



South East Europe Armed Violence Monitor

Quarterly Regional Report

January-March 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 **January-March 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 19 April 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

January - March 2023

821

firearm incidents were
reported in SEE

361

weapon
seizures

24

people died
by suicide
with firearms

122

undetermined
shootings

28

people were
killed with
firearms

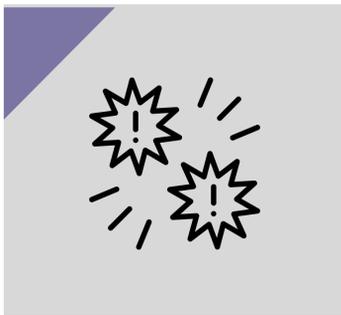
491

incidents
with weapons
in illegal
possession

18

celebratory
shootings

TYPE OF INCIDENTS



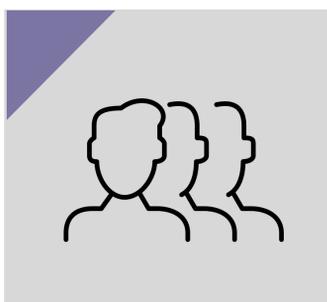
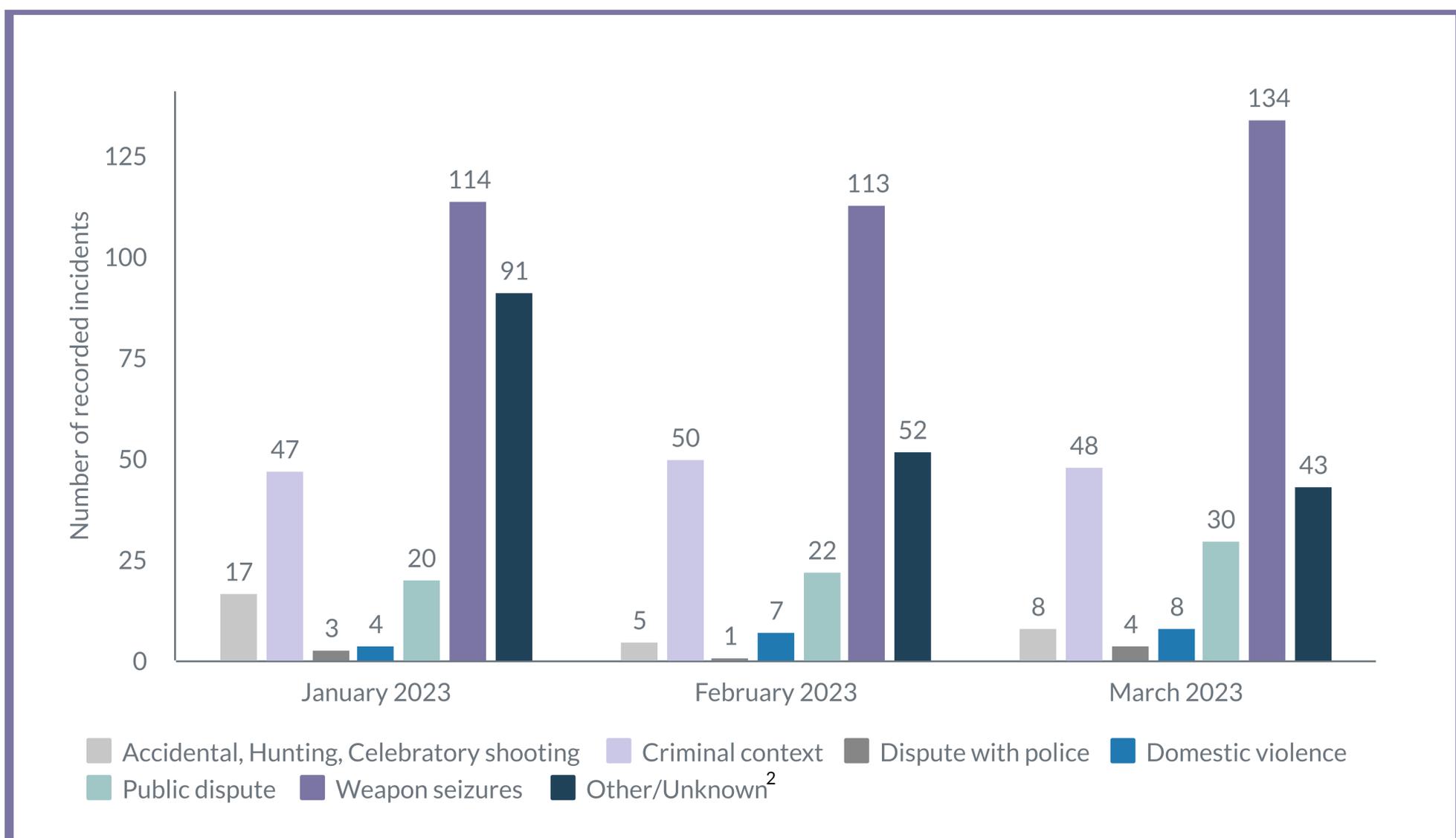
72 public disputes involving firearms were reported; an **11% rise** since the previous quarter.



43 seizures of multiple types of SALW were reported.



28 women were threatened with firearms in **armed robberies**.



42 perpetrators were **18 years old and younger**.



19 reported domestic violence cases; **9** committed by **intimate partners**.



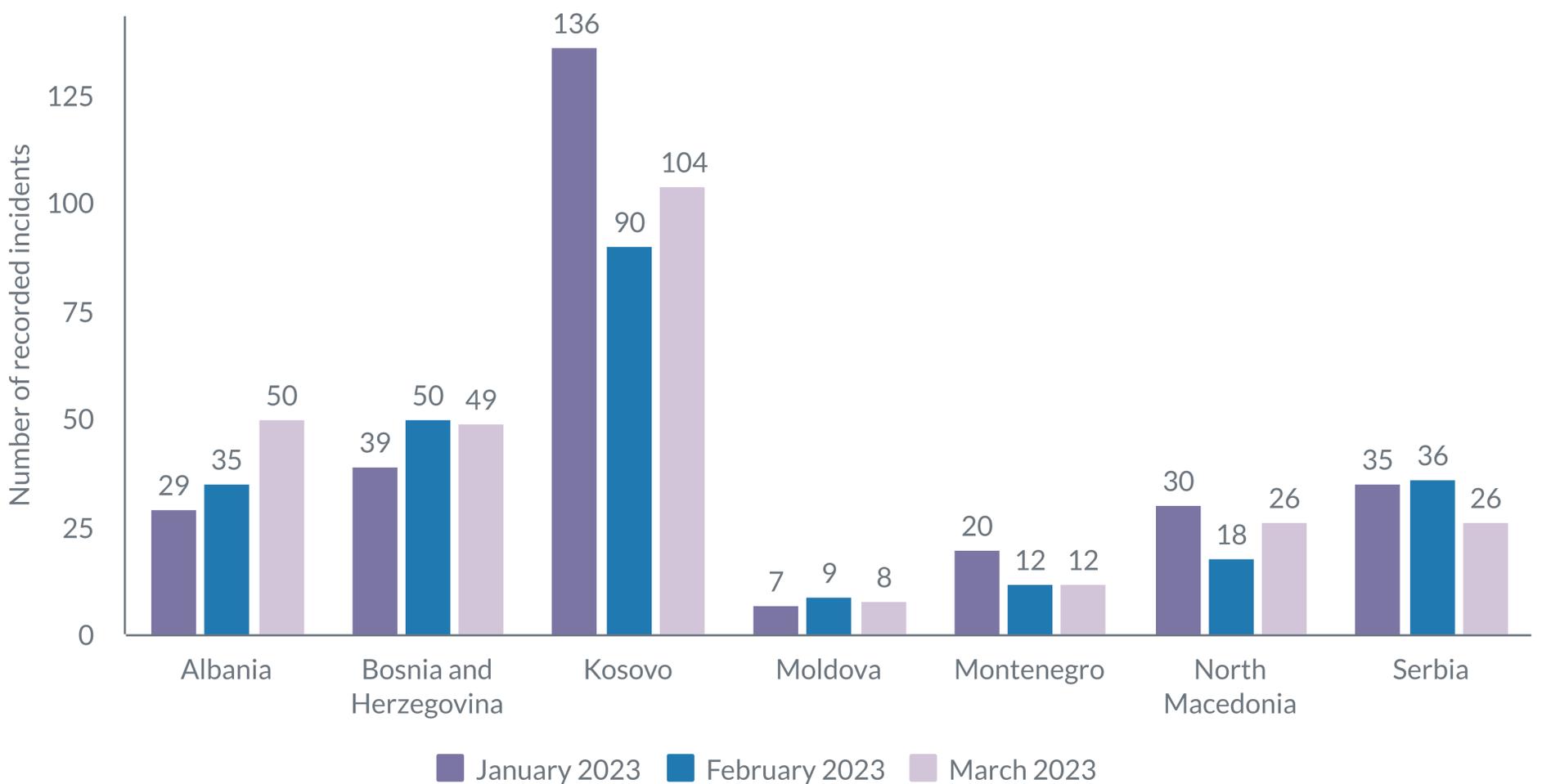
35 cases of firearm thefts were reported, **doubling** the number from the previous quarter.

² Other/ Unknown refer 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

Firearm incidents recorded in this quarter **slightly decreased** compared to the previous quarter (from 827 to 821).

The number of firearm incidents varied from January to March, with the **highest number** recorded in **January (296)**.

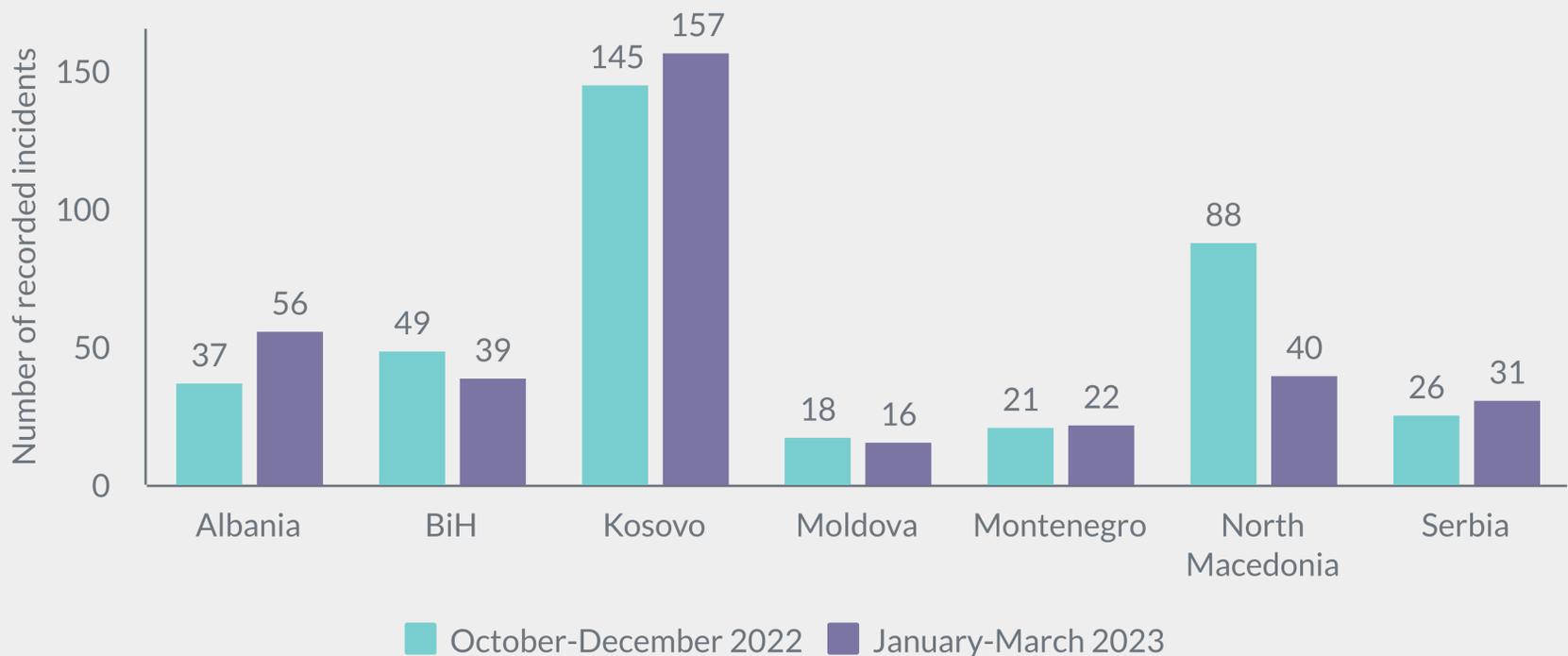


Kosovo (330), Bosnia and Herzegovina (138) and Albania (114) reported the highest number of firearm incidents.

The most reported types of incidents were **weapon seizures (361)**, and firearm incidents in the **criminal context (145)**.

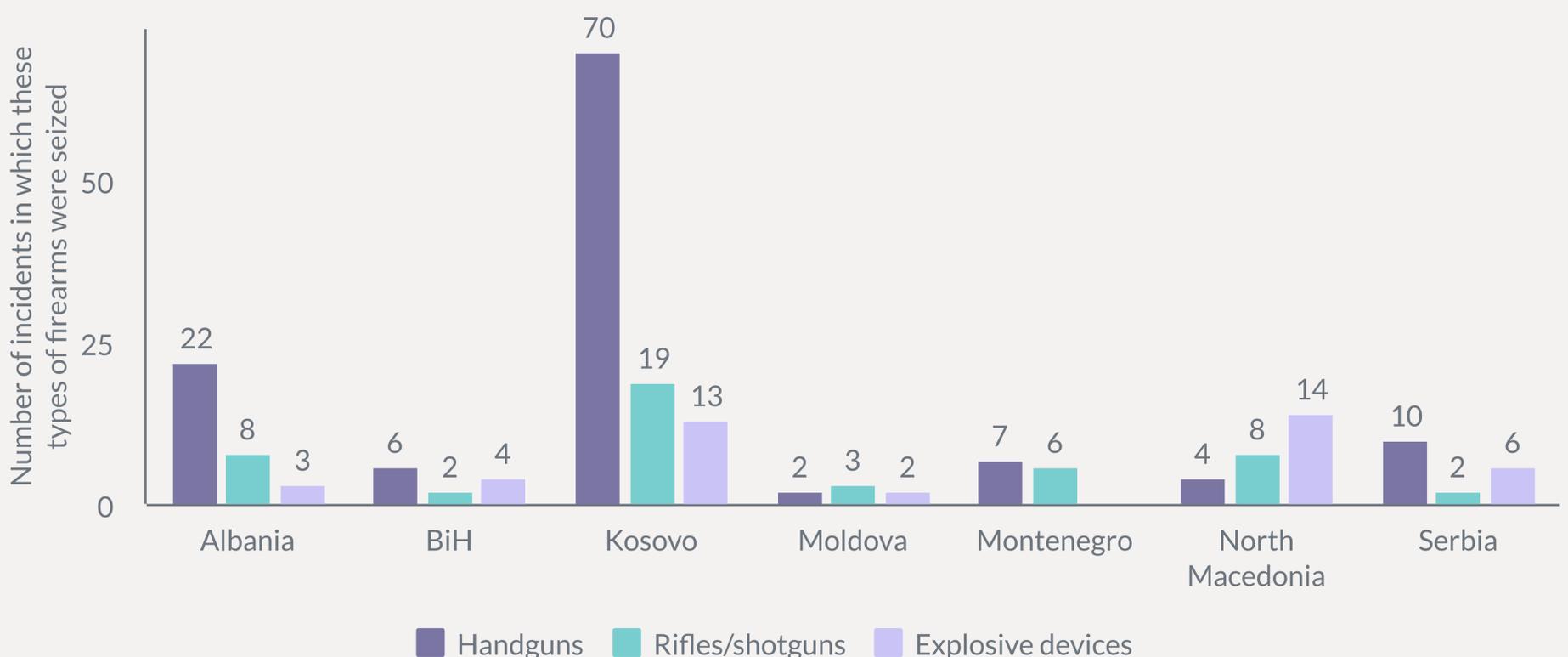
MAIN TRENDS - Weapon seizures

- With **361 incidents** recorded in this quarter, **weapon seizures** continued to be the most commonly reported type of incident, thus accounting for 44% of all firearm incidents.
- This marks a **6% decrease** from the previous quarter's 384 cases and an **18% drop** from the same period last year when 439 cases were documented.



- During this quarter, the **highest number of seizures** was recorded in **Kosovo**, followed by **Albania**, where the number of cases **increased by 51%** compared to the previous quarter. In **North Macedonia**, the number of cases **decreased** by more than half.

- **Handguns** remained the most frequently seized type of weapon, with a total of **121 seizures**. The largest number of handgun seizures, which amounted to **70**, was reported in **Kosovo**.
- **Rifles/shotguns** continued to be the **second most seized** type of weapon, despite a **27% decline** since the previous quarter (48 vs 66). This type of weapon was mainly seized in Kosovo (19), and North Macedonia and Albania with 8 cases each.

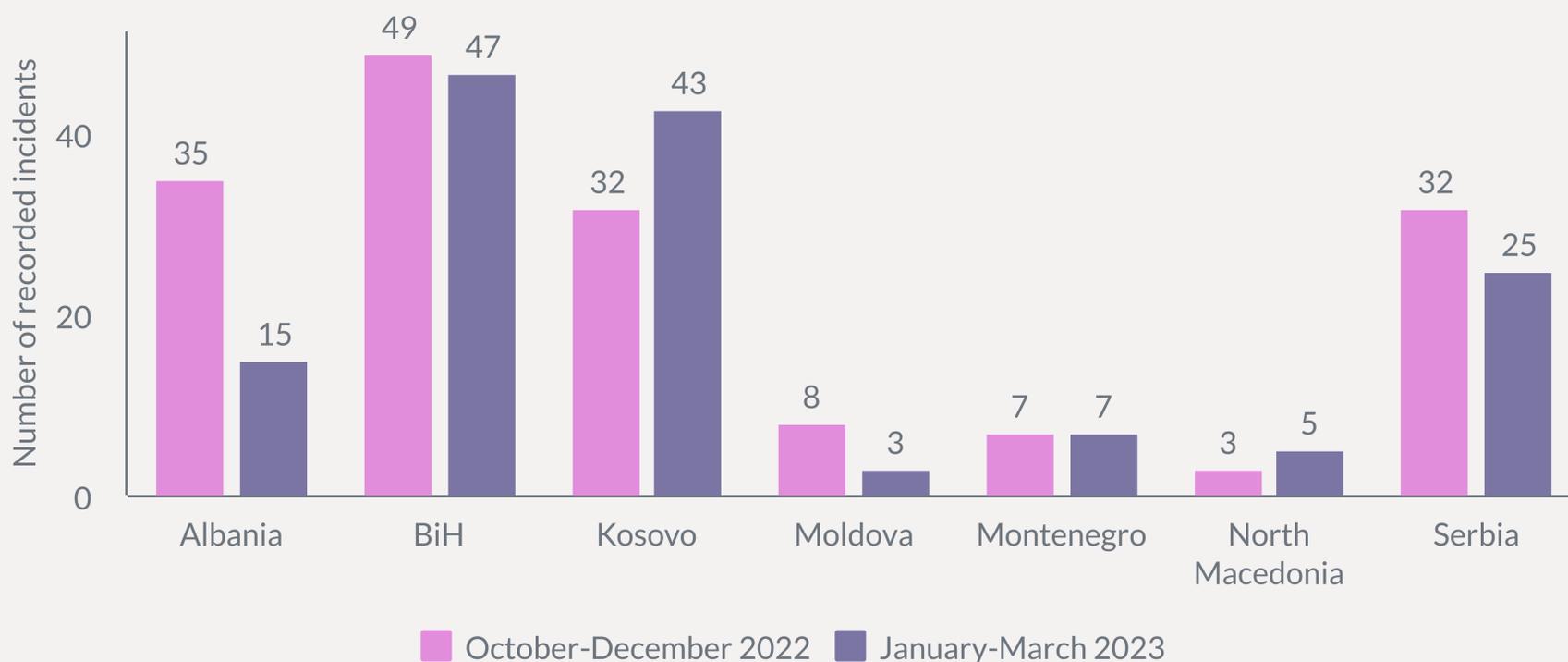


Three most seized types of weapons in the January-March 2023 period

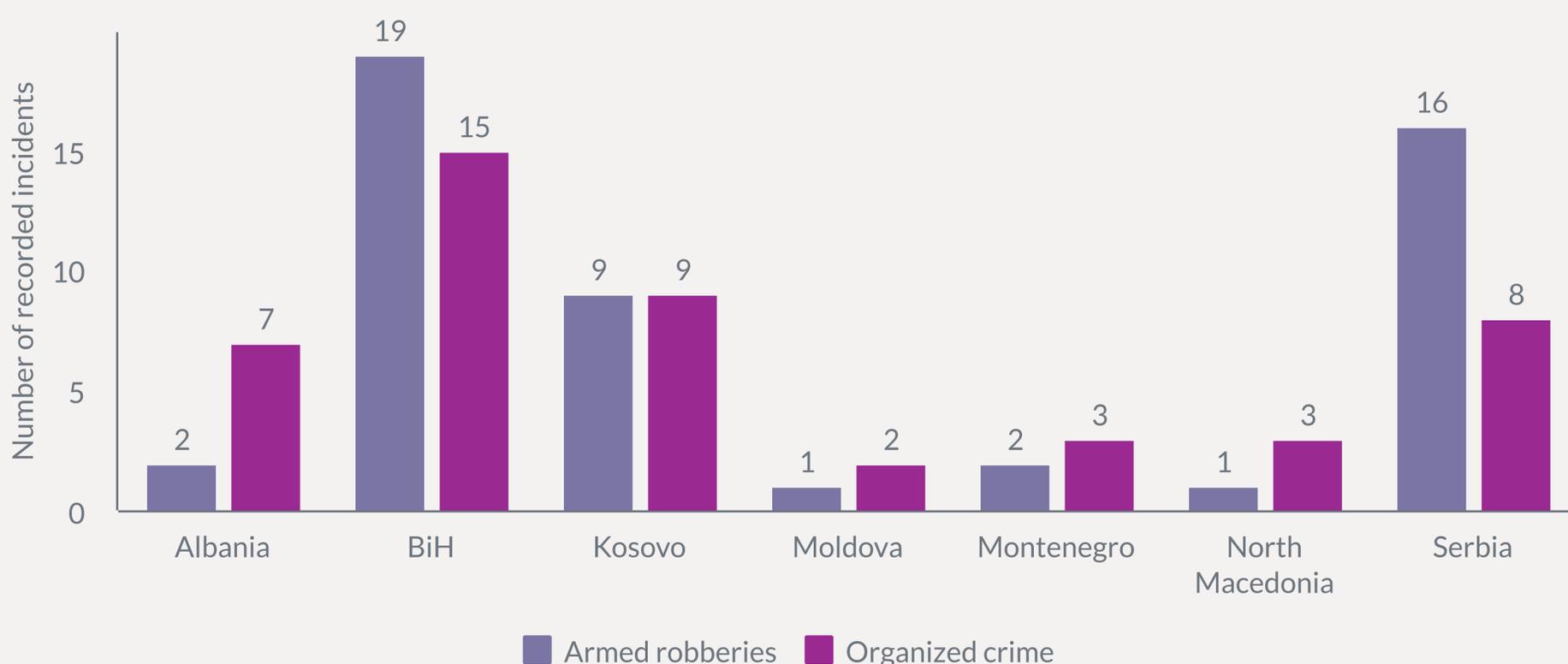
- There was a **33% reduction** in the seizures of **explosive devices** when compared to the previous quarter (from 63 to 42). Most seizures of this type of weapon were reported by North Macedonia (14) and Kosovo (13).

MAIN TRENDS (CONT.) - Criminal context

- Firearm incidents in the **criminal context** were the **second most common type of incident**, with **145 cases** recorded, showing a **14% decrease** from the previous quarter (166 cases).
- **Moldova (62%), Albania (57%)** and **Serbia (22%)** reported prominent drops in the number of these incidents. **Kosovo**, on the other hand, documented **an increase (34%)**.



- **Fifty armed robberies** were reported this quarter, demonstrating a **25% decline** compared to the previous quarter (67). **Decreases** were seen in **Kosovo (40%)** and **Bosnia and Herzegovina (22%)**. Nonetheless, Bosnia and Herzegovina (19) accounted for approximately 40% of all armed robberies this quarter, followed by Serbia (16).
- A total of **47 firearm incidents associated with the organized crime** were reported, nearly **30% less** than in the previous quarter. These incidents were mainly reported in **Bosnia and Herzegovina (15)**. **Albania** reported a significant drop - from 23 to 7 cases.

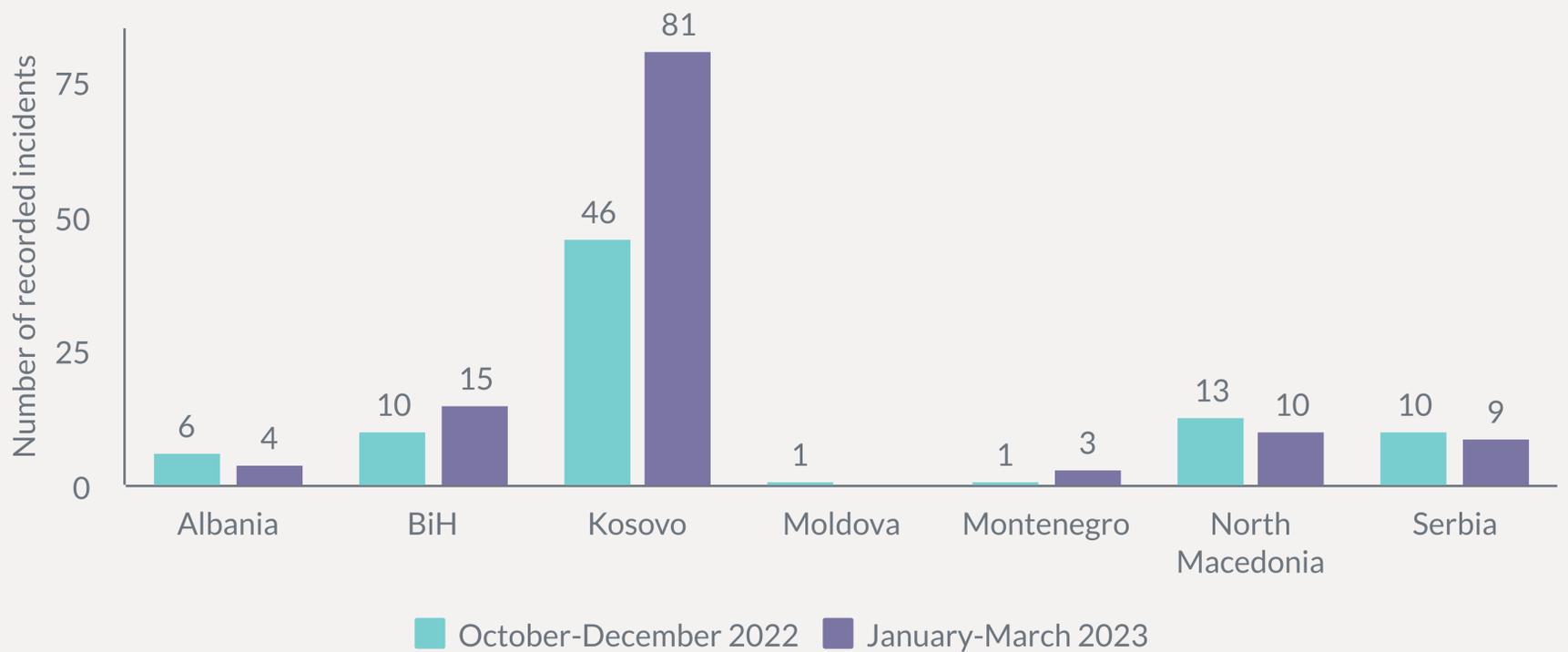


Two most reported incidents under the criminal context category in the January-March 2023 period

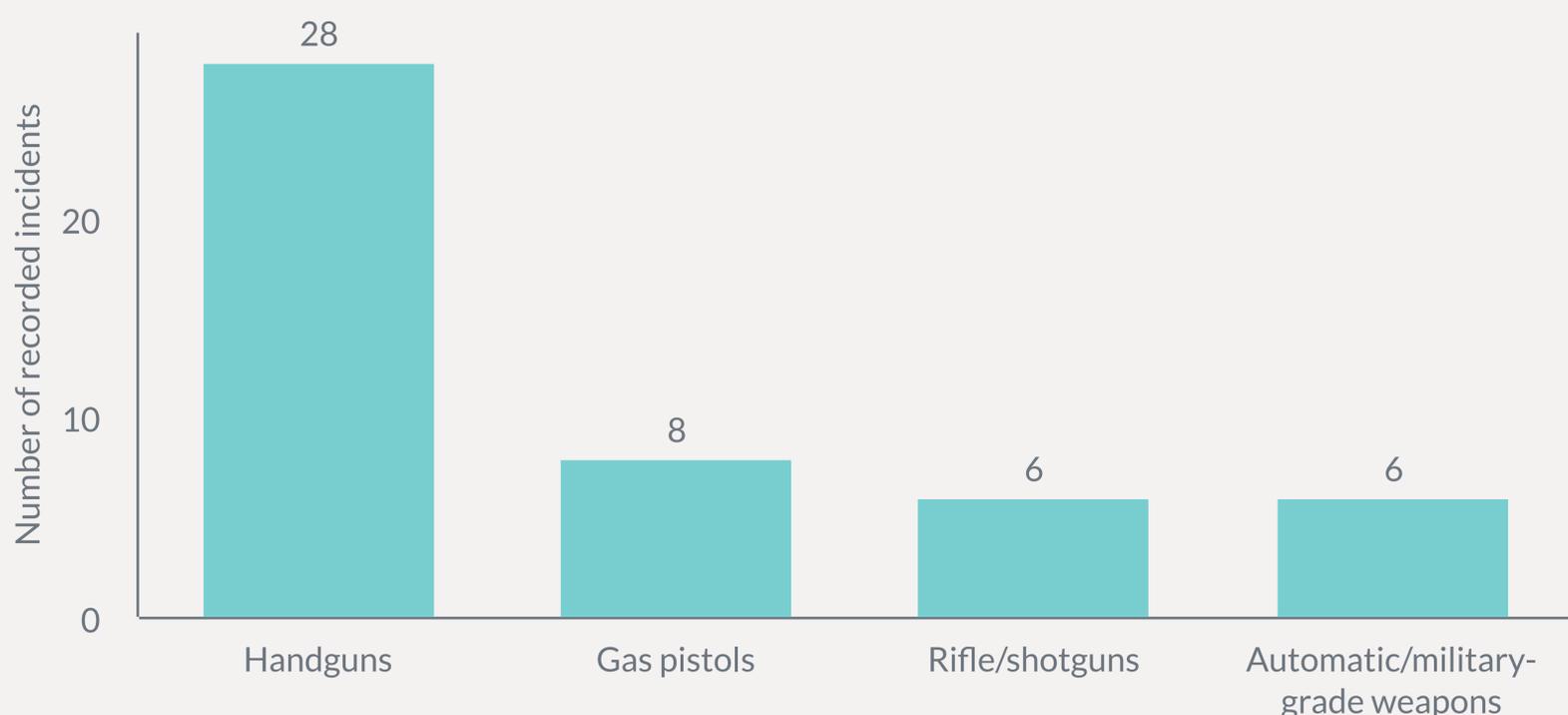
- **106 victims** of incidents in criminal context were reported, among whom **10 were killed**, **11 injured** and **58 threatened**.

MAIN TRENDS (CONT.) - Undetermined shootings³

- **Undetermined shootings** remained the **third most reported type of incident** with **122 cases**, indicating a **42% rise** observed since the previous quarter (86 cases).
- The **largest number** of these incidents was seen by **Kosovo**, which reported almost twice as many cases compared to the previous quarter, thus making up 66% of all undetermined shootings.



- **38 victims** of undetermined shootings were reported, of whom **7 people were** reported as **killed** and **21 as injured**.
- **Among perpetrators** of undetermined shootings whose sex was reported, **73 were men** and **3 were women**. In 49 cases, perpetrators were caught by the police, while they were unknown in 65 cases.

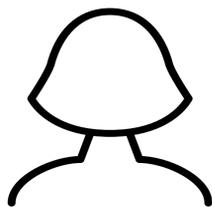


- In 52 cases where the type of firearm was identified, **handguns were the most commonly reported weapon**, being used in **28** undetermined shootings, more than twice than in the previous quarter. The use of **gas pistols** also **increased** during this quarter, i.e. from 4 cases in the previous quarter to 8 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.

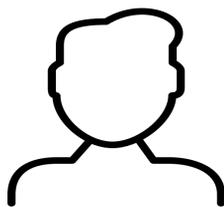
PERPETRATORS

From January to March 2023, there were **936 perpetrators⁴** of firearm incidents, of whom



16

were women



803

were men

N/A

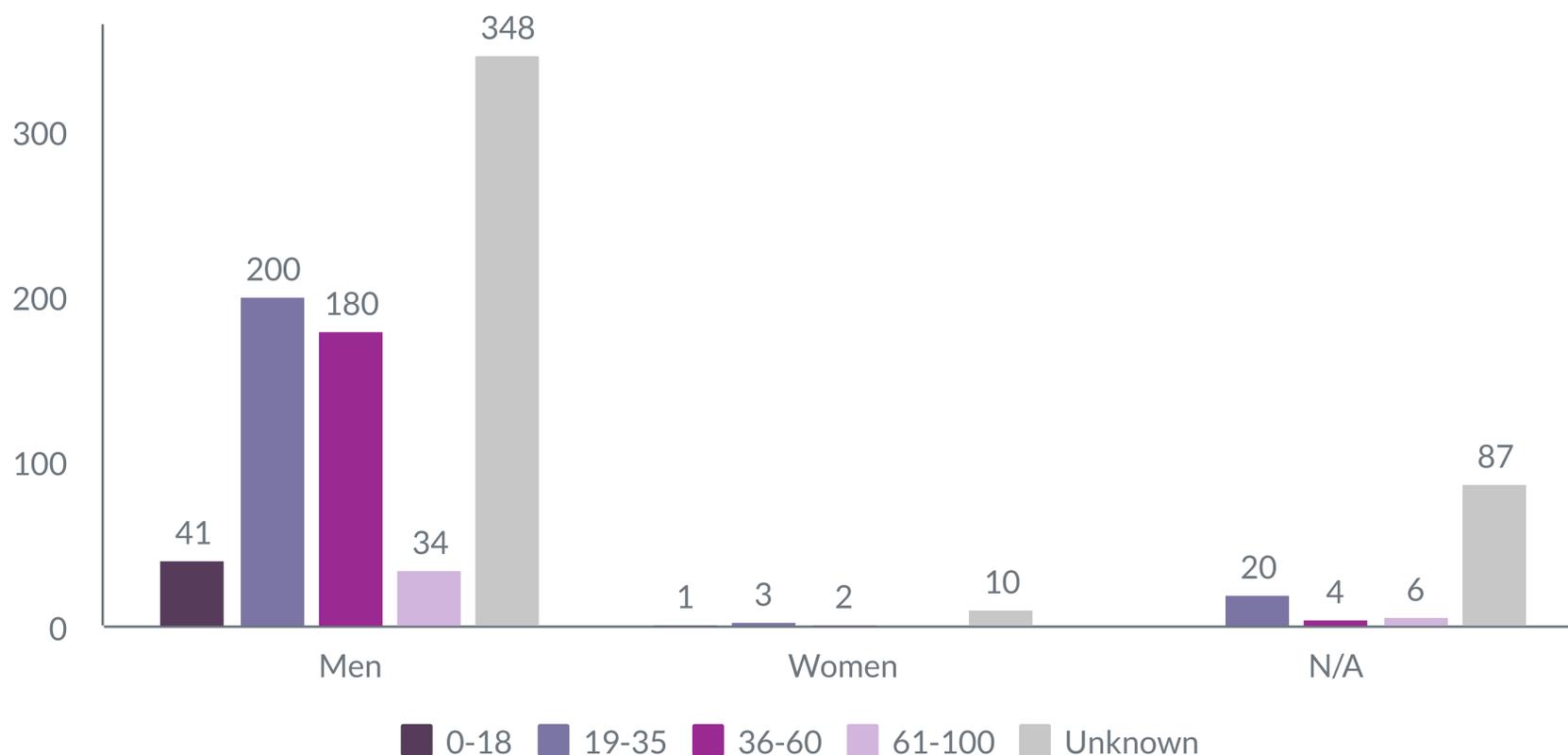
for **117**

sex was not reported

Men were identified as perpetrators mostly in incidents related to **weapon seizures (45%)** and the **criminal context (21%)**.

Women were identified as perpetrators mostly in incidents related to **weapon seizures (67%)** and **undetermined shootings (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.

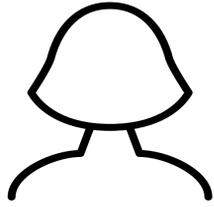


- For **445 (48%) perpetrators**, age was not reported. For 87 perpetrators, neither sex nor age was reported.

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.

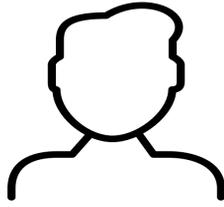
VICTIMS

From January to March 2023, there were **334 victims⁵** of firearm incidents, of whom



64

were women



216

were men

N/A

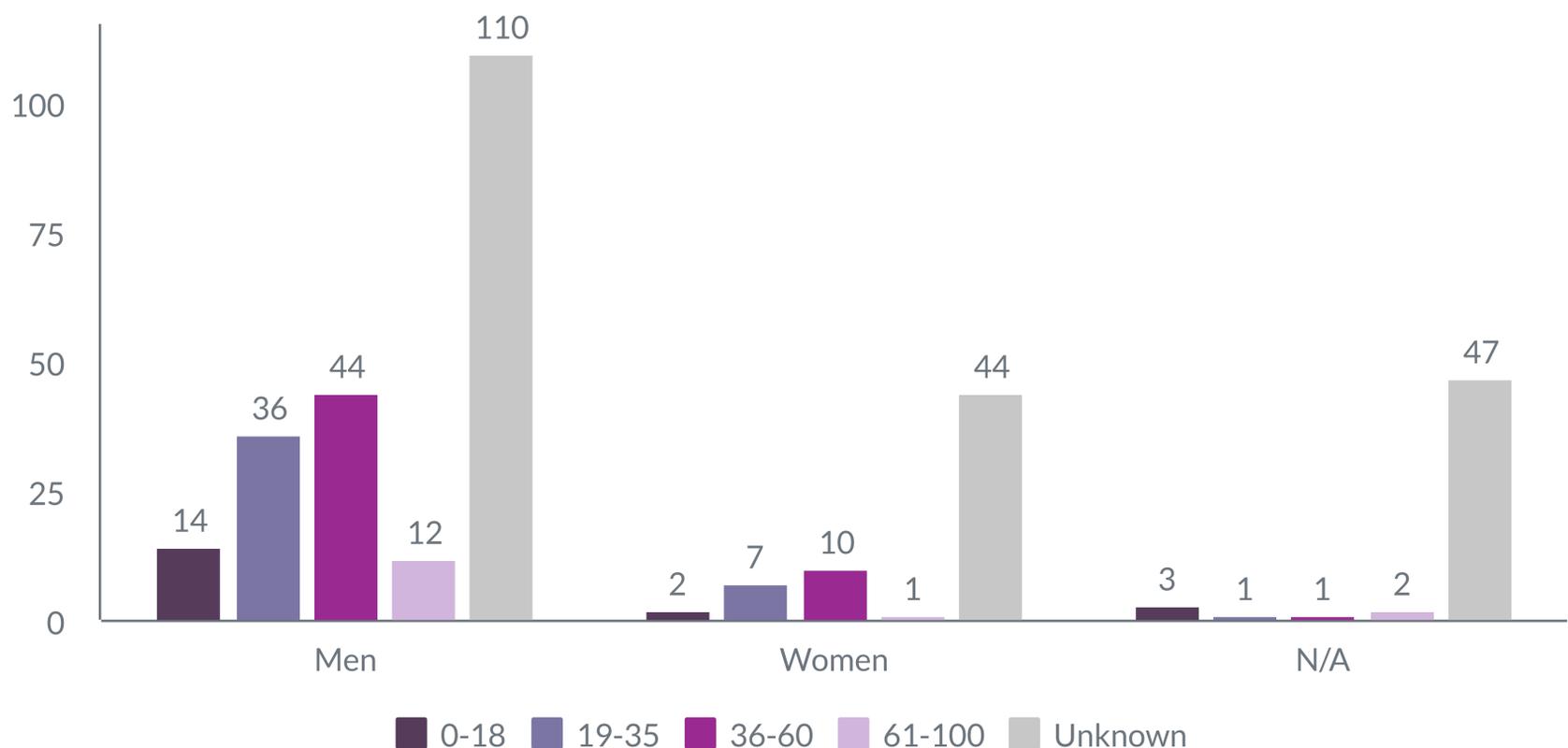
for **54**

sex was not reported

Women victims were mostly reported in incidents related to **criminal context (61%)** and **domestic violence (23%)**.

Men victims were mostly reported in incidents related to **public disputes (33%)**, **criminal context (21%)** and **undetermined shootings (16%)**.

- 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.



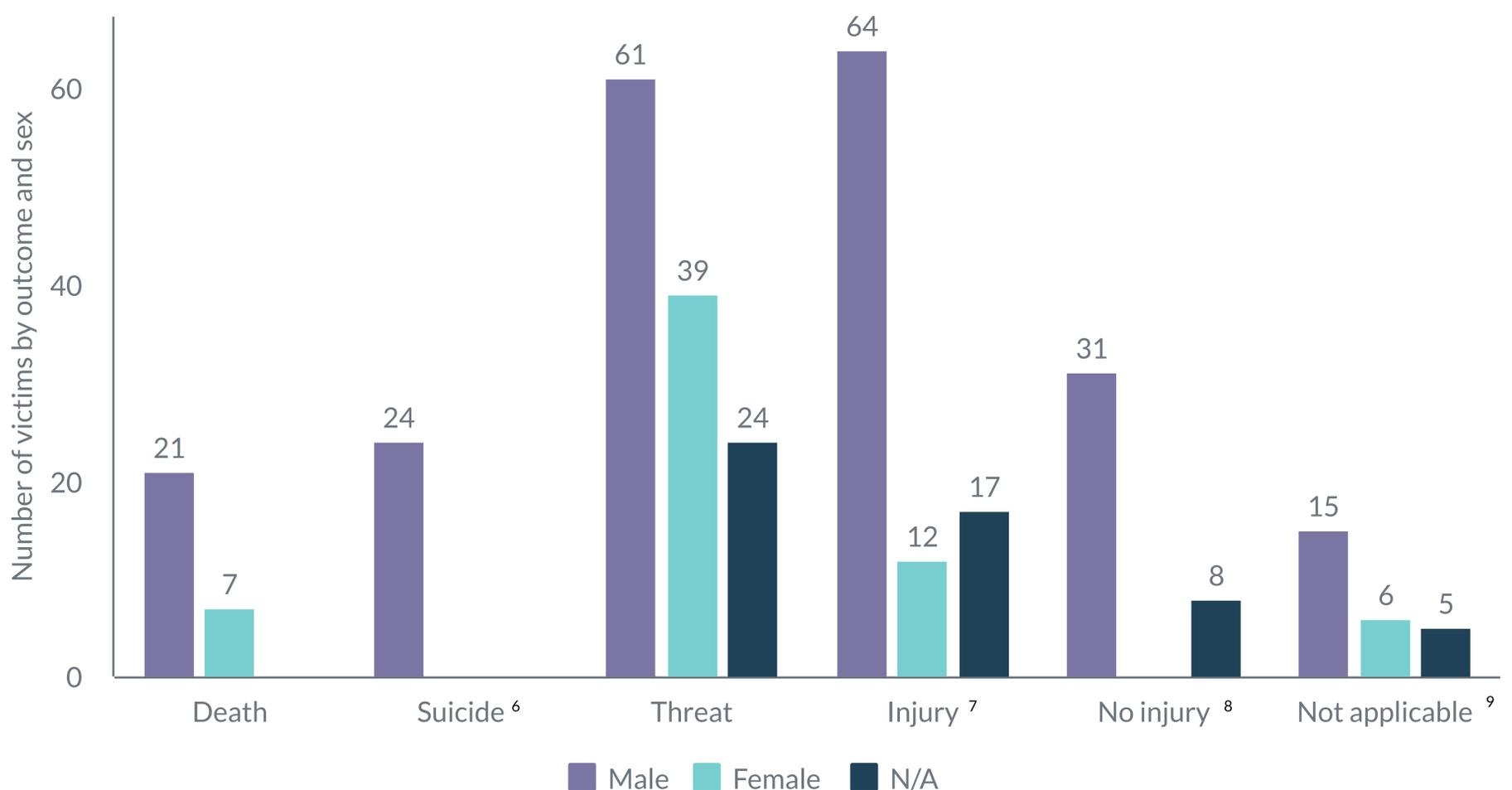
- For **201 (60%) victims**, **age was not reported**. For 47 victims, neither sex nor age was reported.

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

124 victims were threatened with firearms, with 58 in the criminal context and 34 in public disputes.

93 victims were injured, with 22 injured in public disputes, 21 in undetermined shootings, and 16 in celebratory shootings.



28 people were killed with firearms. The number of firearm deaths **rose by 75%** since the previous quarter - from 16 to 28.

24 suicides with firearms were reported, **50% more** than in the previous quarter. All victims were men.

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.

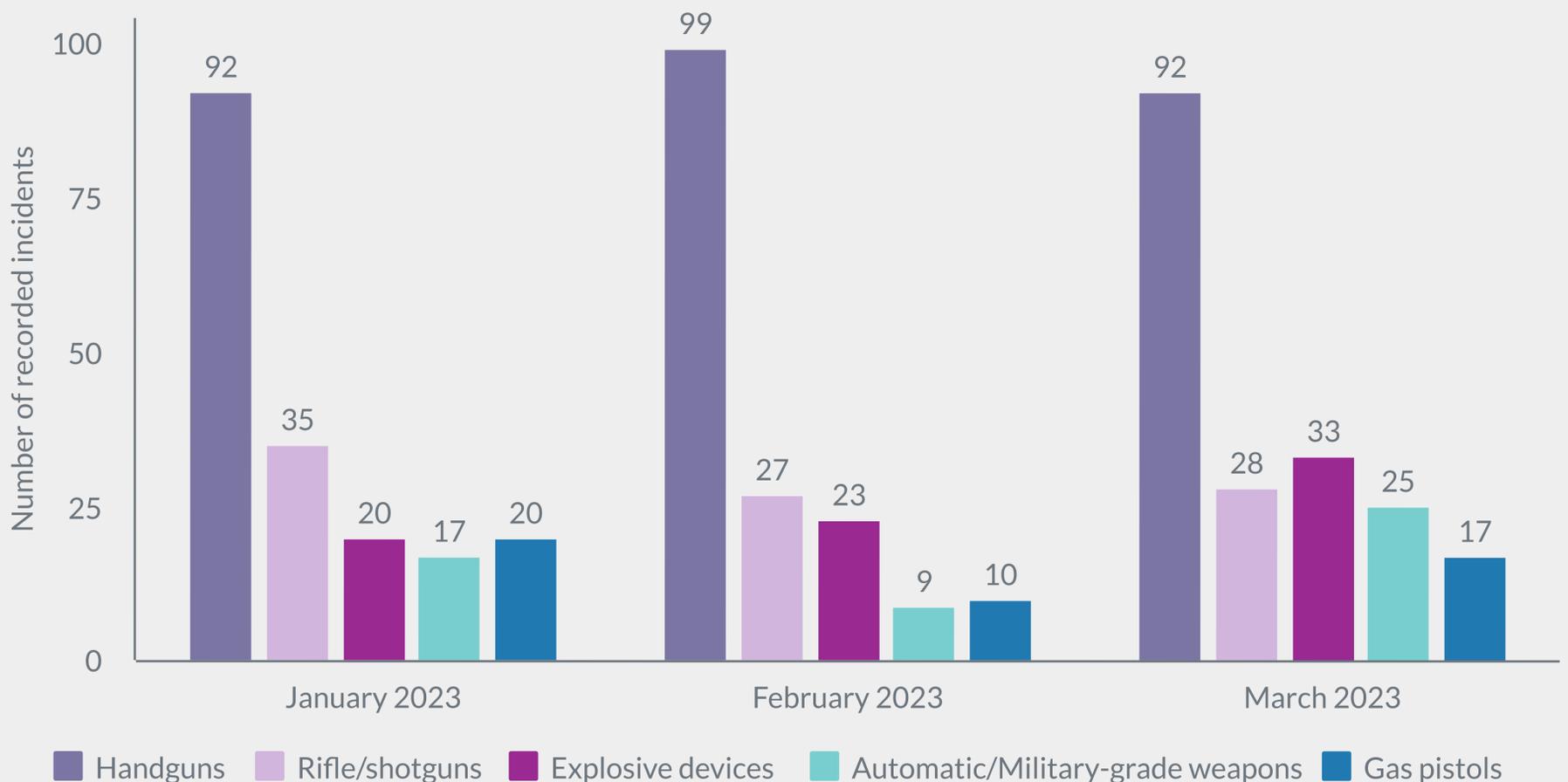
⁹ Not applicable refers to all incidents in which a weapon is present but not used or discharged (for example, theft of a weapon).

TYPE OF WEAPONS



In **491 (60%) incidents**, the firearms used were in **illegal possession**, while in **53 (6%) cases**, they were in **legal possession**. In 277 (34%) incidents, the status of possession was not reported.

- **Handguns** were reported in **283 incidents**, 15% more than in the previous quarter. In 121 cases, this type of firearm was seized, while in **69 cases**, it was used in the **criminal context**.
- **Rifles/shotguns**, as the second most used type of weapon, were reported in **90 incidents**, showing a 22 % decline since the previous quarter. In **more than half cases (48)**, this type of weapon was **seized**.



Please note that the graph represents the number of incidents in which the five most reported types of weapons were used. During this quarter, in 19.5% of all reported cases the type of firearm was either unknown or not reported.

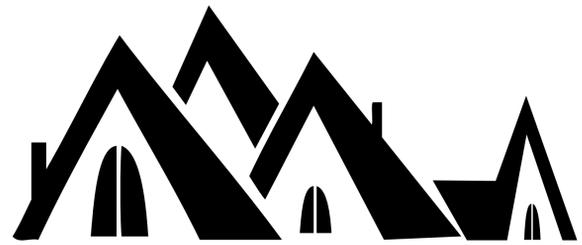
- **Explosive devices** were reported in **76 incidents**, 30% less than in the previous quarter. In **31 cases**, explosives were reported as **found accidentally** by civilians, while in **18 cases** they were used in **undetermined explosions**.
- **Automatic/military-grade weapons** were reported in **51 incidents**. This type of firearm was reported as **seized** in **31 cases**.
- **Gas pistols** were reported in **47 incidents**, a 52% increase since the previous quarter (31 cases). In 20 cases, this type of firearm was reported as **seized**.

MACRO AND MICROLOCATION

From January to March 2023

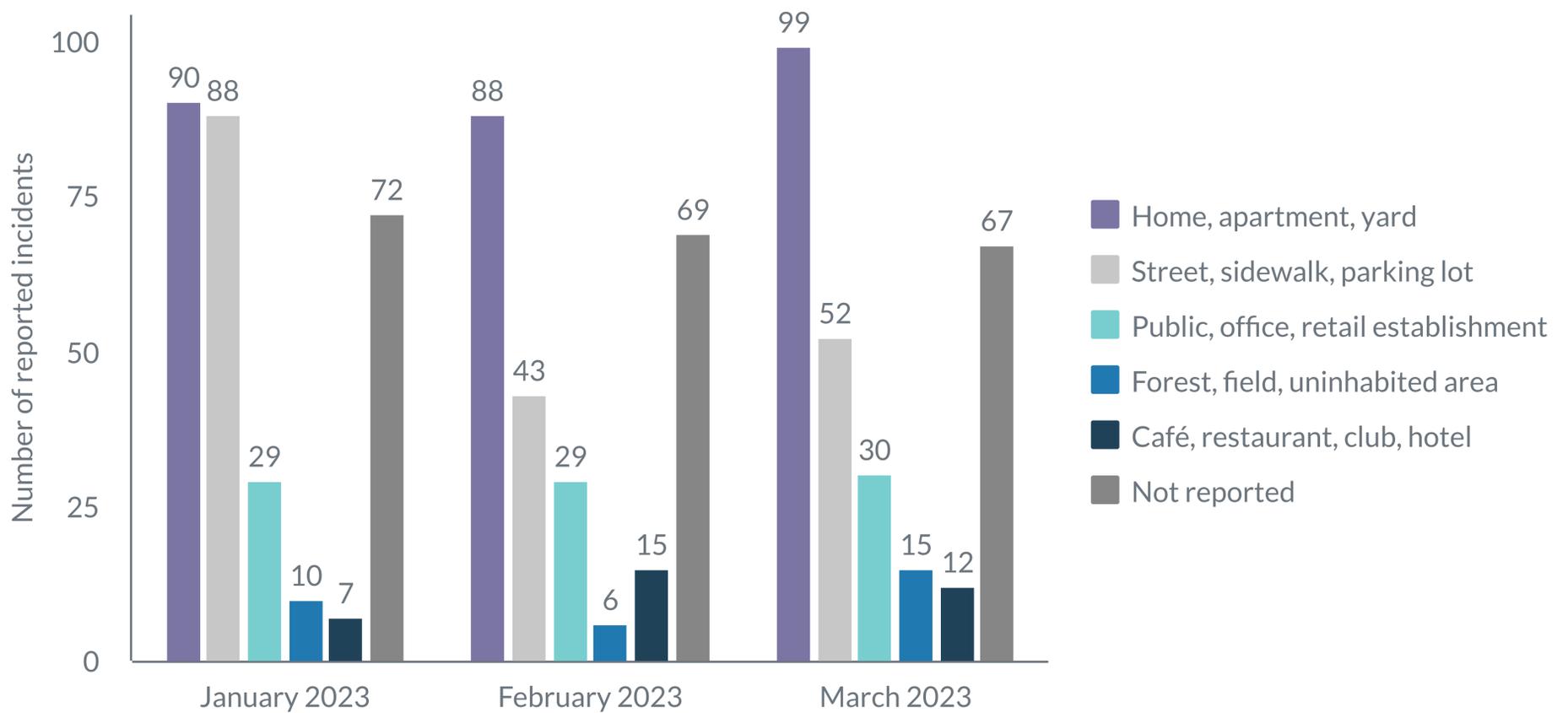


573 (70%) incidents
occurred in urban areas.



248 (30%) incidents
occurred in rural areas.

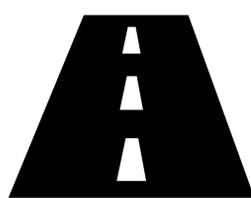
Microlocation



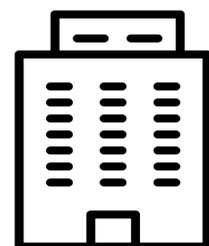
Majority of incidents were reported



at homes / yards
277 incidents



in streets
183 incidents



in public buildings
88 incidents



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