



South East Europe Armed Violence Monitor

Quarterly Regional Report

April-June 2023

Background

The widespread proliferation and misuse of firearms continue to pose a grave threat around the globe. To echo the concern about the negative impact of firearms on security, human rights, as well as social and economic development, UNDP SEESAC initiated data collection in 2014 to track the firearm-related incidents in South East Europe (SEE) and established a Regional Armed Violence Monitoring Platform (AVMP).

The AVMP covers Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Kosovo*. 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 police reports.

The present regional report builds on monthly Armed Violence Monitor Reports, and it has been prepared to provide a collection of data, show the trends, highlights, as well as threats regarding firearm incidents in SEE from **April-June 2023**.¹

Quarterly AVMP regional reports aim to serve as an information tool to research organizations and all interested parties engaged in the area of small arms and light weapons with the primary goal of providing a better understanding of the firearms' negative impact on civilians.

* 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.

¹ Data was retrieved on 17 July 2023. Given that news articles may be published after the incidents occurred or that recorded incidents can be updated with new pieces of information, the given statistics may slightly differ in the future.

QUARTERLY SNAPSHOTS

April - June 2023

831

firearm incidents were
reported in SEE

395

weapon
seizures

50

people were
killed with
firearms

91

public disputes
involving
firearms

122

people were
injured with
firearms

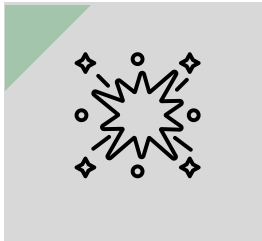
36

incidents in
the context of
domestic
violence

50

incidents with
weapons in
legal
possession

TYPE OF INCIDENTS



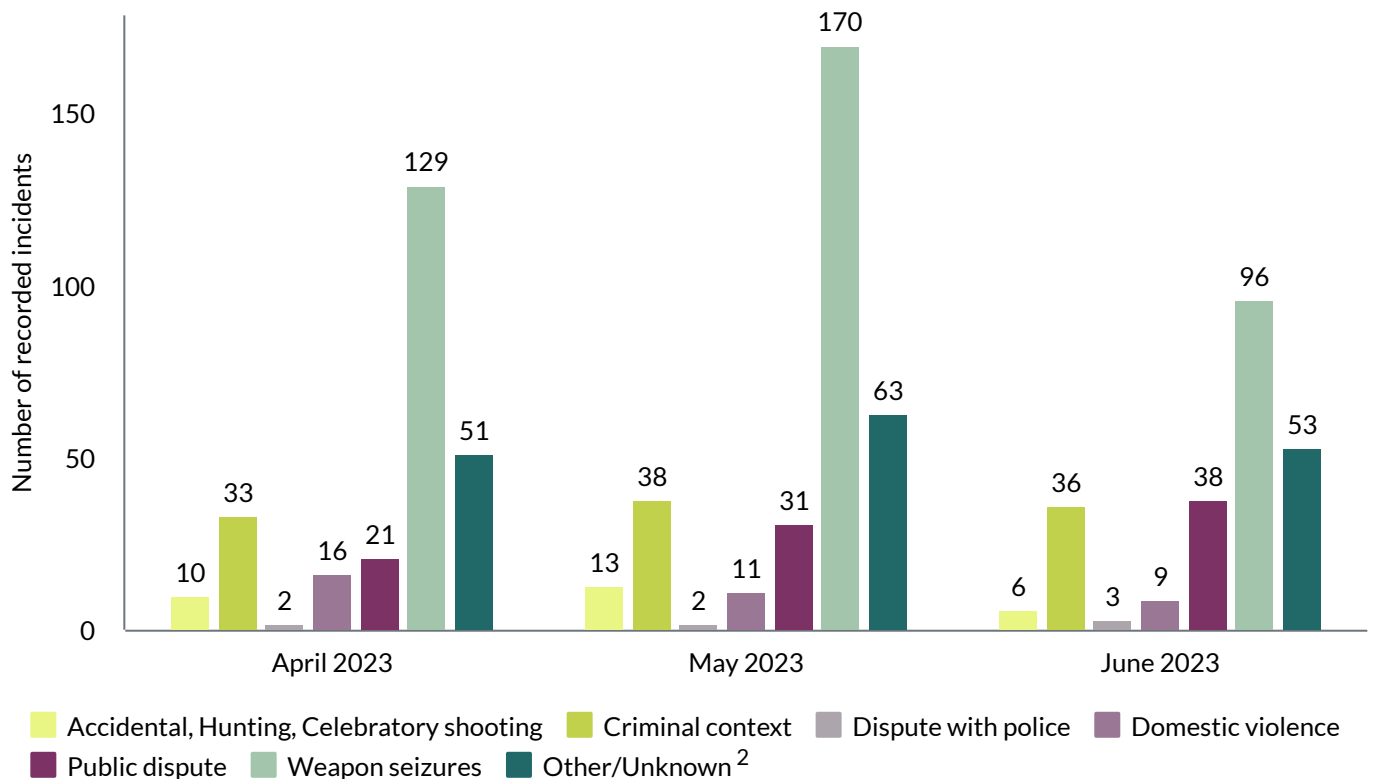
17 celebratory shootings were reported.



19 domestic violence incidents were committed **by intimate partners, all men.**



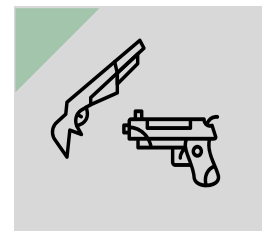
2 mass shootings were **reported** in this quarter, resulting in **19 killed** and **19 injured** people.



16 cases of firearm thefts were reported, a **54% drop** from the previous quarter.



14 accidental shootings were reported, a **40% rise** from the previous quarter.



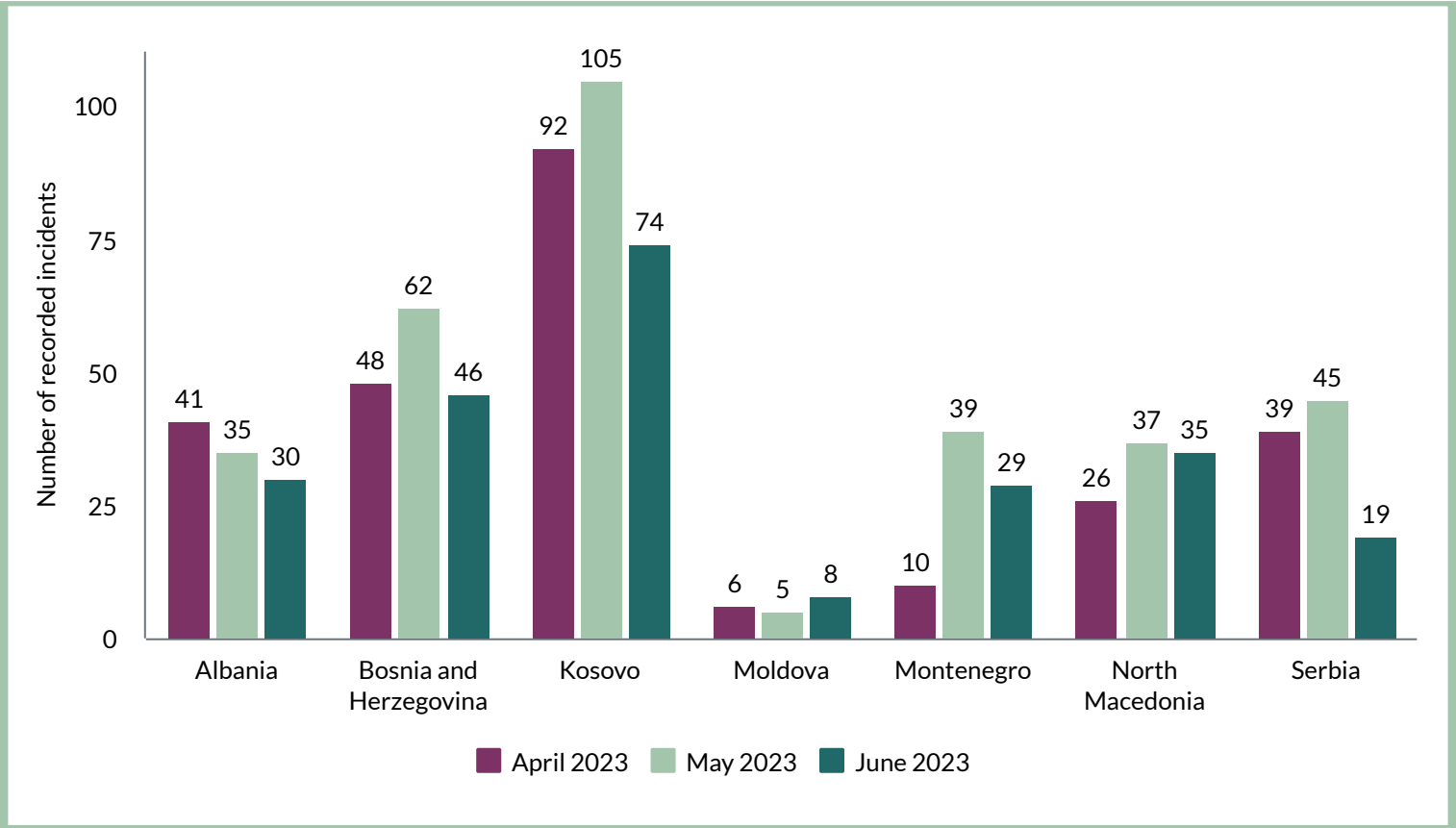
90 incidents with multiple types of SALW were reported, a **22% increase** from the previous quarter.

² Other/ Unknown category refers to suicides, shootings under undetermined circumstances, non-hunting related shooting of animals, explosions, weapons used for defence, and all other incidents that cannot be classified under any of the categories above.

NUMBER OF INCIDENTS

A **slight increase** in firearm incidents was seen this quarter, with the number rising from **824** to **831**.

May recorded the **highest number** of firearm incidents in both this quarter and the first half of 2023.

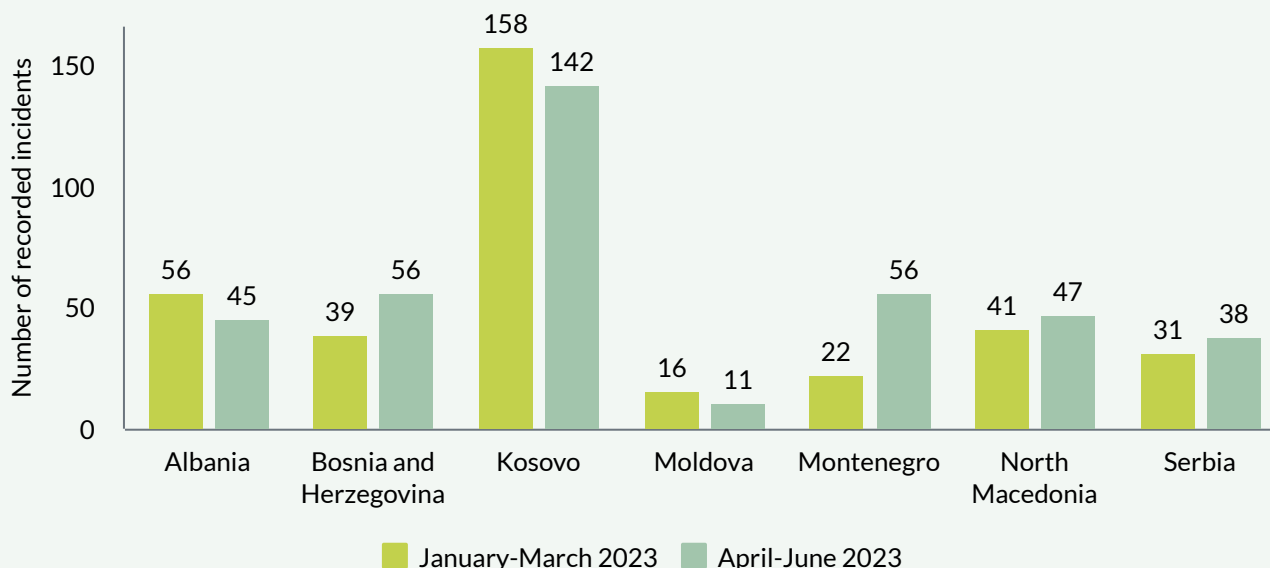


Kosovo (272), Bosnia and Herzegovina (156) and Albania (106) reported the highest number of firearm incidents.

Weapon seizures (395) and firearm incidents in the **criminal context (107)** were the most reported type of incidents.

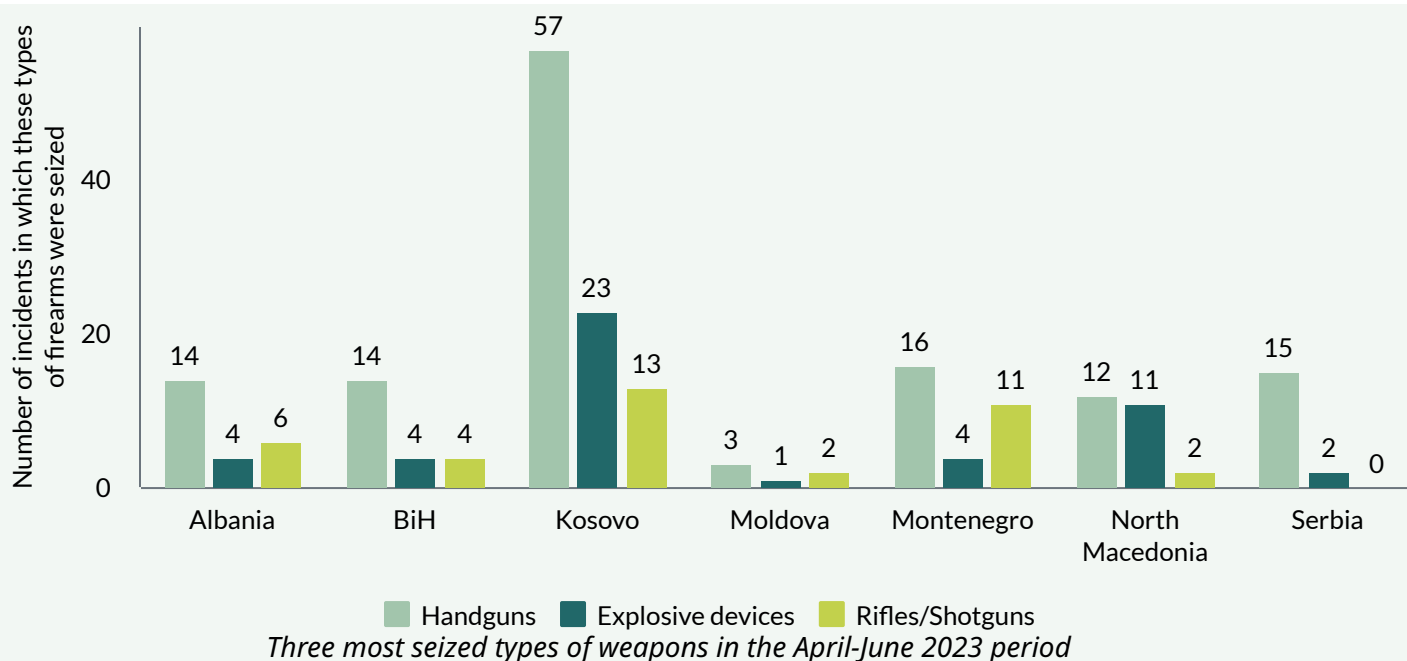
MAIN TRENDS - Weapon seizures

- In this quarter, the number of reported **weapon seizures** reached **395** incidents, thus making them the **most prevalent type of firearm incident**, representing **48% of all firearm incidents**.
- Compared to the previous quarter's 363 cases, this indicates a **9% increase** and a **17% rise** from the corresponding period last year, when 339 cases were documented. The increase was mainly due to a high number of seizures reported in May.



- The **highest number of seizures** was recorded in **Kosovo**, followed by **Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina**, where the number of cases **increased by 155% and 44% respectively**, in relation to the previous quarter.

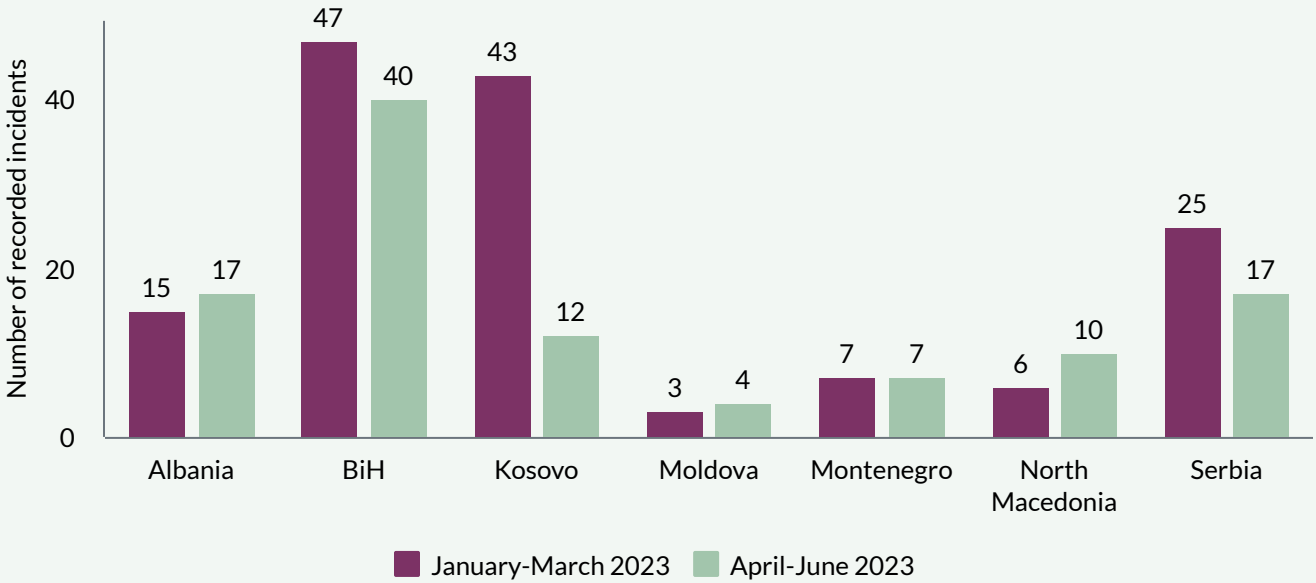
- With a total of **131 seizures**, **handguns** continued to be the **most frequently seized** type of weapon. **Kosovo** reported the largest number of handgun seizures, amounting to **57** cases.
- Seizures of **explosives increased 17%** from the previous quarter, rising from 42 to 49 cases. As a result, explosives were **the second most seized weapon**, indicating a shift in the trend from the January-March quarter, when the explosives ranked third in terms of number of seizures. As in the previous quarter, explosives were mainly seized in **Kosovo (23)** and **North Macedonia (11)**.



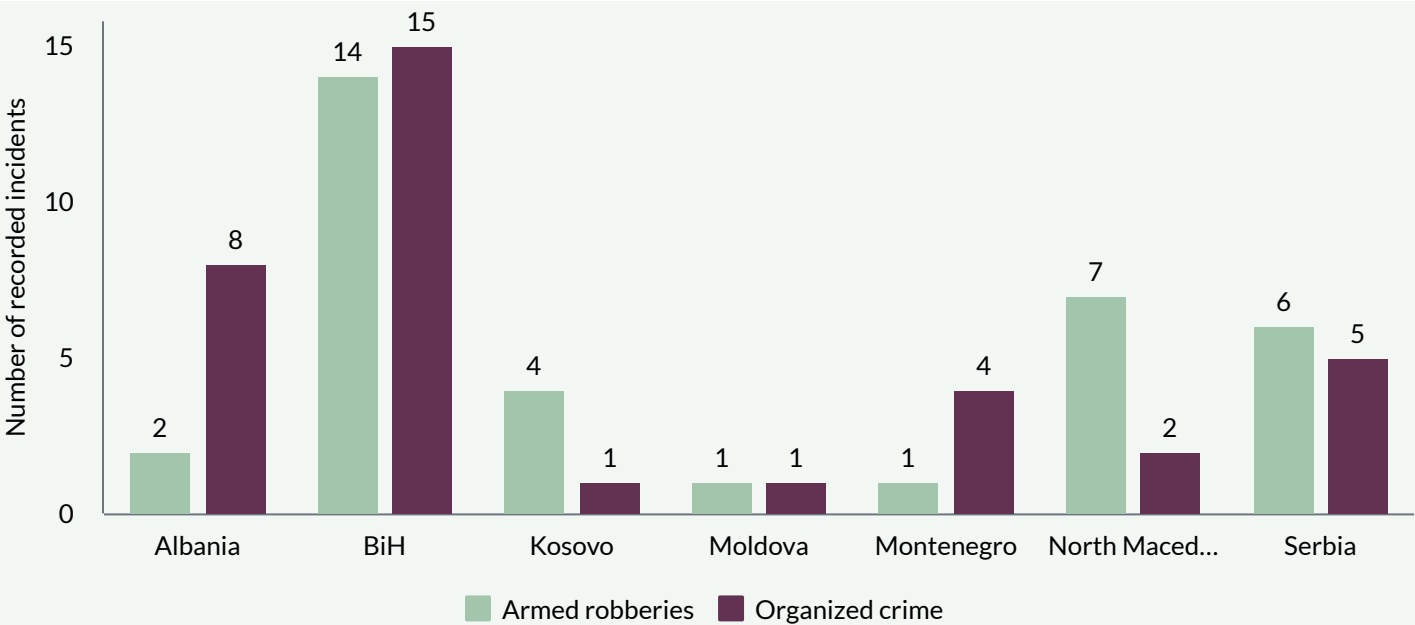
- Seizures of rifles/shotguns declined by **24%** when compared to the previous quarter (from 50 to 38 cases). Most seizures of this type of weapon were reported by **Kosovo (13)** and **Montenegro (11)**.

MAIN TRENDS (CONT.) - Criminal context

- The number of firearm incidents in the criminal context **continued to decrease**, showing a **27% decline** since the previous quarter. The incidents dropped from 146 to 107 cases.
- The most notable **decrease** was observed in **Kosovo (72%)**, followed by **Serbia (32%)** and **Bosnia and Herzegovina (15%)**. **North Macedonia** documented a **significant increase of 67%**, while **Albania** witnessed a **modest rise of 13%**.



- The number of **armed robberies decreased by 31%**, falling from 51 in the previous to **35 cases in this quarter**. **Serbia** saw a **decrease of 62%**, followed by Bosnia and Herzegovina with a 21% drop. However, the number of armed robberies in **North Macedonia increased nearly fourfold**, rising from 2 to 7.
- A total of **36** firearm incidents were associated with **organized crime**, showing a **23% decline** from the previous quarter. **Bosnia and Herzegovina (15)**, with the same number of these incidents as in the previous quarter, **accounted for 42% of all these incidents**. Kosovo reported the most significant decline of these incidents, from 4 to 1.

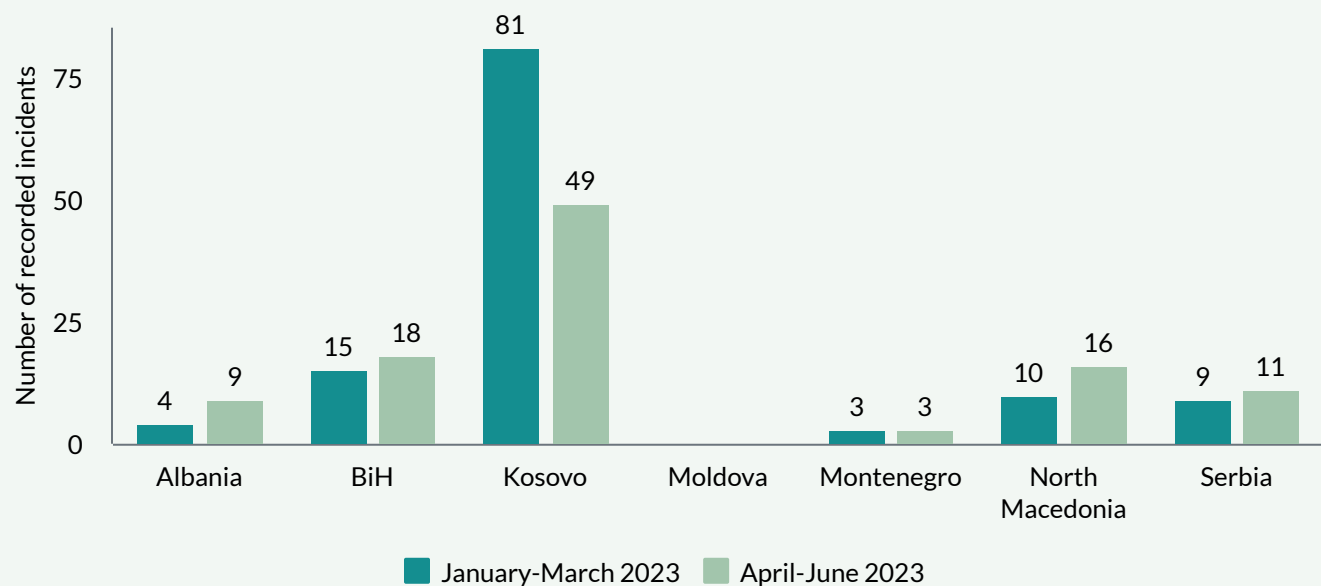


Two most reported types of incidents under the criminal context category in the April-June 2023 period

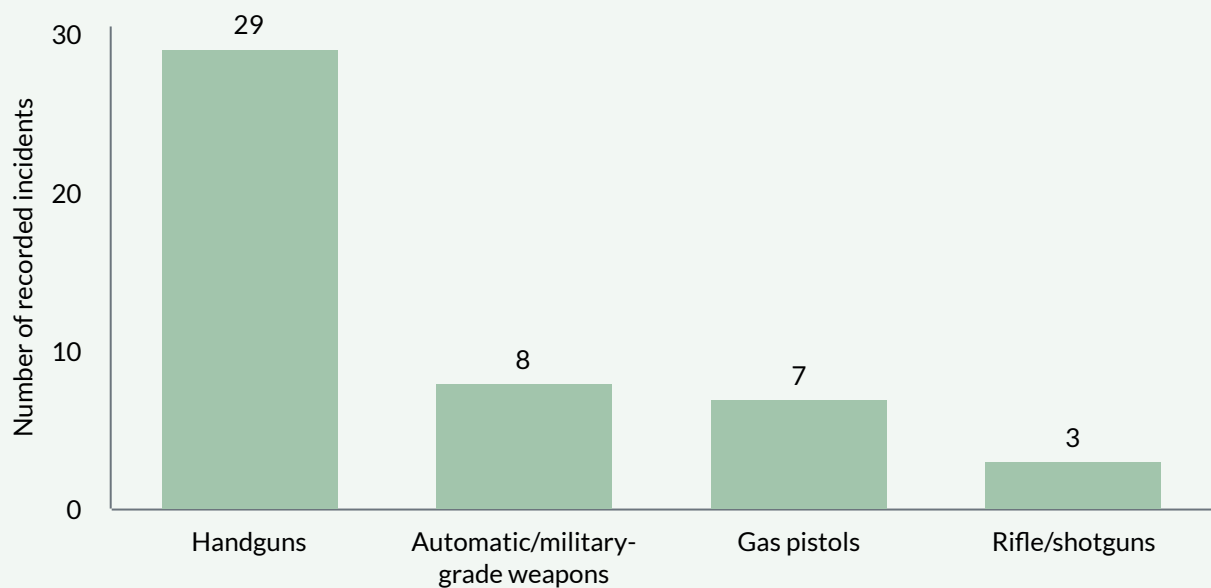
- **63 victims** of incidents in criminal context were reported, among whom **5 were killed**, **14 injured** and **33 threatened**.

MAIN TRENDS (CONT.) - Undetermined shootings³

- The third most frequently reported type of incident, **undetermined shootings**, saw a total of **106 cases**, reflecting a **13% decrease** from the previous quarter's 122 cases.
- **Kosovo** reported the **highest number**, constituting **46% of all undetermined shootings**, despite reporting a nearly 50% decrease compared to the previous quarter. An increase was seen in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Serbia.



- Undetermined shootings resulted in **56 victims**, of whom **8 people** were reported as **killed** and **32 as injured**.
- Out of the **perpetrators** whose sex was reported, **77 were men** and **2 were women**. The perpetrators were caught in 56 incidents, while they remained unknown in 45 cases.

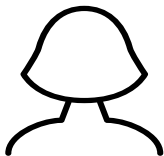


- Out of the 51 cases where the type of firearm was identified, **handguns** were the **predominant weapon**, being used in 29 undetermined shootings, almost the same as in the previous quarter (28 cases). The use of **automatic/military-grade weapons** experienced a **slight increase**, rising from 6 cases in the previous quarter to 8 cases in this quarter. However, the number of incidents involving **rifles/shotguns halved** compared to the previous quarter.

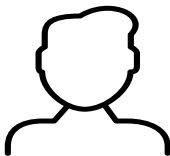
³ Undetermined shooting refers to any firearm discharge under unknown circumstances and motives, regardless of whether or not such incident caused a fatality, injury, or damage.

PERPETRATORS

From April to June 2023, there were **946 perpetrators⁴** of firearm incidents, of whom



20
were women



765
were men

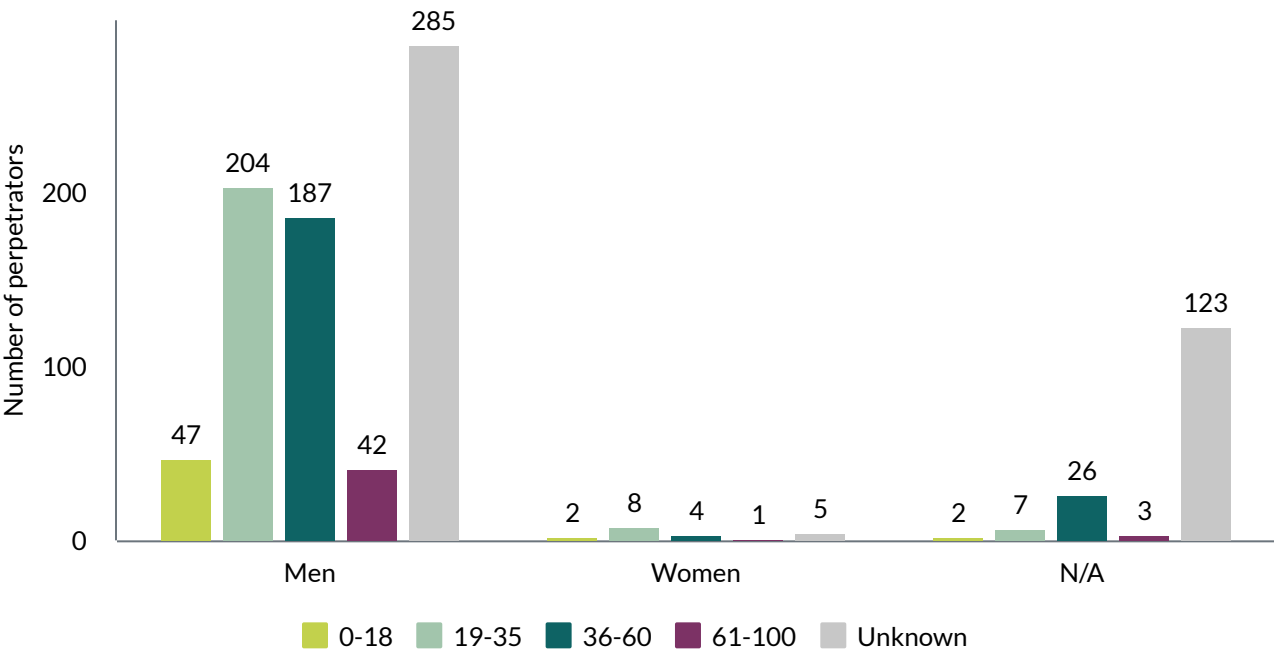
N/A

for **161**
sex was not reported

Men were identified as perpetrators mostly in incidents related to **weapon seizures (45%)**, **criminal context (15%)** and **public disputes (14%)**.

Women were identified as perpetrators mostly in incidents related to **weapon seizures (50%)** and **criminal context (20%)**.

- In incidents where age of **men and women perpetrators** was reported, the majority fell under the **age group of 19-35**, closely followed by 36-60 age group.

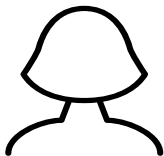


- For **413 (44%) perpetrators**, age was not reported. For 123 perpetrators, neither sex nor age was reported.

⁴ Perpetrator refers to any individual who has used a firearm/ammunition/explosive to commit any of the types of incidents covered by the AVMP.

VICTIMS

From April to June 2023, there were **371 victims⁵** of firearm incidents, of whom



65
were women



256
were men

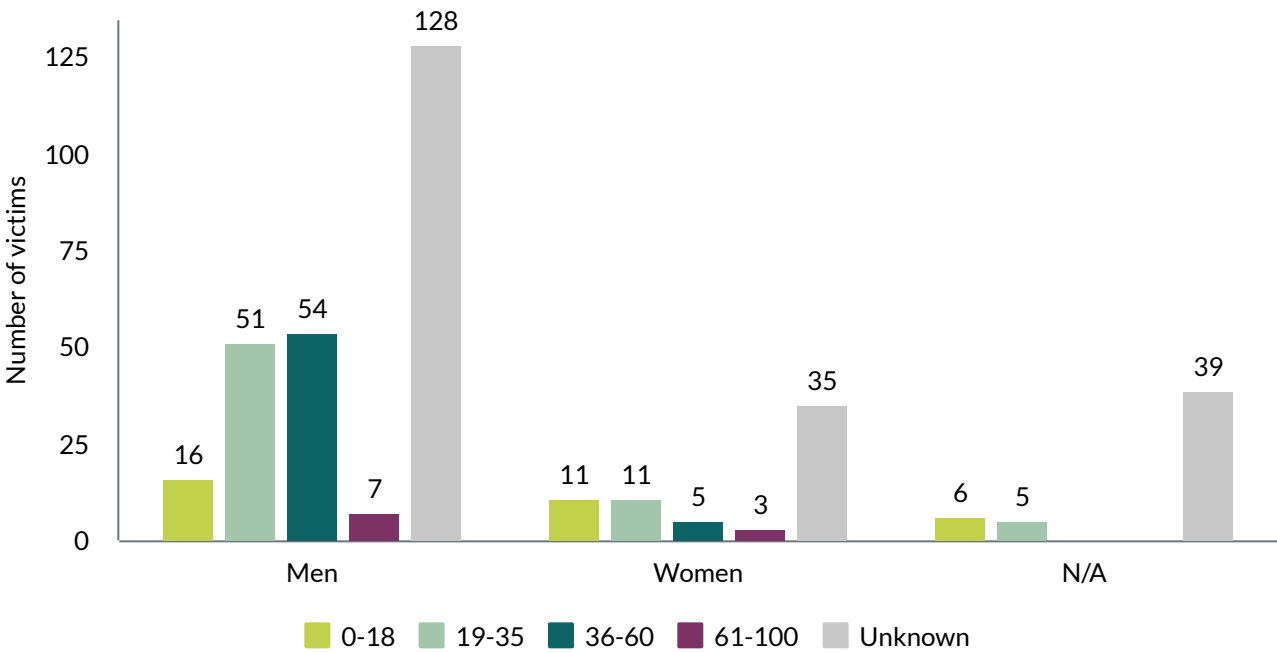
N/A

for **50**
sex was not reported

Women victims were mostly reported in incidents related to **domestic violence (43%)**, **two mass shootings (22%)**, and **criminal context (15%)**.

Men victims were mostly reported in incidents related to **public disputes (36%)**, **undetermined shootings (19%)** and **criminal context (14%)**.

- In incidents where the age of **men** and **women victims** was reported, the majority fell under the **age group of 19-35**, followed by the 36-60 age group.



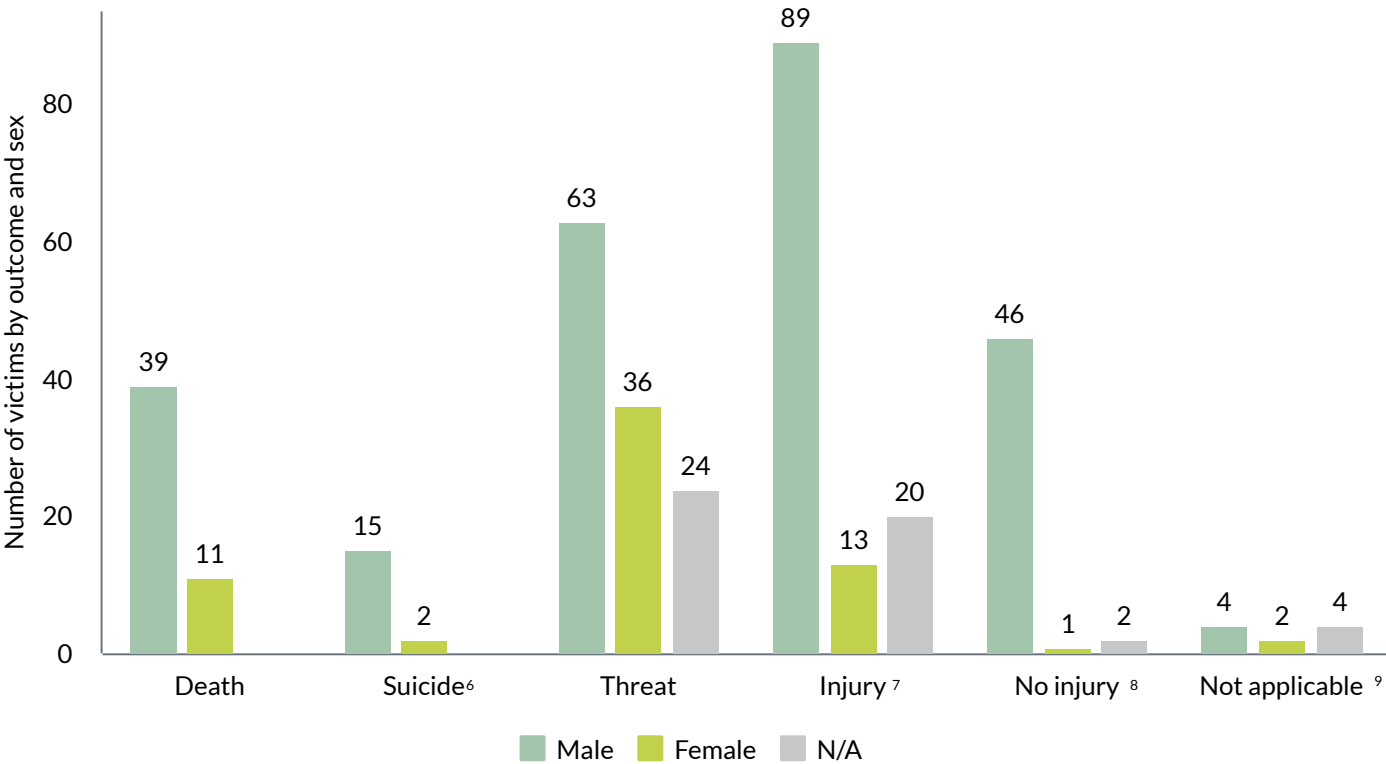
- For **202 (54%) victims**, **age was not reported**. For 39 victims, neither sex nor age was reported.

⁵ 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.

OUTCOME FOR VICTIMS

123 victims were threatened with firearms, with 38 in public disputes and 33 in domestic violence and criminal context, each.

122 victims were injured, 33% more than in the previous quarter. 19 victims were injured in two mass shootings.



50 people were killed with firearms. The number of firearm deaths **rose by 79%** since the previous quarter, mainly due to two mass shootings.

17 suicides with firearms were reported, **29% less** than in the previous quarter.

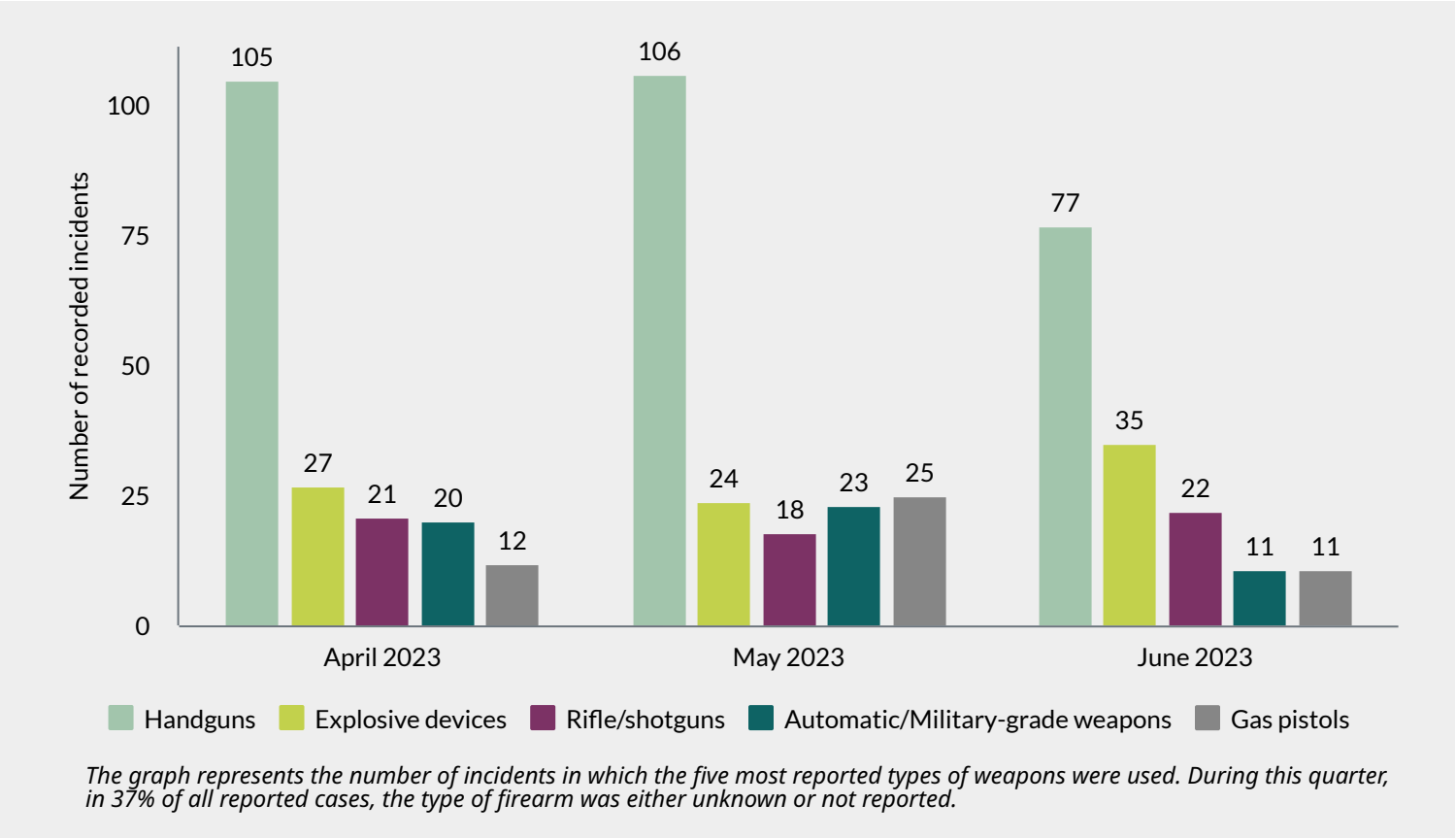
⁶ Suicide refers to all incidents in which the victim killed him/herself with a firearm.
⁷ Injury refers to all incidents in which an individual sustained an injury due to weapon use.
⁸ No injury refers to all incidents in which a weapon was discharged, but the victim did not sustain a gunshot injury.
⁹ Not applicable refers to all incidents in which a weapon is present but not used or discharged (for example, theft of a weapon).

TYPE OF WEAPONS



In **472** (57%) **incidents**, the firearms used were in **illegal possession**, while in **50** (6%) cases, they were in **legal possession**. In 309 (37%) incidents, the status of possession was not reported.

- **Handguns** were reported in **288 incidents**, nearly the same as in the previous quarter. In 131 cases, this type of firearm was seized, while in **48 cases**, it was used in **public disputes**.
- **Explosive devices**, as the **second most used** type of weapon, were reported in **86 incidents**, 13% more than in the previous quarter. In **37 cases**, explosives were reported as **found accidentally** by civilians, while in **20 cases** they were used in **undetermined explosions**.



- **Rifles/shotguns** were reported in **61 incidents**, showing a 34 % decline since the previous quarter. In **nearly 60% of the cases**, this type of weapon was **seized**.
- **Automatic/military-grade weapons** were reported in **54 incidents**, primarily in weapon seizures (29 cases).
- **Gas pistols** were reported in **48 incidents**, showing a modest increase since the previous quarter (46 cases). This type of firearm was reported as **seized** in almost half of cases (22)

MACRO AND MICROLOCATION

From April to June 2023

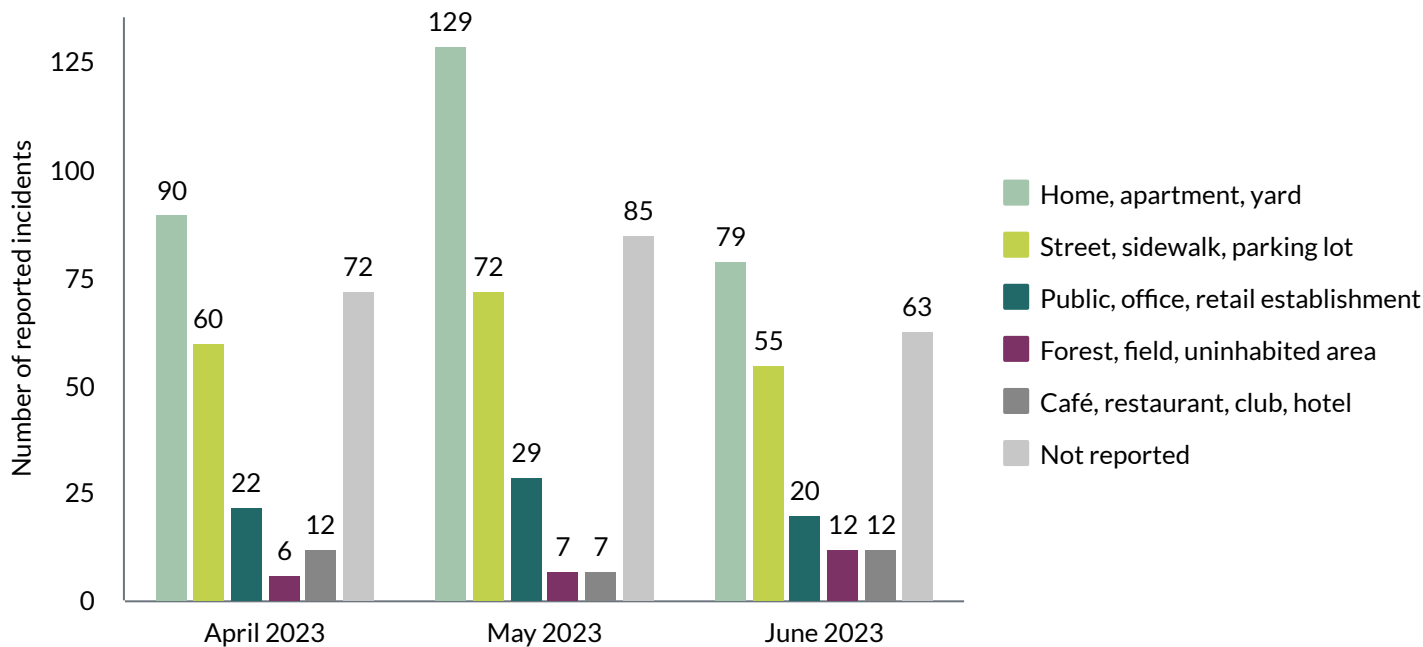


581 (70%) incidents
occurred in urban areas.



250 (30%) incidents
occurred in rural areas.

Microlocation



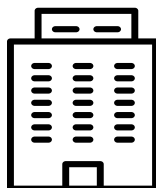
Majority of incidents were reported



at homes / yards
259 incidents



in streets
187 incidents



in public buildings
71 incidents



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