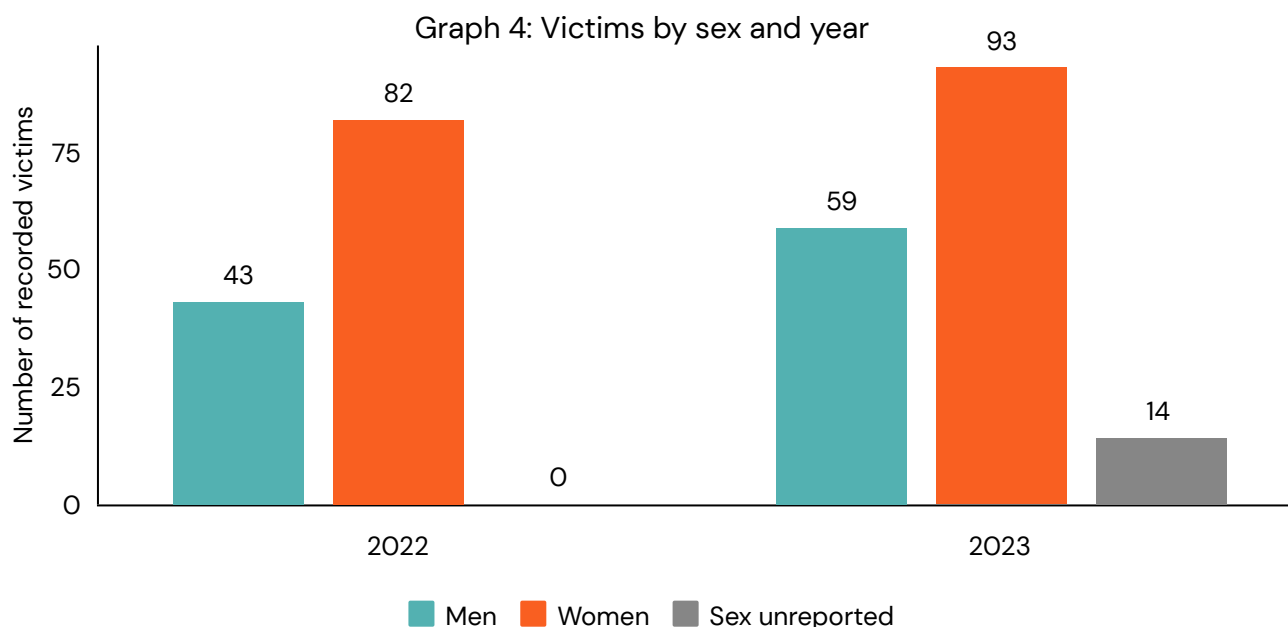
3. Victims

The overall increase in firearm incidents in the context of domestic violence resulted in a significant rise in the number of victims, growing from 125 in 2022 to 166 in 2023 – a 33% increase.

Women continued to make up the majority of victims in 2023, with 93 reported victims, representing 56% of all victims. This marks a 13% increase from the 82 women victims reported in 2022.

Men victims, accounting for 36% of victims, also experienced a sharp rise, increasing by 37%, from 43 in 2022 to 59 in 2023.

Additionally, the sex of 14 victims (8%) was unreported.



In most jurisdictions, women were the predominant victims, with the exception of Montenegro and North Macedonia, where more men than women were reported as victims.

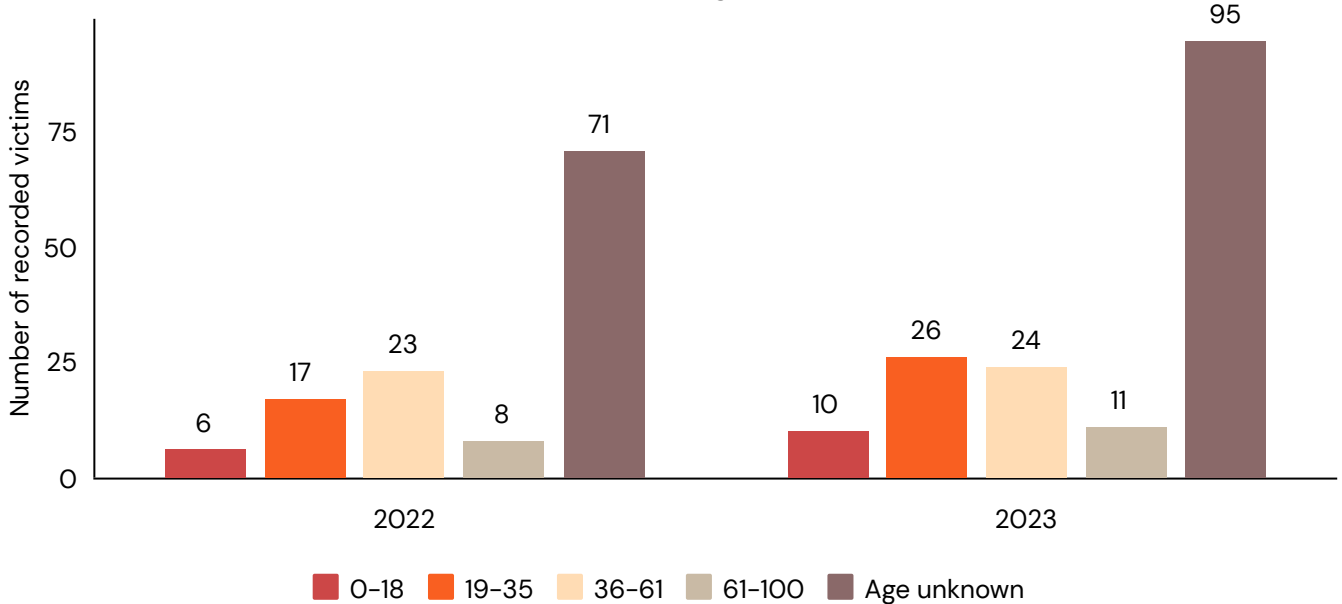
Table 1: Victims by sex, jurisdiction and year

Jurisdiction	2022			2023		
	M	W	N/A	M	W	N/A
Albania	11	20		15	17	6
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	5		7	9	
Kosovo	10	28		16	15	2
Moldova	1	4		2	2	
Montenegro	2	1		3	10	1
North Macedonia	10	9		3	8	5
Serbia	7	15		13	32	
Total	43	82		59	93	14

3.1 Age of victims

In 2023, the age was specified for 71 (43%) victims, while the age remained unknown for 95 (57%) victims. Unlike in 2022, where victims aged 36–60 represented the largest group, the majority of victims in 2023 were aged 19–35 (37%), increasing from 17 in 2022 to 26 in 2023. Victims aged 36–60 (34%) followed closely, increasing slightly from 23 in 2022 to 24 in 2023. The number of victims aged 61 and older increased from 8 to 11, while those aged 18 and younger almost doubled, from 6 to 10. These changes point to a shift with younger age groups being more affected.

Graph 5: Victims by age and year



In 2023, data on both age and sex was available for 65 victims, comprising 36 women and 29 men. The age distribution showed differences between men and women victims. Among men, the majority fell within the 36–60 age group (38%), while among women, the largest group was aged 19–35 (47%). This trend was also observed in 2022.

The number of victims aged 18 and younger remained low for both sexes (6 total), while those aged 61 and older accounted for 11 victims, with a relatively even split between men and women.

This data indicates that the trend observed in 2022 continued into 2023, with firearm incidents disproportionately affecting women aged 19–35 and men aged 35–60.

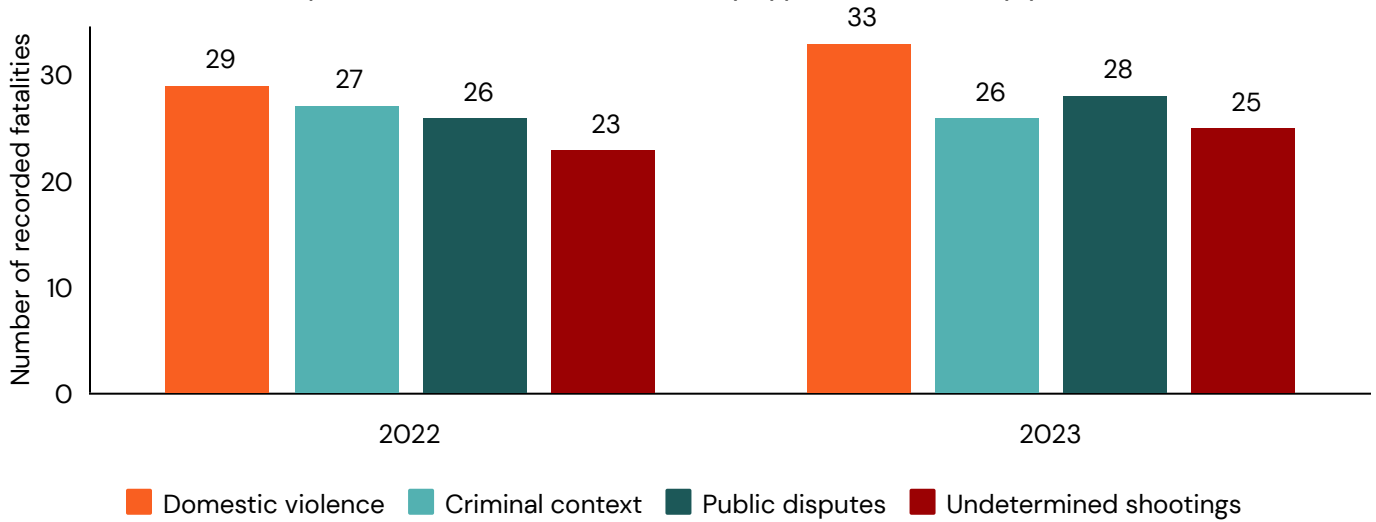
Table 2: Victims by age and sex in 2023

Age	Men	Women	Total
0-18	4	2	6
19-35	8	17	25
36-60	11	12	23
61-100	6	5	8
Unknown	30	57	8
Total	59	93	152

4. Fatality of firearm incidents in the domestic context

The alarming severity of firearm use in domestic violence continues to result in the highest number of fatalities compared to other types of incidents captured under the AVMP. In 2023, domestic violence incidents involving firearms accounted for 33 fatalities, surpassing those reported in criminal contexts (26), public disputes (28), and undetermined shootings (25). This trend, consistent with data from 2022 and earlier years, underscores that domestic violence involving firearms remains the leading context for fatal incidents.

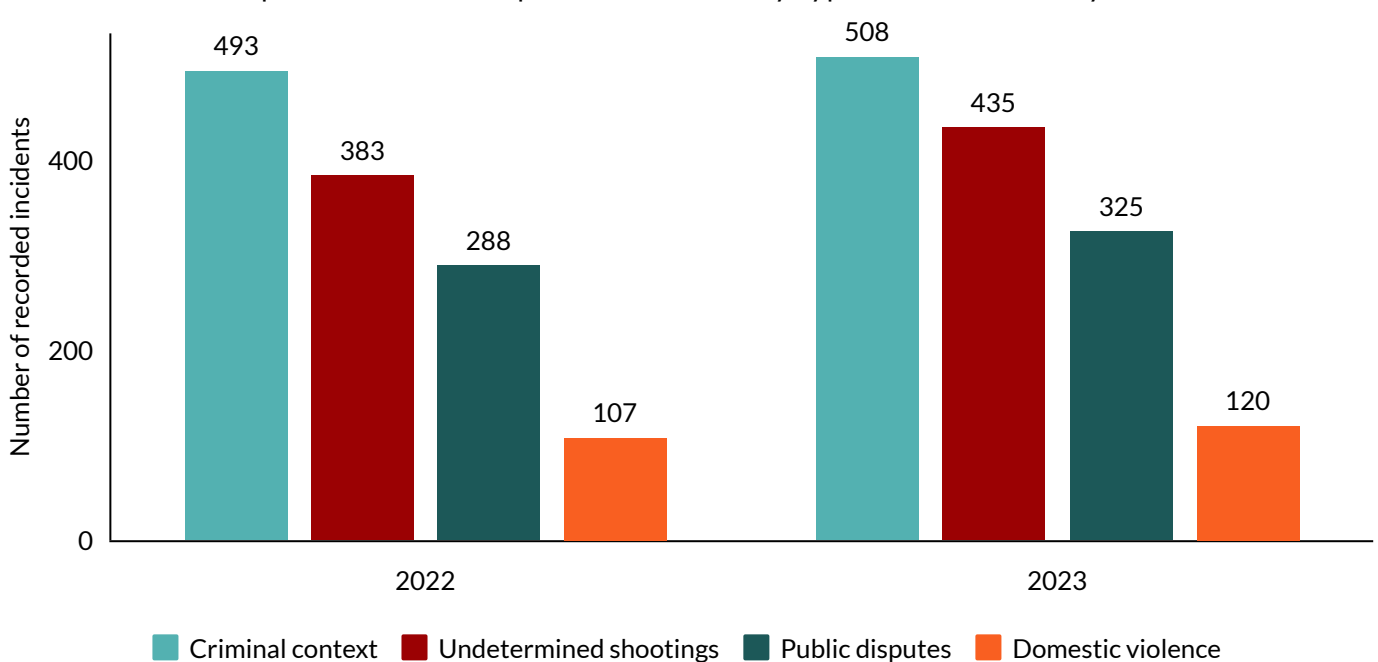
Graph 6: Firearm-related deaths by type of incident by year



The data reveals a concerning and reoccurring trend: while domestic violence incidents involving firearms are reported in the lowest numbers compared to other contexts (107 in 2022 and 120 in 2023), they consistently account for the highest number of victims with fatal outcomes. This disparity underscores the heightened lethality of firearms in domestic settings, where incidents often result in severe outcomes.

In contrast, firearm incidents in the criminal context, which were the most frequently reported (508 cases in 2023), and public disputes (325 cases in 2023), by far outnumbered those in domestic violence yet resulted in fewer fatalities. The findings are even more concerning when considering that many incidents of firearms being used for coercive control, threats, and intimidation in domestic settings likely go unreported, further hiding the true magnitude of this issue.

Graph 7: Number of reported incidents by type of incident and year

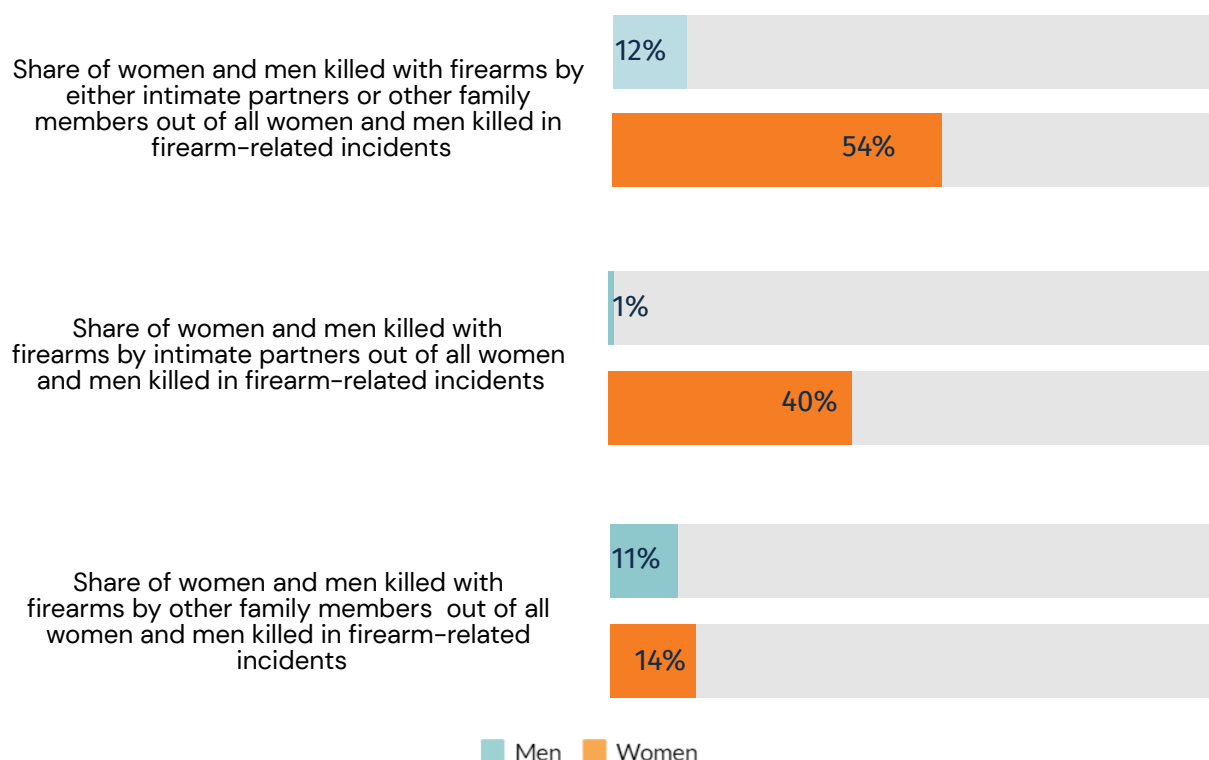


Domestic violence disproportionately affects women, who are more likely to be killed in such incidents compared to other types of firearm-related violence. This highlights the deeply rooted and gender-specific dynamics of domestic violence, where the presence of firearms significantly increases its fatal consequences. Men, on the other hand, are more likely to be victims with fatal outcomes in the criminal context, undetermined shootings, and public disputes, pointing to differing patterns of vulnerability across genders in firearm violence.

Table 3: Fatalities by type of incident, sex and year

Jurisdiction	2022		2023	
	M	W	M	W
Domestic violence	11	18	14	19
Criminal context	27	0	21	5
Public disputes	25	1	28	0
Undetermined shootings	21	1	22	2
Total	84	20	85	26

Graph 8: Fatalities by type of incident, sex and year



The graph shows the fatal outcomes resulting from all types of incidents covered by the AVMP in 2023

Two mass shootings that occurred in 2023, where nine young girls and 10 men were killed, considerably affected the gender distribution of firearm-related fatalities. Since the share of women in the total number of firearm-related fatalities increased, the share of women killed with firearms in the domestic setting decreased, while men saw a slight increase.

Specifically, the share of women killed by either intimate partners or other family members dropped from 66% to 54%, while for men, it increased from 10% to 12%. The share of women killed by intimate partners decreased from 51% to 40%, while for men, only minor changes were documented, from 0 to 1%. Similarly, the share of women killed by other family members decreased from 18% to 14%, while men's share saw an increase from 10% to 11%.

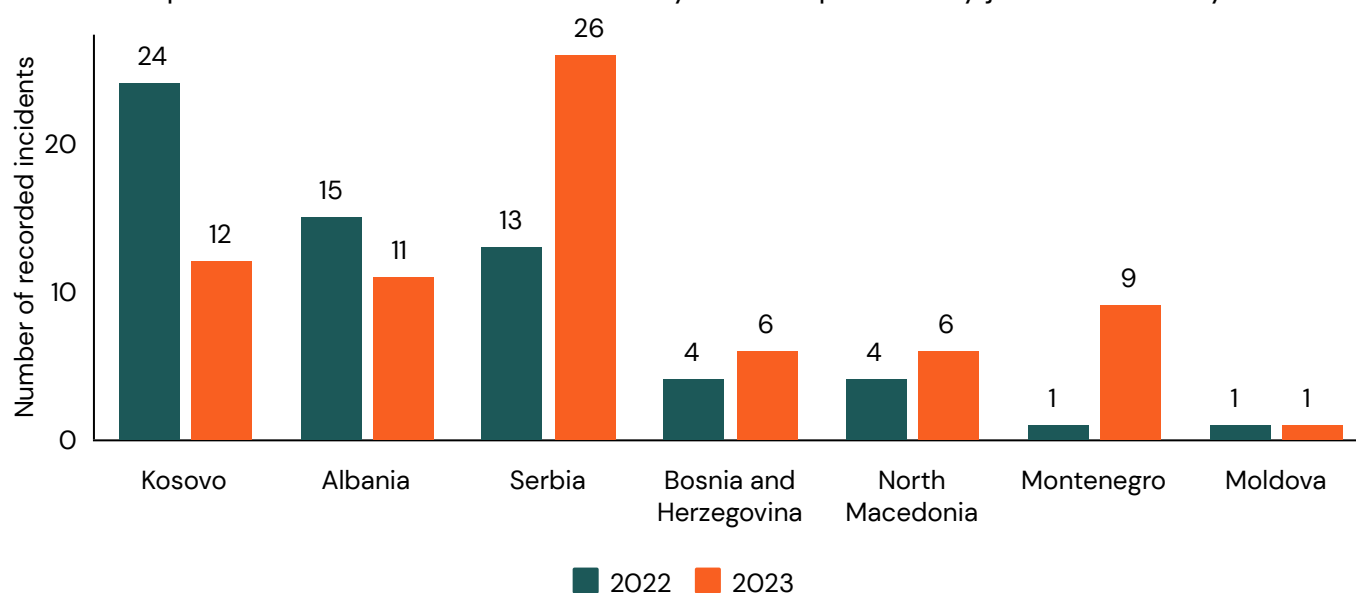
5. Firearm incidents in the context of intimate partner violence

The data for 2023 reveals a concerning increase in firearm incidents committed by intimate partners in SEE, with a total of 71 incidents reported. This marks a 15% rise compared to 2022, continuing the upward trend observed in recent years and emphasizing the persistent risk firearms pose in the context of intimate partner violence.

The highest number of incidents was reported in Serbia, with cases doubling from 13 in 2022 to 26 in 2023. Montenegro witnessed a sharp rise, with reported cases increasing from 1 to 9. Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with North Macedonia, also saw increases, with incidents rising from 4 to 6 in both jurisdictions.

In contrast, some jurisdictions showed declines. Kosovo, which had the highest number of incidents in 2022, experienced a significant reduction, with cases halving from 24 to 12. Similarly, Albania reported a 27% drop, with incidents decreasing from 15 to 11. Meanwhile, Moldova reported one case in both 2022 and 2023.

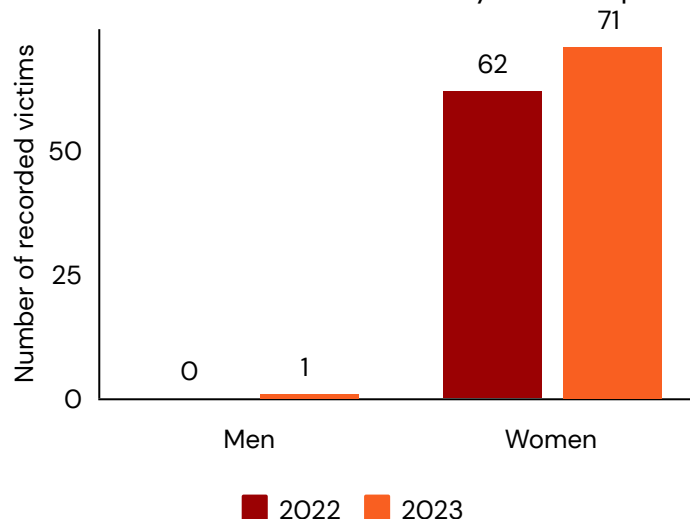
Graph 9: Firearm incidents committed by intimate partners by jurisdiction and year



5.1 Victims of intimate partner violence

In 2023, incidents of intimate partner violence involving firearms in SEE resulted in 72 reported victims, marking a 16% increase compared to the 62 victims documented in 2022. Women remained the overwhelming majority of victims, with their numbers rising from 62 in 2022 to 71 in 2023. From 2022, the number of women victims increased by 15%, while no men victims were reported in 2022.

Graph 10: Victims of firearm incidents committed by intimate partners, by sex and year



In 2023, intimate partner violence involving firearms resulted in the death of 14 women, mirroring the number record in 2022. More than half of these fatalities were reported in Serbia (8) followed by Bosnia and Herzegovina (3), Kosovo (2), and Albania (1). Compared to the previous year, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina saw an increase in fatalities, while Kosovo experienced a decline, and Albania reported the same number in both years. Fatal outcomes were not reported in the remaining jurisdictions.

Compared to 2022, the number of women injured by intimate partners using firearms nearly tripled in 2023, with eight women victims. These outcomes were reported across most jurisdictions except Moldova, with Serbia documenting three victims, Kosovo two, and other jurisdictions reporting one each.

A concerning trend emerged in 2023, with a 50% rise in the number of women threatened with firearms by their partners, totalling 39 cases, compared to 2022, with 26 such victims. The majority of these threats occurred in Serbia (12), followed by Kosovo (8) and Montenegro (7).

Six women experienced a situation where their intimate partners discharged firearms in their presence without causing injury. This marks a significant increase from 2022, when one such victim was reported.

Additionally, the AVMP captures incidents where a firearm was present during intimate partner violence but not used. Eighteen such cases were reported in 2022 and 4 in 2023, a 78% drop. Three victims with such outcomes were documented in Albania and one in Montenegro.

Table 4: Outcome for women victims of intimate partner violence by jurisdiction and year

Jurisdiction	Death		Injury ⁶		No injury ⁷		Threat	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
Albania	1	1		1	1		9	6
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	3	1	2			1	1
Kosovo	3	2				1	8	9
Moldova			1			1		
Montenegro	1			1				7
North Macedonia	1		1	1		1	2	4
Serbia	6	8		3		3	6	12
Total	14	14	3	8	1	6	26	39

In 2023, one man victim of intimate partner violence involving firearms was reported in Serbia, while no cases with such outcomes were reported in 2022.

⁶ Injury refers to all incidents in which an individual sustained an injury due to the use of a weapon.

⁷ No injury refers to all incidents in which a weapon was discharged, but the victim did not sustain a gunshot injury.

The use of firearms in intimate partner violence has far-reaching consequences, extending beyond the other family members or individuals present during the incident. According to AVMP data for 2023, in addition to the 72 victims of intimate partner violence, 28 victims (16 men, 7 women, and 5 people of unreported sex) were also affected during these incidents.

This represents a 75% increase in the number of these victims compared to 2022. Among 28 victims reported in 2023, seven were documented in Serbia, six in Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina each, while other jurisdictions reported three or fewer. In these cases, three people were killed, four were injured, and 15 were threatened with firearms. In contrast, no fatalities or injuries were reported in 2022.

However, there was an increase in threatened victims, totaling 15 victims, with five reported in Albania and four in Serbia, three in North Macedonia, and two in Montenegro.

In two cases, the weapon was present but not used, affecting 4 victims, three in Albania and one in Montenegro.

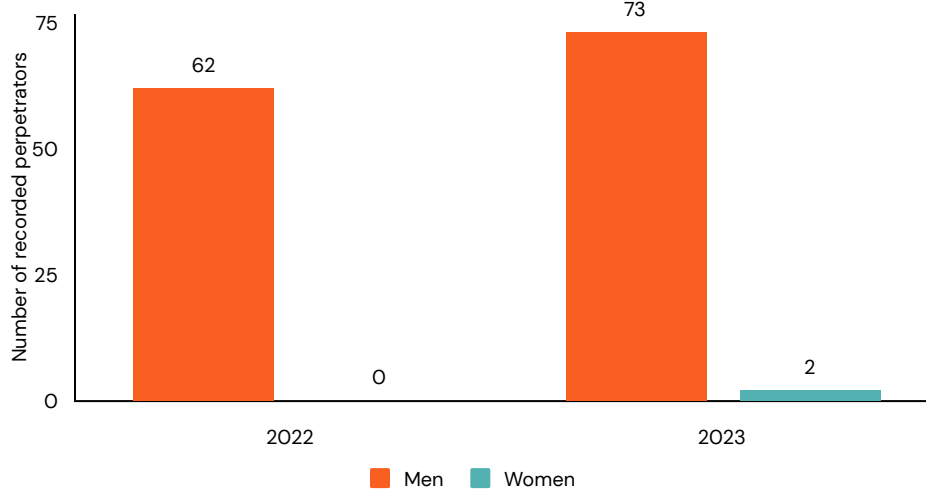
Table 5: Outcome for other family members and persons involved in firearm incidents committed by intimate partners by year

Jurisdiction	Death		Injury		No injury		Threat	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
Albania							4	5
Bosnia and Herzegovina				2			3	1
Kosovo						1		
Moldova					1			
Montenegro						1		2
North Macedonia							3	3
Serbia				2	1		2	4
Total		3		4	2	2	12	15

5.2 Perpetrators of intimate partner violence involving firearms

In 2023, 73 men and two women⁸ committed intimate partner violence involving firearms. Among those whose ages were reported, 56% were between 36 and 60 years old, 21% were aged 19 to 35, and 10% were 61 or older, reflecting similar age distributions as in 2022. In 2022, all perpetrators of intimate partner violence were men.

Graph 11: Perpetrators of intimate partner violence incidents involving firearms by year



- The data reveals that intimate partner violence in 2023 impacted 71 women and one man, with the perpetrators being 60 current and 10 former partners.
- Reports of prior domestic violence often remain unreported. In 2023, five incidents involved perpetrators with a history of domestic violence, and one case involved a man with a criminal record. This marks an increase from 2022, when only one such case was reported.
- Additionally, two men perpetrators in 2023 were law enforcement officers, in contrast to 2022, when no such cases were recorded.

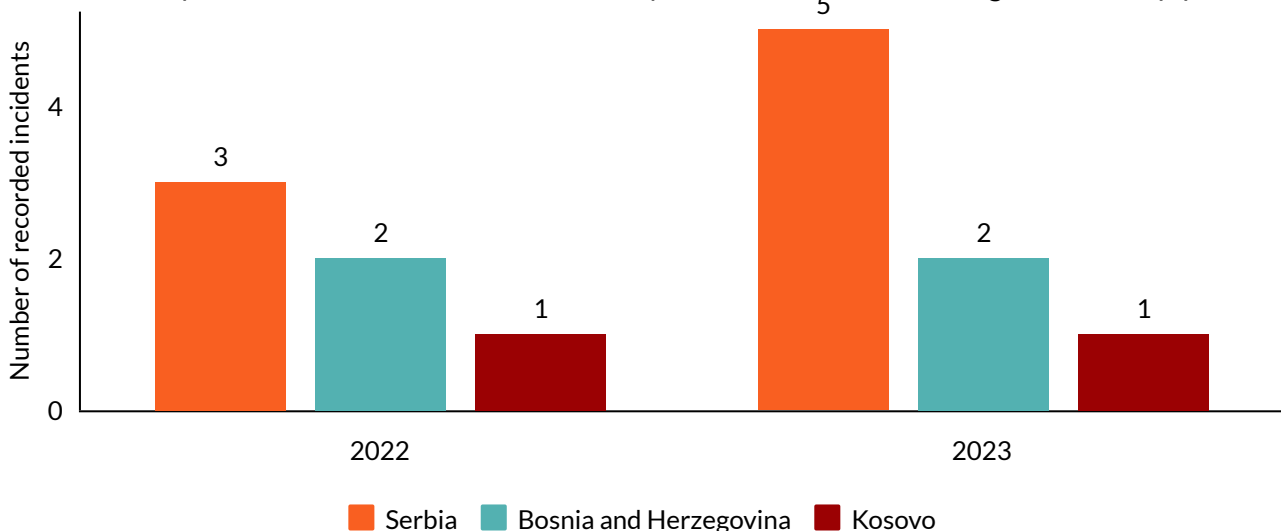
5.3 Murder suicide in intimate partner violence

Intimate partner homicides are often followed by the suicides of perpetrators, with the number of such incidents rising from six in 2022 to eight in 2023.

In 2023, these incidents were reported in Serbia (5), Bosnia and Herzegovina (2), and Kosovo (1). Notably, in three cases, the perpetrators had previously been reported for domestic violence.

Additionally, one suicide attempt following the murder of a woman intimate partner was documented in 2023 in Serbia. In North Macedonia, one man died by suicide after injuring his woman intimate partner, while in Bosnia and Herzegovina, another man threatened with suicide after killing his intimate partner.

Graph 12: Murder suicides in intimate partner violence involving firearms, by year



⁸ In 2023, one woman, assisted by her son and daughter, committed an intimate partner violence with firearms.

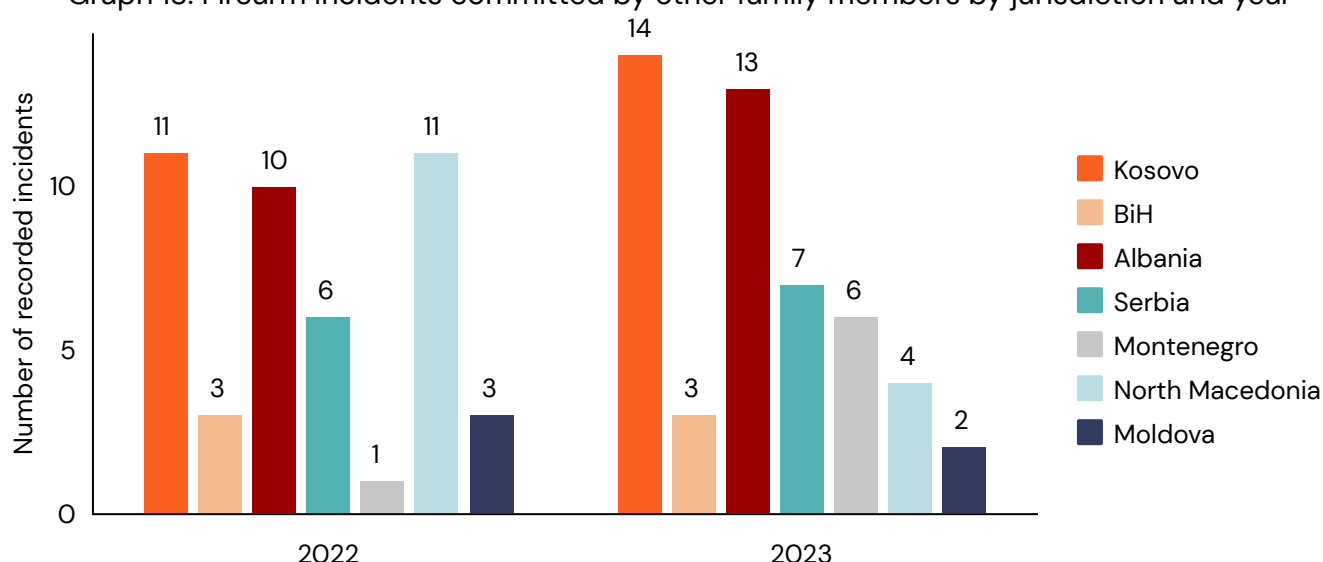
6. Firearm incidents committed by other family members

Domestic violence extends beyond intimate partner violence to include incidents committed by other family members. These cases encompass instances where individuals perpetrated violence against their nuclear or extended family. The use of firearms in these incidents increases the potential for serious harm or fatal outcomes.

In 2023, there was a 9% increase in firearm incidents committed by other family members in the context of domestic violence, rising from 45 reported cases in 2022 to 49 in 2023.

Following the trends from 2022, Kosovo (14) and Albania (13) recorded the highest number of incidents, marking a 27% and 30% increase from the previous year, respectively. Montenegro experienced the most prominent increase, with reported incidents surging from 1 in 2022 to 6 in 2023. Serbia experienced a modest increase, with cases rising from 6 to 7. In contrast, Bosnia and Herzegovina reported the same number of incidents (3) as in the previous year, while Moldova documented a decrease. North Macedonia saw a significant 63% reduction, with incidents falling from 11 in 2022 to 4 in 2023.

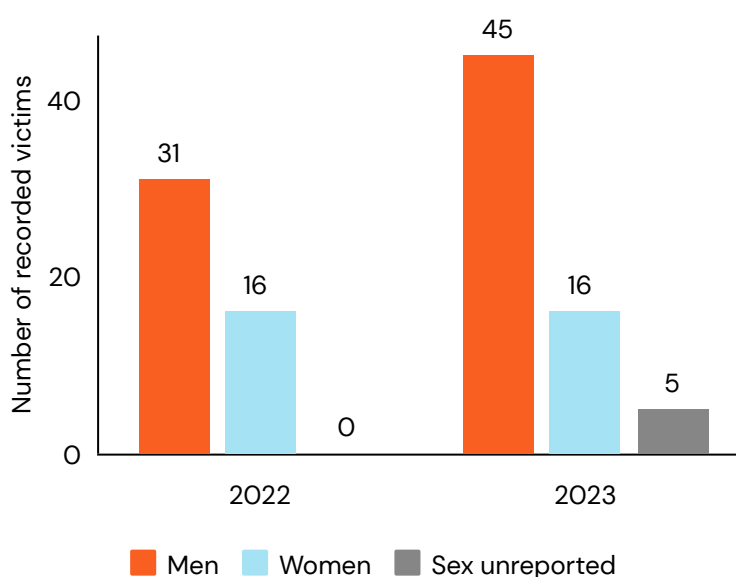
Graph 13: Firearm incidents committed by other family members by jurisdiction and year



6.1 Victims of firearm incidents by other family members

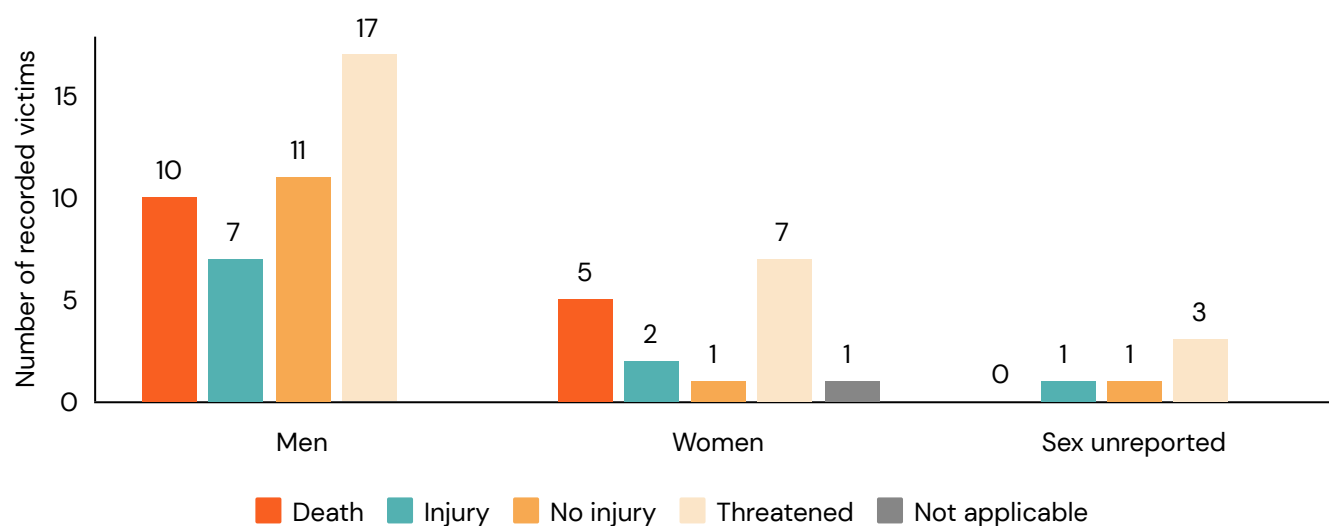
The total number of victims of domestic violence perpetrated by other family members rose by 40%, increasing from 47 in 2022 to 66 in 2023. In both years, men victims significantly outnumbered women victims. In 2023, there were 45 men victims, nearly three times the number of women victims (16), reflecting the same trend as in 2022. The number of men victims observed a 45% increase compared to the previous year, rising from 31 to 45, while the number of women victims remained unchanged. Additionally, 2023 saw five victims whose sex was not specified.

Graph 14: Victims of firearm incidents committed by other family members by year



In 2023, in SEE, family members killed 10 men and five women. Among victims whose sex was specified, seven men and two women were injured, while 27 individuals, including 17 men and seven women, were threatened. Additionally, in incidents where perpetrators discharged firearms in the presence of family members, 11 men and one woman did not sustain injuries. This data indicates that men are more frequently affected by violence from other family members, while women are predominantly impacted by intimate partner violence.

Graph 15: Outcome for victims of firearm incidents committed by other family members in 2023



The number of firearm-related fatalities caused by other family members decreased slightly, from 16 in 2022 to 15 in 2023. The most prominent increase occurred in North Macedonia, where the number of victims rose sharply from one in 2022 to six in 2023. In contrast, Serbia saw a significant decline, with fatalities dropping from six in 2022 to two in 2023. Montenegro reported no such cases in either year.

The number of injured victims more than doubled, climbing from four in 2022 to ten in 2023. Albania accounted for four of these victims, while Kosovo and Moldova each reported two. The number of threatened victims rose by 80%, rising from 15 in 2022 to 27 in 2023. Albania reported the highest number of threatened victims (9), followed closely by Kosovo (8) and Serbia (6). Both Albania and Kosovo also recorded the most significant increases in the number of threatened victims compared to the previous year.

The number of victims who were not injured when a family member discharged a firearm in their presence more than doubled, reaching a total of 13. The majority of these victims were reported in Kosovo (7), which also recorded the most significant increase. In one case, the weapon was present during the incident but was not used or discharged.

Table 6: Outcome for victims of firearm incidents committed by other male family members by jurisdiction and year

Jurisdiction	Death		Injury		No injury		Threat	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
Albania	4	4		4	2	4	1	9
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	3			1	1		
Kosovo	2	1		2	2	7	4	8
Moldova	1	1		2			3	
Montenegro			1					3
North Macedonia	1	4	3	1				1
Serbia	6	2		1	1	1	7	6
Total	16	15	4	10	6	13	7	27

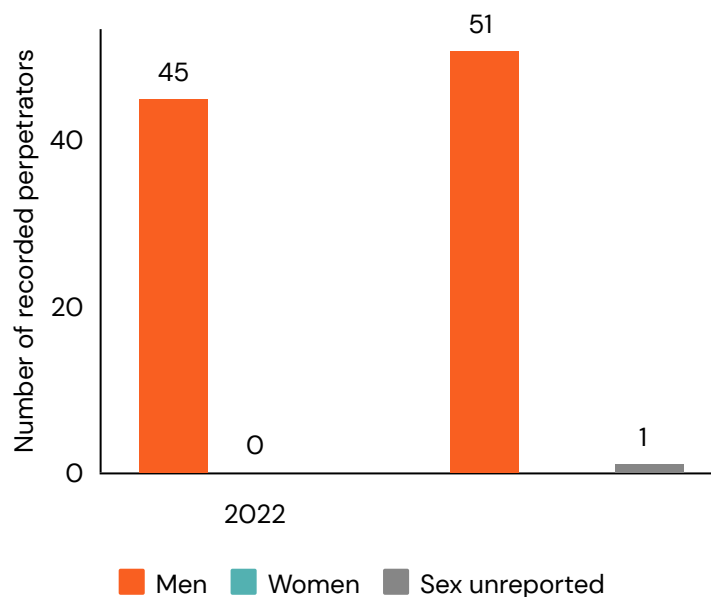
6.2 Perpetrators of firearm incidents against other family members

In 2023, perpetrators of firearm incidents against their family members included 51 men and one individual whose sex was not reported. Among the 34 perpetrators whose ages were specified, the distribution was nearly even across three age groups: 12 were aged 19 to 35, 11 were between 36 and 60 years old, and another 11 were 61 years or older.

The data shows that, of the 49 reported cases of domestic violence committed by other family members in 2023, 57% involved individuals from the nuclear family. In contrast, 33% were perpetrated by members of the extended family. In 10% of the cases, the specific relationship between the victim and the perpetrator was not identified.

In one case reported in Serbia, the perpetrator was a law enforcement officer who used his weapon in legal possession.

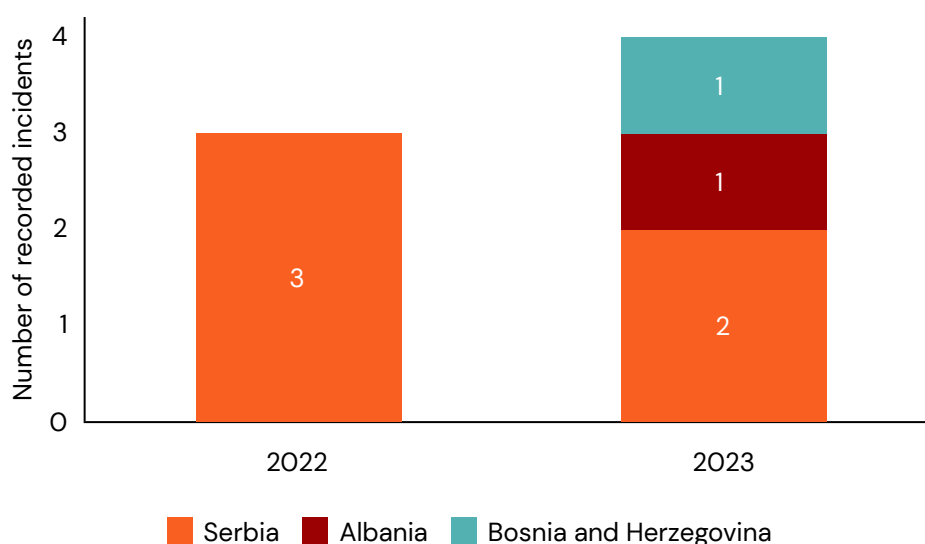
Graph 16: Perpetrators of firearm incidents against family members, by year



6.3 Murder suicides in firearm incidents against other family members

In 2023, four cases of murder-suicide were committed by people who had previously killed one or more family members, exceeding the three cases reported in 2022. Serbia accounted for two of these cases, while Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina each reported one. All cases were committed by men.

Graph 17: Murder suicides in firearm incidents committed against family members, by year

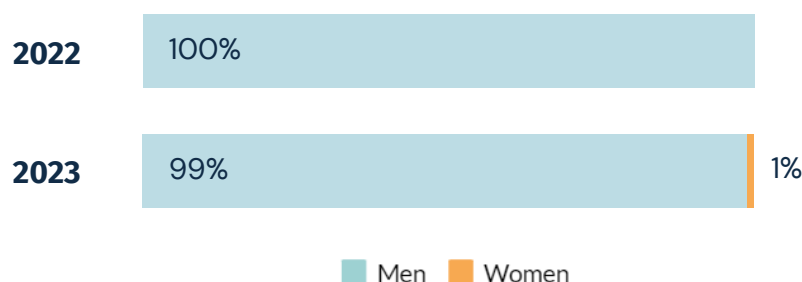


7. Perpetrators in the domestic context

7.1 Sex of perpetrators

In 2023, out of 128 reported perpetrators of domestic violence involving firearms, 125 were men, two were women, and one person whose sex was unidentified. This reflects a slight shift compared to 2022, when men were the sole reported perpetrators, with 108 perpetrators, underscoring the predominantly gendered nature of firearm misuse in domestic violence.

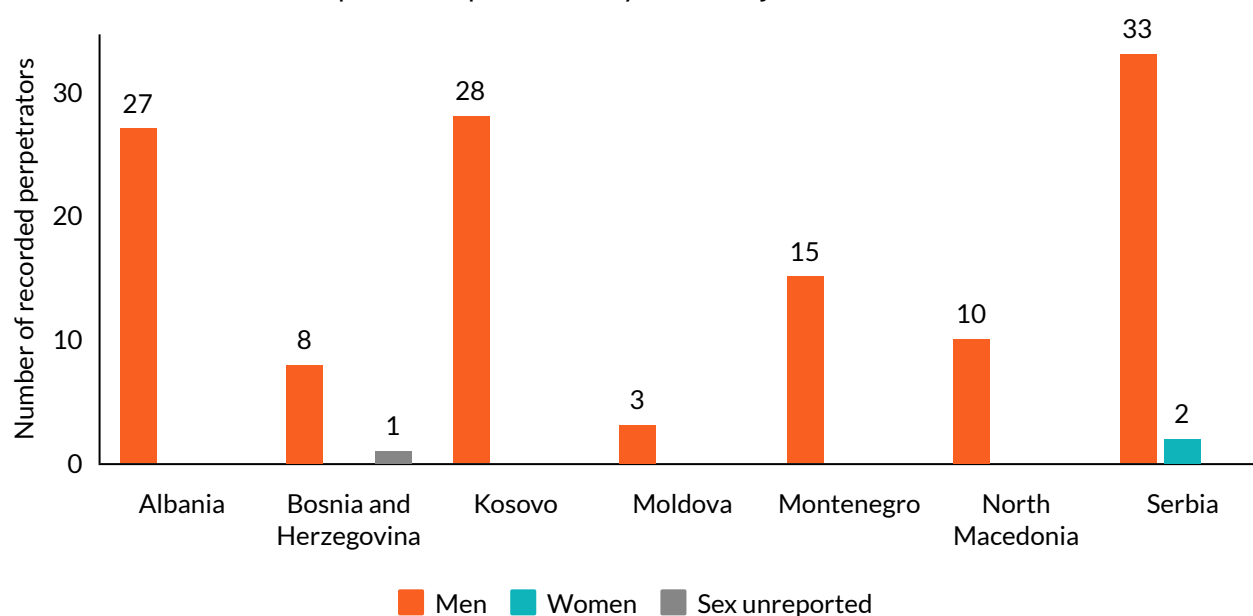
Graph 18: Share of men and women perpetrators, by year



7.2 Perpetrators in jurisdictions

The gendered dynamic of the misuse of firearms in domestic violence incidents remained consistent across all jurisdictions in 2023, with men being the predominant perpetrators, with two women reported as perpetrators in Serbia and one person of unreported sex in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 2022, all perpetrators were men.

Graph 19: Perpetrators by sex and jurisdiction in 2023



7.3 Age of perpetrators

In 2023, a total of 128 perpetrators of domestic violence involving firearms were reported, with age specified for 96 individuals (75%).

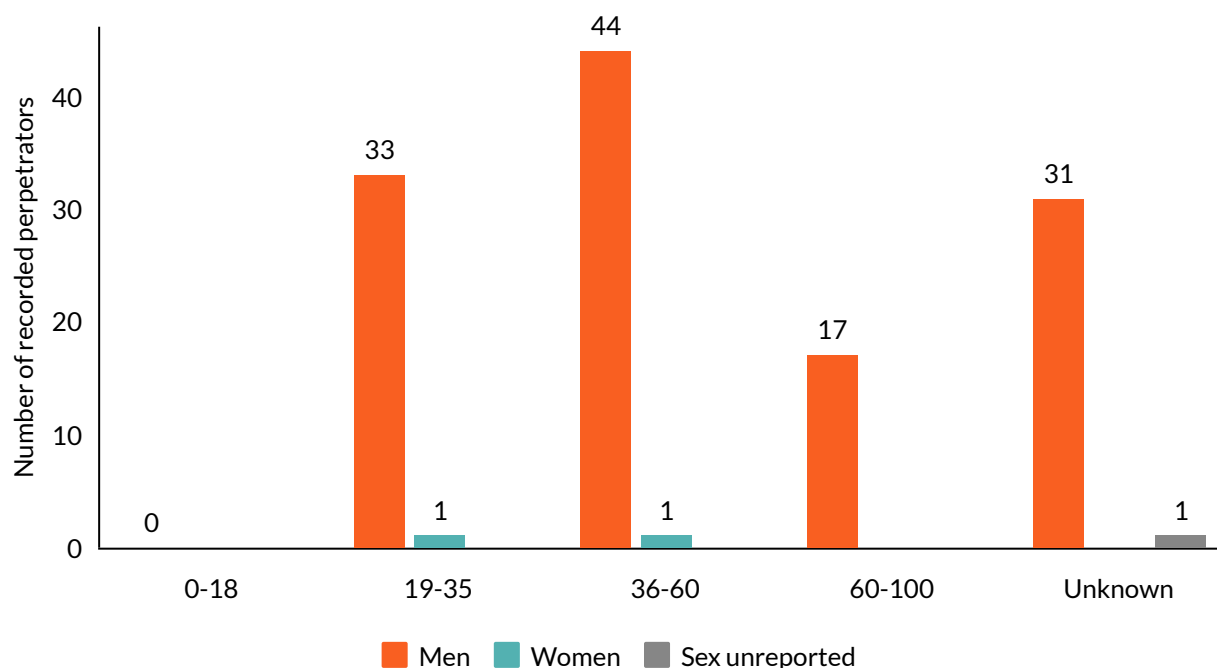
The majority of these perpetrators were men, and the data reveals that the highest number of incidents occurred among those aged 36–60, with 44 men and 1 woman in this age group. This is consistent with the pattern observed in 2022, where men aged 36–60 (53) were the most frequent perpetrators.

Among the younger age group of 19–35, 33 men and 1 woman were identified as perpetrators, a significant increase compared to the 12 perpetrators in this age group in 2022.

For those aged 61 and older, 17 men were reported, slightly higher than the 11 perpetrators recorded in this age group in 2022.

Additionally, 32 cases in 2023 involved perpetrators of unspecified age, including one individual of unidentified sex.

Graph 20: Age of perpetrators in 2023



8. Types of weapons

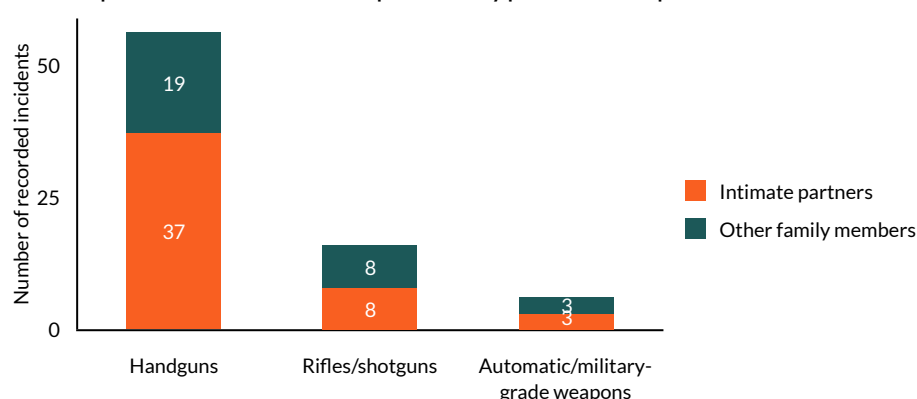
In 2023, handguns were the most commonly reported weapon in domestic violence cases in SEE, being used in 56 incidents (43%) where the type of weapon was identified. Of these, 37 incidents involved intimate partners, while 19 involved other family members. The use of handguns in intimate partner violence rose by 37% in compared to 2022.

Rifles/shotguns were the second most reported type of weapon, used in 16 cases (15%), reflecting a 10% decrease from 2022. Automatic/military-grade weapons were documented in six incidents (6%) in domestic settings, with both types of weapons being equally used by intimate partners and other family members.

Explosive devices were reported in five incidents, all related to intimate partner violence. Multiple types of SALW were recorded in 20 cases.

In 76 incidents (63%), law enforcement seized weapons from the perpetrators after the incident. These patterns aligned with trends observed in 2022.

Graph 21: Three most reported types of weapons in 2023



In 2023, Serbia reported the highest number of handgun-related incidents, with 20 cases, followed by Kosovo with 13 cases. Significant increases in incidents involving handguns were observed in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro. North Macedonia and Albania recorded a decline in such cases.

As in 2022, Albania accounted for one-third of the cases involving rifles/shotguns (5 cases), followed by Serbia (4 cases) and Kosovo (3 cases). Compared to 2022, incidents involving rifles/shotguns increased only in Moldova, while a decline was noted in Kosovo and Albania. Other jurisdictions reported the same number of cases as in 2022.

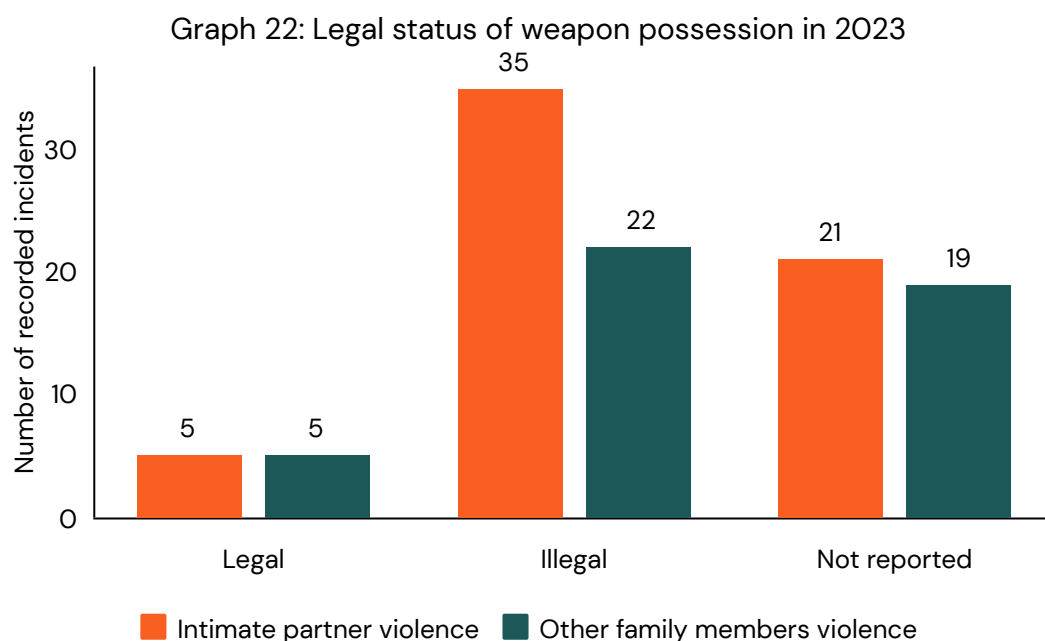
Incidents involving automatic/military-grade weapons were documented in Albania (4 cases), while both Montenegro and Serbia reported one cases each.

Table 7: Three most reported types of weapons by jurisdiction and year

Jurisdiction	Handguns		Rifles/Shotguns		Automatic military-grade weapons	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
Albania	6	3	7	5	6	4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	7	2			
Kosovo	14	13	5	3	3	
Moldova	2	1	1	2		
Montenegro	1	6	1	1		1
North Macedonia	10	6	1	1		
Serbia	11	20	4	4		1
Total	46	56	21	16	9	6

8.1 Legal status of weapon possession

In 2023, the legal status of weapon possession was specified for 70 cases (58%). Among these, ten cases (14%) involved weapons in legal possession, with five used in incidents committed by intimate partners and five in cases involving other family members. The remaining 60 cases (50%) were committed with weapons in illegal possession.



The trend regarding weapons in legal possession remained consistent in both 2022 and 2023. In 2023, handguns accounted for the majority of weapons (7 cases) accounted for the majority of weapons in legal possession. The cases involving weapons in legal possession were primarily reported in Serbia (5 cases). In one case, the perpetrator, a law enforcement officer, used his service weapon, while in the other a man committed intimate partner violence with this father's service pistol.

From 2022 to 2023, the number of cases with illegal weapons increased by 5%. The most reported weapons in illegal possession were handguns (22 cases), rifles/shotguns (7 cases) and automatic/military-grade weapons (6 cases).

Table 8: Legal status of weapon possession by jurisdictions and year

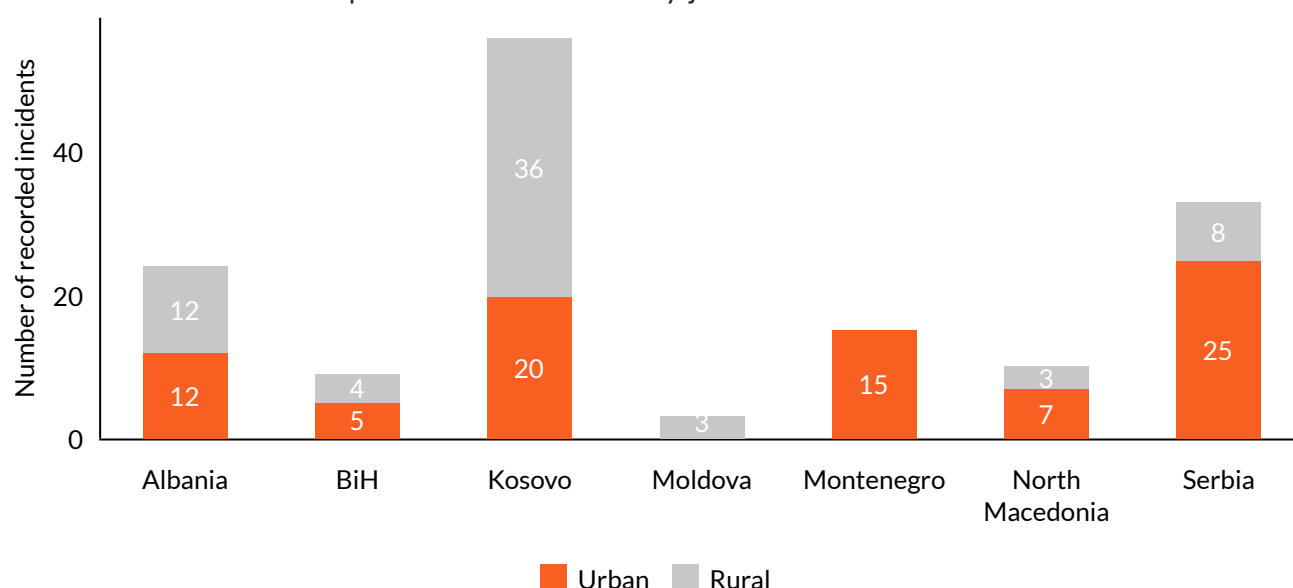
Jurisdiction	Legal		Illegal		Not reported	
	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
Albania	1	1	19	13	7	10
Bosnia and Herzegovina			1	4	10	5
Kosovo	5	2	20	14	11	10
Moldova	1		2	2		1
Montenegro		2	1	9	5	4
North Macedonia	1		5	1	6	9
Serbia	2	5	9	17	10	11
Total	10	10	57	60	69	50

9. Macrolocation and microlocation

9.1 Macrolocation

In 2023, firearm incidents in the domestic context remained more prevalent in urban areas, accounting for 70% of all incidents while rural areas comprised 30%. This finding may suggest that such incidents are underreported in rural regions. This pattern was consistent throughout the region, with the exception of Albania and Moldova. In Albania, incidents were evenly split between urban and rural areas in 2023, each accounting for 12 cases. In Moldova, all reported incidents (3 cases) occurred in rural areas. No incidents in rural areas were reported in Montenegro in both years. The disparity between rural and urban areas was most pronounced in Serbia and Kosovo, where urban incidents constituted approximately 76% of the total cases in each jurisdiction.

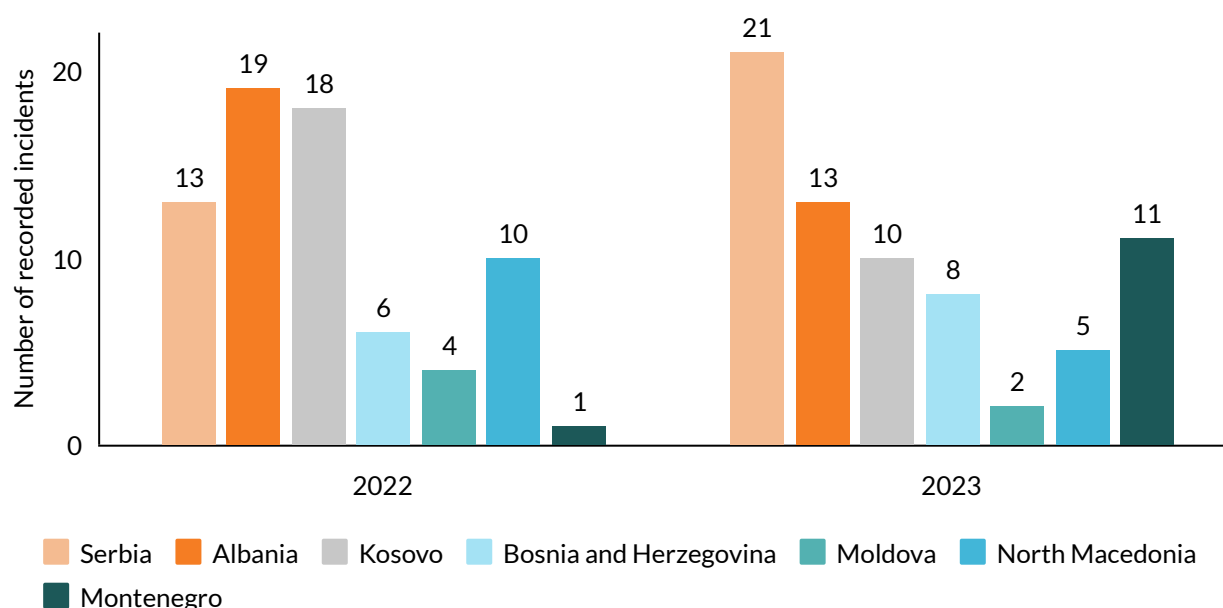
Graph 23: Macrolocation by jurisdiction in 2023



9.2 Microlocation

In 2023, microlocation data was available for 83 incidents (69%), revealing that 70 incidents (84%) occurred at homes, underscoring the home as the primary setting for domestic violence involving firearms. This trend was consistent across all jurisdictions and remained unchanged from previous years. A smaller share of incidents occurred on the streets (7 cases, 8%) and in public buildings (5 cases, 6%).

Graph 24: Home as the most reported microlocation by jurisdiction and year





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