



# **South East Europe Armed Violence Monitor**

## ***Quarterly Regional Report***

*January-March 2024*

## 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 **January-March<sup>1</sup>2024**.

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.

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\* 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.

<sup>1</sup> Data was retrieved on 14 April 2024. 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

January - March 2024

# 842

firearm incidents were reported

## 430

weapon seizures, accounting for 51% of all incidents reported in the first quarter of 2024.

## 54

cases involving firearms in legal possession, 35% more than in the last quarter.

## 23

people were killed with firearms, a 21% decline from the previous quarter.

## 588

incidents occurred at home, a 11% increase from the last quarter.

## 106

people were injured with a firearm.

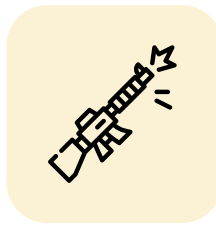
## 79

public disputes with firearms, a 5% rise from the previous quarter.

# TYPE OF INCIDENTS



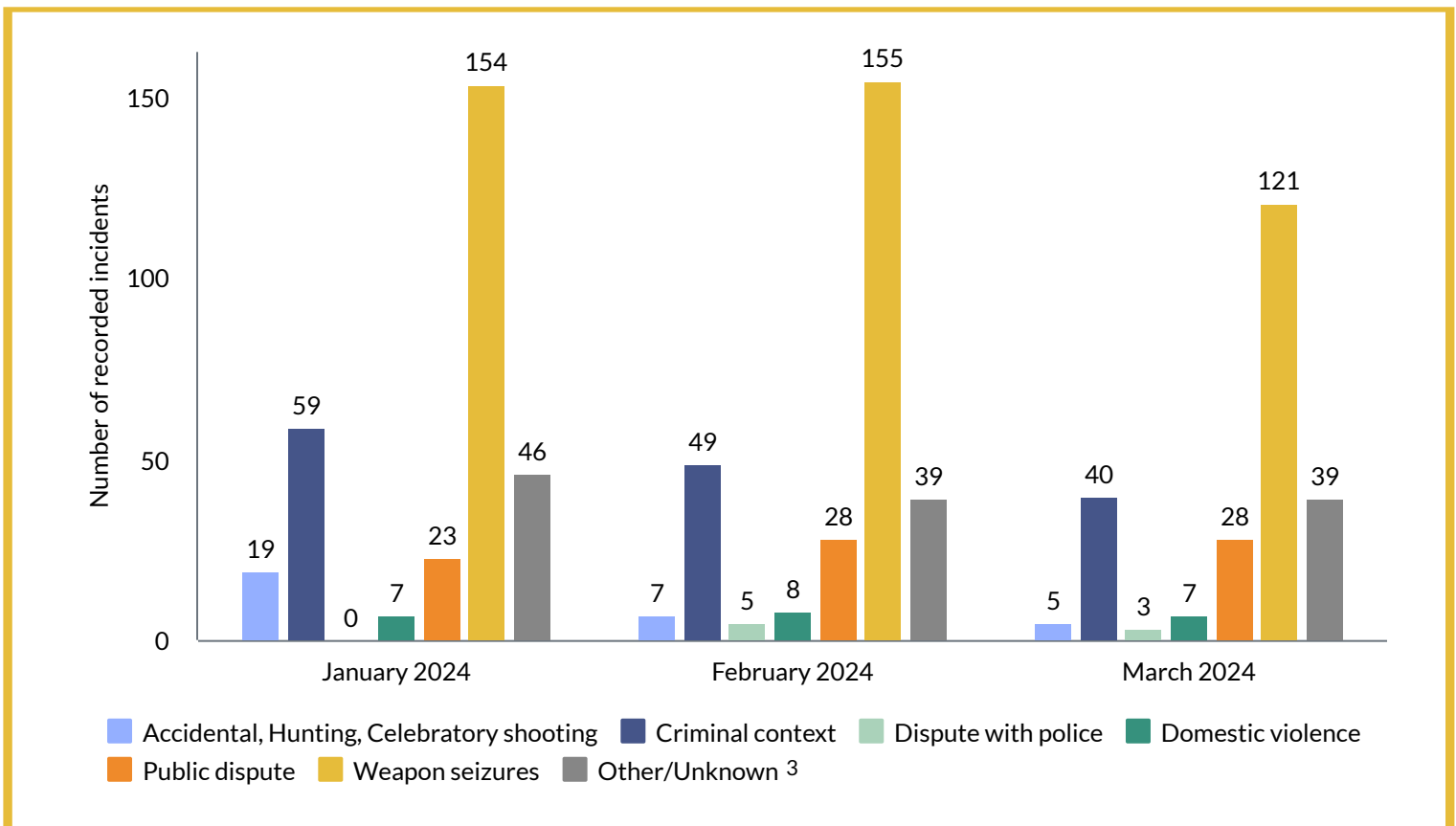
**20 people were injured** from the use of **pyrotechnic devices**, more than **double** than in the previous quarter.



**75 undetermined shootings<sup>2</sup>** were documented, **7% less** than in the previous quarter.



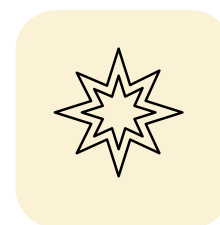
**23 firearm thefts** were reported, **nearly double** the number from the last quarter. Half of the stolen firearms were in **legal possession**.



**22 incidents in the domestic violence context**, 7 of which committed by **intimate partners**, all men.



**14 celebratory shootings** were reported, a **30% decline** from the previous quarter.



**23 undetermined explosions** were reported, a **44% rise** from the previous quarter.

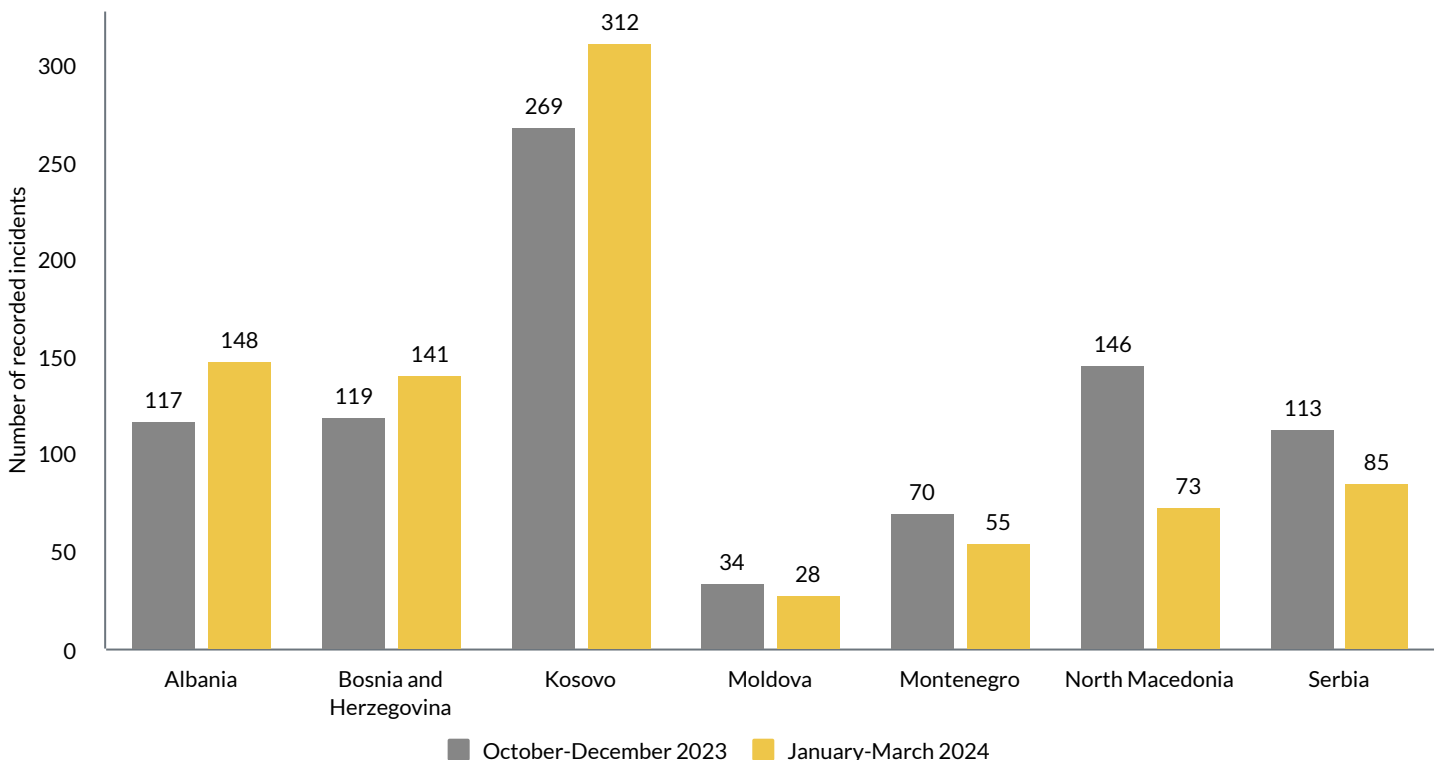
<sup>2</sup> Undetermined shooting refers to any firearm discharge under unknown circumstances and motives, regardless of whether or not such incident caused a fatality, injury, or damage.

<sup>3</sup> 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

There were **842 firearm incidents** reported this quarter, a **3% reduction** from the previous quarter.

Compared to the last quarter of 2023, a **decrease** was observed across **almost all categories of firearm incidents**, except for incidents in the criminal context and public disputes.



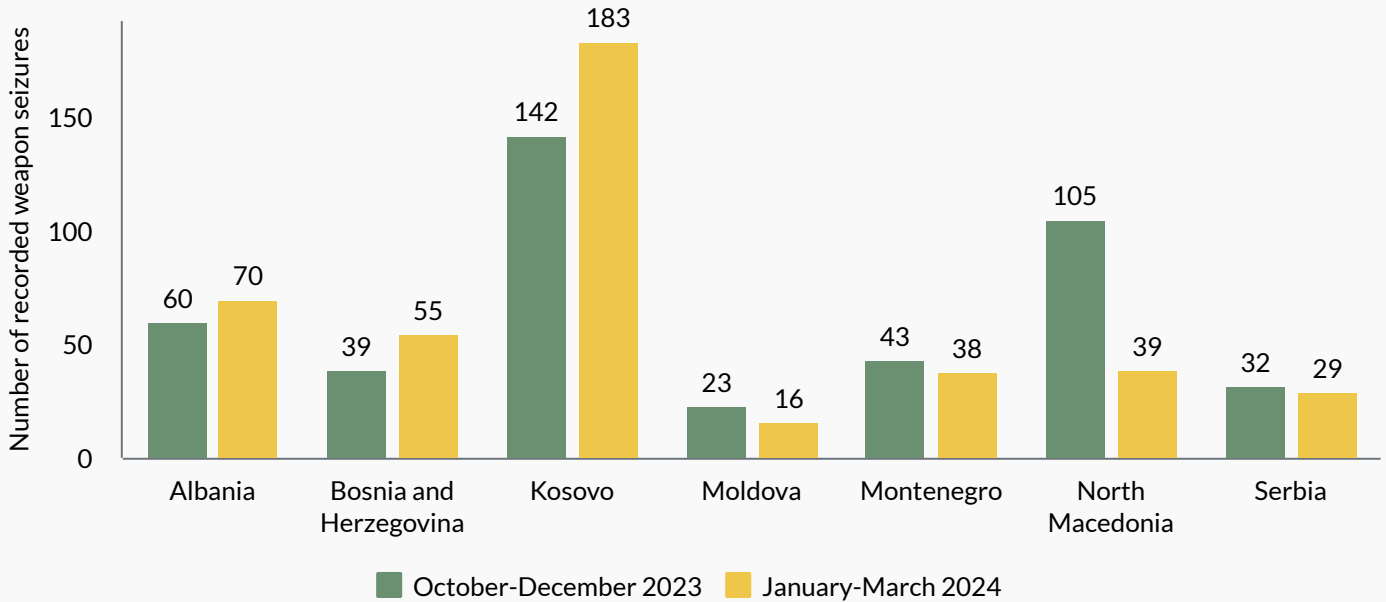
A **similar or identical number of incidents was reported under most categories in the first quarter of 2023 and 2024**, with two exceptions: weapon seizures were lower, and incidents under the "Other" category were higher in Q1 2023.

Firearm incidents showed a **declining trend** over the first quarter of 2024, with **January** recording the **highest number at 308**, followed by **291 in February**, and **243 in March**. Notably, March 2024 had the lowest number of incidents for that month since 2020.

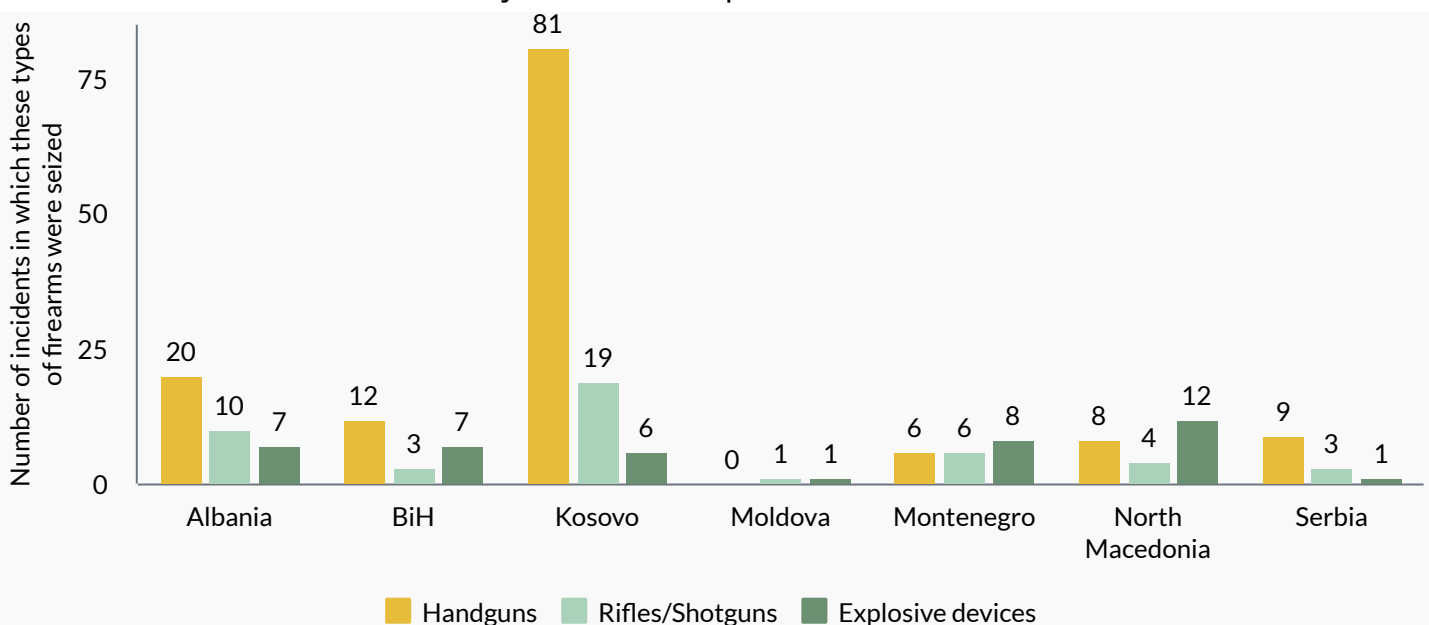
**Kosovo (312), Albania (148), and Bosnia and Herzegovina (141)** reported the **highest number of firearm incidents**, each experiencing an **increase compared** to the previous quarter. In contrast, all other jurisdictions saw a decline, with North Macedonia witnessing the most substantial decrease, dropping from 146 to 73 incidents.

# MOST REPORTED INCIDENTS - Weapon seizures

- Weapon seizures, with **430 reported cases**, were the most prevalent type of incident, comprising over half of all incidents in this quarter. This represents a **3% decrease** from the 444 cases in the previous quarter.
- **January (154) and February (155)** documented an almost identical number of weapon seizures, while March saw a decline to 121 cases.



- **Kosovo** maintained the **highest number of weapon seizures**, marking a **29% increase** from the previous quarter. Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina followed, with rises of 17% and 41%, respectively. All other jurisdictions documented a decline, with North Macedonia witnessing the most considerable decrease at 63%.
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- With **136 reported cases**, **handguns** remained the **most seized type of weapon**, representing a 19% increase from the last quarter of 2023. The highest number of handgun seizures was reported in **Kosovo (81 cases)**, showing a 60% increase from the previous quarter.
  - Seizures of **rifles/shotguns**, the **second most seized weapon**, saw a 35% decrease from the previous quarter, dropping from 71 to 46 cases. **Kosovo (19 cases)** and **Albania (10 cases)** accounted for the majority of these seizures.
  - **Explosive devices** were the **third most seized weapon**, showing a considerable **60% decrease** from the previous quarter. **North Macedonia** reported the **highest number** of such cases at 12, while all other jurisdictions reported fewer than 10 cases each.

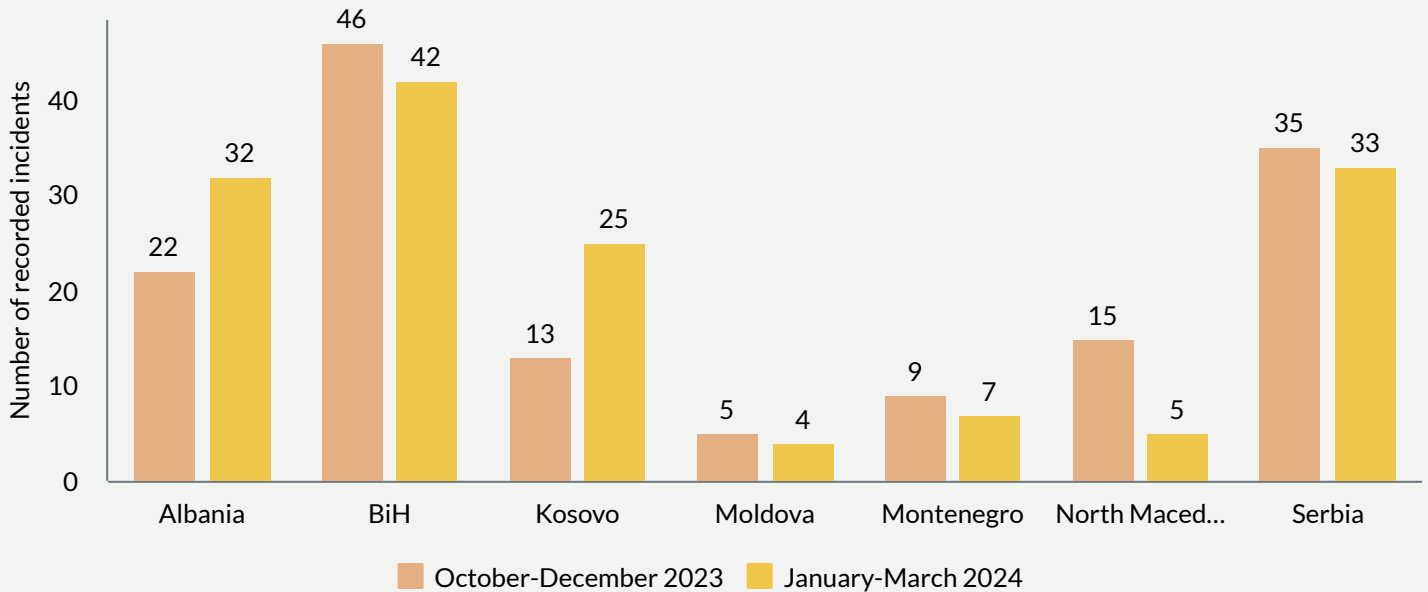


Three most seized types of weapons in January-March 2024

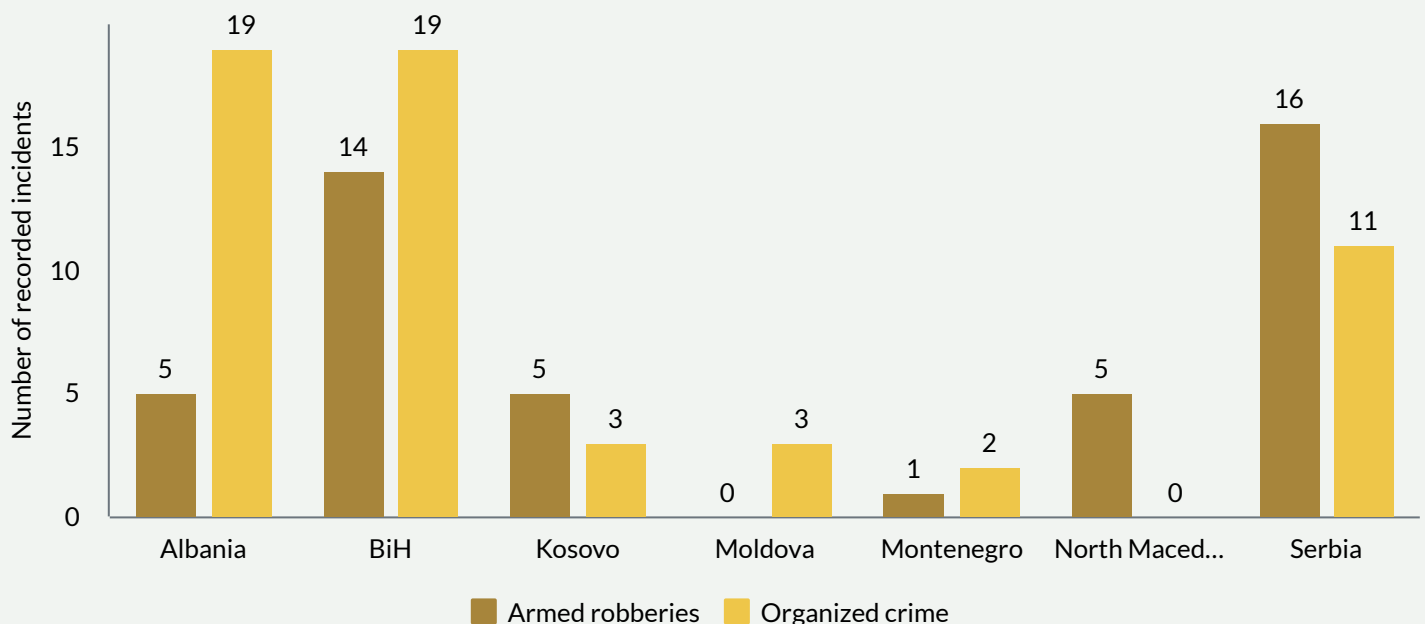
# MOST REPORTED INCIDENTS (CONT.)

## - Criminal context

- In the **January-March 2024** period, there were **148** reported firearm incidents in the **criminal context**. This reveals a **3% increase** from the **October-December 2023** period.
- In relation to the previous quarter, **Albania (45%)** and **Kosovo (92%)** reported an **increase**. Other jurisdictions experienced a **decline**, with the most significant drop reported by **North Macedonia (67%)**.



- A total of **57 firearm incidents** were linked to **organized crime**, indicating a modest decrease from the previous quarter's 61 cases. Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina each recorded 19 incidents, followed by Serbia with 11.
- Regarding **armed robberies**, there was a **decrease** during the January-March 2024 period, totalling **45 cases**, compared to 55 cases in the last quarter of 2023. This quarter, **Serbia** reported the **highest number of armed robberies**, at 16 cases, a shift from previous quarters where Bosnia and Herzegovina reported the highest numbers. Despite the change, Bosnia and Herzegovina still reported 14 armed robberies.



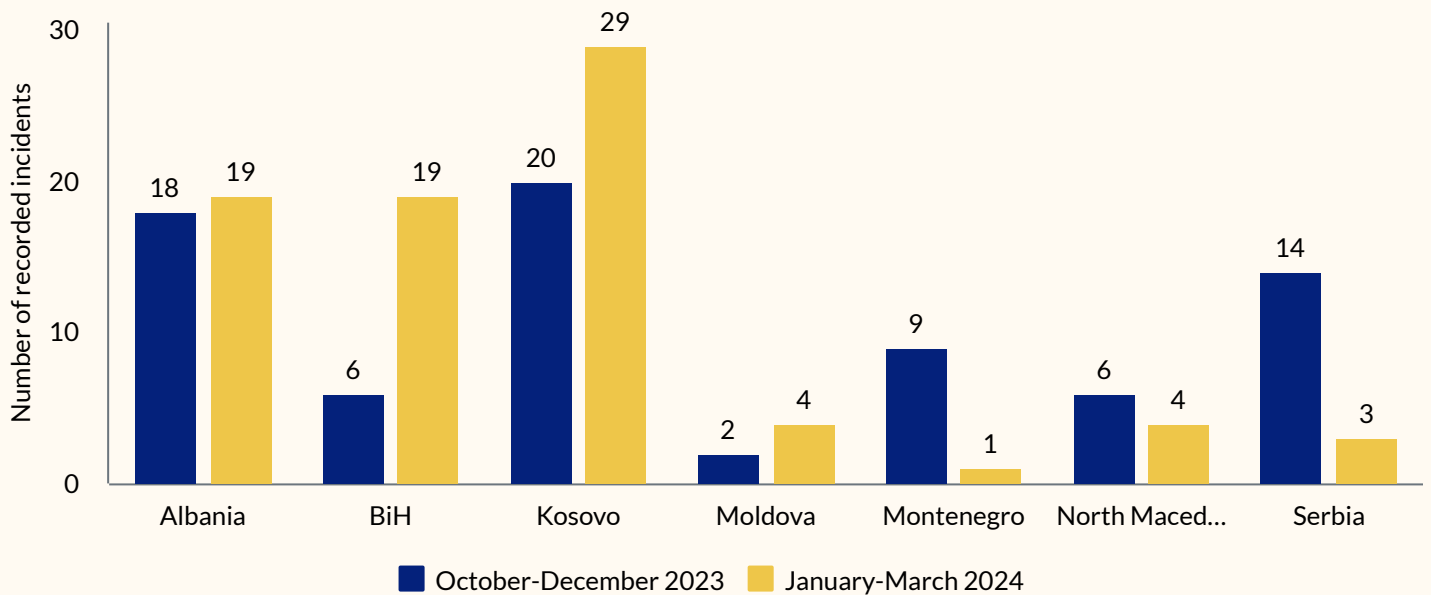
*Two most reported types of incidents under the criminal context category in the January-March 2024.*

- **96 victims** of incidents in the criminal context were reported, among whom **5** were **killed** and **7** **injured**. The number of **people threatened** rose from 42 to 60.

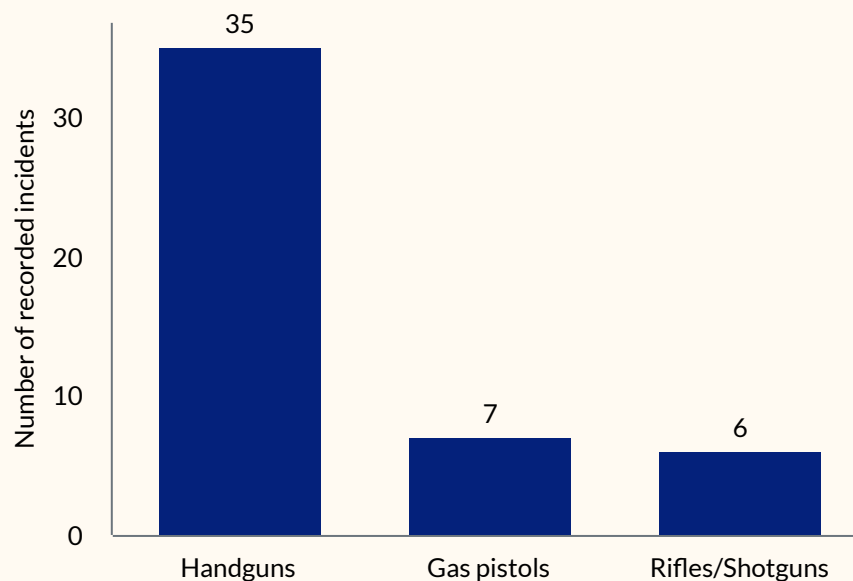
# MOST REPORTED INCIDENTS (CONT.)

## - Public disputes

- **Public disputes involving the use of firearms**, the **third most reported** type of incident, were reported in **79 cases**, marking a **5% decline** from the previous quarter.
- Similar to the previous quarter, **Kosovo** reported the **highest number**, accounting for **37%** of all **public disputes**. Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina followed, each with 19 cases.
- In comparison to the previous quarter, prominent **increases** in these incidents were seen in **Bosnia and Herzegovina (from 6 to 19)** and **Kosovo (from 20 to 29)**. Serbia and Montenegro documented notable declines.



- A total of **102 victims** were affected by the use of firearms in public disputes, which is **higher** than the 97 victims reported in the previous quarter.
- Among the reported victims this quarter, **5 people were killed, 35 were injured, and 35 were threatened**. In addition, **26 people did not sustain gunshot injuries** when a firearm was discharged in their presence during a dispute.



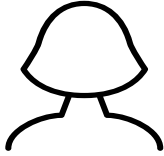
*Four most reported types of weapons in public disputes in January-March 2024 period*

- In 60 cases where the type of firearm was specified, **handguns** were the **most commonly reported** weapon, being used in 25 public disputes. The use of **gas pistols** and rifles/shotguns was reported in 7 and 6 cases, respectively. In comparison to October-December 2023, the use of gas pistols increased from 3 to 7 cases.



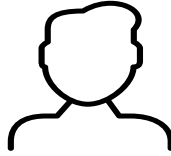
# PERPETRATORS

From January to March 2024, there were **1,014 perpetrators<sup>4</sup>** of firearm incidents, of whom



**17**

were women



**846**

were men

**N/A**

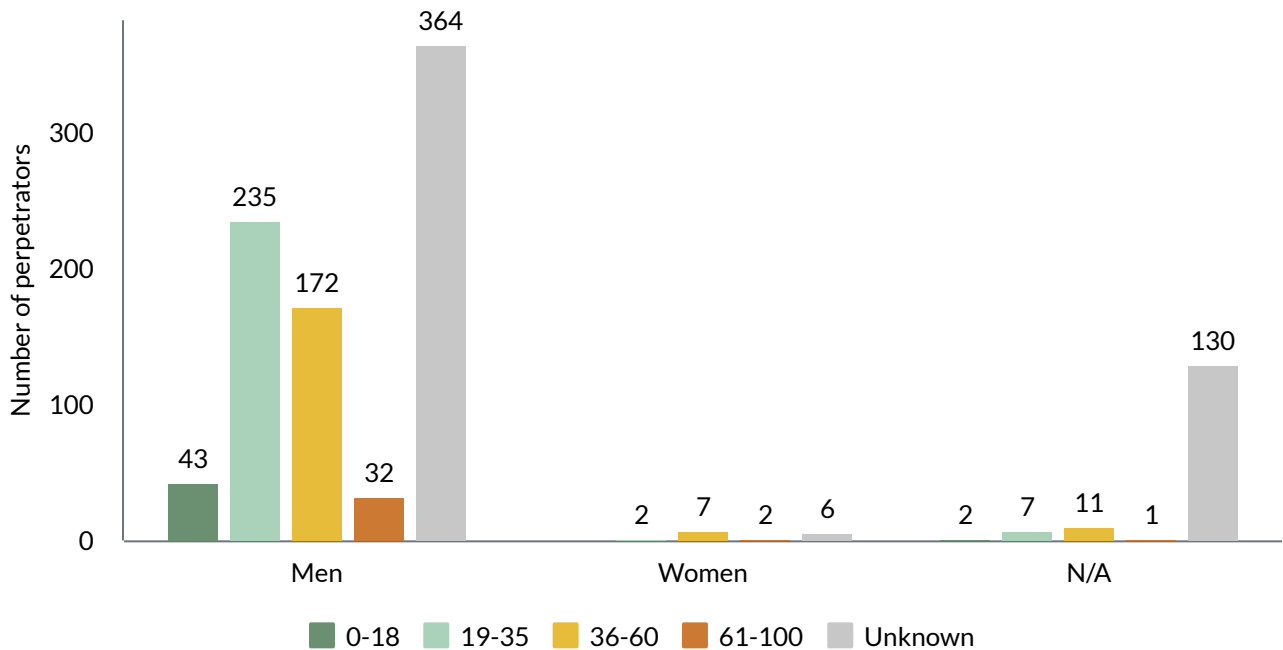
for **151**

sex was not reported

Men were identified as perpetrators mostly in incidents related to **weapon seizures (50%), criminal context (20%) and public disputes (11%).**

Women were identified as perpetrators, mostly in incidents related to **weapon seizures (47%) and criminal context (35%).**

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

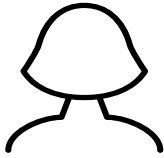


- For **500 (49%) perpetrators**, age was not reported. For 130 perpetrators, neither sex nor age was reported.

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

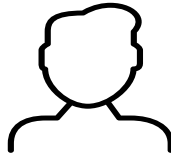
# VICTIMS

From January to March 2024, there were **318 victims<sup>5</sup>** of firearm incidents, of whom



**47**

were women



**210**

were men

**N/A**

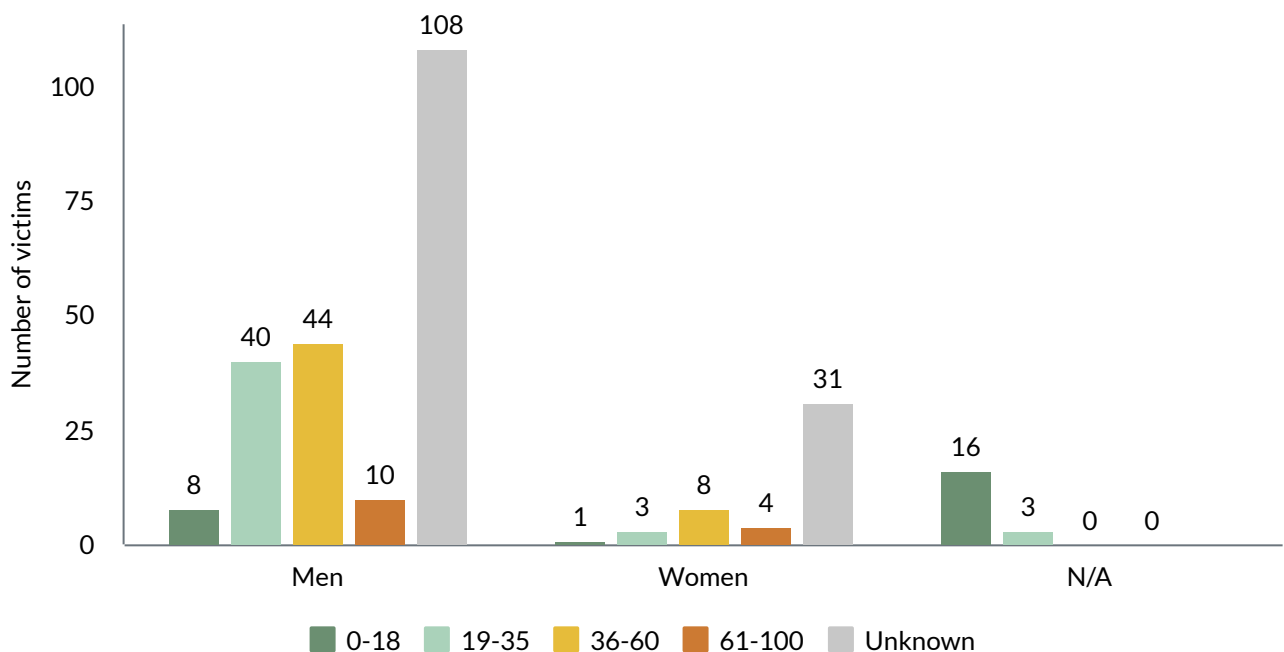
for **61**

sex was not reported

**Women victims** were mostly reported in incidents related to **criminal context (45%), domestic violence (36%)** and **public disputes (10%)**.

**Men victims** were mostly reported in incidents related to **public disputes (35%), criminal context (25%),** and **undetermined shootings (15%)**.

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



- For **181 (57%) victims**, age was not reported. For 42 victims, neither sex nor age were reported.

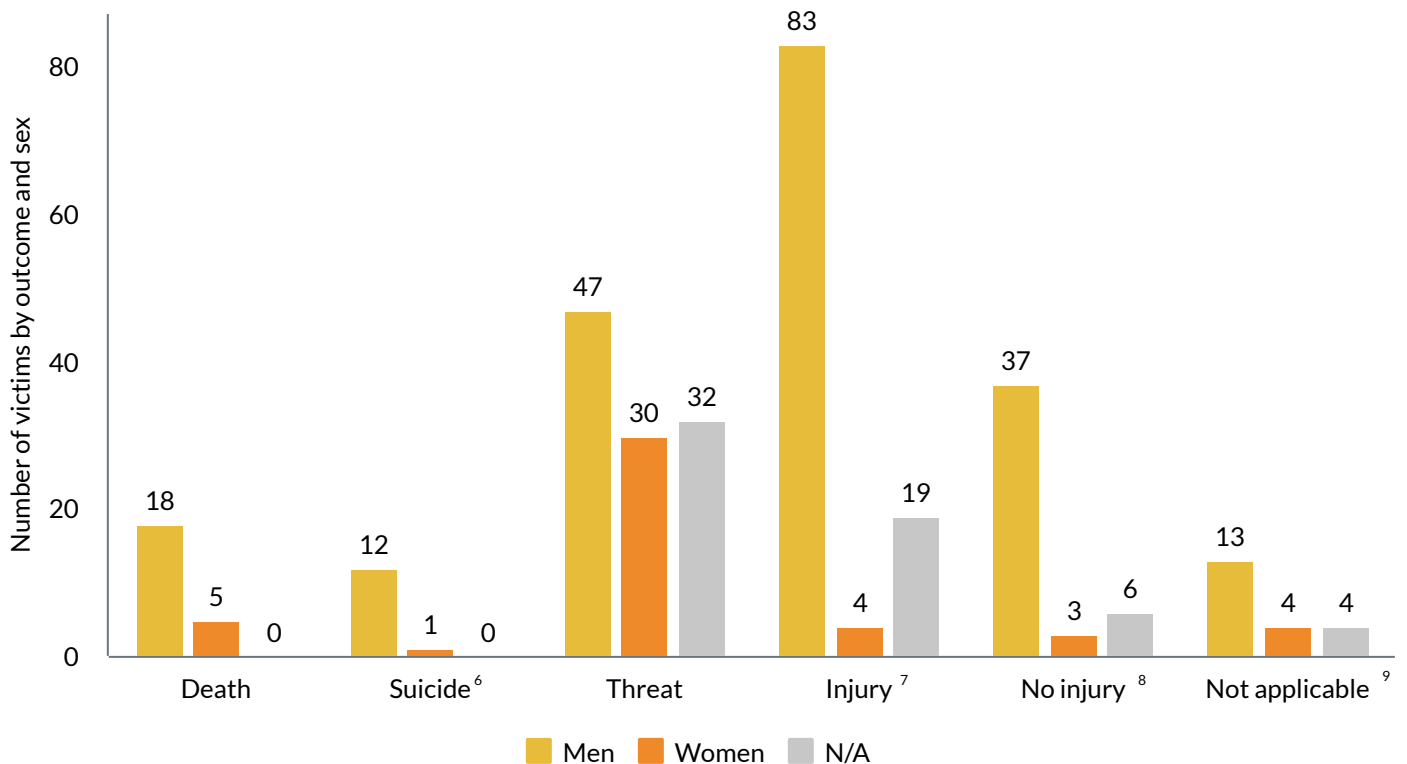
<sup>5</sup> Victim refers to any individual who has been threatened, injured or died as a result of the use of a firearm/ammunition/explosives.

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

**23 people** were killed with firearms, **21% less** than in the previous quarter. Victims were mainly killed in **domestic violence (9)** and **public disputes (5)** and **criminal context (5)**.

**13 firearm suicides** were reported, an **18% increase** from the previous quarter, and **five** of them in a **murder suicide** pattern.



**106 people** were injured, the same as in the previous quarter. 35 victims were injured in public disputes, 29 in accidental shootings, and 26 in undetermined shootings.

**109 people** were threatened with firearms, **14% more** than in the previous quarter. 60 victims were threatened in the criminal context, 35 in public disputes, and 12 in the domestic violence context.

<sup>6</sup> Suicide refers to all incidents in which the victim killed him/herself with a firearm.

<sup>7</sup> Injury refers to all incidents in which an individual sustained an injury due to weapon use.

<sup>8</sup> No injury refers to all incidents in which a weapon was discharged, but the victim did not sustain a gunshot injury.

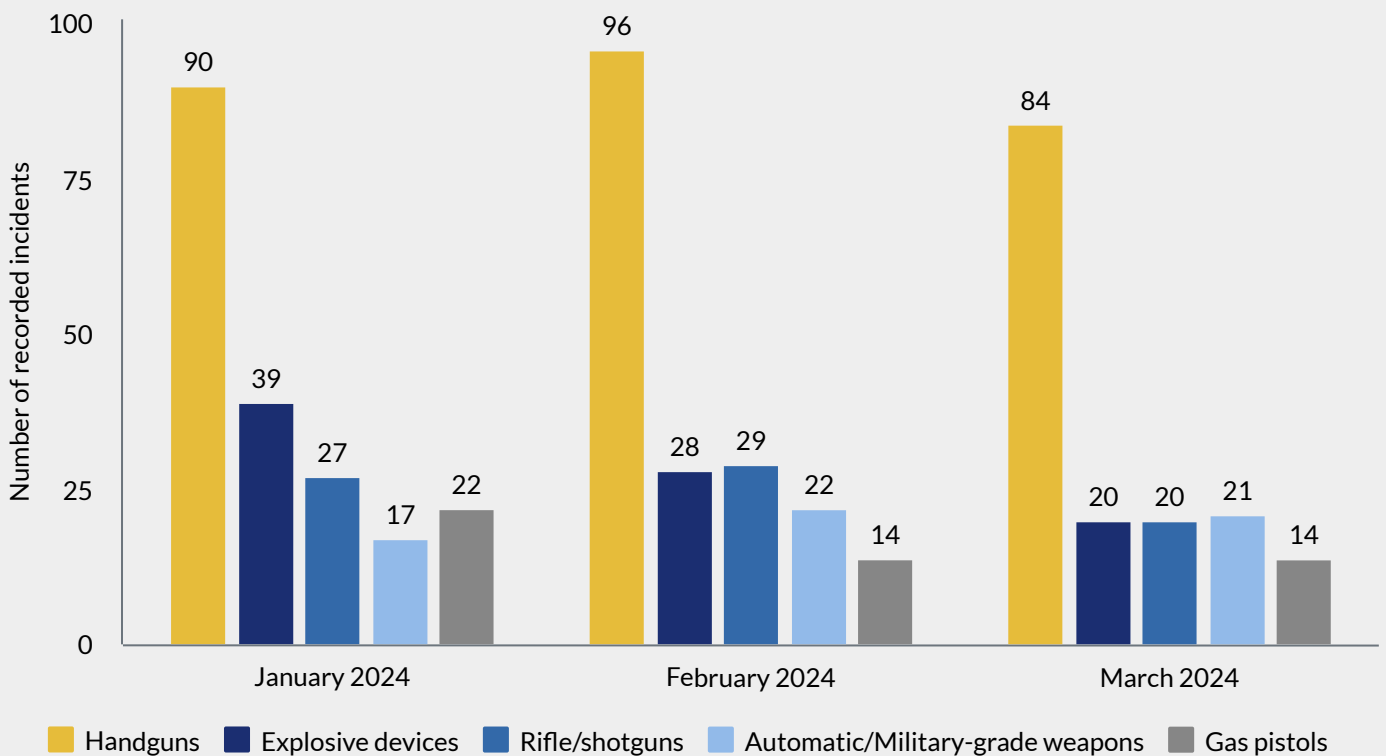
<sup>9</sup> Not applicable refers to all incidents in which a weapon is present but not used or discharged (for example, theft of a weapon).

# TYPE OF WEAPONS



In **535 (64%) incidents**, the firearms used were in **illegal possession**, while in **54 (6%) cases**, they were in **legal possession**. In 253 (30%) incidents, the status of possession was not reported. During this quarter, in 15% of all reported cases, the type of firearm was either unknown or not reported.

- **Handguns** were reported in **270 incidents**, slightly more compared to 267 incidents in the previous quarter. Apart from being seized in 136 cases, handguns were used in the **criminal context** in **58 cases** and in **35 incidents** resulting from **public disputes**.
- Being documented in **87 incidents**, **explosive devices** were the **second most reported** type of weapon, marking a 20% drop from the previous quarter. In **23 cases**, explosive devices were reported as **found accidentally** by civilians, while in **23 cases**, they were used in **undetermined explosions**.



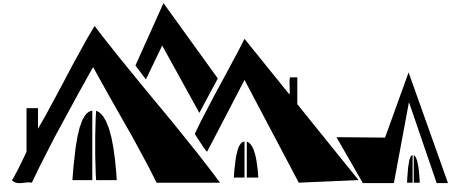
- **Rifles/shotguns** were reported in **76 incidents**, marking a **30% decline** since the previous quarter. This type of weapon was seized in 61% of the cases.
- **Automatic/military-grade weapons** were reported in **60 incidents**, primarily in weapon seizures (36 cases) and the criminal context (15 cases). A **13% rise** from the previous reporting period was observed in relation to this type of weapon.
- **Gas pistols** were reported in **50 incidents**, showing an increase of 19% compared to the previous quarter (42 cases). This type of firearm was reported as **seized** in more than half of the incidents involving this type of weapons (30 cases).

# MACRO AND MICROLOCATION

From January to March 2024

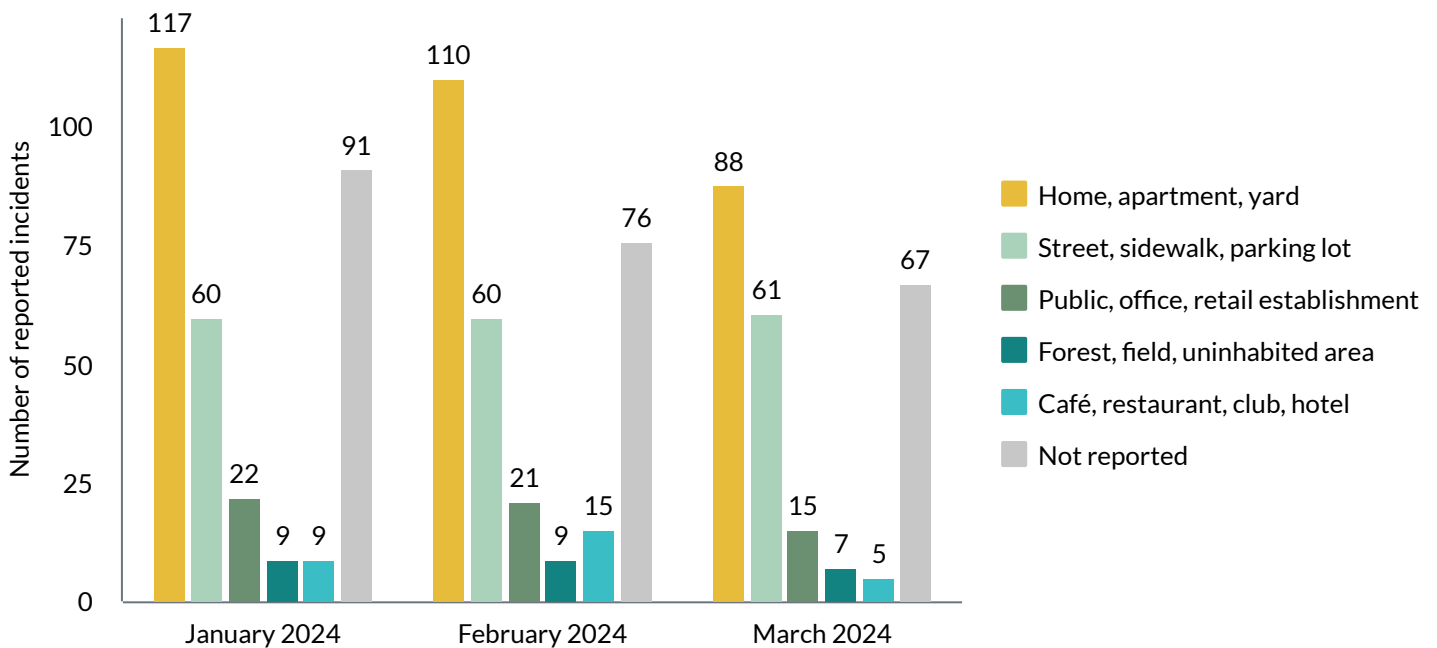


**588 (70%) incidents**  
occurred in urban areas.



**254 (30%) incidents**  
occurred in rural areas.

## Microlocation



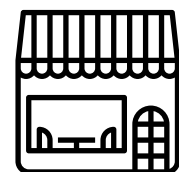
Majority of incidents were reported



at homes / yards  
**315 incidents**



in streets  
**181 incidents**



in cafe /restaurants  
**29 incidents**



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