South East Europe

ARMED VIOLENCE MONITOR

Quarterly Regional Report



January - March 2025

Background

The spread and misuse of firearms remain a persistent threat to public safety, human rights, and sustainable development worldwide. Recognizing this challenge, UNDP SEESAC established the Armed Violence Monitoring Platform (AVMP) to systematically collect and analyse data on firearm-related incidents across South East Europe (SEE).

Monitoring and analysing firearm-related incidents are therefore essential to understanding the scale, scope, and dynamics of armed violence. Comprehensive and timely data is crucial to inform evidence-based policymaking, strengthen prevention and response strategies, and support efforts to reduce the illicit possession and misuse of small arms and light weapons (SALW).

To support these goals, this **Quarterly Regional Report** [1] presents key trends, incident patterns, and emerging threats observed between **January and March 2025**. Building on monthly reports, it aims to enhance understanding of firearm-related violence in SEE.

The AVMP provides real-time insight into the scope and impact of firearm use, covering **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Kosovo**.*

Methodology

The AVMP provides real-time insight[2] into the scope and impact of firearm incidents, covering **Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Kosovo**.

The AVMP data is collected **daily** from a combination of **official sources**, including websites of law enforcement institutions and ministries of interior, **online and print media**, with Kosovo's data primarily sourced from daily police reports.

Data on firearm incidents is categorised according to standardised definitions to ensure consistency and comparability across jurisdictions and reporting periods. Each incident is reviewed and analysed using a methodology developed by SEESAC.

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 used is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1244/99 and the International Court of Justice Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.*

2 *Data was retrieved on 29 April 2025. 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

932

Firearm incidents were reported, a **marginal increase** from the previous quarter.

524

cases of weapon seizures were reported, accounting for **56% of all firearm incidents** - the highest number recorded in a single quarter to date.

143

Reported cases in the **criminal context**, a **25% rise** from the previous quarter.

36

People were **killed** in firearm incidents, **13** of whom in a **mass shooting**.

124

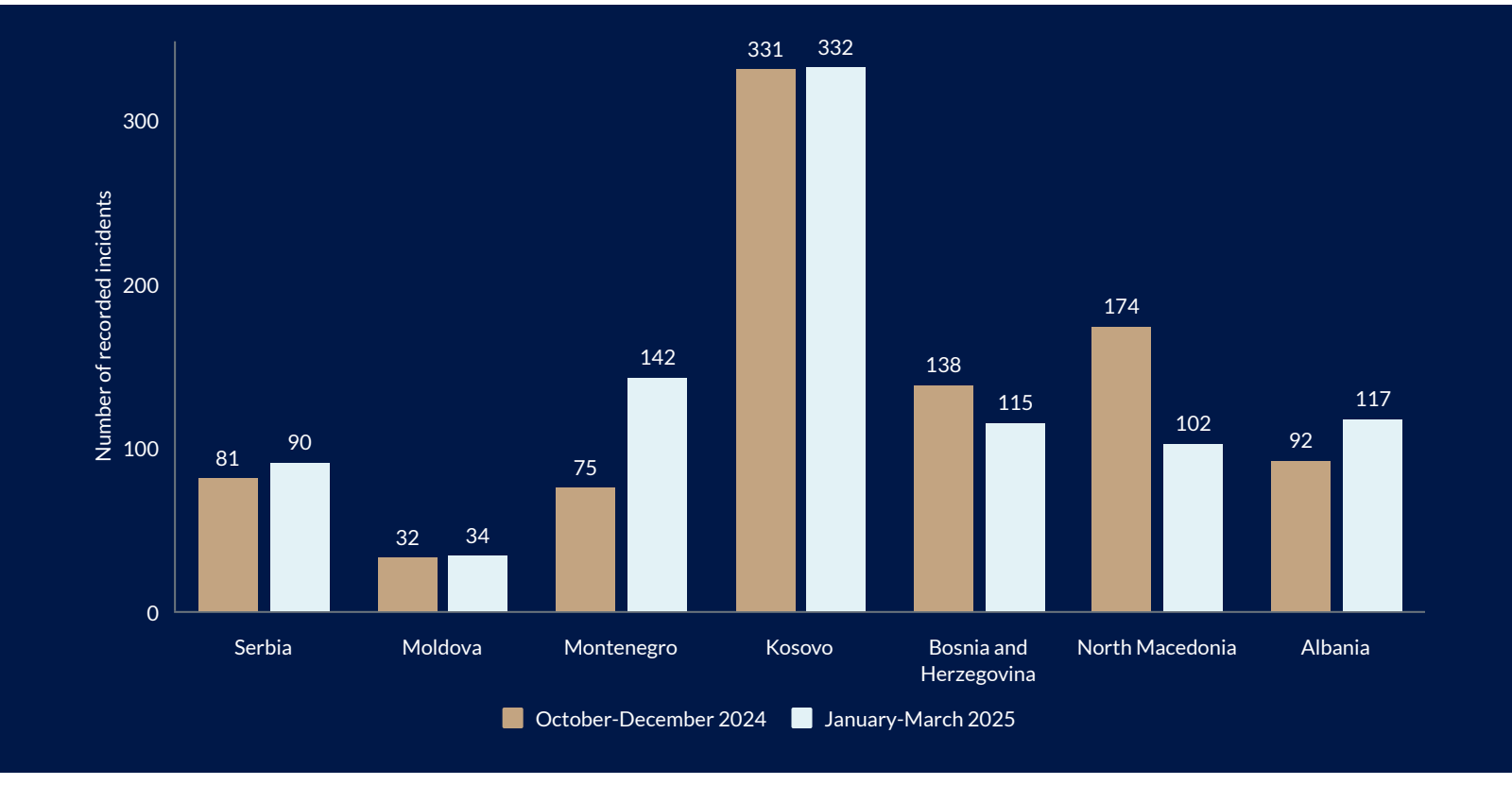
People were **threatened** with a firearm, nearly **40% more** than in the previous quarter.

53

Cases involved **automatic/military-grade weapons**, a **60% rise**, reversing the downward trend of 2024.

NUMBER OF INCIDENTS

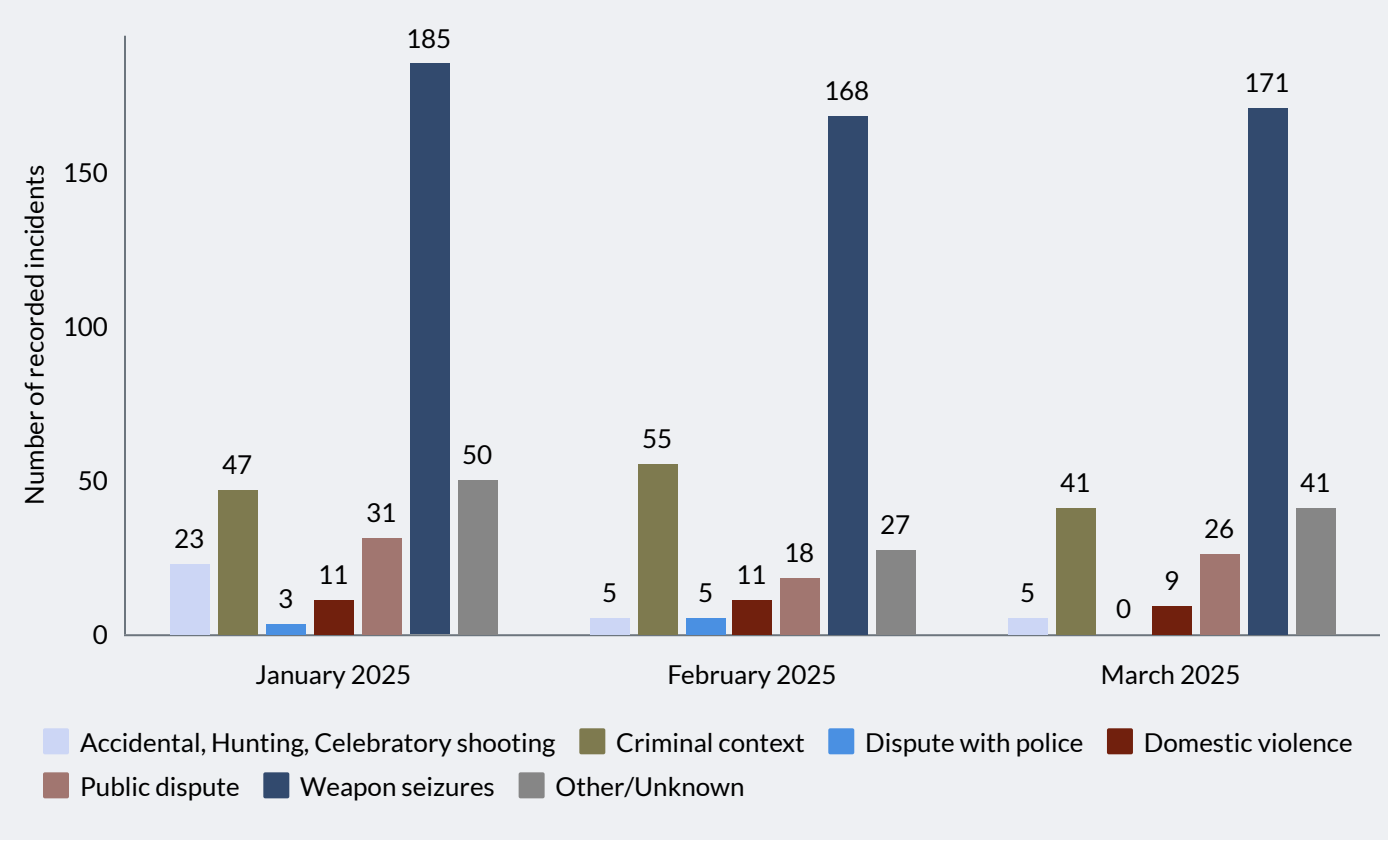
- In the first quarter of 2025, **932 firearm incidents** were reported, nearly matching the 923 incidents documented in the previous quarter.
- This quarter represented a **9% increase** compared to the first quarter in 2024, which had 857 incidents.
- The **highest number of incidents** was reported in **January**, totalling **350 cases**, marking a **12% rise** compared to the same month in 2024.



Kosovo (332) maintained the **highest and stable** number of incidents, reporting a nearly identical number of incidents in both quarters. **Montenegro** had the **second-highest** number of incidents and the **largest increase**, with incidents nearly **doubling** from 75 to 142. **Albania** recorded a 27% **rise** - from 92 to 117 cases**. Serbia** also experienced a moderate increase of around 10% (from 81 to 90). **North Macedonia** saw the **sharpest decline of 41%**, with incidents dropping from 174 to 102. **Bosnia and Herzegovina** also saw a **decrease of 17%**, from 138 to 115 incidents. **Moldova** had the **lowest number of incidents**, despite documenting **a slight rise**.

TYPES OF INCIDENTS

The monthly distribution of firearm incidents in the first quarter of 2025 reveals fluctuations across different types of incidents:

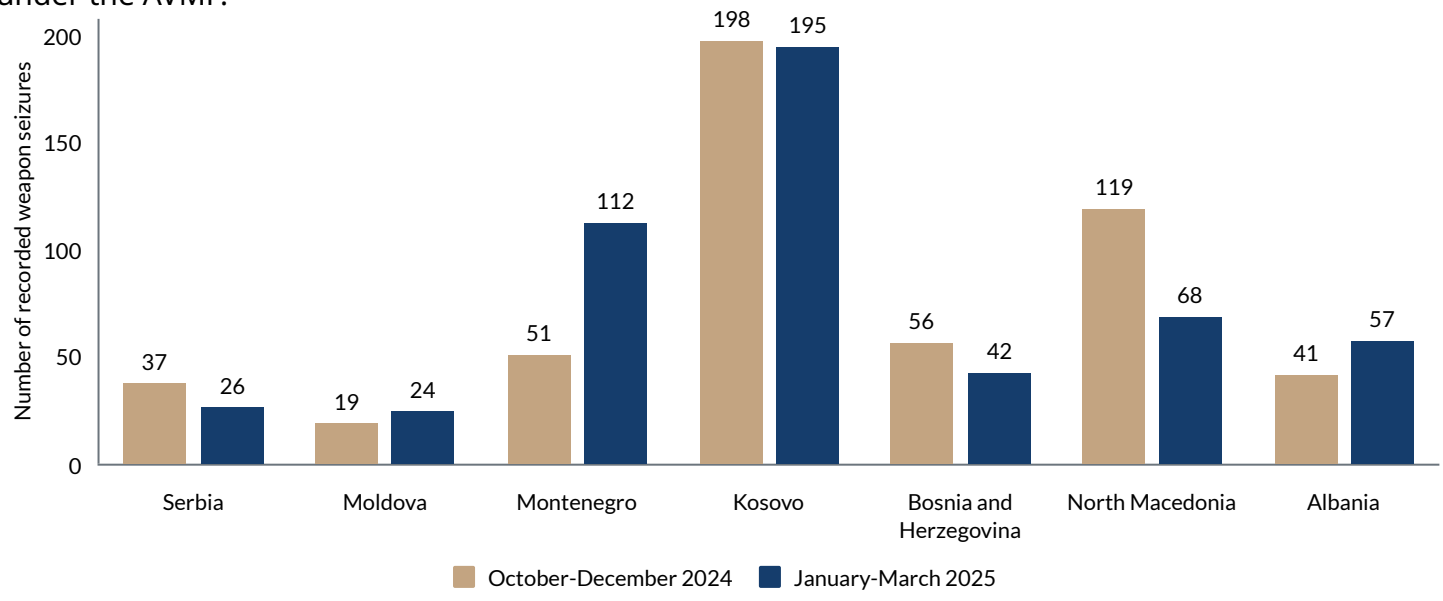


- **Weapon seizures** remained the most reported incident type across all three months, consistently accounting for the highest number of cases, peaking in **January** (185).
- **Incidents in the criminal context** were the second most commonly reported type of incidents, peaking in **February (55)**.
- **Public disputes** fluctuated moderately, with the highest number reported in **January (31)**.
- **Domestic violence incidents** remained relatively stable, with **11 cases** in both January and February and a slight decrease in March.
- **Accidental, hunting, and celebratory shootings** were mainly concentrated in **January (23)**, likely linked to celebratory shooting in the holiday season, before sharply dropping in both February and March.
- **Disputes with police** were sporadic, with **3 cases in January**, **5 in February**, and no incidents reported in March.
- Incidents falling under the **Other/unknown category** decreased from **50 cases in January** to **27 in February**, then slightly rose to **41 in March**.

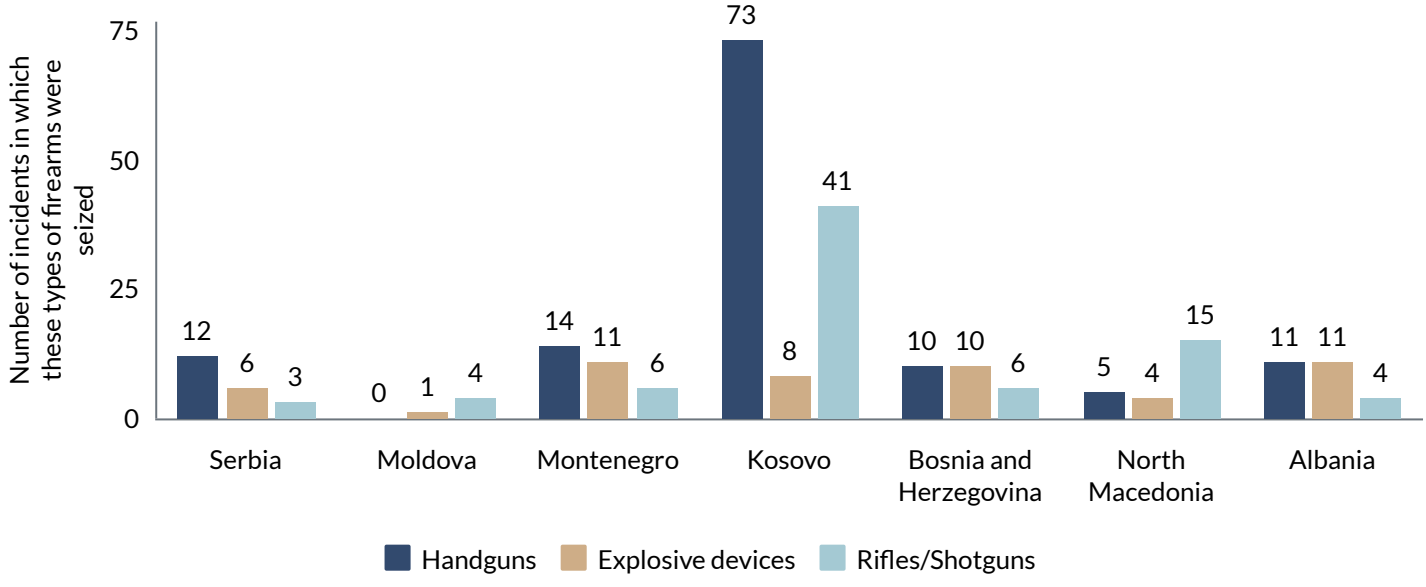
MOST REPORTED INCIDENTS

Weapon seizures

Weapon seizures stayed the **predominant type** of incident in this quarter, with **524 reported cases,** representing **56% of all incidents** and showing a marginal **increase** over the prior quarter's total of 521 cases. This also marks the **largest recorded number of weapon seizures** in a single quarter under the AVMP.



Kosovo, with 195 cases, maintained the highest number of seizures, representing **over one-third** of seizures in the region. In **Montenegro,** the reported weapon seizures more than **doubled** (from 51 to 112) due to a strong law enforcement response following a mass shooting in January. A **39% rise** was seen in **Albania (24)**, followed by **Moldova (24)** where a **26% increase** was reported. In contrast, **North Macedonia** experienced a significant **decline of 43%. Bosnia and Herzegovina** and **Serbia** also recorded **decreases** of 25% and 30%, respectively.



Three most seized types of weapons in January-March 2025

Handguns remained the most frequently seized type of weapon in both quarters, with a **24% increase** from the previous quarter. Significant rises were recorded in **Albania**, **Montenegro,** and **North Macedonia**, while **Kosovo** continued to report the highest number of seizures overall. In contrast, **Serbia** saw a slight **decline** in handgun seizures.

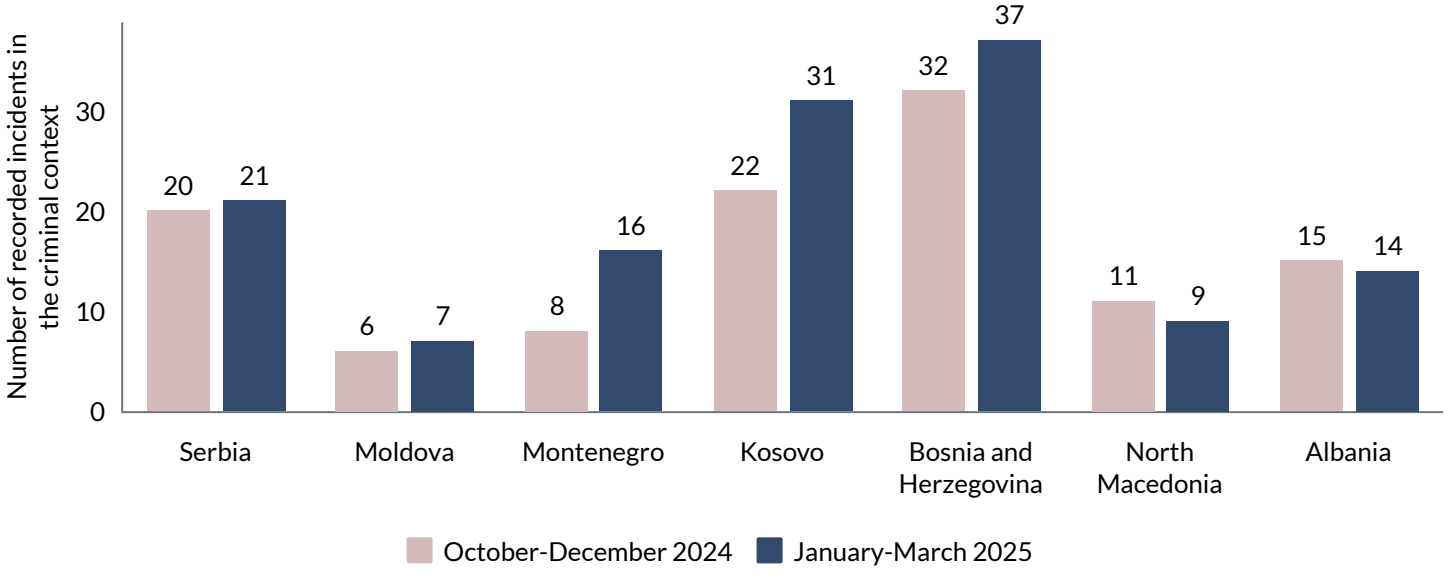
The seizures of **rifles/shotguns** remained **stable at 80 cases** in both quarters. While **Kosovo** reported a decrease, increases were observed in **Albania, Montenegro**, and **North Macedonia**.

Seizures of explosive devices dropped by **40%**, from **114** in the previous quarter to **68** in this quarter. This decrease was largely driven by a **sharp reduction** in **North Macedonia, mainly due to a drop in seizures of pyrotechnic devices**.

Criminal context

During the first quarter of 2025**,** a total of **143 firearm incidents** were recorded in the **criminal context**, reflecting a **25% increase** compared to the previous quarter. This rise was primarily driven by an **increase** in **armed robberie**s**, firearm thefts,** and **incidents linked to organized crime**.

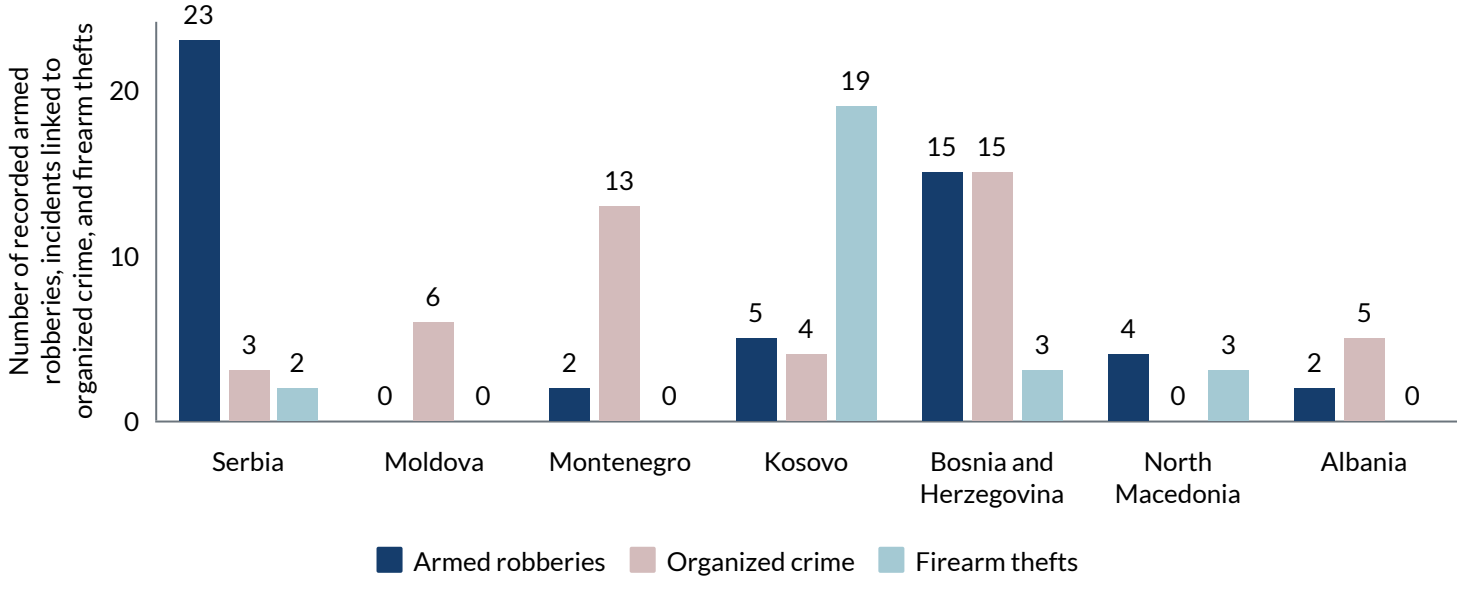
In the reporting quarter, **Bosnia and Herzegovina** continued to record the **highest number** of firearm incidents in the criminal context (37), marking a slight **increase** from the previous quarter. **Kosovo (31)** and **Serbia (29)** also saw rises, continuing the upward trend from the last quarter of 2024. **Montenegro doubled** its numbers from 8 to 16 incidents, while **Moldova** recorded a modest **increase** (from 6 to 7). In contrast, **Albania (14)** and **North Macedonia (9)** experienced **slight declines** compared to the previous quarter.



A total of **51 armed robberies** were reported in this quarter, marking a **38% increase** from the previous quarter. **Serbia** reported the **highest number of armed robberies (23), more than double** that of the last quarter. **Bosnia and Herzegovina** followed with 15 cases, a 67% rise. **Slight increases** were seen in **Albania, Kosovo, and Montenegro**. **North Macedonia**, on the other hand, saw a decline, from 11 to 4 cases, while **Moldova** again **had no reported cases**.

Firearm incidents linked to **organized crime** totalled **46 cases** in the first quarter of 2025, a 7% increase from the previous quarter, with 43 cases. **Bosnia and Herzegovina maintained** the **highest number,** with **15 cases** in both quarters. **Montenegro** saw a rise, from 4 to 13 incidents. **Moldova and Kosovo** also recorded a **modest increase**. **Albania and Serbia** experienced **declines** of 50% and 63%, respectively, while **North Macedonia had no reported cases** in either quarter.

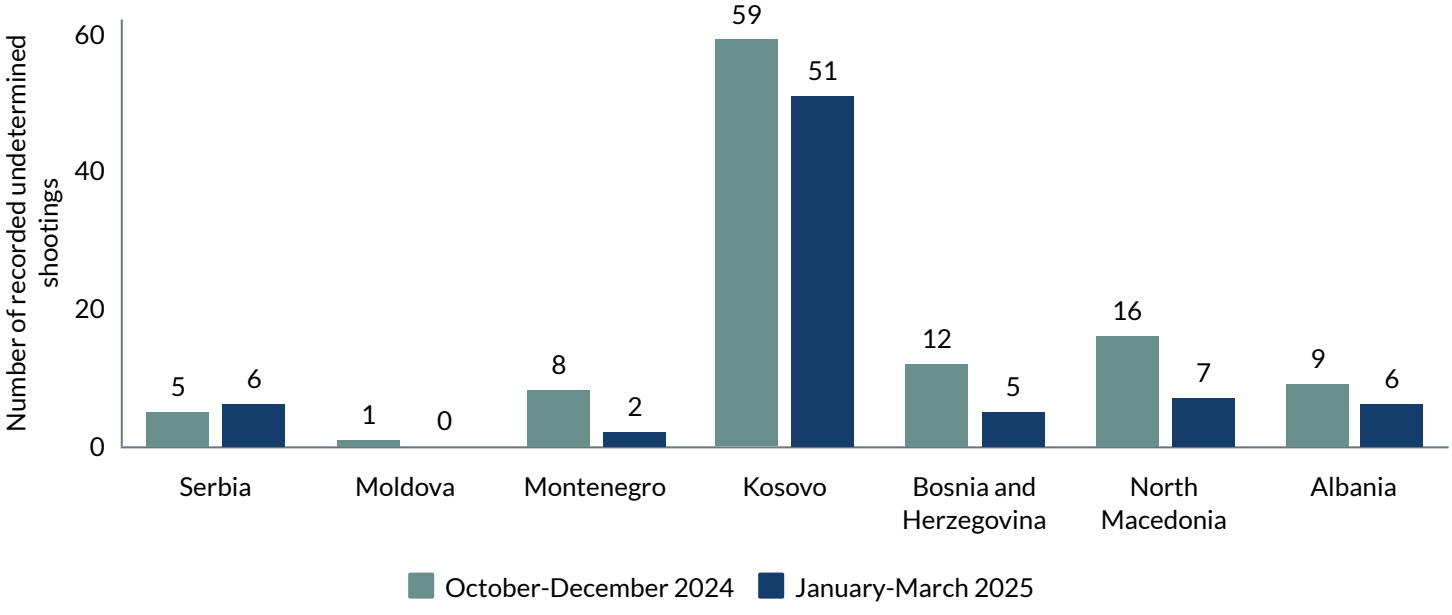
A total of **27 firearm thefts** were documented in the region this quarter, a **23% rise** from 22 cases in the previous quarter. Most firearm thefts were reported in **Kosovo (19).**



Undetermined shootings

A total of **77 undetermined shootings**[3] were reported in the first quarter of 2025, reflecting a **30% decrease** compared to 110 cases in the previous quarter, thus continuing a downward trend observed in the last quarter of 2024. The holiday season likely contributed to the peak in undetermined shootings in January when 40% of these incidents were documented.

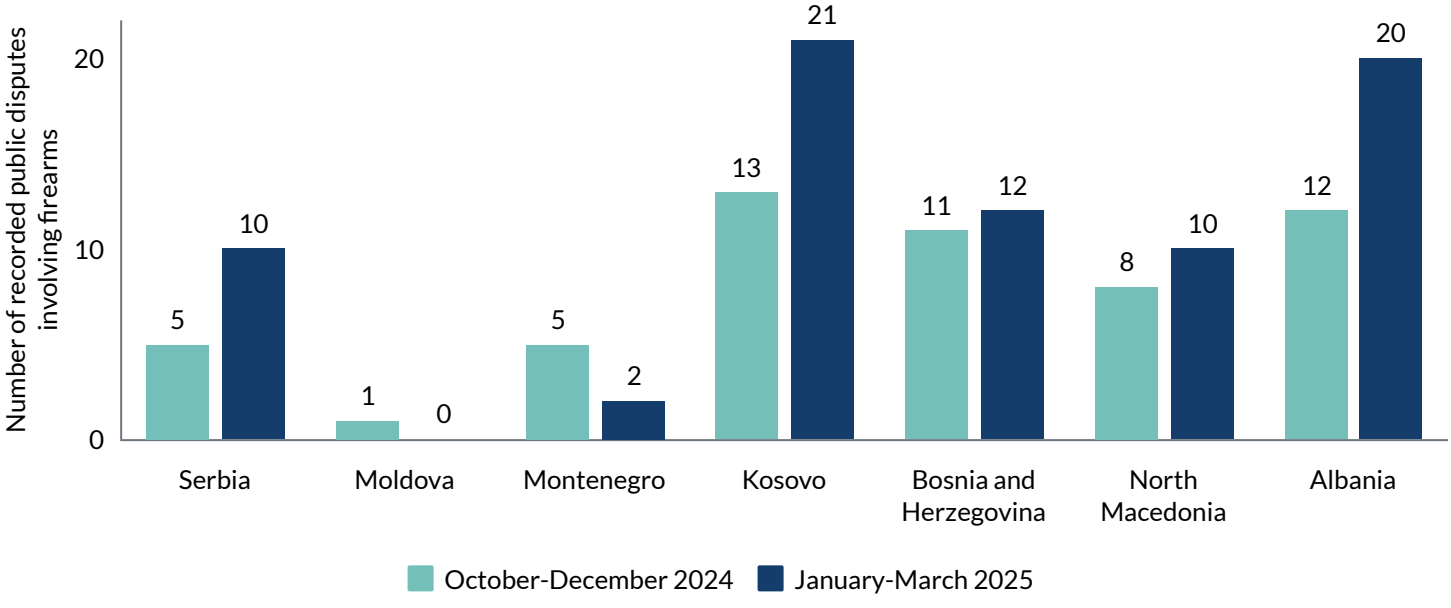
Kosovo continued to report the highest number of such incidents (51), despite a 14% decline from the previous quarter. **Bosnia and Herzegovina** saw a sharp drop from 12 to 5 cases, while **North Macedonia** also halved its numbers from 16 to 7. **Montenegro** reported a significant decrease, falling from 8 to 2 cases. **Albania (6)** and **Serbia (6)** remained relatively stable, with Serbia recording a slight increase. **Moldova** reported no undetermined shootings in this quarter.



Public disputes

A total of **75 incidents related to public disputes** were recorded in the first quarter of 2025, marking a **36% increase** from the 55 incidents reported in the last quarter of 2024.

The sharpest rises were observed in **Kosovo**, where cases increased from 13 to 21, and in **Albania**, which saw an increase from 12 to 20. **Serbia** also **doubled** its reported cases, rising from 5 to 10. While Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, and Montenegro recorded minor increases, Moldova reported no such incidents in this quarter.

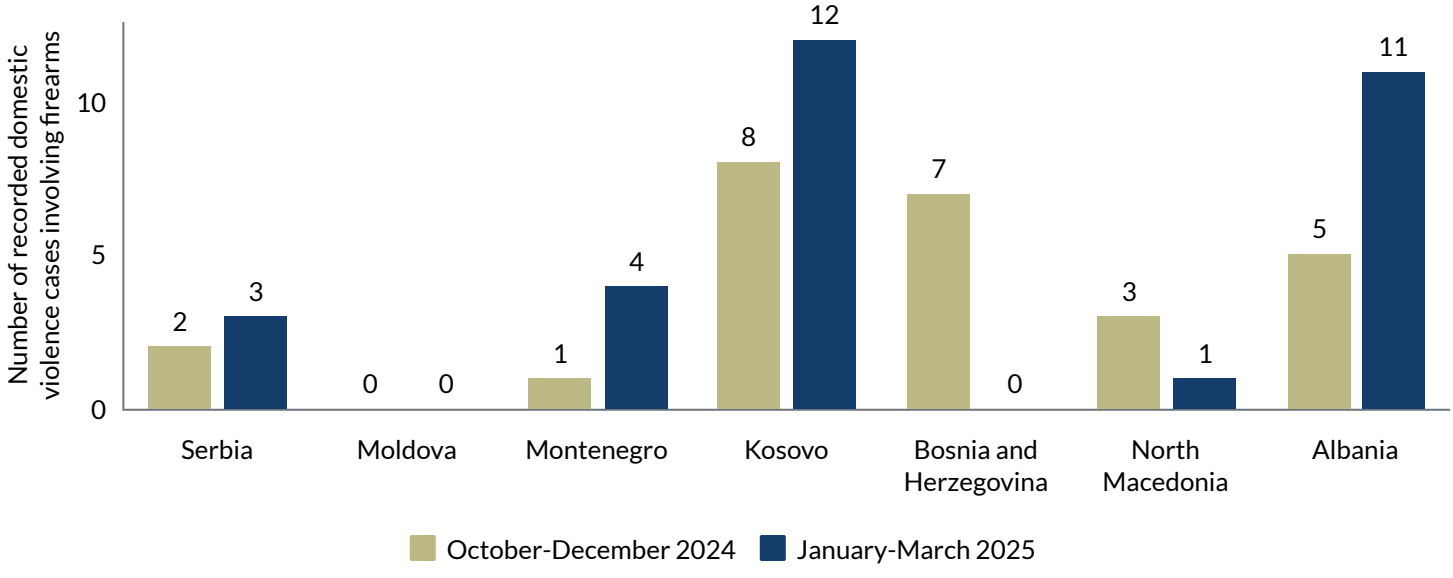


[3] *Undetermined shooting refers to any firearm discharge under unknown circumstances and motives, regardless of whether or not such incident caused a fatality, injury, or damage.*

Domestic violence

A total of **31 firearm-related domestic violence incidents** were reported in the first quarter of 2025, reflecting a slight increase from **26 cases** in the previous quarter. The rises were seen in **Albania**, which more than doubled its cases from 5 to 11, and in **Kosovo**, where incidents rose from 8 to 12. **Montenegro** also saw an increase, from 1 to 4 cases. A modest increase was also seen in **Serbia**, rising from 2 to 3 cases. In contrast, **Bosnia and Herzegovina** reported **no incidents** in the first quarter of 2025, after recording 7 in the previous quarter. **North Macedonia** recorded a slight decrease, while **Moldova** reported no cases in either quarter.

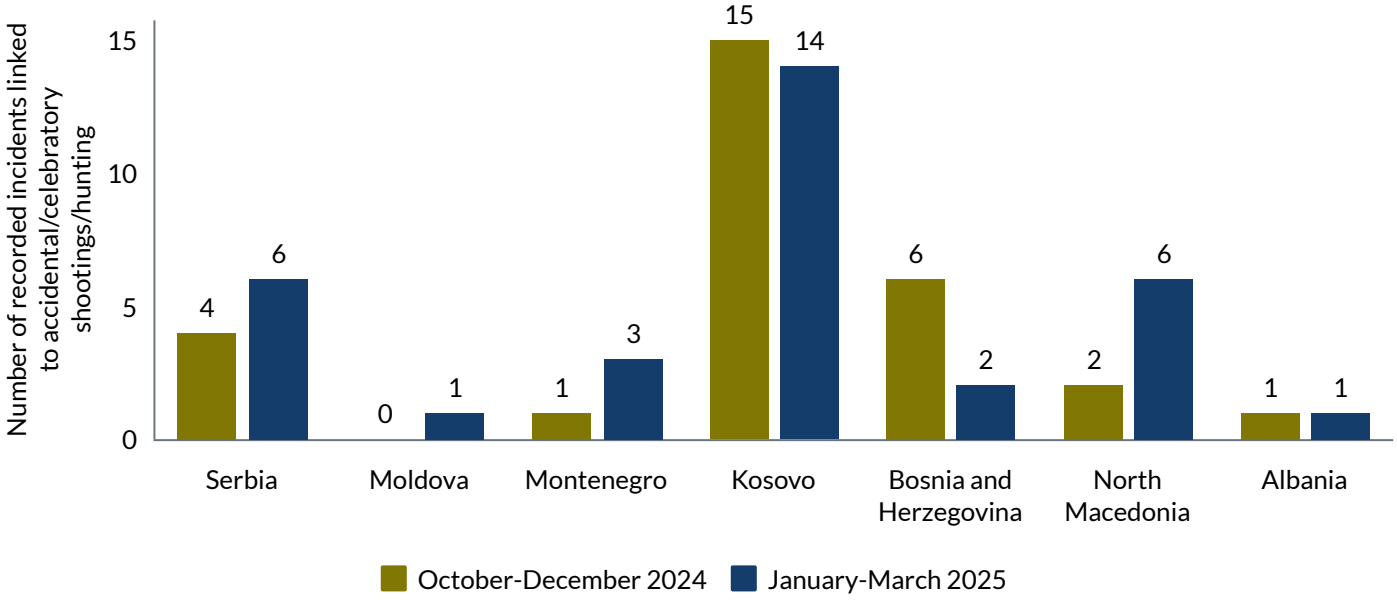
Of the 31 firearm-related domestic violence incidents reported in this quarter, **18** were cases of **intimate partner violence**, slightly down from 19 in the previous quarter. In contrast, **violence by other family members increased**, from 7 cases in the fourth quarter of 2024 to **13** in the first quarter of 2025.



Accidental/Celebratory shootings/ Hunting

A total of **33 incidents** were recorded under the category of **Accidental, Celebratory Shootings, Hunting**, marking a slight increase from **29 cases** in the previous quarter.

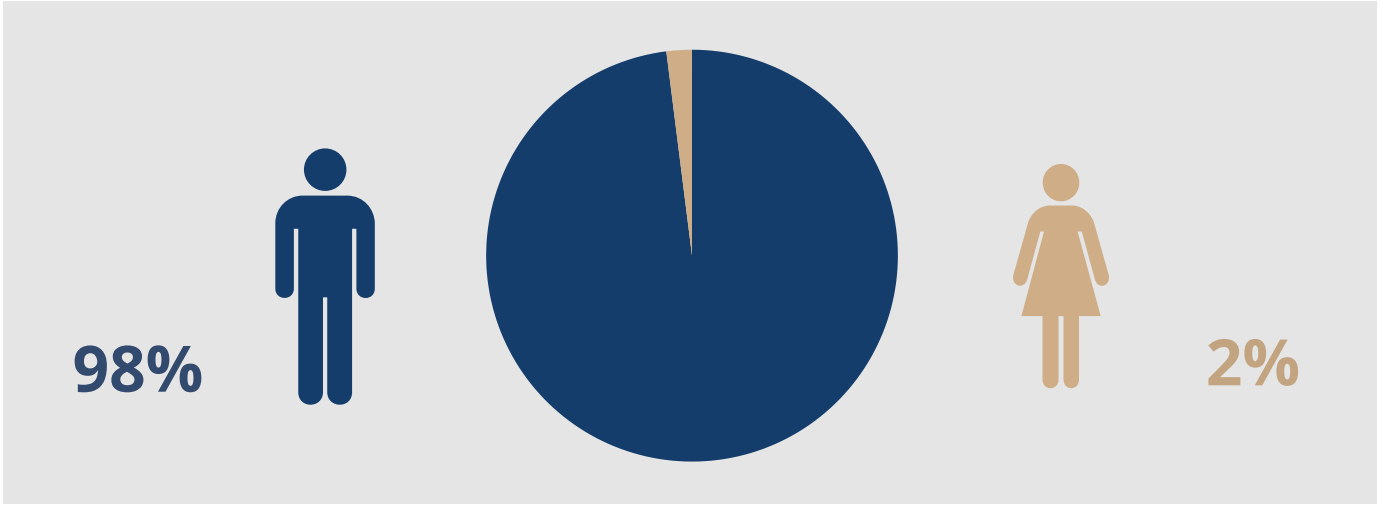
Of these, **18 incidents** were linked to **celebratory shootings**, while **15 involved accidental discharges, including two during hunting activities.** The majority of these incidents were reported in Kosovo (14), followed by North Macedonia and Serbia, with 6 such cases each.



PERPETRATORS

A total of **1,159 perpetrators**[4] were recorded in firearm incidents during the reporting period. The majority were **men (916), while 15 were women**, and sex was not indicated for 228 individuals.

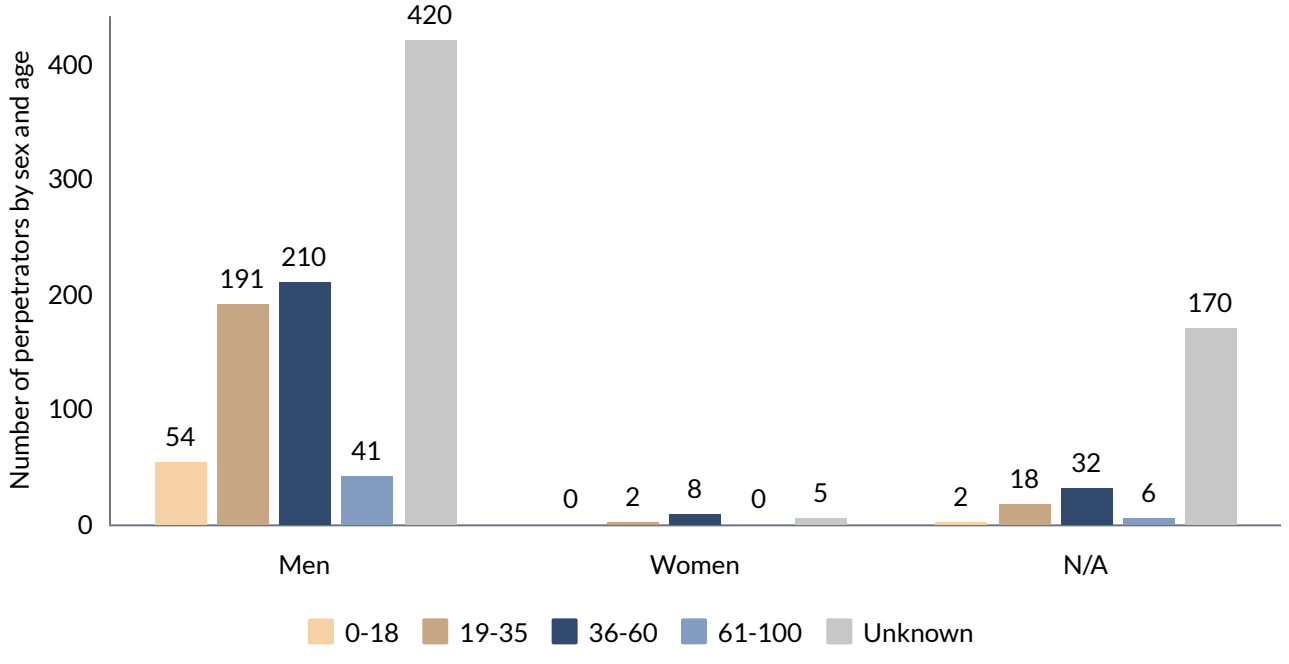
In cases when the sex was known, men accounted for 98% and women for 2% of perpetrators.



Men **were identified as perpetrators,** mostly in incidents related to **weapon seizures (55%)**, **criminal context (18%), public disputes (10%)** and **undetermined shootings (6%).**

Women were identified as perpetrators, mainly in incidents related to **weapon seizures (47%).**

The most common age group among perpetrators was **36–60 years** (**250**), followed by **19–35 years** (**211**) and **0–18 years** (**56**). There were also **47 perpetrators** aged **61 and over**. However, for **595 perpetrators**, the age remained unknown, while for 170 neither age nor sex was reported.

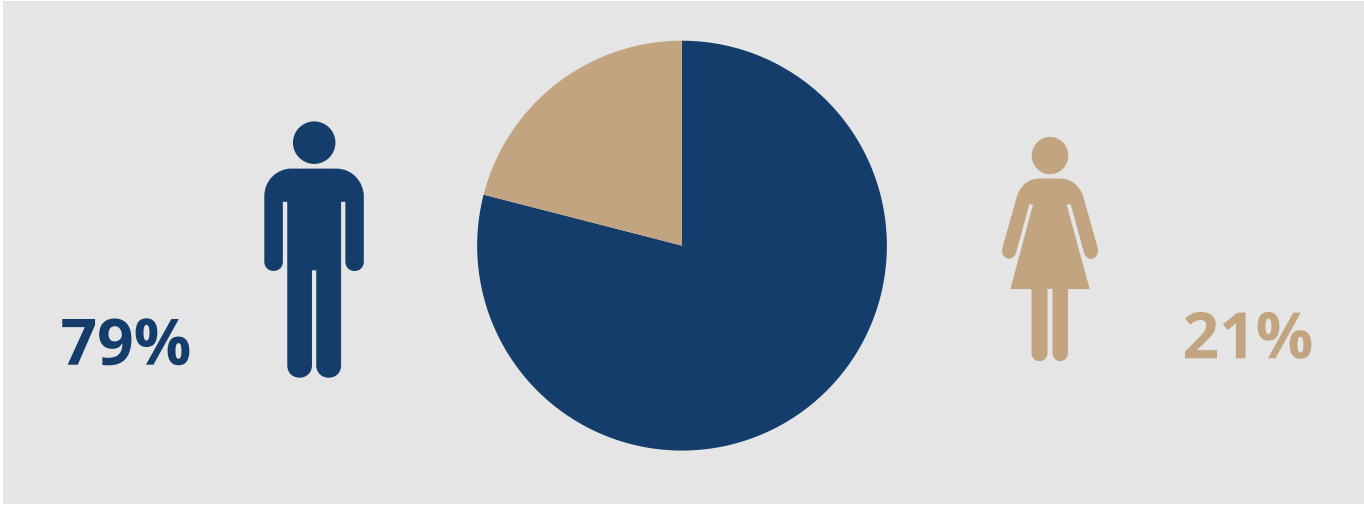


4 *Perpetrator refers to any individual who has used a firearm/ammunition/explosive to commit any of the types of incidents covered by the AVMP.*

VICTIMS

A total of **333 victims**[5] were recorded in firearm-related incidents. This marks an 11% increase compared to 298 in the previous quarter. **Men accounted for the majority** of victims (**240 men**), while **63 were women,** and for **30 individuals,** the information on sex was not reported.

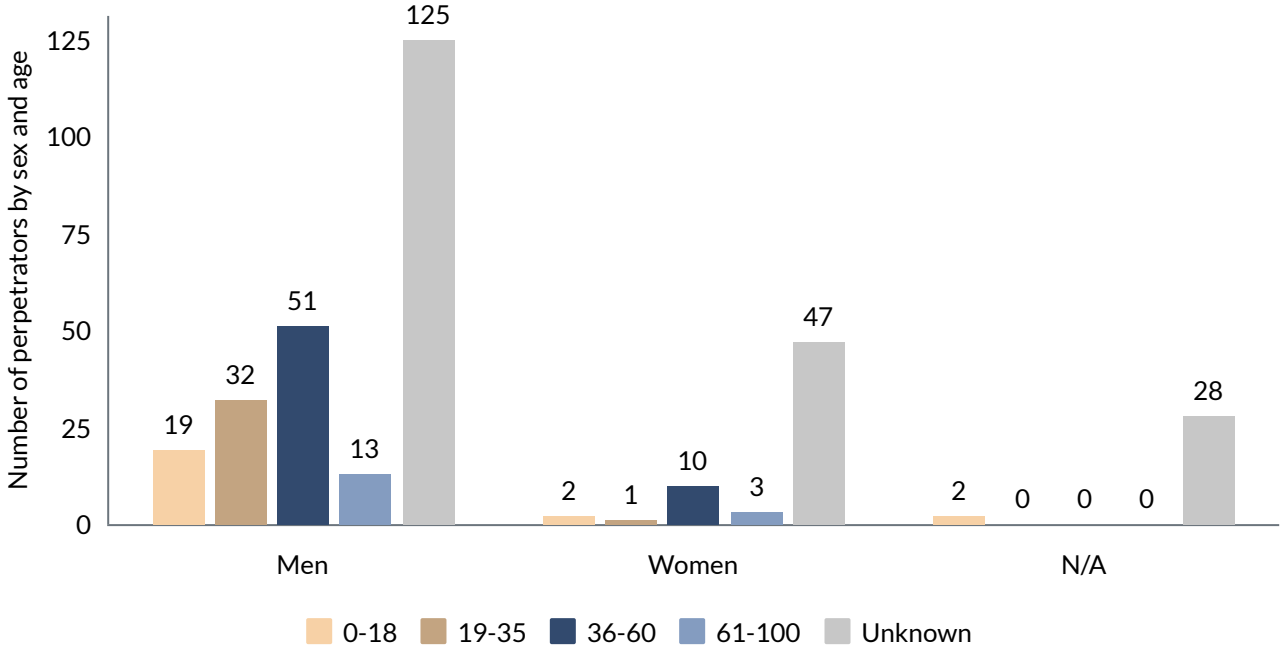
In cases when the sex was known, men accounted for 79% and women for 21% of victims.



Men **were identified as victims,** mostly in incidents related to **public disputes (34%)**, **criminal context (23%), public disputes (10%)** and **undetermined shootings (17%).**

Women were identified as victims, mainly in incidents related to **the criminal context (44%), specifically in armed robberies, and domestic violence (34%).**

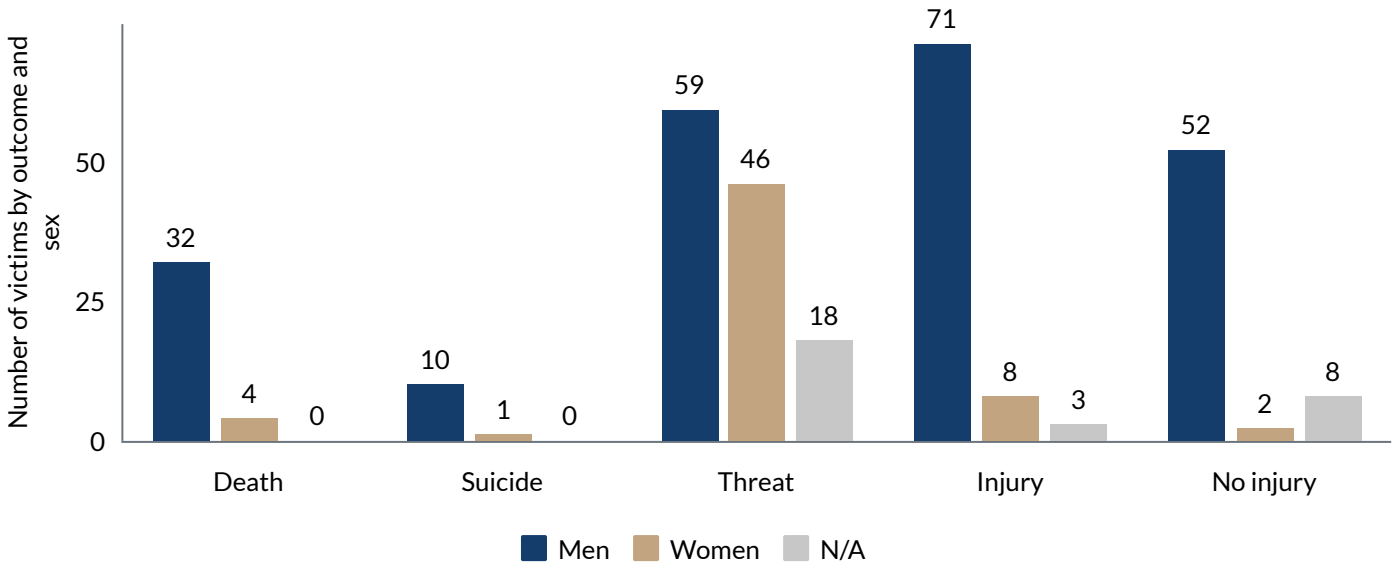
When the age was known, the **36–60 age group** was the most affected among victims, with **61 victims, followed by 19–35-year-olds** (**33 victims**) and **those aged 0–18** (**23 victims). There were 16 victims aged 61 and over**, while the **age remained unknown in 200 victims**.



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.

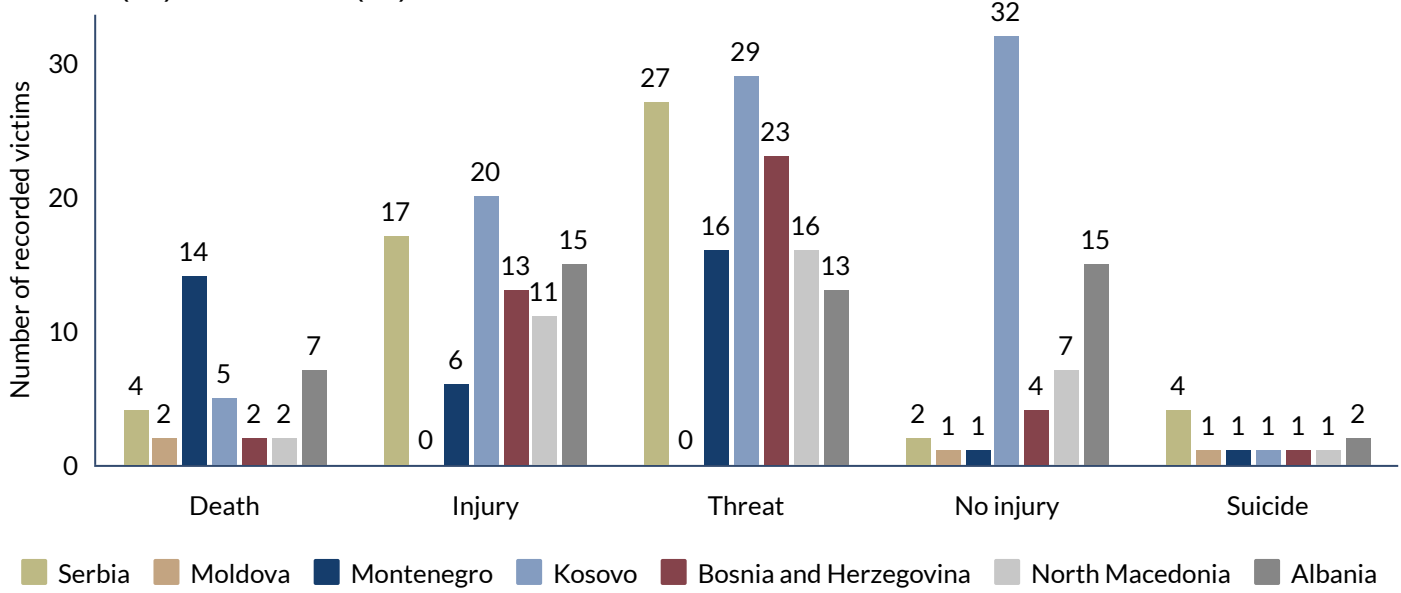
Outcomes for victims

The outcomes of firearm incidents in the first quarter of 2025 reflect different levels of impact of armed violence.



Most reported outcomes of firearm incidents by type from January to March 2025

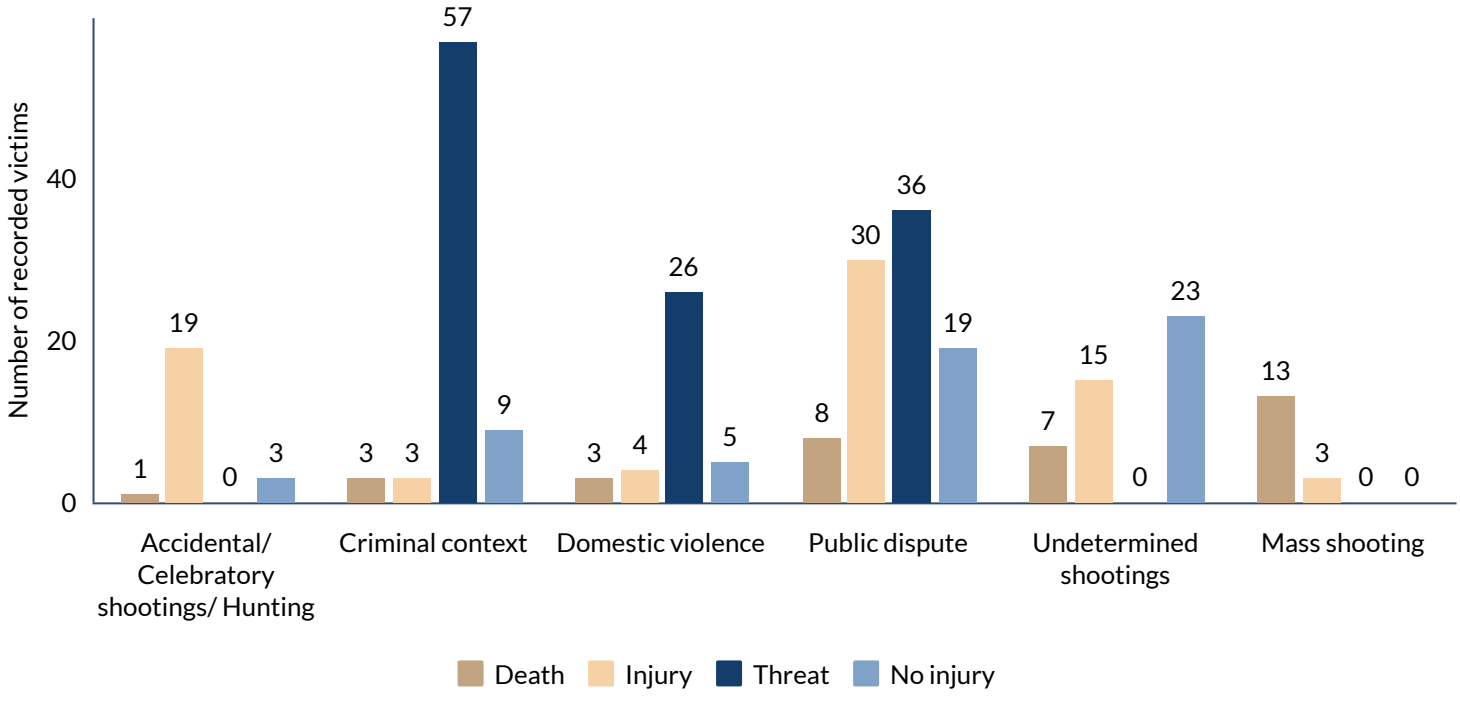
- Compared to the previous quarter, the number of firearm-related **deaths** increased slightly from **34 to 36**, with **men accounting for the majority** in both quarters. Deaths among **women decreased** from 7 to 4. The highest number of deaths was reported in Montenegro (14), primarily due to a mass shooting, followed by Albania (7).
- The number of reported firearm-related **suicides** remained relatively stable, with a minor rise from 10 to 11 cases, most of which involved men as victims. A total of 4 suicides were reported in Serbia, while other jurisdictions reported 2 or fewer cases.
- The number of **injured victims** saw a slight **decline**, from **89 to 82**. However, injuries among **men increased** from 61 to 71, while those among **women decreased** from 13 to 8. Kosovo (20), Serbia (17), and Albania (15) reported the highest number of injured victims.
- **Threats with firearms** were the **most reported outcome**, with **124 threatened victims**, affecting 59 men and 50 women. The number of threatened victims **rose by 32%**. Threatened victims were mainly reported in Kosovo (29), Serbia (27), and Bosnia and Herzegovina (23).
- In cases where a firearm was discharged, **62 victims** were unharmed, and reported **no-injury outcomes**. The number of these victims increased from **56 to 62**. Most victims were reported in Kosovo (32) and Albania (15).



Most reported outcomes of firearm incidents by jurisdiction from January to March 2025

Outcomes for victims and context

The below overview offers an insight into the outcomes for victims resulting from the use of firearms in different contexts covered by the AVMP.



Most reported outcomes of firearm incidents by type from January to March 2025

Firearm-related deaths

- The highest number of firearm-related deaths occurred in the context of **mass shootings**, with **13 victims**, including **10 men and 3 women**.
- **Public disputes** involving firearms were the second most fatal context, resulting in **8 victims, of whom 7 were men** and **1 was a woman**.
- Fatalities linked to **undetermined shootings** and **domestic violence** followed, with **7 and 3 deaths,** respectively, all men. The AVMP data collected since 2018 indicates that this is the **first quarter in which no women were reported killed in domestic violence incidents**.
- Incidents in the **criminal context resulted in 3 fatalities**, involving only men.

Firearm-related injuries

- **The highest number of injured victims occurred during public disputes** (30), followed by **accidental/celebratory shootings/hunting (19) and undetermined shootings (15).** Almost half of the injuries were caused by the **celebratory use of pyrotechnic devices**, mainly affecting minor victims.
- The use of firearms in **domestic violence** led to 2 men and 2 women being **injured**, while **3 men were** injured in the **criminal context**.
- **One man and 2 women** were **injured** in the **mass shooting**.

Firearm-related threats

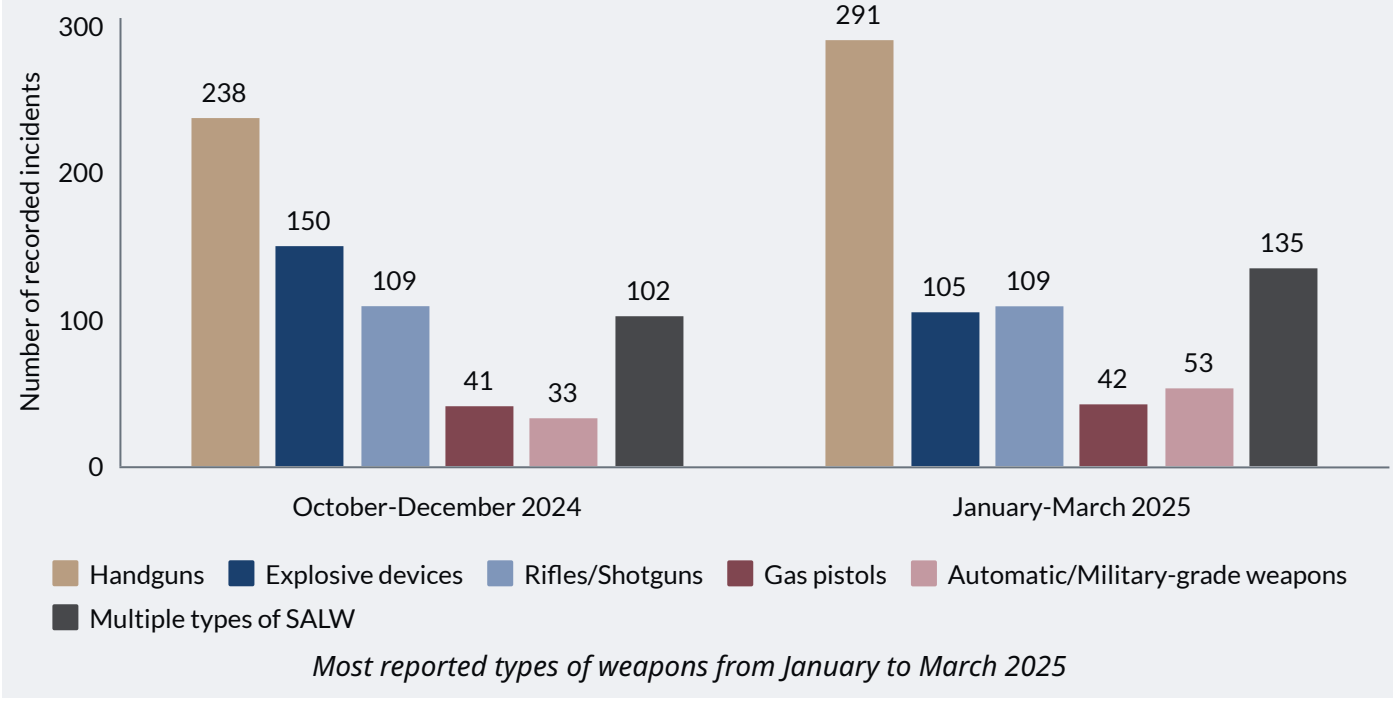
- **Threats with firearms** were most frequently reported in incidents in the **criminal context**, accounting for **57 threatened victims,** followed by **public disputes (36) and domestic violence** (27). **Women** were particularly affected in the criminal context with 26 women threatened (mainly in armed robberies) and in domestic violence, with **18 victims**.
- **Undetermined shootings** accounted for the highest number of **no-injury outcomes, with 23 victims,** followed by **public disputes (19)** and **criminal context incidents (9)**. Majority of these victims were men.

TYPES OF WEAPONS

In **693** (74%) **incidents**, the firearms used were in **illegal possession**, while in **47** (5%) cases, they were in **legal possession**. In 192 (21%) incidents, the status of possession was not reported. During this quarter, in 14% of all reported cases, the type of firearm was either unknown or not reported.

Handguns remained the most frequently reported weapon type in both quarters, with a 22% increase in usage observed in the first quarter of 2025. During this period, handguns were seized in 155 cases. They were also linked to various contexts, including criminal context (55 cases), 33 public disputes, and 17 undetermined shootings, among others.

The use of **rifles/ shotguns** remained consistent across both quarters, with **109 cases reported** in each. In **73% of these cases**, the weapon type was **seized**.



Most reported types of weapons from January to March 2025

Explosive devices were the **third most reported** type of weapon, with 105 cases recorded, a **30% drop** compared to the previous quarter. The decline was mostly caused by a decrease in the seizures of **pyrotechnic devices**. Additionally, civilians reported **42 cases of accidental discoveries** of explosive devices, while **13 cases** involved their use in **undetermined explosions**.

The number of cases involving **automatic and military-grade weapons** rose sharply by **60%**, increasing from **33 cases in the previous quarter to 53** in the first quarter of 2025. This shift marks a reversal of the **downward trend observed throughout 2024**. In the majority of cases (**58%**), these weapons were **reported as seized**.

The number of incidents involving **gas pistols** remained stable, with **42 cases reported** in the first quarter of 2025, nearly identical to the **41 cases** recorded in the previous quarter. In **60% of these incidents**, gas pistols were **reported as seized**.

Incidents involving **multiple types of SALW** increased by **32%**, rising from **102 to 135 cases** between the two quarters. These cases were **predominantly linked to weapon seizures**.

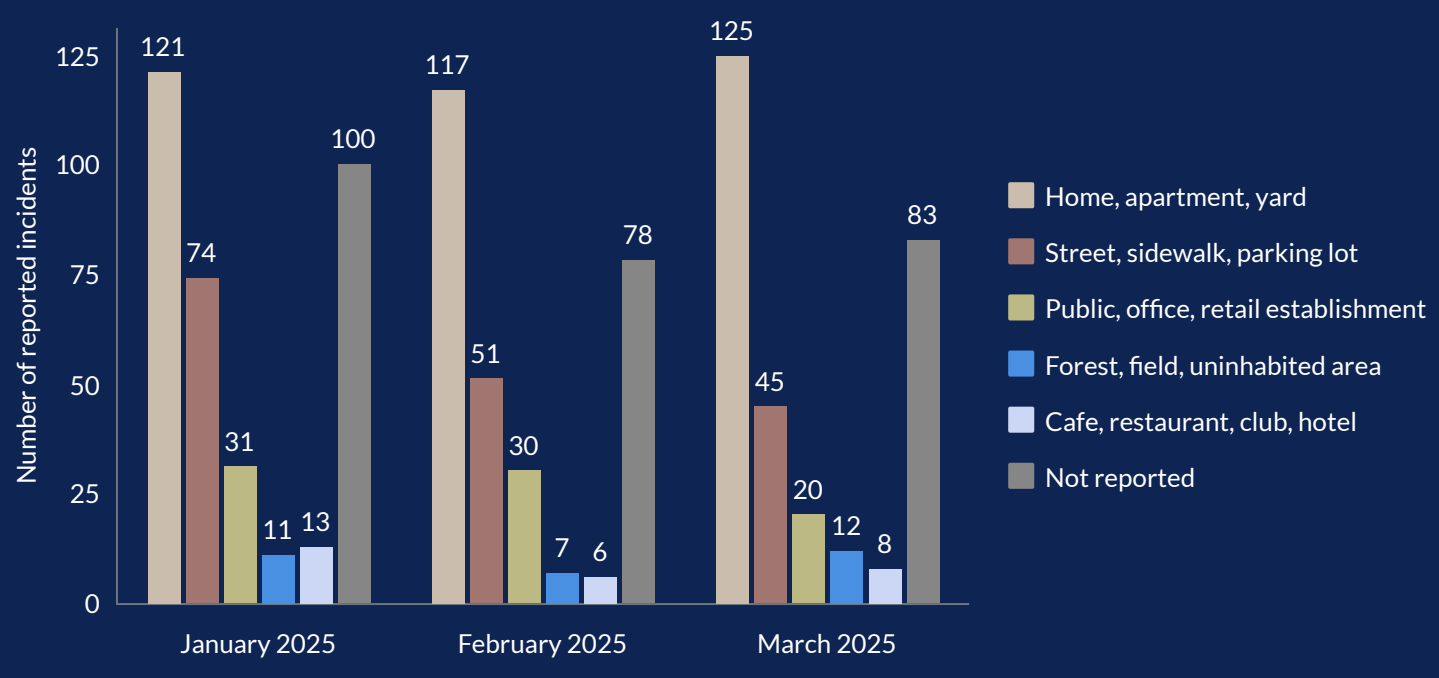
MACRO AND MICROLOCATION

From January to March 2025

704 (76%) incidents
occured in urban areas.

228 (24%) incidents
occured in rural areas.

Microlocation



When reported, the majority of incidents occurred

at homes / yards

363 incidents

in streets

170 incidents

in public buildings

81 incidents

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

Bulevar Zorana Đinđića 64
11000 Belgrade, Serbia

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

e-mail: seesac@undp.org

www.seesac.org

The Armed Violence Monitor was prepared by Violeta Gaši, SEESAC Programme Associate, and edited by Juliana Buzi, SEESAC Regional Cooperation Specialist.

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