

Kosovo and the Gun:
A Baseline Assessment of Small Arms
and Light Weapons in Kosovo

Anna Khakee
Nicolas Florquin

June 2003



Kosovo

A study commissioned by
the United Nations
Development Programme

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Development Programme and
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Contents

Acknowledgements	v
Acronyms and abbreviations	vi
Glossary	vii
List of tables, figures, and boxes	vii
Executive Summary	viii
I. Introduction	1
II. Kosovo: Difficult past, unclear future	4
III. Perceptions of security and security providers	7
Types and scale of violence and insecurity in Kosovo	7
Perceptions of security providers	9
IV. How many guns are there in Kosovo?	11
The various gun holders in Kosovo	11
Law-enforcement and KPC weapons	11
Militia armaments	12
Civilian holdings	16
Weapons collection efforts after official demobilization	21
Black market weapons prices	26
V. Gun smuggling across the borders of Kosovo	27
Introduction	27
Border control arrangements	27
Smuggling at border checkpoints	28
Smuggling routes, the green border, and internal trade	29

VI. Gun culture and weapons regulations, past and present	31
Kosovo Albanian gun culture: ‘A house without a weapon is not a home’	31
Attitudes towards guns in present-day Kosovo	32
Gun laws in Kosovo	34
VII. Direct and indirect effects of guns in Kosovo	35
Introduction	35
Fatal and non-fatal injuries	35
Guns in crime	36
Gun-free environments? Guns and schools	39
VIII. Conclusions	41
Endnotes	42
Annex 1: Responses to selected questions of the SABA household survey	46
Annex 2: SABA household survey questionnaire	53
Annex 3: Variables in the feasibility and volatility indices	62
Annex 4: Kosovo municipalities ranked according to feasibility and volatility indices	63
Annex 5: Data used in figures	64
Sources	69
Bibliography	69
Interviews	71

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v

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Acronyms and abbreviations

AAK	Alliance for the Future of Kosovo
ABL	Administrative Boundary Line (separating Kosovo from Serbia and Montenegro)
AKSh	Armata Kombetare Shqiptare
CIVPOL	Civil police (international civilian police force)
EU	European Union
FYROM	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ISAC	Illicit Small Arms Control Project (of the UNDP)
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KIDS	Kosovo Initiative for a Democratic Society
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army, see also UCK
KPC	Kosovo Protection Corps, see also TMK
KPIS	Kosovo Police Information System
KPS	Kosovo Police Service
LDK	Democratic League of Kosovo
MNB	Multinational Brigade
MSU	Military Specialised Unit
MUP	Ministarstvo Unutrašnjih Poslova (Ministry of the Interior, Serbia)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NLA	National Liberation Army (FYROM)
OSA	Serb Liberation Army
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PDK	Democratic Party of Kosovo
PISG	Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (of Kosovo)
RPGs	Rocket-propelled grenade launcher
SABA	Small Arms Baseline Assessment (undertaken by SAS for UNDP/ISAC in Kosovo)
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SAS	Small Arms Survey
SEESAC	South Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons
SRS	Special Representative of the Secretary General (of the United Nations)
TMK	Trupat Mbrojtëse Të Kosovës (Albanian for KPC)
UCK	Ushtria Çlirimtare Kosovës (Albanian for KLA)
UCPMB	Ushtria Çlirimtare Presheve, Medvegje e Bujanovac (the Liberation Army of Preshevo, Medvegje and Bujanovac)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
VJ	Vojska Jugoslavije (Yugoslav Army)
WAC	Weapons Authorization Card
WED	Weapons-in-Exchange for Development

Glossary

Administrative boundary line	Border between Kosovo and Serbia and Montenegro
Green border	Border between boundary line checkpoints/international border crossing points
Light weapons	Heavy machine guns, hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-tank and anti-aircraft missile systems, and mortars of less than 100mm calibre
Small arms	Revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, assault rifles, sub-machine guns, and light machine guns
UNMIK Police	Consists of the international Civil Police and local Kosovo Police Service

List of tables, figures, and boxes

Tables

Table 4.1	Total estimated gun holdings by Kosovans (licit and illicit), 2003
Table 4.2	KLA and Kosovo Serb militia armaments in 1999
Table 4.3	Results of weapons amnesties in 2001 and 2002
Table 4.4	Weapons seized by KFOR, 1 January–12 March 2003
Table 4.5	Lost and found: Weapons pillaged and recovered in Albania, March 1997–September 2001

Figures

Figure 3.1	Kosovo crime rates in comparative perspective
Figure 4.1	SALW types seized by the police, 2000–2002
Figure 4.2	Assault rifle manufacturers
Figure 4.3	Pistol manufacturers
Figure 4.4	Geographic distribution of police seizures, mid-2000 to end 2002
Figure 4.5	Comparison of the yields of KFOR seizure operations and weapons amnesty, 15 March–15 April 2002
Figure 4.6	Weapons seized by KFOR troops in 2001 and 2002
Figure 7.1	Hospital reporting on reasons for visit/injury
Figure 7.2	Percentage of reported crimes committed with SALW, selected categories
Figure 7.3	Types of SALW used in murders, 2002
Figure 7.4	Types of SALW used in kidnappings, 2002
Figure 7.5	Types of SALW used in robberies, 2002
Figure 7.6	Types of SALW used in aggravated assaults, 2002

Boxes

Box 1.1	Generating new information: Data and sources for the study
Box 1.2	UNDP weapons collection in Kosovo
Box 3.1	The SABA household survey
Box 3.2	Focus group research in Kosovo
Box 4.1	Estimating weapons possession
Box 4.2	Weapons in the political life of Kosovo
Box 4.3	The legacy of March 1997
Box 6.1	The history of weapons collection in Kosovo
Box 6.2	Celebratory fire

Executive Summary

Kosovo remains marked by more than a decade of communal strife and persecution, and the security and safety of civilians is a serious concern in post-war Kosovo. Though the incidence of reported armed violence has declined in absolute terms since the NATO campaign in 1999, civilians and international agency personnel living and working in the territory are nevertheless vulnerable. The widespread availability and misuse of small arms, particularly pistols and automatic rifles, constitutes a central challenge to the reduction of insecurity and the promotion of development throughout Kosovo.

Despite the fact that the availability of small arms predates the Ottoman presence in the region—and despite their central role in exacerbating insecurity in the 1990s and early twenty-first century—very little is known about how many weapons are circulating, how and by whom they are held, how guns are perceived, and what their impacts are on individuals and on society.

Acknowledging that small arms availability and misuse represents an impediment to the fulfilment of its core mandate, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has recently launched the Illicit Small Arms Control (ISAC) Project. ISAC has four sub-components, one of which is Weapons-in-Exchange for Development (WED). In order to better apprehend the role of small arms in Kosovo and to establish measurable benchmarks and standards for the WED, the UNDP/ISAC commissioned the Small Arms Survey to carry out a small arms baseline assessment (hereafter SABA).

viii

Through a combination of various research and survey instruments,¹ the SABA household survey sought to answer five key questions: (1) how many small arms are there in Kosovo and how are they distributed; (2) what types of weapons are most commonly reported and misused; (3) who are the primary owners and users of small arms and what are their attitudes towards weapons; (4) how are small arms transferred and what are the scale and dynamics of the small arms trade; and (5) what are the direct and indirect effects of small arms misuse on civilians? The broad findings are reviewed below.

There are an estimated 330,000–460,000 civilian small arms in Kosovo today. Though the Kosovo Police Service (KPS), the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), the international security providers, as well as various private security companies and a select group of political actors have access to or own weapons, the overwhelming majority—between 330,000 and 460,000—are held by civilians.² Small arms are variously distributed within the civilian population, both geographically and demographically. Geographically, small arms are more prevalent in rural and semi-rural areas than in urban centres. Though small arms are by nature mobile, it appears that they are more numerous in areas such as Mitrovica and Pejë/Peć. Small arms tend to be stored indoors in purpose-built caches, or buried outdoors relatively close to households. The demographic profile of small arms owners tends to be consistent with other regions of the Balkans: men above the age of 18 years.

The most common weapons in circulation are pistols and assault rifles. The types of weapons most commonly reported by UNMIK Police, as well as by focus groups and surveys, included Zastava and Tokarev pistols, as well as Kalashnikov and Zastava assault rifles. Though Zastavas and Tokarevs made up 53 per cent of all reported pistols, other types were also reported, such as Berettas (seven per cent) and Ceska Zbrojovka (six per cent). At least 85 per cent of all reported assault rifles were Kalashnikovs and 14 per cent Zastavas. Other weapons types reported include rifles and shotguns and, to a much lesser extent, rocket launchers, sub-machine guns, sniper rifles, and grenades.

Small arms are owned and used by a wide variety of actors. In addition to key security providers, such as KFOR and UNMIK Police, small arms are owned and misused by organized and semi-organized criminal actors, businessmen, and ex-combatants. Private security companies and a nominal number of politicians are also entitled to ‘weapons authorization cards’ and carry small numbers of weapons. Another category of owners includes hunters and recreational shooters, who are entitled to possess hunting and recreational weapons upon receipt of a weapons registration card.

Attitudes toward security providers vary among Kosovans. The SABA household survey indicates that attitudes towards primary security providers (KFOR, CIVPOL, KPS) vary tremendously between the Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serb populations. While the former demonstrate ample trust in KPS and to a lesser extent KFOR, Kosovo Serbs are largely sceptical and even hostile to KPS. Nevertheless, both ethnic Albanian and ethnic Serb children and youth claim to rely primarily on themselves and on weapons to ensure their security.

Kosovans do not appear to be as attached to their weapons as commonly believed. Though attitudes towards small arms among Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs vary, the SABA household survey reveals that 47 per cent of Kosovans believed that there were ‘too many guns in society’, and only 21 per cent disagreed with this statement. Also, over 50 per cent of respondents thought it ‘very likely’ or ‘somewhat likely’ that people in their neighbourhood would hand in their guns in exchange for investments in their community. Finally, more than 50 per cent of respondents claimed that they would not choose to own a weapon even if it were legal.

Small arms are trafficked primarily from Serbia and Albania and the trade is relatively low in comparison with other Balkan states. The primary source of weapons to Kosovo is Serbia (Yugoslavian-manufactured and comparatively expensive pistols) and Albania (Chinese-manufactured and relatively low-cost assault rifles). There are several reasons why the trade and trafficking of small arms in Kosovo is limited: specifically, the high presence of international and national security forces and the low profits involved, in comparison with the trafficking of women, cigarettes, or fuel. A looming concern, however, is the weakness of border control, which means that small arms trafficking could increase if the demand for small arms surged in either Kosovo or FYROM.

Fatal and non-fatal firearm injuries have decreased since the latter half of 1999. Based on an epidemiological study commissioned by SAS, it appears that the number of reported cases decreased by more than 50 per cent between mid-1999 and 2002. Although reporting rates are undoubtedly low and public health capacities limited, it appears that this trend is set to continue in 2003.

Criminality, particularly crime involving small arms, is prevalent in Kosovo. Although violent crime rates (homicide, robbery, and assault) in Kosovo are analogous to or even lower than its neighbours, an estimated 72 per cent of all reported murders in 2002 were committed with small arms. This is extremely high when set in the context of other post-communist states: fewer than 13 per cent of all homicides in Estonia and 11 per cent in Hungary were committed with small arms, for example.

Moreover, small arms were more than twice as likely to be used in robberies than in Estonia and four times more likely than in Hungary. It also appears that, in Kosovo, the guns themselves are part of the problem, since the ‘substitution effect’ (when one type of tool becomes scarce, it is replaced with another to commit a crime) does not appear to be strong.

Firearm-related incidents tend to be rare in schools and colleges. In a survey of 15 schools in Kosovo, the SABA household survey reveals that violence is more associated with weapons such as knives and

chains than with pistols or assault rifles. Small arms only occasionally substitute for other weapons. Respondents acknowledge, however, the precarious nature of security in many of the schools.

Kosovo faces a wide range of structural challenges, from widespread unemployment to substantial deficits in infrastructure and education. Although attention must be devoted to a number of legitimate developmental concerns, efforts to redress the economic situation cannot neglect targeted interventions designed to reduce violence and insecurity, including that related to small arms availability and misuse.

The piloting of a Weapons-in-Exchange for Development programme in the summer of 2003, under the auspices of the UNDP/ISAC Project, will be an important indicator of whether a Kosovo-wide weapons for development strategy is desirable and feasible. Though WED planners and participants must set relatively modest objectives—given the scale of the task at hand and the risks involved—their efforts should be supported at the highest level.

The findings of the SABA household survey suggest that any future WED should focus primarily on pistols and assault rifles, particularly those in the hands of civilians. People in possession of other types of potentially more lethal weapons, including sniper rifles and machine guns, should also be encouraged to exchange their weapons voluntarily for development incentives. Those responsible for any intervention should recognize, however, the varied levels of trust among indigenous Serb and Albanian populations. Perhaps most important, the SABA household survey indicates that the involvement of local leadership and the participation of communities in defining their own security and development-related needs will be integral to the success of any future WED.

I. Introduction

Small arms have been at the heart of the upheavals in the Balkans over the last decade and a half. One of the most forceful images of the wars in Bosnia is that of snipers killing and maiming civilians in Sarajevo. In Albania, the most dramatic event of the 1990s was the looting of more than half a million small arms from army stockpiles in 1997, in a desperate response to the failed pyramid savings scheme in which many Albanians lost their meagre assets. In FYROM, images of the NATO-led operation 'Essential Harvest' often illustrate how war was narrowly averted in 2001. In this weapons collection effort, ethnic Albanian nationalists handed over approximately 3,800 small arms and light weapons to international forces. In Kosovo, finally, the armed KLA fighter remains a potent image of the desperation of the Kosovo Albanians after a decade of increasing oppression by Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic and his followers. All these images of guns in the Balkans fit only too neatly with long-standing images in other parts of Europe of the region as 'unruly' and strongly attached to the gun.

This study examines the issue of small arms in Kosovo. Kosovo is still marked by more than a decade of ethnically-based persecution and by the NATO-led war against Milosevic's Yugoslavia that this oppression finally triggered.³ Kosovo is thought to be home to a large number of guns, many related to the recent conflict. However, not much is known about the situation in Kosovo with respect to guns. How many guns are there? Who holds them? How are they traded? What effects do they have on Kosovan society? How are they perceived?

Page 1

The present study aims to provide some answers to these and related questions. The study, officially labelled the Small Arms Baseline Assessment (SABA), was commissioned by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) under the auspices of its Illicit Small Arms Control (ISAC) Project in Kosovo. It is designed particularly to inform the Weapons-in-Exchange for Development (WED) component of the programme in the territory (see Box 1.1 and 1.2). It thus serves as a background document for assessing the feasibility of collecting weapons in Kosovo. However, it is conceived of as a reference document on small arms generally in the territory, and thus addresses a much wider audience.

Box 1.1 Generating new information: Data and sources for the study

The present study is based on a range of material, obtained from sources such as:

- a 1,264 person face-to-face household survey designed by SAS and distributed throughout Kosovo (for further details, see Box 3.1 and Annex I and II);
- twelve focus group discussions with 5–11 participants each, undertaken in four locations (three Kosovo Albanian and one Kosovo Serb) in Kosovo (see Box 3.2);
- interviews with 15 ex-KLA fighters from all seven operational zones of the KLA;
- interviews with 29 teachers and administrators at 15 schools throughout Kosovo;
- interviews with key personnel within the Kosovo Provisional Institutions of Self-Government, UNMIK, KFOR, OSCE, and other actors in the security sector;
- the UNMIK Police database (Kosovo Police Information System, KPIS); and
- the database of the Pristina University Hospital.

Sections II and III of this study review the general political and military context of the small arms situation in Kosovo. Section IV provides estimates of the number of guns in Kosovo, a difficult task given the porous nature of borders in the area and the secrecy surrounding arms possession. The porous borders are considered in Section V, which focuses on illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW). Section VI examines the cultural and historical context of small arms possession and use in Kosovo, including the history of weapons collection by the Ottomans and Yugoslavs. It also elucidates how traditional values associated with the gun have been transmitted to the present time. Section VII takes a closer look at the various impacts that SALW have had in Kosovo, ranging from direct effects (death and injury), to indirect effects (such as crime and impact on children in their school environment).

The main findings of the report are listed below.

- Approximately 330,000-460,000 guns are held by civilians in Kosovo. This number is based on a rate of approximately 60–70 per cent gun ownership among households in the territory, and on an average rate of gun holdings among these households of circa 1.4–1.7 weapons. This number accounts for the large majority of total weapons possession in the territory.
- The most common types of weapons in Kosovo are pistols and assault rifles. The most common pistols are Zastavas and TTs, and the most common assault rifles are Kalashnikovs and Zastavas.
- Police seizure data indicates that Mitrovica and Pejë/Peć are more densely-armed areas than Gjilan/Gnjilane and Prizren, with Pristina falling in the middle. Geographically, there are fewer guns in city centres than in the countryside.
- Apart from criminals, it appears that businessmen and ex-combatants are particularly well armed. Small arms are either stored in purpose-built concealments or buried outside the house.
- So far, weapons amnesties—although this will, one hopes, change—have been lacking in terms of domestic ‘ownership’, with limited participation of the Kosovo politicians and public figures in KFOR/UNMIK weapons collection efforts.
- Weapons collection has been less successful in the ethnic Serb communities. This is arguably linked to their negative perception of the main official security providers in Kosovo, in particular the KPS, but also CIVPOL.
- Gun smuggling appears to be limited, especially when compared to other forms of smuggling such as trafficking in cigarettes, women, and fuel. Gun smugglers use the same routes as for other types of trafficking.
- Recent attempts to re-create a legislative framework for gun possession and transfer in Kosovo, and in particular the possession of hunting guns, have met with success but are to date incomplete.
- Gun injuries have decreased substantially between the immediate post-war period (the second half of 1999) and 2002.
- Guns are nevertheless prevalent in crime, and are present in more than 70 per cent of all murders.
- Crime guns are mainly pistols and Kalashnikovs.

Box 1.2 UNDP weapons collection in Kosovo

UNDP is not new to small arms control in the western Balkan region: It has organized weapons collection programmes in Albania (Gramsh and later Elbasan, Dibra, and other locations). Along with the Stability Pact, it operates the South Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC). Moreover, it is currently starting a programme in FYROM and is considering one in southern Serbia and Montenegro.

In Kosovo, the UNDP/ISAC Project aims to sensitize the population to the small arms problem, remove illicit weapons from society, reduce the negative effects of small arms, foster popular participation in political decision-making, while at the same time promoting development at the local level. The ISAC Project is comprised of four components, namely: 1) Support to the Small Arms Regulatory Framework; 2) Civil Society Engagement; 3) Weapons-in-Exchange for Development (WED) and 4) Weapons Destruction. The WED component will be piloted in two Kosovan municipalities in the summer of 2003. This will be the first application of the WED collection model in Kosovo. If successful, it might lead to a wider WED programme across the whole of Kosovo. The pilot WED is financed by the government of Japan.

At this first stage, the collection effort under the WED is centred on two municipalities, Vushtrri/Vučitrn and Viti/Vitina. These were selected according to two objective criteria:

- (a) *feasibility*: the likelihood of success of a WED programme in the municipality; and
- (b) *volatility*: the relative need for a WED programme in a given community.

SAS measured feasibility and volatility using a number of economic, political, and social indicators, disaggregated by municipality. The indicators were weighted and computed into feasibility and volatility indices. The feasibility index included electoral participation rates, tax collection, and a composite index of selected responses to a 1,264 household survey (henceforth referred to as the SABA household survey), commissioned by UNDP/ISAC and conducted across the territory by Index Kosova in February 2003 (see Box 3.1 for details). The volatility index was composed of data on crime levels, gun seizures, ethnic distribution, gun-related injuries, and selected responses to the SABA household survey. Annex 3 lists the variables in the indices; Annex 4 ranks the municipalities according to the two indices.

The WED is participatory: local communities are invited to take an active part in the programme. Such participation will occur at different stages. At the initial stage, the villages and neighbourhoods must express a willingness to participate in the programme, and must indicate how many guns they can collect from local inhabitants. They also have to come up with concrete development projects and a proposal for spending development funds that UNDP would provide. The process is meant to include not only community leaders but also a representative group of 'ordinary' citizens. At a later stage, the residents must actively mobilize to contribute weapons in order to receive a share of development funding.

Some analysts have expressed scepticism towards weapons collection in Kosovo, arguing that it amounts to 'an attempt to micro-manage particular aspects of day-to-day security in Kosovo', which cannot succeed 'when fundamental political and security issues remain unresolved' (Paes and Matveeva, 2003).⁴ However, only four per cent of respondents to the SABA household survey believed that guns were held for 'political security' reasons, while 69 per cent believed that weapons were held for personal security reasons. More than 50 per cent of respondents also thought it very, or somewhat, likely that people would turn in weapons in exchange for investments in their community (see Annex 1).

II. Kosovo: Difficult past, unclear future

Kosovo is a fragile entity, surrounded by unstable neighbours. It suffers from similar ills as many other parts of the Balkans—tense inter-ethnic relations.⁵ In the late 1990s, persecution of the Kosovo Albanians led to an armed NATO intervention. The NATO-led bombing campaign, which lasted from 24 March to 2 June 1999, did not resolve all problems, nor did it answer the question of the future status of Kosovo. Kosovo—while still formally part of the so-called State Union of Serbia and Montenegro dominated by Serbia—has, since the war, been a United Nations protectorate under the UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). As a consequence, ethnic Albanians, who form approximately 88 per cent of the population of Kosovo, no longer have to fear ethnic oppression. However, members of the Kosovo Serb minority of the territory (circa 6–7 per cent in 2000)⁶ have, for the most part, not been able to return to their homes. For security reasons, the remaining Kosovo Serb enclaves are, in part, isolated from the rest of Kosovo and protected by the multinational NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR).

Apart from fear of persecution and the lack of economic opportunities, Kosovo Serbs are also hesitant to return to what might one day become a separate state with few links to Serbia. It appears to be ‘push’ rather than ‘pull’ factors that account for the trickle of Kosovo Serbs returning: life in the refugee centres in Serbia is difficult and the chances of finding a job are slim, as Serbia remains in deep economic crisis. To date, there is indeed not much to ‘pull’ Kosovo Serb refugees back to Kosovo. Unemployment rates are very high (see Section IV).⁷ Homes have often been destroyed, or are occupied by new tenants. The procedures for reclaiming property are slow, and recourse to the courts does not help the re-integration of Kosovo Serbs into local communities. Freedom of movement is severely restricted, as Kosovo Serbs often are reluctant to leave their enclaves without KFOR escort. This obviously means that their social contacts and access to health care and basic necessities are limited.⁸

Efforts at building democracy in Kosovo have been rather successful. Since the establishment of the UN administration, municipal elections have been held twice, on 28 October 2000 and on 26 October 2002. Kosovo-wide elections took place for the first time on 17 November 2001. During all three elections, moderate ethnic Albanian parties, and in particular the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) of Ibrahim Rugova, were more successful than the more radical groupings.⁹ The Kosovo Serb population boycotted the first municipal elections totally, and also partially the Kosovo-wide elections and the second municipal elections (ICG, 2001; Biele, 2002).¹⁰ One reason for this was that Serb politicians in Belgrade implicitly or explicitly encouraged them to do so; another reason was pressure from some local Kosovo Serbs, such as the ‘Bridge Watchers’ (see below), on their fellows not to vote (Paes and Matveeva, 2003, p. 38). However, in 2002, the highest turnout was in many mixed municipalities, such as Shtërpçë/Štrpce, where Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs alike feared the domination of the other community, and thus showed up at the polls in large numbers (Biele, 2002).¹¹

A number of seats of the 120-seat Kosovo parliamentary assembly have been permanently reserved for the various minorities in Kosovo, including ten for the Kosovo Serb minority (over and above the seats they gain in an election).¹² After political in-fighting, the assembly finally elected Ibrahim Rugova as president, and Bajram Rexhepi as prime minister in early March 2002. Actual political power is, however, only gradually being transferred from UNMIK to the elected bodies.¹³ In December 2002,

a UN Security Council delegation to Kosovo gained 'the firm impression that local ownership and commitment to these processes [improvement of rule of law, return of minority groups, privatization etc.] have been less than could have been expected'. It advised UNMIK to make further efforts to involve the local institutions and political leaders in policy formulation and implementation (UNMIK, 2003).

Kosovo's neighbours also affect its stability. Across from the northern and eastern border of Kosovo, in southern Serbia, there is a range of towns (in particular Presevo, Medvedja, and Bujanovac) with an ethnic Albanian majority. From early 2000 to the end of May 2001, ethnic Albanians fought Serbian police forces in the area. The ethnic Albanian militia, the so-called UCPMB (the Liberation Army of Preshevo, Medvedja, and Bujanovac), was an offshoot from the KLA. A peace agreement, negotiated by NATO, has led to a temporary and fragile stabilization of the situation. Nevertheless, 2002 saw renewed flare-ups of violence in the Presevo valley.

In 2001, Kosovo's neighbour to the west, Montenegro, threatened to secede from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The situation was at least temporarily resolved in March 2002, when the EU brokered an agreement on a looser union between Serbia and Montenegro, under the new name of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. The union will be maintained at least until 2006, when referenda on independence will be held in both regions. Had Montenegro left the federation, it would have been very difficult to justify maintaining Kosovo within it.¹⁴

To the south-west, Kosovo borders Albania, which has experienced long periods of lawlessness over the past decade and a half, and whose population today is still substantially poorer than its brethren in Kosovo.¹⁵ Finally, during 2001 FYROM to the south was close to full-scale war between ethnic Albanian militias and the ethnic Macedonian-dominated state apparatus (a splinter group from the KLA, the National Liberation Army, NLA, was responsible for the fighting on the ethnic Albanian side). Many of the ethnic Albanian insurgents are reported to have used Kosovo as a base, and are still not fully disarmed.¹⁶ The situation is still unsettled and there are indications (such as increased illicit funding activities and extremist manifestations) that renewed fighting might be on the horizon.¹⁷

The unsettled status of Kosovo—whether it will remain a part of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro or become independent¹⁸—coupled with the strong inter-ethnic hostility, has slowed economic development of the region. Economic activity is strongest around the international presence (service industries catering to UNMIK, OSCE, EU, KFOR and other international personnel, for instance), and there is fear that no long-term, sustainable economic recovery is in sight. At least half the population lives in poverty, and unemployment levels are a staggering 50 per cent.¹⁹

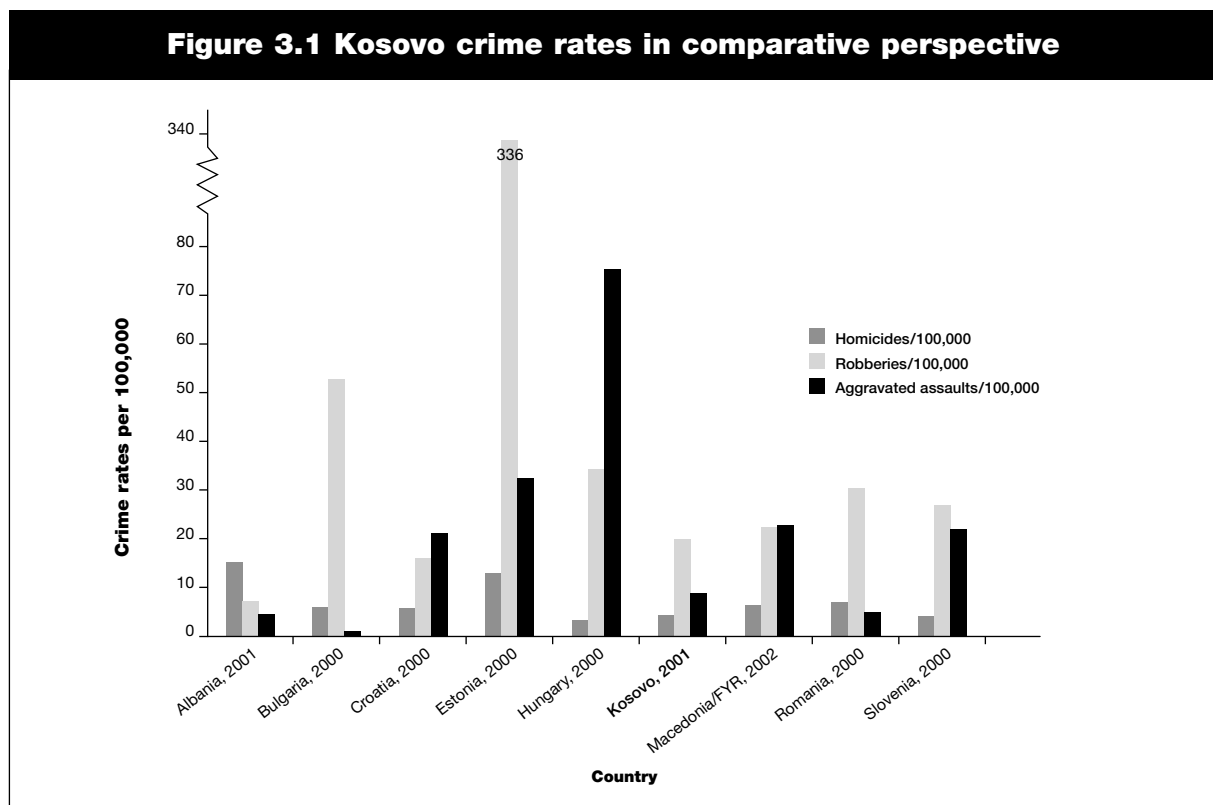
Map of Kosovo municipalities



III. Perceptions of security and security providers

Types and scale of violence and insecurity in Kosovo

The combination of regional and domestic political insecurity, inter-ethnic tension, lack of economic prospects, and its own post-conflict status has contributed to the perception of Kosovo as a violent society. However, reported crime levels have decreased substantially over the last few years. In 2001 there were 89 homicides (approximately 4.45 per 100,000 inhabitants), 401 cases of robbery (20.05 per 100,000), and 186 serious assaults (9.3 per 100,000).²⁰ These figures are analogous to those of other countries in the Balkan region and across central and eastern Europe; if anything, they are lower. However, Kosovo crime levels might be underestimated in official data in view of a certain reticence on the part of inhabitants to report crime to the police.²¹ In addition to under-reporting, another potential reason for low reported crime rates is the significant international police and army presence in the territory, which depresses crime levels.



Sources: KPIS; Interpol; SOK (2002)

Murders these days occur largely between Kosovo Albanian men. Inter-ethnic murder rates have gone down substantially, and less than one-fourth of the victims are women.²² In this respect Kosovo differs little from other countries (for details of gun use in crime, see Section VII of this report).

One concern in Kosovo today is that political and criminal violence are becoming interlinked through increasingly well-organized crime structures. The KLA has been split up, with parts of its leadership turning to politics (mainly the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo, AAK, and the Democratic Party of

Kosovo, PDK), and others to business, organized crime, or continued paramilitary activities. But the split is not a neat one, as business, organized crime, and regular and extremist politics are linked in various ways. It is important to note that this is not confined to ex-KLA structures. The links are strongest in extreme nationalist organizations, which are thought to finance their activities mainly through crime, as most recently through a series of kidnappings.

Intimidation of people in key political and administrative positions is pervasive. This is evidenced by the fact that it has been difficult to keep local Kosovans in senior positions within the customs service. Various types of pressure are also exercised by ex-KLA groupings. For example, it has sometimes been claimed that mass demonstrations related to the KLA (such as the 18,000-strong protest march on 27 February 2003 in Pristina against the turning in of suspected ethnic Albanian war criminals to the war crimes tribunal in the Hague (TOL, 2003)) would be substantially smaller were people not pressurised (although not necessarily by the threat of violence) into participating. A number of recent explosions that coincided with important political events have caused some concern in Kosovo. However, the most serious recent attack was a shooting. In January 2003 Tahir Zemaj, an ex-KLA commander turned politician, was shot dead together with members of his family (UNDP, 2003, pp. 26–7).

When asked in a poll of May–August 2002 how safe they felt in the streets, 54 per cent of Kosovans stated that they felt ‘somewhat’ or ‘very’ safe. Three months later, this figure had risen to 59 per cent (UNDP, 2003, p. ii). There are ethnic differences in perceptions of security, however. While 59 per cent of Kosovo Albanians felt safe in the streets, only 41 per cent of Kosovo Serbs did so.²³ Among Kosovo Serbs, 42 per cent felt ‘not too safe’ or ‘not safe at all’ at home alone, while 26 per cent of Kosovo Albanians felt the same (UNDP, 2003, Table A.8). However, there is a general sense among the population that security is improving. When asked in the SABA household survey whether security in their area had become better or worse than the year earlier, 65 per cent of the ethnic Albanian respondents said that it had improved, and only 11 per cent said it had deteriorated. Among ethnic Serbs, answers were quite different, with 70 per cent estimating that the situation had stayed the same, 19 per cent that it had improved, and six per cent that it had become worse (see Annex 1).

Box 3.1 The SABA household survey

From 4 to 10 February 2003, Index Kosova conducted a face-to-face household survey with 1,264 people around Kosovo, which was commissioned by UNDP/ISAC as a part of the SABA. Both Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs were interviewed.²⁴ The topic of the survey was security, safety, and guns in Kosovo. The survey contained some 40 questions on experiences of threat and violence, perception of security and security providers, attitudes towards guns and various gun control measures, number and types of guns believed to be in circulation, etc. (selected responses to the questionnaire are presented in Annex 1 to this report; the complete questionnaire is found in Annex 2).

This proved to be a very sensitive topic. Although questions were posed indirectly (for example, asking about guns in the neighbourhood rather than about the respondent’s own possible guns), this was the first time that Index Kosova experienced refusals when conducting a survey. Respondents also frequently asked whether the interviewers were sent by KFOR, UNMIK, or KPS, and expressed concern that raids or arrests would follow the interviews.

Such process-related problems notwithstanding, the survey produced very interesting final results, in particular revealing differences between the ethnic communities and various demographic groups (age, rural/city, etc.), which are highlighted throughout this report.

A more complete picture of the causes of insecurity is provided by the participatory focus group research conducted by Index Kosova for this study in four locations in Kosovo (Box 3.2). When asked about factors causing insecurity, people did not necessarily evoke crime. Men tended to stress political factors, such as the final status of Kosovo, limited power of the governing bodies, non-functional courts, and enclaves, although enigmatic killings, organized crime, and drugs were also cited. Women more often mentioned fast and reckless driving,²⁵ dark streets, lack of pavements, bad roads, stray dogs, and pollution. Smuggling, crime, and violence were also ranked as factors making for insecurity. Children and youth, in contrast, were more concerned about crime. High on their lists of factors were criminals, killings, drug dealing, trafficking in humans, kidnappings, and rape.

The Kosovo Serb focus groups were generally much more concerned with crime than their Kosovo Albanian counterparts, as men, women, and children/youth all ranked various types of crime (drugs, rape, attacks on children, and kidnapping) high on their lists. The men in particular saw crime as coming mainly from the other community. Kosovo Serbs also ranked issues such as transport to and from enclaves, Kosovo independence, and the centralization of Kosovo²⁶ high among security concerns.

The issue of guns came up spontaneously in some of these discussions on factors of insecurity. In Gjilan/Gnjilane, unlicensed weapons were one of the factors of insecurity mentioned in the male focus group discussion (albeit not as one of the main threats). In Prizren, women, men, and children/youth alike listed weapons among their main security concerns. For women, unlicensed weapons were the top security concern. The children and youth of Prizren ranked 'armed people' second, and the men ranked 'weapons' fourth among risk factors. In Mitrovica-South and in the Kosovo Serb focus groups, however, guns were not mentioned. On the whole, this shows that there is a certain concern with weapons among the population in Kosovo. This is corroborated by the SABA household survey. When asked whether they thought there were too many guns in society, 47 per cent of ethnic Albanian respondents and 46 per cent of the ethnic Serb sub-sample answered 'yes', while 20 and 32 per cent, respectively, answered 'no' (see Annex 1).

Perceptions of security providers

For any weapons collection programme to succeed, people have to trust those that are charged with providing security to the community. When asked whom they would contact if their car, motorcycle, or other asset were robbed, 90 per cent of Kosovo Albanian respondents said that they would turn to the KPS, and a further six per cent would go to CIVPOL.²⁷ If their lives were threatened the respondents would do the same: 87 per cent would go to the KPS, four per cent to CIVPOL, and three per cent to KFOR. At the same time, 30 per cent said that they were 'very likely' or 'somewhat likely' to shoot/attack the thief if possible; 38 per cent were 'very likely' or 'somewhat likely' to fight back if their lives were threatened. Eighty per cent were 'very likely' or 'somewhat likely' to turn to relatives, friends, or neighbours if something valuable was stolen from them or they were seriously threatened. Ideally, according to 71 per cent of the respondents, KPS should be responsible for security. Nine per cent believed responsibility should lie with KFOR, and eight per cent with UNMIK/CIVPOL (see Annex 1).

Kosovo Serbs were roughly as likely as Kosovo Albanians to either fight back/shoot the thief or turn to relatives, friends, or neighbours. They were much less likely to go to the KPS, however: only 13–17 per cent would go to the KPS if they were threatened or had had an asset stolen from them. When asked who, ideally, should be responsible for security, 38 per cent chose MUP²⁸/Serb Police/Army, 28 per cent local militias, and only eight per cent KPS. These findings confirm earlier ones: in a survey from November 2002, more than 95 per cent of Kosovo Albanians declared themselves 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the KPS. More than 78 per cent showed the same positive attitude towards CIVPOL. The Kosovo Serbs expressed almost exactly opposite opinions: more than 90 per cent were 'dissatisfied' or 'not

at all satisfied' with the KPS, and 77 per cent held the same opinion about CIVPOL (UNDP, 2003, p. 27). The dissatisfaction with the KPS is also underlined by the fact that Kosovo Serbs in KPS uniform have faced verbal abuse and even physical attacks in northern Kosovo (Paes and Matveeva, 2003, pp. 39–40).

The focus group research confirms this, but makes interesting additions. Since the discussion centred on security generally rather than on safety from crime, KFOR took on a larger importance, as did KPC and firefighters among Kosovo Albanian respondents. Family also ranked high among security providers, especially among women. Men in Gjilan/Gnjilane and Prizren mentioned 'weapons with licence' among important, although not top, security providers. A worrying sign is that children and youth stressed self-defence and self-defence weapons among the security providers. For the male Kosovo Serb participants, the Yugoslav army, the Serb ministry of Interior, and Serb police were ranked high among security providers. Personal weaponry, self-organization, and hunter's clubs ranked eight, ninth, and tenth among security providers for Kosovo Serb men. The male focus group also stated that 'if they had been given the chance to possess arms legally, it would have been a great provider of security for them'. Women did not mention weapons, but the Kosovo Serb children and youth, similarly to Kosovo Albanian ones, ranked arms as the top security provider.

Box 3.2 Focus group research in Kosovo

Participatory research techniques can be used to gather in-depth information on a variety of topics, including sensitive issues such as the gun question in Kosovo. In Kosovo, such techniques, in the form of focus group discussions, were organized in four locations throughout the territory (Gjilan/Gnjilane, south Mitrovica, Prizren, and the municipality of Pristina; Kosovo Serb inhabitants from Laplje Selo, Caglavica, and Gracanica). In each location, the participants were randomly selected, and divided into three sub-groups: children/youth (9–17 years old), women, and men. Index Kosova and Gallup International conducted the participatory research, commissioned by UNDP/ISAC, in January and February 2003.

Participants were asked to do five exercises:

1. *Defining factors of insecurity*: First, participants were invited to list freely all factors which made them feel insecure or unsafe. In a second step, they ranked these factors in pairs. In that way, a ranking of various factors of insecurity was obtained.
2. *Identifying security providers*: Participants were invited to list all institutions/organizations/means that they would turn to if they felt unsafe. They then ranked the importance of the security provider and its proximity to them.
3. *Mapping security*: Participants were asked to draw a map of their town/neighbourhood, indicating unsafe spots and places where small arms can be found.
4. *Drawing a time line* (men and women only): Participants were asked to draw a graph of how levels of insecurity had changed over the last ten years, explaining why peaks and troughs occurred.
5. *Small arms and their consequences*: Participants were invited to list all types of SALW that they had heard of or seen in the previous twelve months. In a second step, they ranked these weapons to arrive at a list of the most dangerous weapons types. Lastly, participants were asked to list all potential impacts/consequences of the weapons on the list.

In Kosovo, where there is a range of other information sources at researchers' disposal, participatory research techniques are arguably less crucial for the research than in information-scarce environments. However, as is apparent in the subsequent sections of the report, participatory research in the Kosovo context has been very useful in triangulating and verifying data obtained through other means.

IV. How many guns are there in Kosovo?

The various gun holders in Kosovo

The total holdings of guns by civilians in Kosovo can be estimated at between 330,000 and 460,000. Almost all of these are held illicitly (as of May 2003, only 20,000 hunting weapons were legally held).

This section details how this estimated figure of civilian ownership was arrived at, and explains how these weapons are distributed, geographically and demographically. It is important to note, however, that a large number of different actors hold weapons in Kosovo, and that the distinctions between some of them are blurred. Apart from civilians, weapons holders include ex-combatants, private security firms, militias (both Kosovo Serb and Kosovo Albanian), the Kosovo police (KPS), the civilian emergency service (KPC), as well as the international police and military forces present on the territory (CIVPOL, KFOR). In particular, distinguishing between a civilian weapon and one held by an individual who may be easily mobilized into an organized militia during political strife is difficult. Nevertheless, weapons ownership patterns for each category have been estimated separately below.

The total estimated holdings of guns by indigenous Kosovans (i.e. including non-civilian holdings such as that of the KPS) can be estimated at between 350,000 and 480,000 weapons (see Table 4.1). This estimate still excludes the weapons of the international police force (some 4,300 foreign officers in April 2003), as well as those of KFOR (which had roughly 28,000 troops in Kosovo as of March 2003).²⁹ The above figures imply that the large majority of all small arms are in civilian hands.

Table 4.1. Total estimated gun holdings by Kosovans (licit and illicit), 2003

KPS	KPC	WAC holders	Civilians (illicit and legally held)	Kosovo Serb militia	Kosovo Albanian militia (including the NLA)	Total
5,200	200 (+1,800)	200+	330,000-460,000	240-400	11,800-15,800	350,000-480,000

In contrast to the other parts of former Yugoslavia, in particular Serbia and Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is no indigenous production of small arms in Kosovo, except for the odd improvised weapons.³⁰

Law-enforcement and KPC weapons

As elsewhere, law enforcement weapons in Kosovo are a fraction of total weapons holdings, at just above 5,000 guns.³¹ With their withdrawal in June 1999, Serbian police ceased to be the law-enforcement entity in Kosovo.³² Their law enforcement and public order duties have been assumed by a new organization, UNMIK Police, which includes the international CIVPOL, and the KPS. They operate under the orders of the international authorities. However, in the Kosovo Serb parts and especially in north Mitrovica, CIVPOL and the KPS are only partially effective. Instead, unofficial militia structures, such as the so-called Bridge Watchers, ensure 'law and order' (the holdings of militias such as these are discussed below).

The Kosovo Police Service is a civil police organization with a personnel strength of 5,185 officers in January 2003.³³ According to UNMIK sources, they hold a total of about 5,200 weapons, mainly side arms (Glock 9mm pistols), but also 75 AK-47s for border patrolling and 32 H&K MP-5s for close protection.³⁴ The upgrading of the firepower of the border guards is a response to the increasingly well-armed smugglers crossing the border. The choice of AK-47s has been motivated by the weapons seizures in the territory, which consist largely of AKs. It is therefore a cheap option for equipping the police. With approximately one firearm per officer, the KPS is slightly less well-armed than many of its foreign colleagues: the typical police armament multiplier of 1.2 firearms and light weapons per sworn officer would have yielded an inventory of approximately 6,200 weapons.³⁵

Created in exchange for the demobilization of the KLA, the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), or *Trupat Mbrojtëse Të Kosovës* (TMK) in Albanian, has an active corps of 3,000 members and an auxiliary branch of 2,000 men and women. It is responsible for disaster relief, search and rescue operations such as that undertaken after the earthquake in April 2002 in Gjilan/Gnjilane, assistance in demining, aiding in humanitarian assistance in remote areas, and helping in the reconstruction after the war. It has no role in law enforcement or law-and-order tasks. The KPC continues to be viewed with suspicion in international circles in particular, dismissed by many as a day job for an insurgent organization with a reputation for having turned to organized crime (Davis, 2002, pp. 14–15). Charged exclusively with responsibility for disaster and humanitarian assistance, it is supposed to operate unarmed, but it is allowed 200 weapons to guard its facilities. As with the KPS, these are mainly side arms and AK-47s.³⁶ Beyond these weapons, the KPC is also allowed to hold a certain number of ceremonial weapons and, more importantly, KFOR holds 1,800 small arms in trust for the KPC.³⁷ Today, these weapons are in rather poor condition. Although the KPC has the right to KFOR-supervised access to the weapons, the organization has not been maintaining them. This could indicate that the KPC, which strives to become the national army in case Kosovo one day becomes independent, has no shortage of better quality and/or more powerful guns, or ready access to such guns.

Page 12

Whether the KPC as an organization maintains a covert arsenal of its own is doubtful, however. It is more likely that its individual members, or groups of members, have easy access to arms (although as members of the KPC they face harsher corrective measures than the ordinary civilian if guns are found in their possession).

Other parts of the Kosovan security sector also hold weapons, but in small quantities. Prison guards patrolling the prison walls of the high-security prison in Pristina are armed with AK 47s, as the prison has faced attempted break-ins as well as breakouts. The customs officials are unarmed, although their mobile units (mainly fighting cigarette smuggling) are to be equipped with non-lethal weapons in the near future.³⁸

Outside of the public security structures, private security companies also have arms. Those operating legally can apply for Weapons Authorization Cards (so-called WAC-cards, see Section VI for details) from UNMIK. It is quite possible that some security personnel who thrive in the grey zone between legality and illegality have access to a wide variety of small arms.

Militia armaments

The extent to which insurgents in Kosovo are armed is especially difficult to establish, for two reasons. First, ethnic Albanian fighters could, and still can, shift their operations with apparent ease between Albania, Kosovo, and parts of FYROM. This flexibility undermines strict territorial divisions of arms

holdings, and points to the need for regional or militia-based estimates of stocks. Second, the distinction between combatants and civilians is murky, blurring the one between civilian and insurgent armaments. This is also true for the much smaller Kosovo Serb militias.

Table 4.2. KLA and Kosovo Serb militia armaments in 1999

KLA militia	Kosovo Serb militias
32,000-40,000	9,900-13,800

Estimating the scale of KLA armaments historically is complicated by the fact that its final size in 1999 is unknown, and also by competing claims regarding how well armed it was at the time. Estimates for June 1999, just before Slobodan Milosevic capitulated to NATO demands, range from a low of 8,000–10,000 (Small Arms Survey, 2002, p. 290) to a total of 20,000 insurgents in KLA ranks (Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, 2001, p. 14). The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) received 25,723 applications for reintegration assistance when it started to register KLA combatants in late 1999 (Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, 2001, p. 14). According to KFOR estimates, there were about 15,000 KLA members in 1998, at the peak of the fighting, which seems to confirm the larger figures of about 20,000 KLA fighters in 1999 (forces tend to swell as the prospect of victory grows).³⁹ An estimate of 20,000 KLA men is therefore reasonable.

Whether and how all of the combatants were armed (especially the latecomers) is unclear. It seems, however, that possession of SALW was an important marker, even for those who took very little part in the actual fighting. According to one ex-KLA fighter interviewed, ‘small arms were... used by some people to show off as ex-KLA soldiers even though they became involved in the KLA very late or even joined the KLA after the war’.⁴⁰

Using the conservative Small Arms Survey ‘insurgent multiplier’ of 1.6 weapons per combatant (see Box 4.1) as a starting point, the total KLA arsenal at the end of the war, in June 1999, can be first estimated at about 32,000 small arms and light weapons. A factor that could increase the ratio of arms to combatants is the pillaging of the neighbouring Albanian army weapons depots by a desperate population in 1997 (see Box 4.3 for details). As a result, the KLA almost certainly became a well-equipped guerrilla movement: many argue that it was with the 1997 events in Albania that the KLA was transformed into a military force to be reckoned with. This is confirmed by the interviews undertaken for this report with 15 ex-KLA members. While most of those interviewed thought that few weapons were acquired in the period up to 1997, nine of them indicated that Albania was the most important channel for weapons after 1997. One ex-KLA combatant describes these journeys to smuggle weapons:

We went there in different groups, sometimes they were big groups of 50 to 300 people and sometimes we went in small groups of five to 20 people... In Northern Albanian villages... we would load the weapons (usually AK-47, RPG and smaller amounts of mortars and field guns) and munitions onto our back; we would load the horses and donkeys as well. Then we would return again on that road full of risks and physical difficulties.⁴¹

Thirteen of the interviewees mention Albania, together with Serbia and Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and FYROM, as places where weapons were bought. Interviewees believe that the KLA seized very small quantities of arms from Serb forces during the fighting, approximately 1.5–2 per cent of the total weapon amounts of the KLA. In contrast, according to the ex-KLA members interviewed, weapons bought from sources in Serbia amounted to 5–25 per cent of total KLA weapons.

Taking the pillaging of Albanian weapons arsenals into account, the insurgent multiplier might have to be pushed up to as much as two or more guns per combatant. This would mean that the KLA stockpiles amounted to 40,000 or more in 1999, which gives the range of 32,000–40,000 weapons noted in Table 4.2.

Under its initial arrangement with KFOR, the KLA agreed to hand over all its weapons except short-barrelled, non-automatic ones, within 90 days.⁴² During the 90-day period, the KLA handed in about 8,500 firearms and large quantities of other weapons, including: approximately 7,000 rifles (3,000 automatic rifles, 2,000 semi-automatic, and 2,000 bolt-action), approximately 300 side weapons (mostly semi-automatic pistols), 700 machine guns (most of them light), 200 mortars, some 300 anti-tank weapons, fewer than 20 air-defence weapons, 27,000 grenades, and more than 1,200 mines. Moreover, more than six million rounds of SALW ammunition were handed in. Confiscation from the KLA started during those 90 days, and yielded more than a thousand rifles, almost 400 pistols and revolvers, and lesser numbers of machine guns, anti-tank weapons, grenades, mines, and ammunition.⁴³

Page 14

The relatively low numbers of arms handed over by the KLA were explained by the KLA military commander Agim Ceku in the following terms:

At the end of the bombing campaign, we had 20,000 soldiers, but many of those, maybe even 50 percent, were drafted and had no arms. They had to share one weapon. We were never short of fighters, but had the problem of weapons—both in quantity and in quality. (Cited in Heinmann-Grueder and Paes, 2001, p. 19.)

Nevertheless, there is wide agreement that the KLA was not fully disarmed (Ripley, 2000, p. 21; Heinmann-Grueder and Paes 2001, especially pp. 19–21), something that the above estimates also indicate: if the KLA did indeed possess around 32,000–40,000 weapons, and only about 10,000 were either handed in (8,500) or seized (1,500) during the 90 days, this means that at least 22,000–30,000 weapons are unaccounted for.

The question thus stays: what happened to the remaining weapons? Today, KLA no longer exists as one single group: as noted in the introduction, some ex-KLA fighters have joined the KPC, the KPS, politics, business, or organized crime, or have simply reintegrated themselves into civilian life. The KLA weapons are thus likely to be in the control of various groups and individuals. According to some analysts, some remaining weaponry is stored in Albania proper (Ripley, 2000, p. 22; Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, 2001, p. 20). It is possible that very large weapons stocks exist in Albania, near its eastern border with Kosovo, around places such as Bucaj and Krumë, but these weapons are beyond the scope of this report.⁴⁴ They would be an important concern, however, should armed clashes resume.

Larger weapons caches are still found throughout Kosovo, however, and some of the *matériel* is in a condition that makes it likely that it has simply been forgotten. Others have not even been secured.⁴⁵

Cache seizure announcements appear almost daily in KFOR press releases. Thus, for example, a press release of 7 March 2003 announced that soldiers from the Finnish and Norwegian battalions had discovered a 'significant' cache in the Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje area, consisting of 32 hand grenades, 13 rifles, 4,434 rounds of small arms ammunition, 400 grams of TNT, 1kg of plastic explosive, 38 weapon magazines, and 5 rifle grenades. The same day, lesser amounts of weapons and explosives were also discovered in the vicinities of Vidomirovic, Ugdare, Mitrovica, and Podujevë/Podujevo (KFOR, 2003).

Some of the KLA weapons were no doubt transferred to the UCPMB (a splinter group from the KLA fighting Serb police in southern Serbia), which had approximately 2,200 members in 2000,⁴⁶ when the fighting in southern Serbia was at its peak. Today, the number of fighters is probably slightly lower, perhaps around 1,000 (hence holding an estimated 1,600 to 2,000 weapons). The ethnic Albanian NLA, which fought for ethnic separatism in FYROM in 2001, is also reported to be at least partially based in Kosovo and reliant on havens around the territory. The total size of the NLA has been estimated at approximately 1,500–2,000 active members in 2001.⁴⁷ Again, using the active insurgent multiplier of 1.6 weapons per combatant (see Box 4.1), as well as the higher figure of 2.0 weapons per combatant based on the weapons proliferation in the region, the size of NLA stockpiles can be estimated at 2,400–4,000 SALW. Other KLA splinter groups, such as the Albanian National Army (Armata Kombetare Shqiptare, AKSh), UCPG, and UCK-L together had an estimated 4,900 members in 2001,⁴⁸ which means that a substantial part of ex-KLA weaponry, 7,800–9,800 weapons, could have ended up in the hands of these groupings/organizations.

Together these calculations suggest that Kosovo Albanian militias, including the NLA, could hold between 11,800 and 15,800 weapons, the figure offered in Table 4.1. The remaining former KLA weapons, between 8,000 and 18,000 weapons, are assumed now to be part of civilian weapons holdings.

Kosovo Serb paramilitary groups were quite strong in 1999. The 'Black Hand' had an estimated 700–1,000 members, the Serb Liberation Army (OSA) approximately 5,000, and the White Eagles 500–900 combatants.⁴⁹ According to information obtained by SAS, these were well armed by the VJ (the Yugoslav army) and Yugoslav police. This means that in 1999 the Kosovo Serb militias possessed at least $1.6 \times (700 + 5000 + 500) \approx 9,900$ weapons. More likely, the ratio of weapons to combatant was higher, given the VJ's 'people's war' tactics.⁵⁰ Using a multiplier of two weapons per combatant and the higher number of militants yields a total of 13,800 SALW. Today, these militia groups have dwindled to a handful of small groups operating mainly in Mitrovica, such as the Bridge Watchers. KFOR estimates that these do not number more than a total of 150–200 men.⁵¹ While they do not carry guns openly when 'on duty', Bridge Watchers have good access to arms. In clashes with UNMIK Police and KFOR, they have used hand grenades and assault rifles (mainly Serbian-made AK-47s) (Paes and Matveeva, 2003, p. 40). If we use the same multiplier as above, the Bridge Watchers would have 240–400 arms. Given the fact that they can rely on large swaths of volunteers (up to 5,000, according to some sources), their total is most probably substantially higher. It is difficult to estimate what proportion of the arms of the now-defunct militia groups still remain in Kosovo, as these militias were not indigenous but pan-Serb paramilitaries. For counting purposes, however, we have assumed that these weapons (with the exception of arms of the Bridge Watchers) are either part of the civilian stockpiles, or are not in Kosovo proper.

Box 4.1 Estimating weapons possession

Several of the figures in this chapter are precise and based on data made available to SAS. Some numbers, however, such as the extent of civilian ownership, are not known and must hence be estimated. SAS has previously developed techniques to estimate the number of guns in societies or social groups. The main techniques are the ‘acquisition’ method and the ‘possession’ method.

The acquisition approach is based on the premise that an accurate picture of the number of guns in a particular place at a particular time exists (say in 1990, when Yugoslavia started to unravel), and that acquisitions by all parties after that date can be detailed. In Kosovo, this approach is rather difficult to apply. Acquisitions by KLA, Kosovo Serb militias, and civilians are not well documented, to say the least. More importantly, there is no starting point (a point in time for which a good approximation of the number of guns exists) from which to begin mapping acquisitions.

For these reasons, this report mainly uses the possession approach. This method estimates the number of guns on the basis of the number of combatants, civilians, police, etc. and the multiplier for gun-holding for each group. For example, if we know that there are 5,000 police in Kosovo, and believe they hold on average 1.2 guns each, the total number of guns held by the police can be estimated at 6,000.

How then are multipliers determined? Although the acquisition approach cannot easily be used as an overall method in Kosovo, it comes into the picture when one determines how well armed militias are, and hence the ratio of arms to combatants. This ratio is based on estimates of the importance of inflows of weapons.

Another way of determining a multiplier is through extrapolation: if the number of arms per police officer is known to be 1.2 in Canada, it can be assumed that the ratio is the same in other comparable countries (Western democratic states). This method is used here for determining militia holdings. From previous work, SAS has established an active militia multiplier of 1.6 weapon per combatant (Small Arms Survey, 2001). This number is used above.

A third way of determining the ratio is through surveys: people are asked how many guns they own, and the ratio is then applied across the whole population. This method proved not to be useful in Kosovo (see below).

Civilian holdings

Official data from federal Yugoslavia on firearms ownership in 1989 indicated that Kosovo, at the time, had a total of 65,540 legally owned guns, or 4.1 per 100 residents (Gorjanc, 2000, Table 4). If Kosovo followed the pattern of Yugoslavia as a whole, these licensed weapons consisted of pistols (56 per cent) and rifles (44 per cent) (calculated from Gorjanc, 2000, Table 2). This ratio of 4.1 guns per 100 inhabitants was the lowest average of all the regions of Yugoslavia,⁵² and is difficult to reconcile with observed widespread public firearms ownership in the province. In the same year, the then federal police estimated that more than 800,000 SALW were unregistered in Yugoslavia as a whole, half of which (400,000) were reported to be possessed illegally in Kosovo (Gorjanc, 2000, p. 10).⁵³ If correct, this figure suggests that Kosovo Albanians may have been unwilling to register, or hindered from registering, their guns in large numbers.

It is hard to judge to what extent these statements represent political propaganda rather than truth. What is clear is that during the increasing repression of the 1990s, Serb police and military also cracked down on illegal weapons possession (see Box 6.1 for details). As these Yugoslav-era figures on registered and unregistered civilian possession of firearms are highly unreliable, it is necessary to resort to other methods of estimating the number of guns among households in Kosovo.

One useful instrument is the so-called possession approach (see Box 4.1). This approach estimates the number of guns on the basis of the number of combatants, police, or—in this case—civilians, and the ratio of guns possessed by such groups.

In Kosovo, guns are kept as family possessions. Although controlled by the adult male members of the household, they are ‘family guns’ rather than individually held. The basic unit for which possession is estimated is therefore the household. In Kosovo, there are approximately 390,000 households.⁵⁴ How many of these households own guns, and how many guns do weapons-holding households possess on average?

One way to answer these questions is through surveys. Respondents are asked whether they (or people in their neighbourhood) own guns and, if so, how many. In Kosovo, this strategy proved unsuccessful. When asked, ‘In your opinion, how many households in your neighbourhood have firearms’, 43 per cent of all respondents answered that they did not know, and another six per cent refused to answer. Refusal was extremely high (57 per cent) within the Kosovo Serb subset. Only a total of five per cent believed that almost all, most, or every other household owned a gun.

At the same time, in answers to a more indirect question, 11 per cent of respondents believed that there were too many guns in households. Moreover, almost half of respondents thought that there were too many guns in society (compared with 20 per cent of Kosovo Albanians and 32 per cent of Kosovo Serbs, who believed the opposite).⁵⁵ These answers are a good indication of how sensitive the gun issue is in Kosovo, and how widespread gun ownership is likely to be. They do not, however, help in generating an accurate estimate of firearms possession.

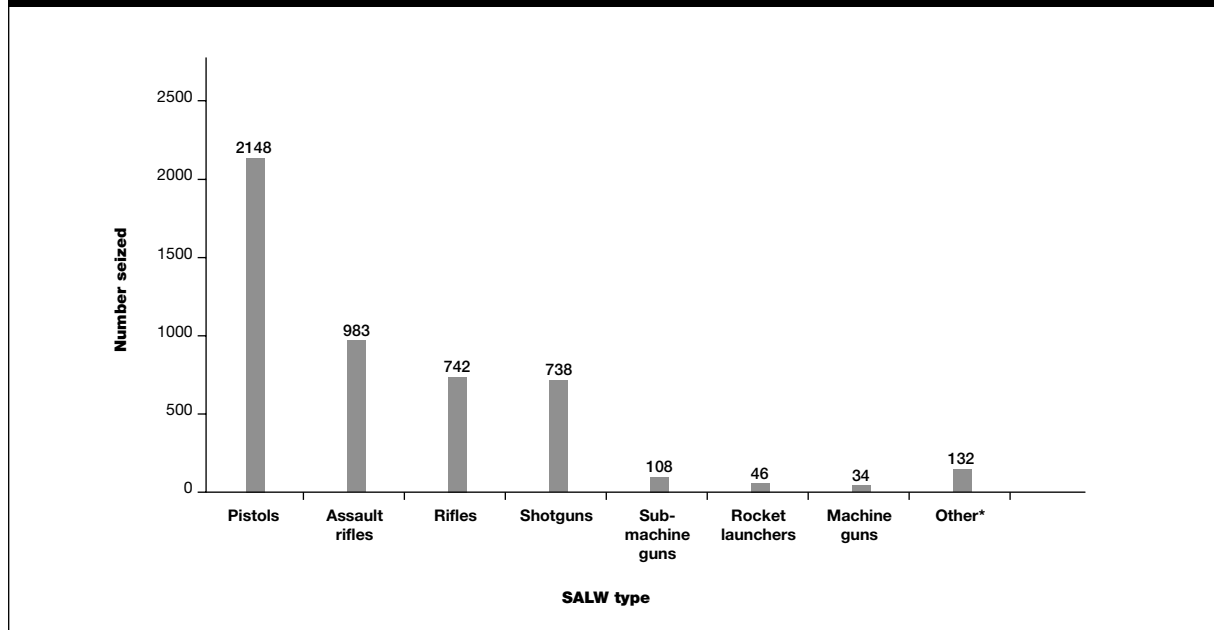
Another method of estimating weapons possession is to examine the results of random searches undertaken by KFOR.⁵⁶ No such random searches are presently undertaken, and the results of those of 1999 and 2000 are not available.

Another route towards an assessment of the number of guns is the informed estimates of people working in various branches of the security sector in Kosovo (Kosovans as well as international personnel working for UNMIK and KFOR). In interviews, responses indicated that 60–70 per cent of households own guns at present.⁵⁷ While many households were perceived to possess one gun, a fair share was believed to be in possession of two or more small arms (a mix of pistols, assault rifles, and hunting weapons for the most part). On average, gun-owning households can be conservatively estimated to own 1.4–1.7 guns. This yields an estimate of 330,000–460,000 weapons held by civilians in Kosovo.

It is possible to get a picture of the most common types and makes of weapons by looking at those weapons that have been collected and seized by UNMIK Police and, to a lesser extent, KFOR.⁵⁸ According to police statistics, and as indicated in Figure 4.1, 44 per cent of all seizures are made up of pistols, 20 per cent of assault rifles, 15 per cent of rifles, and 15 per cent of shotguns. The picture gained from police seizures is somewhat different from the distribution of weapons seized by KFOR, since the police do not primarily seize weapons from caches or other military-style holdings but from

residential areas, cars, etc. Since the police data give a picture of guns seized in connection with crime or suspected crime, including a range of non-violent and non-organized crimes like traffic offences, they present a better reflection of general civilian holdings, and thus are relied upon here.

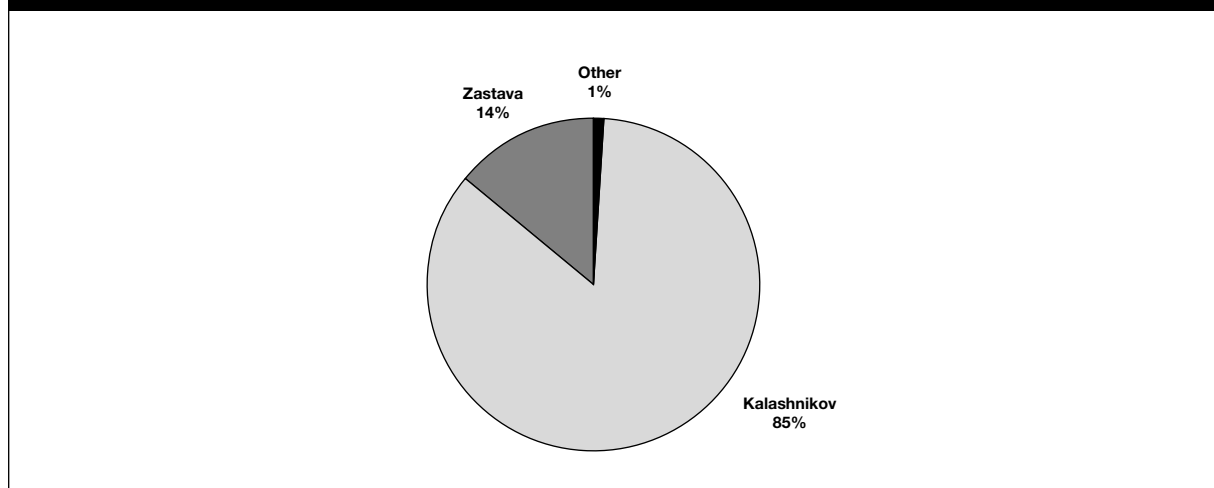
Figure 4.1 SALW types seized by the police, 2000–2002



Other includes primarily air rifles, grenades, and sniper rifles.

Source: KPIS

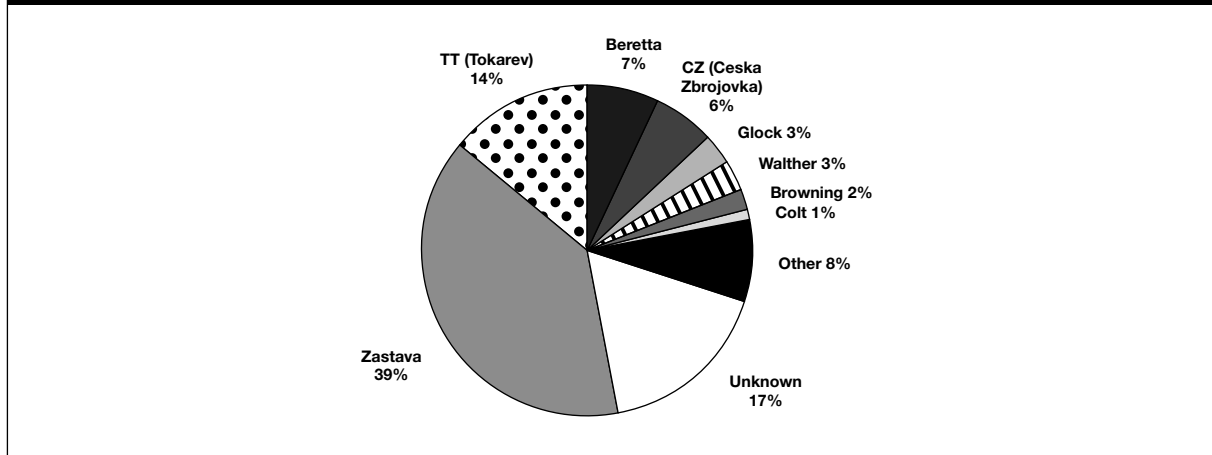
Figure 4.2 Assault rifle manufacturers



Note: The category 'Kalashnikov' may well contain a number of non-Kalashnikov models, including Zastava, since the AK-47 family is the product of many producers and most share a striking visual similarity, and are often accorded the description 'Kalashnikov'.

**Other* includes Colt and SKS (Simonov)

Source: KPIS

Figure 4.3 Pistol manufacturers

*Other' includes Mauser, SIG, Smith and Wesson, Valro, PM (Makarov), and Erma-Werke.

Source: KPIS

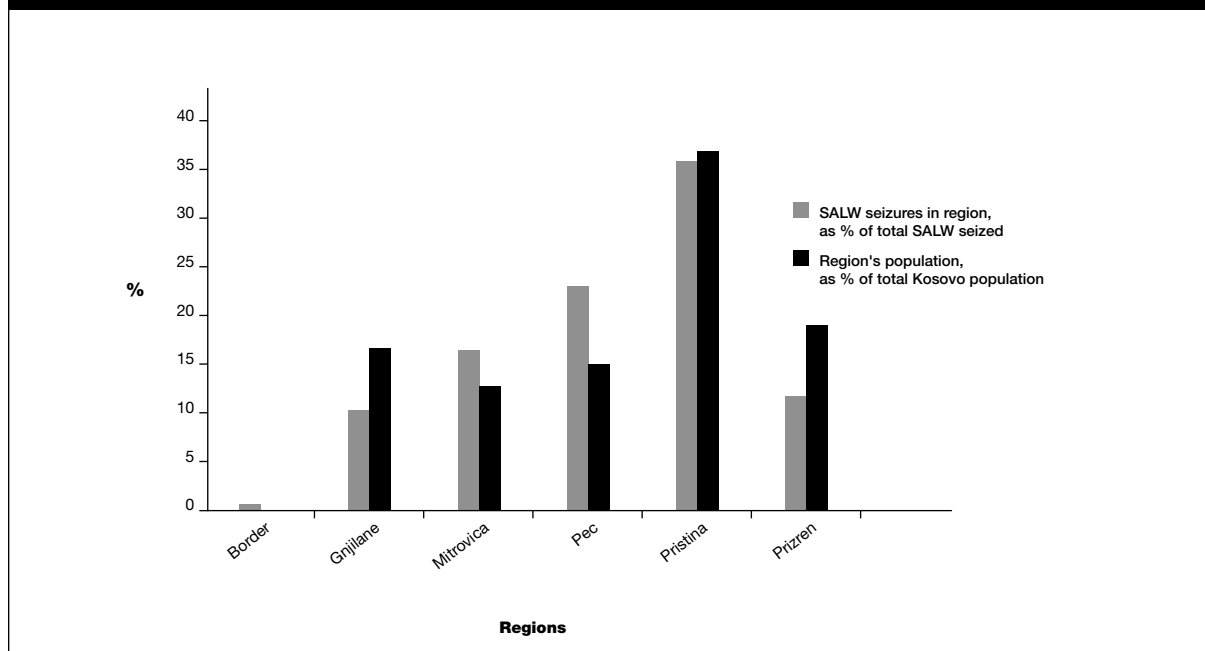
Police statistics also make it possible to analyse the distribution of makes of weapons seized (Figures 4.2 and 4.3). Assault rifles seized are primarily Kalashnikovs, with Zastavas coming a distant second. The stocks of pistols held in Kosovo are more fragmented. Zastavas hold the largest share, with almost 40 per cent of all UNMIK police seizures of pistols. TTs (Tokarev) come second, while Berettas, CZs, and Glocks together also account for a sizeable part of the stocks in the hands of Kosovo civilians. This is important, because it shows that pistols are available from a wide variety of sources, perhaps indicating the diffuse nature of weapons smuggling for civilian possession.

Page 19

Given the relatively small size of Kosovo, the geographical distribution of SALW can in principle shift rapidly. For this reason, some analysts believe that all parts of Kosovo, apart from Pristina (where the international security presence is particularly dense), have similar levels of gun holdings among civilians.

An analysis of the geographic distribution of UNMIK police seizures challenges this conventional wisdom (Figure 4.4). Compared with population distribution, Gjilan/Gnjilane and Prizren are under-represented in terms of weapons seized, while Mitrovica and Pejë/Peć are over-represented (Pristina has almost equal shares of the total population and total SALW seizures). These figures should be interpreted with some caution, as they depend in part on general crime levels, in addition to reflecting levels of civilian possession of weapons.

Figure 4.4 Geographic distribution of police seizures, mid-2000 to end 2002



Source: KPIS

Are weapons more common in some social groups than others? As mentioned above, the male members of households generally control weapons. Some more details about particularly well-armed groups can be gleaned from the SABA household survey. Respondents to the survey who believed that there were too many guns in society were asked as a follow-up question which parts of society had too many arms (see Annex 1). Unsurprisingly, a majority believed that criminal groups were too well-armed. More interestingly, 15 per cent of Kosovo Albanians thought that businessmen had too many guns (only one per cent of ethnic Serbs thought so, however).⁵⁹ Thirty-seven per cent of Kosovo Serb respondents and 12 per cent of Kosovo Albanians believed that there were too many guns among ex-fighters/ex-military. Eight per cent of Kosovo Albanians believed that politicians had too many guns: political leaders did not appear among Kosovo Serb responses.

The storage of household weapons has become increasingly sophisticated over time. Today, storage inside houses often consists of purpose-built concealment. This increasing sophistication is a direct response to KFOR search operations. More and more weapons are stored outside homes, buried in gardens, or cached further afield. Consequently, there are fewer weapons in apartment blocks in the cities than in individual homes in the countryside.

In the early days of KFOR/UNMIK seizures, it was quite common to find small arms in random vehicle searches, which meant that weapons circulated rather extensively. Today, given the low return in seizure operations, it appears that weapons are seldom moved, or that their means of transportation have become more sophisticated. At present, less than one per cent of random vehicle searches result in the seizure of weapons.⁶⁰

Box 4.2 Weapons in the political life of Kosovo

In contrast to general practice elsewhere in western and central Europe, politicians in Kosovo do not depend on KPS or CIVPOL police for their private protection, but on private bodyguards. After investigation, these bodyguards receive weapons authorization cards (WAC), (see Section VI),⁶¹ which permit them to protect vulnerable political figures with weapons.

However, it is thought that, beyond official bodyguard weapons, the political parties in Kosovo are well-armed. According to interviewees working on security issues, all ethnic Serb parties are 'fully equipped' and would even admit this publicly in Mitrovica. Kosovo Albanian parties most probably also have guns at their disposal.

According to UNMIK statistics covering the period July 2000–December 2001, 155 reported criminal incidents involved political parties, either as victims or as perpetrators. Nine of these concerned illegal weapons possession, 20 were shooting incidents, and another 14 cases concerned grenade attacks. The illegal weapons possession cases seem to indicate that guns are not absent from Kosovan political parties. Moreover, the fact that more than 20 per cent of all reported criminal incidents involved weapons-related violence (shooting and grenade attacks)⁶² means that political life has been rather violent in Kosovo. It is important to note, however, that election-related violence has been very limited and decreasing from year to year.⁶³

Weapons collection efforts after official demobilization

Since the end of the war in June 1999, both UNMIK Police and KFOR have attempted to mop up illegal weapons through searches and amnesties.⁶⁴ There have been two amnesties, from 1 May to 3 June 2001 and from 15 March to 15 April 2002. The amnesties have been organized jointly by KFOR and UNMIK. They have permitted people to hand back weapons anonymously either to the police or to KFOR, and special hand-in points have been designated for that purpose. During the second amnesty, more than 80 per cent of the weapons were collected by KFOR, which had better organizational means and resources to implement the amnesty. In addition to the weapons handed in, the authorities noted that there were more 'casual findings' of weapons during the period of the amnesty. This appears to indicate that people who did not trust the authorities' promise of anonymity left guns in areas where KFOR or UNMIK Police would probably find them. This also suggests that the number of weapons collected during the amnesties, listed in Table 4.3, underestimates the total yields of the amnesty.

Table 4.3. Results of weapons amnesties in 2001 and 2002

	2001 amnesty	2002 amnesty		
Weapons type	TOTAL 2001	KFOR 2002	UNMIK Police 2002	TOTAL 2002
Rifles	400 (approx.)	393	24	417
Pistols	65	74	1	75
Machine guns		22	2	24
Mortars	0	1	0	1
Anti-tank	21	43	2	45
Rockets/ Missiles	16	7	2	9
Grenades	200 (approx.)*	658	68	726
Mines		51	43	94
Ammunition	31,000 (approx.)	58771	429	59200
Misc. items**	75	759	136	895
Total (excluding ammunition and misc.)	777	1,249	142	1391

*In 2001, grenades and mines were reported together in one category.

**Miscellaneous items' include uniforms, masks, and (in 2001) 75 uncategorized support weapons.

Sources: KFOR (2001; 2002b); UNMIK (2001)

Perceived shortcomings of the amnesties have included lack of information and communication on the part of the authorities before the starting date, their short time period, and overly visible collection points (which make people shy away from handing in weapons). In this regard, the second amnesty is considered to have been more successful than the first. For instance, in conjunction with the 2002 amnesty, American and Russian KFOR troops worked together on publicising the measures, going from village to village with megaphones.⁶⁵

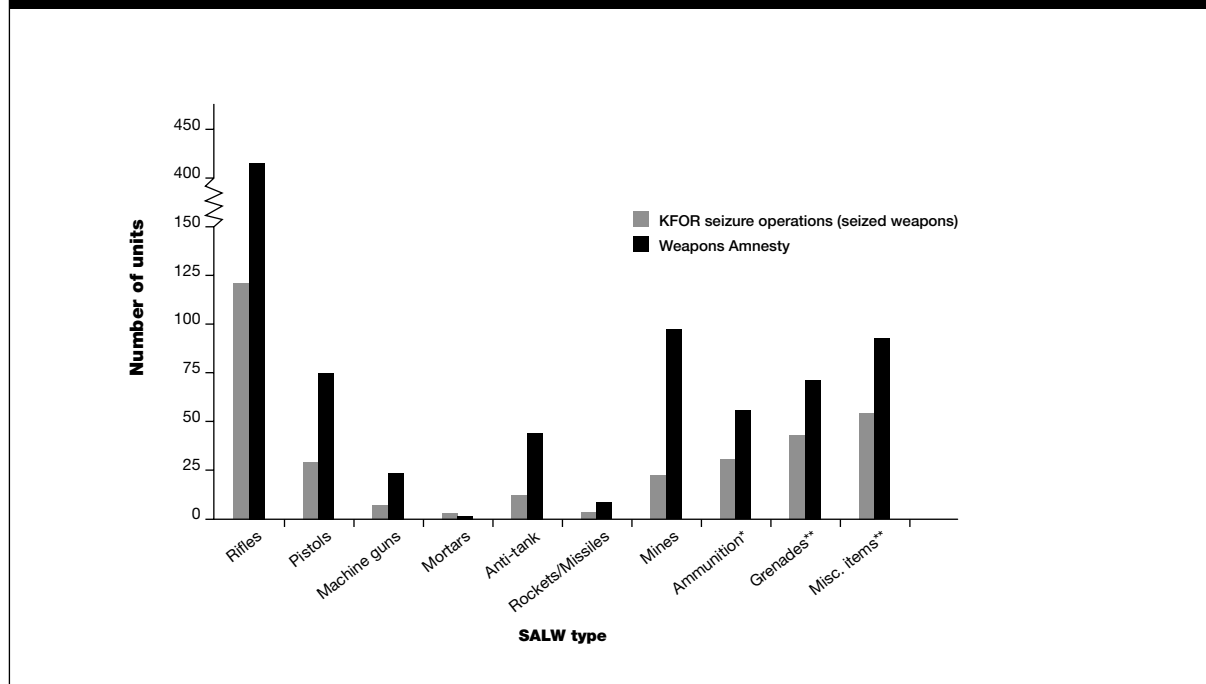
Amnesty results have been less successful among the minority Kosovo Serb communities than in the Kosovo Albanian ones. One of the reasons for this is undoubtedly that Kosovo Serbs continue to feel that they have to protect themselves. In the SABA household survey, 27 per cent of Kosovo Serb respondents and only four per cent of Kosovo Albanian interviewees said that they thought people kept firearms for purposes of ensuring 'political security' (see Section VI for details).

Support from Kosovan political leaders for the amnesties has been limited. Endorsement has been more widespread at the Kosovo-wide level (with political personalities such as President Rugova, Prime Minister Rexhepi, AAK leader Ramush Haradinaj, and PDK's Hacim Thaçi expressing their support for weapons collection during the 2002 campaign) than at the municipal level. There were some notable exceptions to the latter, however. Halil Morina, chief executive of Suharekë/Suva Reka municipality, stated the day before the second amnesty started, 'We do not need weapons, we must get back to work, prosperity and future, to create a free and secure society' (cited in KFOR, 2002, p. 12). So far, Kosovo Serb political leaders have not been supporting weapons collection efforts.

The media coverage of the amnesties shows that the international authorities have been the main driving force in promoting the amnesty. Of the 109 press reports from the Kosovo media outlets included in the Weapon Amnesty Media Summary (KFOR, 2002a), 38 contain a reference to national authorities, while 85 refer to international bodies and/or personalities.⁶⁶ The summary also shows that domestic authorities, such as the government and the KPC, preferred written statements to personal appeals or direct appearances in the press. They were rather passive in the early stages of the amnesty, but became more active supporters towards the end of the amnesty period.

Amnesties and seizure operations have at times worked in tandem. Perhaps unsurprisingly, amnesties have brought in relatively more weapons than searches of houses and cars (see Figure 4.5). In certain parts of Kosovo, searches were intensified in the months before the second amnesty in order to make the population more inclined to give up their guns.⁶⁷

Figure 4.5 Comparison of the yields of KFOR seizure operations and weapons amnesty, 15 March–15 April 2002

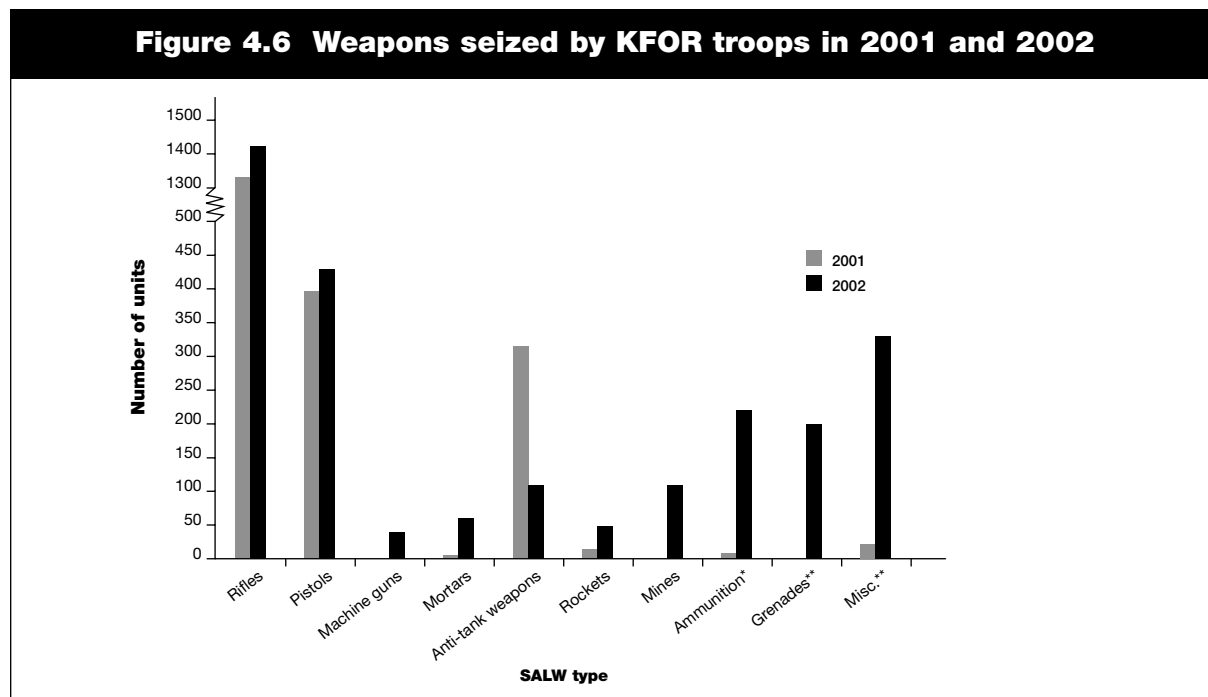


Note: 'Miscellaneous items' include uniforms, gas masks, jerrycans, etc.

*Figures in thousands of units **Figures in tens of units

Source: KFOR

Seizure operations by KFOR have been ongoing since the end of the conflict and are a more or less constant feature of the soldiers' work. From January 2001 to 12 March 2003, KFOR troops seized a total of almost 3,000 rifles, 900 pistols, 56 machine guns, 63 mortars, 450 anti-tank weapons, 74 rockets, 2,200 grenades, and a quarter of a million rounds of ammunition (see Figure 4.6 and Table 4.4). UNMIK Police, in contrast, mainly collect guns in connection with law enforcement operations, such as house searches that are part of criminal investigations (these seizures are discussed above).



*Figures in thousands of units **Figures in tens of units

Source: KFOR

Table 4.4. Weapons seized by KFOR, 1 January-12 March 2003

Multinational brigade (MNB)	Rifles	Pistols	Machine guns	Mortars	ATs	Rockets	Grenades	Mines	Ammunition	Misc.
MNB Central	51	11	2	0	0	0	138	3	10610	224
MNB East	5	2	2	0	6	4	3	1	852	1
MNB North-East	43	10	1	0	1	0	35	1	7120	155
MNB South-West	59	13	5	1	5	5	32	76	5388	616
MSU	11	12	4	0	0	3	18	0	3895	64
Total	169	48	14	1	12	12	226	81	27865	1060

Source: KFOR

According to interviews with representatives of both the international community and Kosovans, current weapons seizure programmes are not perceived negatively by the general population. Naturally, there are exceptions, such as the roadblocks in the Drenica area in the year 2000, where people protested against what they saw as mainly ex-KLA targeted seizures.⁶⁸ In general, however, and despite difficult past experiences with weapons seizures,⁶⁹ current efforts to collect military-style weapons are met calmly, as the population is aware that the weapons seized will not be used against them. This is less true for seizures of hunting rifles, which have met with fierce resistance. The collected weapons are currently destroyed locally at a metal welding factory in Janjevo, to the south-east of Pristina. This is also true for those weapons confiscated by the police. To date, a total of 18,000 weapons have been destroyed.

Box 4.3 The legacy of March 1997

A unique exogenous factor shaping small arms stockpiles in Kosovo was the sudden pillaging of over half a million small arms from state arsenals in neighbouring Albania. There are different figures for the number of weapons lost in March 1997. Early reports from UN sources put the total at 643,220 SALW. The more commonly used Albanian police figures stand at 549,775 weapons. The discrepancy between the two numbers—almost a hundred thousand weapons—which has not yet been analysed, let alone resolved, is so large in itself that it alone could easily wreak great havoc.

A series of Albanian and internationally sponsored projects subsequently recovered a significant proportion of this equipment from the people of Albania. Numbers range from a total of 103,344 weapons according to the most detailed sources used in Table 4.5, to 200,000 according to others.⁷⁰ As shown in Table 4.3, however, the largest proportions recovered were among those categories least suitable for guerrilla warfare, such as old-fashioned bolt-action rifles and heavier items like grenade launchers, mortars, and medium-sized machine guns. Pistols and automatic rifles, however, were much less likely to be turned in. These relative successes aside, a significant proportion of the lost weaponry remains unaccounted for.

Table 4.5. Lost and found: Weapons pillaged and recovered in Albania, March 1997-September 2001

Type	Lost	Recovered	% Recovered
Pistols	38,000	170	0.4
AK-47	226,000	17,522	7.7
Bolt rifles	351,000	66,995	19.0
Machine guns	25,000	11,643	46.0
Grenade launchers	2,450	792	32.0
Mortars	770	242	31
Total	643,220	97,364	15

Note: The Gramsh Pilot Program recovered another 5,980 weapons of unspecified type.

On the Gramsh Pilot Programme see UNDP (2001).

Source: Small Arms Survey (2002, p. 299)

There is currently no way to establish the proportion of these weapons that was transferred out of Albania. Some undoubtedly drifted into the international black market. Others fell into the hands of Kosovo Albanians and Macedonians. While the numbers are unknown, it is almost certainly no coincidence that KLA's challenge to Serbian authority in Kosovo accelerated rapidly after March 1997. The conventional wisdom maintains that something like 150,000 of these weapons reached Kosovo Albanian combatants (and, presumably, civilians) in Kosovo and FYROM, but this is just an educated guess (for example, see Kanani, 2002). If it were true, however, estimates of the total number of KLA force arsenals would have to be increased substantially (see Section IV).

Black-market weapons prices

Although not always easy to analyse, weapons prices can give valuable information about the supply of and demand for weapons. In Kosovo, in general, Yugoslav-made weapons are more popular than the Chinese-made pistols and AK-47s coming from Albania. The Yugoslav makes are of better quality and are hence more expensive on the black market. Prices for Albanian-sourced AK-47s were around EUR 150–200 in the first quarter of 2003, while Yugoslav-made AK-47s fetched EUR 250–400 (a price which could go as high as EUR 550 for new ones).⁷¹ 7.62 mm pistols of Albanian origin were, during the same time period, priced at EUR 300–350, while those of Yugoslav origin fetched around EUR 400. A range of other weapons is also available on the black market.

Prices are also not uniform throughout Kosovo. In the central and eastern parts of the territory, prices are generally higher than those near the western borders, with a differential of EUR 50–100 for most major weapons types.⁷² Prices on the black market in Albania are still lower than in Kosovo, with 9mm pistols going for EUR 700–1,000 in Kosovo and EUR 400–500 in Albania (rifles would go from EUR 350–600 in Kosovo and EUR 200–250 in Albania). This is consistent with the price difference between western border areas and the rest of the territory of Kosovo. It is also unsurprising, given that the majority of the weapons looted in 1997 in Albania have not yet been recovered (see Box 4.3).

V. Gun smuggling across the borders of Kosovo

Introduction

The Balkans, and the former Yugoslavia in particular, are often viewed as the predominant source of Europe's illegal gun trade, especially for small shipments destined for organized crime groups. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Kosovo are routinely grouped together as the centre of the problem (Sagramoso, 2001, p. 48; Paes and Matveeva, 2003, p. 50). However, the research conducted for this report suggests that gun smuggling is not a major activity on the Kosovo borders, compared both with other types of smuggling and with gun smuggling in the region generally.

This is not because such trade would be impossible or even difficult. The international military and police presence notwithstanding, the borders of Kosovo are porous. This applies both to the international borders with Albania and FYROM, and to the so-called administrative boundary-line (ABL) with Serbia and Montenegro. It is also equally true for the international border crossings and ABL checkpoints on the one hand, and the 'green border' (the border/boundary-line stretches between official border crossings/checkpoints) on the other. Obviously, organized and unorganized crime takes advantage of this fact, and smuggling and contraband are rife.⁷³

However, although there is certainly an illicit trans-border trade in SALW, it is rather minor—amounting to tens and occasionally hundreds of guns—when compared with the illegal trafficking of human beings, cigarettes, and fuel.⁷⁴ Given that Kosovo is already well-stocked with arms, demand is tied primarily to criminal and extremist political groupings. Such groups regularly replace and upgrade their equipment. Given that the market for arms is relatively saturated, trafficking in humans, cigarettes, and fuel is also both less risky, and, most importantly, more profitable. The limited larger-scale smuggling in guns (involving lorry-loads) that does exist is mostly thought to consist of (illicit) transshipments along the so-called Balkan route.⁷⁵

Page 27

Border control arrangements

Although the border control arrangements around Kosovo are rather complex, and remain entirely under UNMIK and KFOR command, they do not ensure that borders are entirely guarded. One of the interviewees referred to the boundaries as a 'Swiss cheese', and some of the institutional arrangements of the borders make smuggling easier.

At the international border crossings, the UNMIK border police are responsible for the passage of persons, while the UNMIK Customs Service is in charge of controlling vehicles. The UNMIK border police involve both CIVPOL police officers and members of the local KPS. The UNMIK Customs service is led by internationals, but the people on the ground are Kosovans.⁷⁶ Today, the arrangements are the same for checkpoints along the administrative boundary-line as for international border crossings.⁷⁷ The location of both international crossing points and ABL checkpoints largely depends on topography: they can be anything from a few hundred metres to several kilometres from the Serb, Montenegrin, Macedonian, or Albanian checkpoints/international crossings.

A peculiarity of the administrative boundary line with Serbia and Montenegro is that it is surrounded by a 5km so-called 'ground safety zone', where the police and military role is limited to a boundary-line control function (in the form of checkpoints). In other words, this is, in many ways, a stretch of land

that is uncontrolled and that is frequently used by smugglers and those stashing weapons. Interviewees report that at night, there is substantial movement on many stretches of this no-man's land, and small arms caches of weapons are fairly common.

The green border (both between international crossing points and between ABL checkpoints) is controlled by KFOR, in accordance with the territorial divisions of Kosovo into five sectors. The northern borderline with Serbia is French-controlled, the north-eastern stretch is a British responsibility, the south-eastern border, towards both Serbia and FYROM, is under American supervision, while the whole of the western frontier is under German and Italian command.

Smuggling at border checkpoints

The UNMIK Customs Service, operational since 1999, has one primary objective: revenue collection. Duties and taxes collected on imports at the border account for a significant percentage of the total revenues collected in Kosovo. In accordance with this, the customs service concentrates on freight movements and on reducing contraband (mainly of cigarettes and fuel). Until 2002, it had no 'protection of society' mandate that could be used to interdict drugs, unauthorized pharmaceuticals, arms, etc. entering into the territory. This was the task of the border police, notwithstanding the fact that the police do not, as a general rule, check vehicles, but only persons. As a result, there is at present no concerted and effective effort to stem small arms trafficking at the border crossings, although this is about to change.⁷⁸ However, the fact that the international authorities have proscribed transshipment of goods through Kosovo makes more large-scale and region-wide trafficking attempts less attractive to organized crime groups, which often have other supply routes.

Page 28

Although it has no 'protection of society' mandate, when checking cargo the customs service has at times made seizures of guns. These seizures are of two main types: larger seizures of arms hidden in trucks, and small seizures of one or a few guns stashed in cars.⁷⁹ Whenever a weapon is found by customs, it is handed over to the border police. The border police themselves also make a certain number of seizures. Comparatively speaking, the number of combined customs and border police seizures is very low. As indicated in Figure 4.4, only 37 SALW seizures, or 0.8 per cent of all law-enforcement seizures of guns from mid-2000 to the end of 2002, have taken place at the border. An additional problem is that even these few seizures are not necessarily always well investigated, as the border police do not have the capacity to conduct post-seizure investigations.⁸⁰

These low numbers for weapons seizures must be interpreted with caution, since they reflect not only the rather modest levels of SALW smuggling across the borders of Kosovo, but also the fact that the customs has no technical equipment such as X-ray machines with which to examine loads passing through the border.⁸¹ Moreover, customs has little manpower, and customs officials, like other professionals in Kosovo, are poorly paid. Hence, the temptation to accept bribes can be great, and corruption is a major concern. This problem is recognized by the customs authority, which has established a reward scheme to counter bribery attempts. Under this scheme, a customs team that finds an illegal weapons shipment is awarded a sum which depends on the size of the seizure, but which can be substantially larger than the monthly salary.⁸² Such measures notwithstanding, weapons smuggled in cars and trucks can probably pass the Kosovo borders at any time.

Customs is not entitled to check all cargo: those of humanitarian organization and KFOR contractors are exempt from customs clearance. There have been alleged cases when members of certain less well-paid contingents have escorted civilian cars filled with cigarettes and money up to the border to avoid customs control. No soldier has been caught smuggling arms, however.⁸³

Map of Kosovo (smuggling routes)



Smuggling routes, the green border, and internal trade

Smuggling of SALW across the green border is common but not particularly large-scale. Traffickers over the green border use the same methods as were used during the war. Smuggling is thus often conducted with mules, which are either led by persons or, more often, cross the border unaccompanied. A mule will normally carry 20–30 guns with each crossing. The mule trade is common in the mountainous areas of Kosovo.

Once the mules have crossed the border, their loads are transferred to more modern means of locomotion, especially trucks or prepared vans, in which they are then transported across Kosovo. As a result of its anti-smuggling operations, KFOR has at times been in charge of as many as 30–40 mules confiscated for smuggling, a situation that is not without practical difficulties.⁸⁴

In Kosovo, weapons enter primarily from the west and the north, and exit mainly towards the south and east. Weapons are smuggled in from Serbia and Montenegro (where sought-after, high-quality guns—mainly, but not uniquely, of Yugoslav make—are sourced) and from Albania, which is the principal source of cheaper, Chinese-made weapons. The guns from Serbia and particularly those from Montenegro often come from further afield: Bosnia and Herzegovina has been a common source ever since the war (many Bosniaks were sympathetic to the KLA, and Bosnia and Herzegovina has an important SALW industry).⁸⁵ Weapons exit Kosovo mainly for FYROM, where they are sought after by ethnic separatists and criminal elements, but also for southern Serbia and further afield. The interdiction of transshipment notwithstanding, there is a certain illicit transit trade through Kosovo.

The main routes are the same as for smuggling in other types of goods. In general, guns are transported along the major highways. A major inflow-hub is Pejë/Peć. Another transit route is through the southernmost tip of Kosovo, from Albania via Dragash/Dragaš to Tetovo in FYROM.

Smuggling in arms, as in other commodities (as well as in humans), tends to be an organized activity. However, it is not clear whether, or to what extent, weapons smuggling is linked to other forms of smuggling. Most, although not all, interviewees working in the security sector stressed that trafficking is organized geographically: a family/clan controls one area of Kosovo, including all forms of smuggling within or across that region. This would imply that illicit trafficking networks are linked, at least within Kosovo.

Places where weapons are bought internally include coffee shops and markets across Kosovo.⁸⁶ Personal and sometimes family contacts are important in getting in touch with sellers.⁸⁷ Even without such contacts, it is not difficult to get hold of a weapon, however. It is possible to place orders with particular traders for a special weapon model, including Western makes, which is then purchased abroad and taken across the Kosovo border specifically for the customer in question.

It is widely alleged that soldiers of certain contingents stationed in Kosovo, whose pay rates are low, are involved in various smuggling activities, especially trafficking in fuel. However, gun smuggling, precisely because of its relatively low profitability, is not thought to be among them.⁸⁸ In contrast, it is alleged that German KFOR soldiers were involved in one highly publicized arms smuggling incident. Small arms collected in Prizren were smuggled to FYROM and then to Darmstadt in Germany (Davis, 2002, p. 57).

VI. Gun culture and weapons regulations, past and present

Kosovo Albanian gun culture: 'A house without a weapon is not a home'

As in many other parts of the world, guns have become part of the fabric of Kosovan culture. Among international personnel serving in Kosovo, references to Albanian gun culture and, specifically, to the *Kanun* are common in explaining Kosovo Albanians' (mis)usage of and attachment to the gun. The *Kanun* is the customary law that, in the absence of an effective government, regulated social life in northern Albania and Kosovo for many centuries. Some of the laws allegedly date back to the Illyrians, whom ethnic Albanians consider as their ancestors. The written code was put on paper in the fifteenth century by Lekë Dukagjini: hence the name *Kanuni i Lekë Dukagjinit*.

The *Kanun* contains numerous references to guns, and represents an elaborate socio-legal code regulating the use of firearms. The gun figures prominently as a form of protection and as a means of meting out justice. If a person murders a priest, for example, it is specified in the *Kanun* that he shall be executed 'by a firing squad' (para. 17).⁸⁹ Much of the legislation pertaining to murder presumes that the murder is committed—and will be avenged—by the gun. Other crimes such as adultery are also dealt with through recourse to the gun. According to the *Kanun*, if a man finds his wife with another man, he can kill them both. If he uses a single bullet, no blood feud ensues (para. 923). In the words of the *Kanun*, 'The parents of the adulterous pair may not seek vengeance, but must give the murderer a new cartridge with the words "Blessed be your hand"' (para. 924). However, guns have traditionally not been intended for public display. Weapons, according to Albanian tradition, should not be visible, and the bearer of the weapon should not be proud of it. If the bearer ignored these rules, the sanctions would be severe (Hasani, 2003).

Page 31

However, the role of such social codes and rules in regulating contemporary life is often overstated, and the extent to which such ancient codes influence behaviour is questionable. *Kanun* rules on restraint in the use of force and the display of weapons have been slowly eroding, for example. Adherence to the injunctions of the *Kanun* (in all areas of life) has also weakened with migration from the rural to urban areas, and seems to have lost much of its force in Kosovo as the rule of law is strengthened. Attitudes towards guns and gun culture seem to cleave as well along a generational divide, with especially young urban dwellers being potentially anti-gun, perceiving guns as a thing of the past or as a 'peasant thing'. The refugee experience has also turned some youth against guns.

The more general status conferred by the gun, and especially military guns, has not diminished substantially, but this can be attributed to the prominence of the KLA and the role of weapons in criminal activities. Overall, the pressures of modernization, including under decades of Communist rule, mean that the *Kanun*, at least as far as guns are concerned, provides more background colour and a justification for social behaviour than a rigorous set of rules that actually governs social life in Kosovo today.⁹⁰

Box 6.1 The history of weapons collection in Kosovo

Organized weapons collection programmes have a long and difficult history in Kosovo.

Seizures date back at least to the Ottomans. In 1844, as part of a modernizing reform package, the authorities in Istanbul started to strengthen their control over previously quite remotely governed regions like Kosovo. These new measures also included attempts to disarm the local population. As the modernizing reform was strongly resisted in conservative Kosovo throughout the following decades, more guns were confiscated in successive campaigns to keep the population under control. One of the reasons that the revolutionary so-called Young Turks received the support of conservative Albanians in Kosovo, in their attempts to wrestle the power from the old guard in power in Istanbul, was that they promised to respect the Albanians' traditional rights, including the right to carry arms.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, people in Kosovo again rebelled against the Ottomans, this time because of new taxes. To quell the resistance, Ottoman troops were sent to Pejë/Peć and Gjakovë/Đakovica, where taxes were forcefully collected, the population registered, and arms confiscated. For example, in 1910, as many as 147,525 guns were allegedly confiscated through harsh means. In the same move, all knives other than bread-knives were banned.

During the first half of the twentieth century, when Albanians were under Serb/Yugoslav rule, the Serbian gendarmerie conducted what it called disarmament expeditions, but which in fact amounted to ethnically-based systematic violence against the Albanians. In the early post-Second World War period the federal Yugoslav police, under Minister of Interior Aleksander Ranković, attempted to collect arms forcibly from the population. In the winter of 1956, these house-to-house seizure programmes led to beatings, torture, and even killings. According to Noel Malcolm, 'so severe was the treatment of those who failed to hand over a gun that many Albanians would prudently buy a weapon in order to have something to surrender' (1998, pp. 320–21).

As the Yugoslav federation was dismembered in the 1990s, Milosevic continued the tradition of violent weapons collection. Kosovo Albanians were beaten, tortured, or wrongfully fined in weapons seizure operations.

Sources: Malcolm (1998); Jansen (2002)

Attitudes towards guns in present-day Kosovo

While it is difficult to accurately depict Kosovans' perceptions of small arms, findings from the SABA household survey suggest that Kosovans are not as attached to their guns as commonly believed. When asked whether there were too many guns in society, 47 per cent of the survey respondents answered 'yes', and only 21 per cent said 'no' (with the remaining percentage choosing 'don't know': see Annex 1). Similarly, over 50 per cent of respondents thought it likely or somewhat likely that people in their

neighbourhood would hand in their guns in exchange for investments in their community (Annex 1). Lastly, 54 per cent of respondents claimed they would not choose to own a gun even if it were legal (Annex 1). These findings suggest that gun possession patterns among Kosovans are not as inflexible or culturally conditioned as previously believed.

Nevertheless, and as shown in previous sections, Kosovo remains a heavily armed society. Survey findings suggest that there are two main motives that explain gun possession in Kosovo: personal security and protection, and activities such as hunting (see Annex 1 for details). While both the ethnic Albanian and the ethnic Serb communities seem to agree that hunting is a legitimate reason for holding a gun, there are some revealing differences regarding the two groups' perceptions of security and protection. Kosovo Albanians tend to see crime as the main threat to their security: 70 per cent of them think there are too many guns in the hands of criminal groups. They also feel that the security situation in Kosovo is improving, and have great trust in current security institutions, especially the KPS. Ethnic Albanians are relatively comfortable with current state institutions, and insecurity is more associated with crime than with institutions.

While Kosovo Serbs also justify gun ownership in terms of ensuring personal and family security, they seem much more concerned about political factors than their Kosovo Albanian counterparts. 31 per cent of Kosovo Serbs said they would choose to own a firearm for 'political' reasons, as against four per cent of Kosovo Albanian respondents. Even though they remain sensitive to the number of guns in the hands of criminals, they are much more concerned than Kosovo Albanians by weapons in the hands of ex-combatants and in society as a whole. This reflects their discontent with the current political situation and distrust in current security providers: ethnic Serbs would prefer having Serbian authorities and local militias enforce security and do not believe the security situation is improving. Finally, ethnic Serbs are much less enthusiastic than ethnic Albanians about the likelihood of people handing in guns in exchange for community investments.

These findings suggest that Kosovans' perception of guns greatly depends on their level of satisfaction with the current political situation. Kosovo Albanians are comfortable with the current security and political situation and therefore see tradition and protection against criminality as the main motives behind gun possession. Ethnic Serbs, on the other hand, are much less in agreement with current institutional arrangements and give political insecurity much greater weight in terms of justifying gun possession.

Box 6.2 Celebratory fire

Celebratory fire is quite common in Kosovo and a normal ingredient in celebrations, such as weddings and New Year festivities. Against this, no police action is normally taken, although it depends somewhat on the nationality of the UNMIK police officers in charge. Generally, the international authorities will intervene only if members of the KPS or the KPC are involved in the shooting. Such members of security forces normally face disciplinary action.

There are no statistics on injuries arising from celebratory fire in Kosovo. However, the severity of such injuries should not be underestimated.

Gun laws in Kosovo

UNMIK is currently attempting to re-create a legislative framework for the possession and transfer of small arms in Kosovo. So far, re-regulation is only partial. Hence, in some sectors, such as that of imports and exports, as well as production of SALW, no post-Yugoslav laws or regulations exist.

In contrast, civilian possession has been re-regulated with UNMIK *Regulation No. 2001/7 on the Authorisation of Possession of Weapons in Kosovo*. According to this law, persons in need of special protection may get permission to hold a so-called weapon authorization card (WAC), which allows them to acquire and carry a weapon at all times.⁹¹ Only 'vulnerable persons', i.e. persons who, according to police reports and security assessments, are facing serious threats, may acquire a WAC. The so-called Threat Assessment Committee established by the UNMIK police commissioner assesses every WAC application. The WAC may be given directly to the vulnerable person or more often to his or her registered bodyguard.

UNMIK Police has issued such permits very restrictively. On average, fewer than ten per cent of applications are accepted, mainly from individuals facing specific threats, including leading figures of the main political parties. The heaviest authorized weapons are AK-47s.

Other types of weapons, excluding hunting and recreational weapons, are illegal under Regulation 2001/7. The punishment for illicit weapons holding is very severe: a maximum of eight years' imprisonment, a fine of up to EUR 7,500, or both.⁹² In practice, however, prosecution for this type of crime has been relatively rare.

Page 34

Hunting and recreational weapons have also recently been re-regulated. Hunters and recreational shooters could, between 1 February and 1 May 2003, register their hunting/recreational weapons⁹³ at their local police stations without facing prosecution. Owners may register as many guns of the permitted types as they wish. After the grace period ended on 1 May, owners of hunting or recreational weapons could still register their guns. However, if found unregistered, the weapons will be seized by UNMIK Police and/or KFOR, and the owners may be faced with a criminal charge. Upon registration, applicants receive a Weapon Registration Card that is valid for two years. As of 1 May 2003, more than 20,000 guns had been registered.⁹⁴ The number of organized hunters is a little less than 9,000.⁹⁵

VII. Direct and indirect effects of guns in Kosovo

Introduction

The widespread availability of guns has had a number of consequences for Kosovo society, even in the years since the end of the war. The direct effects include fatal and non-fatal injuries, as well as psychological and physical disabilities due to small arms misuse. In this section, only fatal and non-fatal injuries are discussed, since no data is available on psychological or physical disabilities. The indirect effects are more numerous—including social, economic, and human development dimensions—and sometimes more difficult to quantify. In this section, two indirect effects of gun use are examined in more detail. These are guns in crime and guns in the school environment. From the short overview in this section, it seems clear that guns have had a differentiated impact on society, affecting, for example, crime more than the school environment.

Fatal and non-fatal injuries

In 2002, firearm injuries resulted in 98 hospital visits throughout Kosovo, down from 125 in 2001 (for details, see Figure 7.1).⁹⁶ The figures are substantially lower than for the immediate post-war period: in the six-month period from June to December 1999 alone, 100 firearms injuries were reported by Pristina University Hospital, which is the main referral hospital for traumatic injuries in Kosovo.

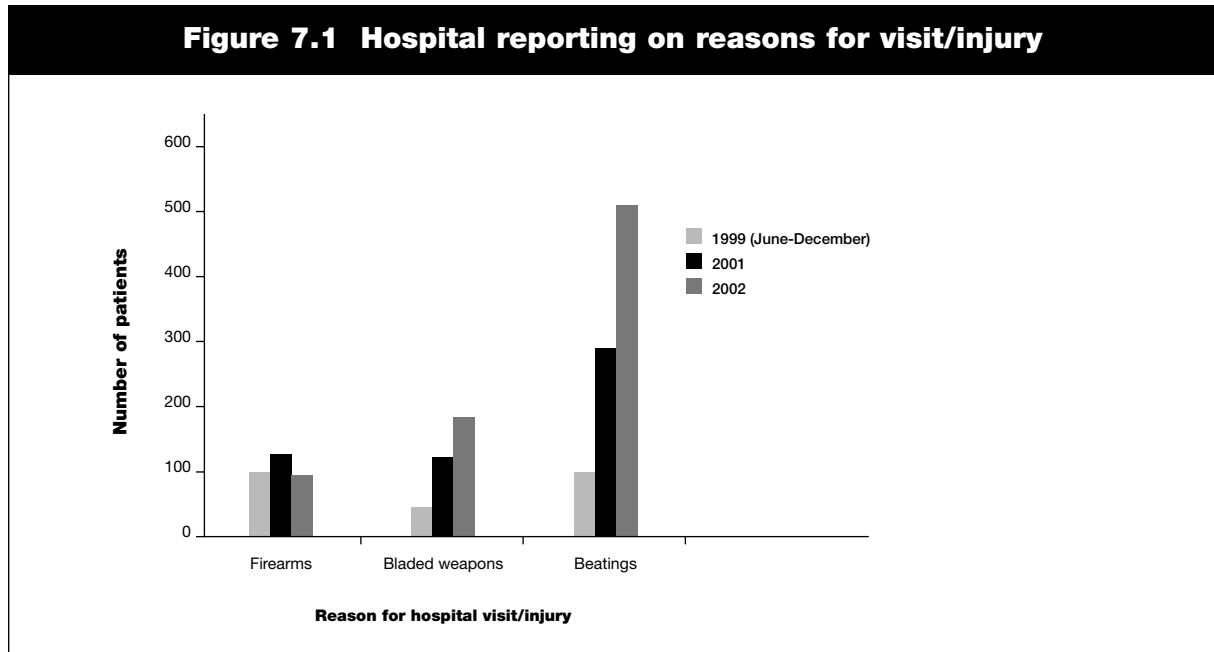
Page 35

The above figures are most likely lower than the actual number of firearms injuries. The catchment area of the Pristina University Hospital is Kosovo-wide. However, some other large clinics elsewhere in the territory also treat injuries. Ethnic Serbs most often prefer to receive treatment for their injuries in Mitrovica (or, if they live in enclaves in the south-east, at camp Bondsteel, the US multinational brigade headquarters). This is reflected in the above statistics, as there are no reported cases with patients from Zubin Potok, Zveqan/Zveçane, or Novobërdë/Novo Brdo (see Table 7.1 in Annex 5).

The total number of injuries is hence most likely higher than that reflected in the statistics from the Pristina University Hospital. It is also well-established that not all injuries due to violence come under hospital care, especially if the injuries are the result of criminal dealings. This also serves to depress injury figures. The figures do, however, capture the declining trend in firearms injuries.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to compare these figures with pre-war figures. As for other statistical data (such as on crime), the injury data was either brought to Belgrade by ethnic Serbs fleeing Kosovo, or destroyed in the course of the war.

Knife injuries and beatings are difficult to interpret and compare with firearms injuries, mainly because many such injuries were treated locally, especially in 1999. It seems, however, that there is a trend towards a larger proportion of non-gun related injuries in Kosovo. For comparison, it should be noted that injuries caused by intentional violence are dwarfed by another source of injury: traffic accidents. In June–December 1999, traffic injuries resulted in a total of 1,361 hospital visits. In 2001, the figure was 1,230; in 2002, it was 1,883.⁹⁷



Source: Pristina University Hospital

Guns in crime

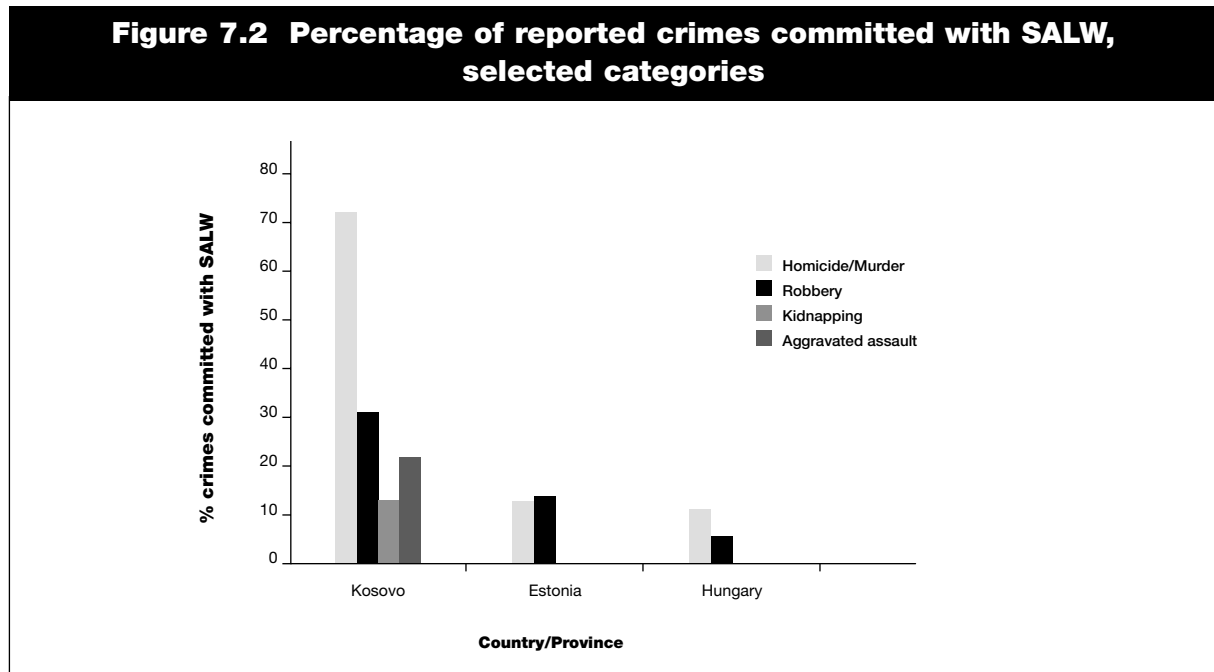
As discussed in more detail in Section III, violent crime is not particularly high in Kosovo.⁹⁸ Reported homicide, robbery, and assault levels are similar to, or lower than, those of other countries in the region. As a consequence, people in Kosovo are also feeling increasingly secure.

However, in the crimes that are committed in Kosovo guns are prevalent. The Kosovo Police Information System, a database established by UNMIK Police covering all reported crimes committed on the territory, gives detailed information on the extent of gun use in crime. Of 76 reported homicides in 2002, 55 (72 per cent) were committed with firearms. In contrast, only seven out of the 55 reported kidnapping cases (13 per cent) of the same year involved guns (see Table 7.2 below). Robberies and aggravated assaults come in between, with approximately 31 per cent and 22 per cent respectively committed with firearms.

Kosovo has high gun-crime rates when compared with other countries. For comparison, Table 7.2 presents the ratio of homicides and robbery committed with firearms in two other selected countries. In Estonia and Hungary, two other post-Communist states, the firearm homicide rates were 13 per cent and 11 per cent respectively. Kosovo's high percentage of homicides committed with guns makes it less probable that guns simply replace other types of weapons/tools for committing murder (what in criminology is called the substitution effect). Although this is somewhat speculative, it seems that the widespread availability of guns in itself may have increased the number of homicides in Kosovo. Details of the homicide cases seem to corroborate this, as some have an accidental component to them, or are a result of a suspect's access to a gun as an argument erupted (*UNMIK Police Briefing Notes*, various issues).

Also in the case of robberies, Kosovo is somewhat anomalous in comparison with Estonia and Hungary. Robberies are twice as likely to be committed with firearms in Kosovo as they are in Estonia, and four times more likely than in Hungary. The fact that guns are used less often in kidnapping seems

to be related to the fact that a large number of kidnappings in Kosovo are related to intra-family conflicts or inter-family feuds. This, in turn, seems to indicate that guns, although widely available, are not used indiscriminately.



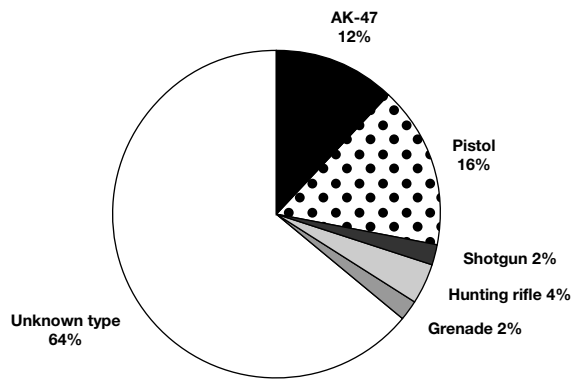
Notes: The figures on robbery and aggravated assault for Kosovo are based on a random sample comprising 50 per cent of the total number of cases. The figures for Estonia and Hungary are an average of the years 1997–2001.

Sources: KPIS; Estonia, Ministry of the Interior; Hungary, Ministry of the Interior.

Data on the types of firearms used in acts of violence is much more sketchy, as the make or type is only rarely indicated.⁹⁹ From what has been indicated, it can be tentatively deduced that AK-47s and pistols dominate among the known weapons types used in murders, kidnappings, robberies, and aggravated assault.

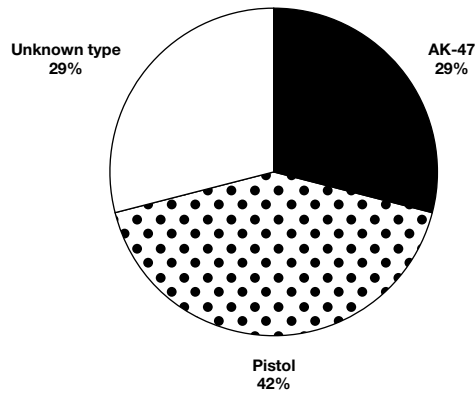
This is also confirmed by the focus group discussions conducted for this study. In all these discussions, pistols and automatic weapons (together with knives) were ranked as the three most dangerous weapons. Given that pistols and automatic weapons, in conjunction with hunting rifles, are the most common guns among civilians in Kosovo, this is not surprising. It has implications for weapons collection and control efforts, however. Any efforts to collect guns could usefully focus on those most predominantly associated with violence. Hence, it seems that AK-47s and pistols, rather than hunting rifles or other types of guns, should receive more attention in the UNDP/ISAC WED pilot in 2003.

Figure 7.3 Types of SALW used in murders, 2002



Source: KPIS

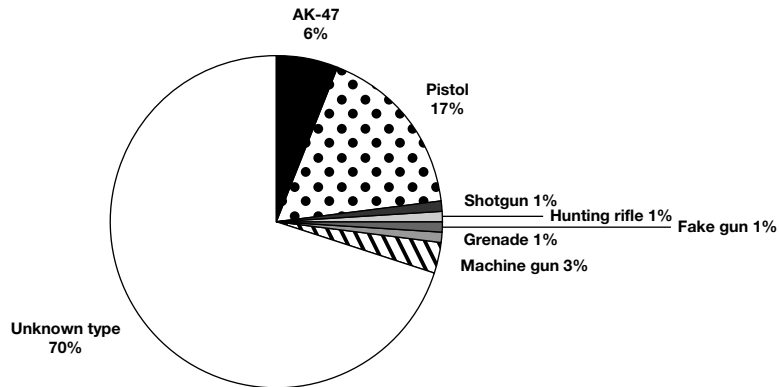
Figure 7.4 Types of SALW used in kidnappings, 2002



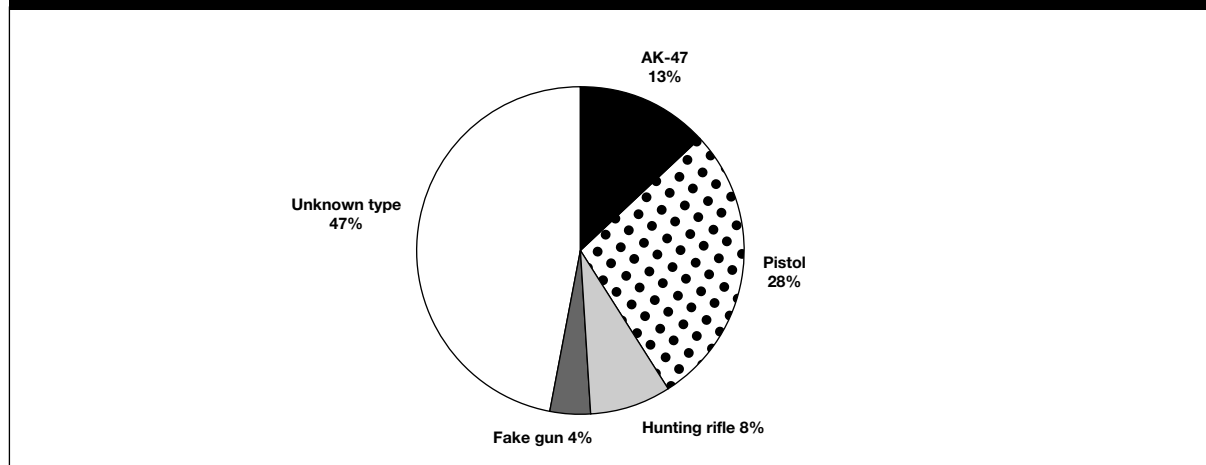
Page 38

Source: KPIS

Figure 7.5 Types of SALW used in robberies, 2002



Source: KPIS

Figure 7.6 Types of SALW used in aggravated assaults, 2002

Source: KPIS

Gun-free environments? Guns and schools

According to a survey undertaken by the International Rescue Committee and the UNDP, the proliferation of weapons in society was among the top ten concerns of youth in Kosovo in 2001, and among the top five concerns among ethnic Albanians (IRC and UNDP, 2001, p. 6, pp. 55–56). A year earlier, the UNDP had held a series of workshop-style discussions with youth groups in Kosovo to elicit their perceptions of the scale of the small arms problem. During these discussions, youth consistently stated that approximately 25–50 per cent of them could personally and easily acquire a firearm within 24 hours (UNDP, 2000). The young people participating in the discussions believed that between five and 20 per cent of all students were armed or claimed that they were armed at school. This number was not the same across schools: it was lower in more specialized secondary schools (medicine, economics, etc.) than in the larger ‘gymnasiums’. At that time, the discussions revealed that youth did not feel secure in schools. Security provisions within schools were poor. Most problematic were youth from outside the school that came into the school grounds to threaten those within. Often, young women were assaulted.

Page 39

By early 2003, the situation had changed in some ways, but remained the same in others. For this research report, the Kosovo Initiative for a Democratic Society (KIDS) was commissioned by the UNDP and UNICEF to undertake research in schools around Kosovo, both urban/rural and minority/majority establishments, in order to investigate the issue of violence and gun use. Personnel from fifteen schools, eight primary and seven secondary schools were interviewed by a former teacher on violence in general and the use of arms in particular.¹⁰⁰ This research shows that the situation has in certain respects evolved somewhat since 2000. It leaves open other issues, to be elucidated through further study, mainly as a consequence of teachers having a different perspective of the security situation in schools than students and pupils.

In the interviews, teachers stress that physical fights, in both primary and secondary schools, are mainly fist-fights, with no weapons or other tools involved. In those few cases when a weapon is implicated in the fighting, it is generally a knife, a chain, or boxing gloves. Firearm incidents remain very rare: in the 15 schools, two incidents were recorded (in one incident, a pistol was noted in the pocket of a student, in another a student hit a classmate with a hand-made non-functioning pistol).

However, the administrators and teachers recognize that the security situation is less than perfect. Several secondary schools have asked for the presence of a policeman in order to avoid violence. In primary schools, teachers conduct bag searches, and regularly find knives but never guns. Secondary school teachers do not feel entitled to go through bags, although, in a number of interviews, they expressed the wish to do so.

The threats are mainly perceived to be coming from the outside, on the way to and from school, or related to youth from other schools, etc. In Kamenicë/Kamenica, for example, police units escort students to the school buses to ensure that no gangs threaten them on the way to the bus. Teachers find parents uncooperative and uninterested in the security situation in schools. In fact, in certain ways they contribute to a negative security climate, as teachers at times receive verbal threats from parents who are dissatisfied with their children's performance.

These interviews confirm that the security situation in schools is less than perfect. It also shows that the main threat is not small arms but fighting and intimidation without weapons, or with weapons such as chains, knives, and iron bars. However, this does not mean that guns are absent from the school environment. The two incidents show that guns are present at times. As information on issues such as these generally does not reach teachers, it is probable that guns are more common than teachers suggest.¹⁰¹

VIII. Conclusions

Despite the recent war and the uncertainty over its future status, the situation in Kosovo does contain some bright spots. In less than four years, the territory has witnessed the development and strengthening of public institutions and the rule of law, as well as the emergence of an increasingly accountable security sector. Though structural, social, and economic challenges remain, including widespread unemployment and continued inter-communal tension, Kosovo's progress has, in some ways, surpassed the expectations of the international community.

A central obstacle to the future success of these efforts, however, is the continued widespread availability and misuse of small arms and light weapons. The findings of this SABA household survey confirm that assault rifles and pistols continue to be trafficked from Serbia and Albania, and are owned by a wide array of actors. In spite of continuous efforts by UNMIK and KFOR to register and collect these arms, some 330,000–460,000 are still in the hands of civilians, organized criminal actors, and political factions.

This study has shown that small arms misuse still represents a threat to the safety and well being of Kosovans, as well as to the national and international staff of the UN administration and other agencies. Though fatal and non-fatal injury rates appear to be on the decline, criminality—and especially crime committed with firearms—is still a concern. Compared with other countries in the central and eastern European region, small arms are misused in a disproportionately large number of homicides and robberies.

The efforts of UNDP, particularly through its forthcoming WED programme, represent a potentially important step, and should be closely monitored and evaluated. But collecting and destroying weapons is only a first step. Although the findings of the SABA suggest that Kosovans may be willing, under some circumstances, to hand over their weapons, their faith in both national and international security providers varies. The proposed WED should therefore adopt modest objectives in the initial stages.

The permanent removal and disposal of small arms from Kosovo could potentially yield profound developmental and symbolic dividends. It is a necessary, but not by itself a sufficient, step to securing the stability and security of the territory and its people. Given the uncertainty that persists among its neighbours, the task will be difficult. Nevertheless, if carried out with adequate political and financial backing, and in tandem with ongoing development programming, the results could be promising for Kosovo and the region.

Endnotes

- ¹ The SABA household survey drew on a number of research instruments, including: (1) 1,200+ household survey; (2) 12 participatory focus groups in four representative regions; (3) 15 key informant interviews with ex-KLA fighters from all seven operational zones; (4) interviews with 29 teachers and administrators in 15 schools throughout Kosovo; and (5) interviews with key personnel in the Kosovo Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG), UNMIK, the OSCE and other actors in the security sector. The SABA household survey team was also given access to the UNMIK Police database (KPIS) and the registry of the Pristina University Hospital.
- ² This estimate is based on the following elements: Approximately 60–70 per cent of the 390,000 households in Kosovo possess guns. The average rate of gun holdings among these households is circa 1.4–1.7 weapons per household.
- ³ The issue of who has persecuted whom is contested terrain: Kosovo Serbs will at times attempt to justify Milosevic's persecution by reference to the way they were treated in Kosovo in the last decades of communist rule.
- ⁴ For a similar argument, see Heinemann-Grüder and Paes (2001, pp. 20–21).
- ⁵ It is important to remember that while these are not 'ancient' or 'eternal' hatreds, the ethnic conflicts have not surged just in the last few years or even decade. Rather, they date back to the emergence of nationalism as a dominant political and social force in Europe in the nineteenth century (Malcolm, 1998, Introduction).
- ⁶ Figures from Living Standard Measurement Survey 2000, cited in SOK (2002). The six per cent figure of the Kosovo Serb minority comes from UNMIK (2002). Figures on the ethnic composition in Kosovo are inherently controversial, and have for many decades been used as a political tool (for a brief discussion, see Malcolm, 1998, xxxi–xxxii).
- ⁷ In addition, the economic situation of the ethnic Serb community tends to be worse than in the rest of Kosovo (Paes and Matveeva, 2003).
- ⁸ For a vivid report on the situation of the returnees, see Veljovic (2003). A more comprehensive picture is provided in ICG (2002).
- ⁹ Support for moderate political leaders has gradually weakened, however (Biele, 2002).
- ¹⁰ In the second municipal elections, the boycott was total in the divided city of Mitrovica.
- ¹¹ This goes against the general trend, which is of a gradual decline in electoral participation over the three elections, from 79 per cent in 2000 to 53.9 per cent in 2002.
- ¹² ICG (2001, p. 17). The only Kosovo Serb party participating in the Kosovo-wide elections, the 'Return' Party, today occupies these ten seats.
- ¹³ The Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) still has 'reserved powers' over the following domains: dissolution of the assembly and calling for new elections; final authority to approve the Kosovo budget; final authority over the judicial system (appointment, removal of judges and prosecutors), law enforcement and correctional institutions; control over the Kosovo Protection Corps; external relations; control over cross-border/boundary transit of goods; protection of minorities; administration of state or other publicly owned property, etc. (UNDP, 2002a, Box 2.4).
- ¹⁴ Although the status of Montenegro differed from that of Kosovo within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Montenegro was a constituent republic of the Federation, while Kosovo was part of Serbia), Kosovo did have substantial autonomy, and in many ways resembled Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina in terms of powers and prerogatives.
- ¹⁵ This is so even though Kosovo was always the least developed part of Yugoslavia. For an overview of the situation in Albania, see UNDP (2002c).
- ¹⁶ The NATO operation 'Essential Harvest' of August–September 2001 collected a total of 3,875 weapons and 397,625 mines, explosives, and ammunition (Small Arms Survey, 2002, Table 7.9). The quality of the weapons was on average not very high, however, and it seems that many of the weapons most useful for fighting may have been retained by the guerrillas.
- ¹⁷ Interviews, security sector personnel working in Kosovo, 27 February 2003.
- ¹⁸ Opinion polls in 2001 and 2002 indicate that close to 100 per cent of the Kosovo Albanians would vote in favour of independence, and a similar share of Kosovo Serbs would vote against (UNDP, 2002a, Box 2.5).
- ¹⁹ Unemployment measured by ILO method, cited in UNMIK (2002).
- ²⁰ UNMIK Police Press Release, 29 October 2002; see UNDP (2003, p. 25).
- ²¹ The opinion survey conducted for this report indicated that about 90 per cent of the respondents would go to the police if they were robbed or seriously threatened (see Annex 1). However, other UNDP opinion polls have arrived at lower numbers; see UNDP (2002b, p. 24; 2003, p. 28).

- ²² Calculated from KPIS. The decline in inter-ethnic murder rates should be interpreted with caution. It is less a consequence of improved inter-ethnic relations than of the fact that the communities are more separated today than in the immediate post-conflict period.
- ²³ Among the category 'others', 71 per cent felt 'safe' or 'very safe'.
- ²⁴ Other minority communities, such as Bosniacs, Roma, and Turks, were covered in the survey. However, their numbers were not sufficiently large to produce statistically significant results. Hence these groups are not further discussed in the report.
- ²⁵ As drivers' licences were not issued for three years during the conflict, there are quite a few untrained and poorly skilled drivers on the Kosovo roads.
- ²⁶ By 'centralization' these men most likely meant centralization of political power in Pristina (as opposed to strong local-level governance structures).
- ²⁷ Hence they prefer the local component of the police force to the international police force, although both are part of the same organization—UNMIK Police.
- ²⁸ Ministarstvo Unutrašnjih Poslova (Ministry of the Interior), Serbia.
- ²⁹ The number of KFOR troops has declined by approximately 30 per cent from its original strength of 42,000 men and women.
- ³⁰ Interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 22 January 2003.
- ³¹ For a discussion of the share of police holdings in total SALW holdings, see Small Arms Survey (2001, Ch. 2).
- ³² However, there are allegations that the Yugoslav police, as well as elements of the VJ, continue to be active underground in certain enclaves, in particular in North Mitrovica. According to one source consulted by SAS, 40 Serb secret service officers operate in northern Mitrovica.
- ³³ UNMIK Police Daily Press Update, 27 January 2003 <<http://www.kosovopolice.org/english/dreports/DPU280103.htm>>.
- ³⁴ Interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 22 January 2003, 2 March 2003.
- ³⁵ For an explanation of the multiplier concept, see Box 4.1.
- ³⁶ Interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 22 January 2003.
- ³⁷ This arrangement is part of the Statement of Principles signed between the commanders of KFOR and the KPC on 20 September 1999. Interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 22 January 2003.
- ³⁸ Interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 28 February 2003.
- ³⁹ This number is also confirmed by the IOM database of ex-KLA combatants. According to this database, only two per cent of combatants were active in the KLA before 1998. The bulk joined in 1998 (36 per cent in the first half, 21 per cent in the second half). The remainder, i.e. more than 40 per cent, joined in 1999 (cited in Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, 2001, p. 25).
- ⁴⁰ Interview with ex-KLA combatant, undertaken by Kosovo Initiative for Democratic Society (KIDS) for the SABA, February 2003.
- ⁴¹ Interview with ex-KLA combatant, undertaken by KIDS for the SABA, February 2003.
- ⁴² 'Undertaking of Demilitarization and Transformation by the UCK', signed on 20 June 1999, paras 22–26. Non-automatic long-barrelled guns were subject to special KFOR permission.
- ⁴³ For example, in the village of Vladovo, US Marines disarmed around 200 KLA combatants (Heinmann-Grüder and Paes, 2001, p. 19).
- ⁴⁴ The background to this is that the Yugoslav army was long successful in keeping the KLA—and hence KLA armaments—at bay along the Kosovo borders in Albania. The sudden withdrawal of the VJ in June 1999 led KLA fighters to move swiftly (and thus only lightly armed) into Kosovo, leaving large stocks behind (Ripley, 2000, p. 23).
- ⁴⁵ Interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 27 February 2003.
- ⁴⁶ Data provided by KFOR, March 2003.
- ⁴⁷ Data provided by KFOR, March 2003.
- ⁴⁸ Data provided by KFOR, March 2003.
- ⁴⁹ Data provided by KFOR, March 2003.
- ⁵⁰ For details on the armament requirements of 'people's war' tactics, see Small Arms Survey (2002, Ch. 2).
- ⁵¹ Data provided by KFOR, March 2003. OSCE puts the number at 200. However, these numbers comprise only those Bridge Watchers who are more or less full-time militias. It is thought that, beyond these, a larger number of supporters/reservists can be mobilized whenever needed (cited in Paes and Matveeva, 2003, p. 36).
- ⁵² According to Gorjanc (2000, Table 4), Montenegro had more than 13.5 weapons per 100 inhabitants.
- ⁵³ Again, if Kosovo followed the general pattern across Yugoslavia, 25 per cent should have been rifles and the rest largely pistols (calculated from Gorjanc, 2000, Table 2).

⁵⁴ These data are not precise, since no census has been conducted since 1991, and the inflows and outflows of persons have been significant since then. Moreover, the 1991 data are unreliable, as the census was conducted with ethno-political goals in mind. This calculation is based on data from the Statistical Office of Kosovo, the OSCE, and the SABA household survey.

⁵⁵ For further details, see Annex 1.

⁵⁶ The success rate of random searches in houses would provide a good lower threshold for the ratio of households that possess weapons. Precisely because the searches are random, the chance of seizing a gun should be equal to the proportion of households owning a gun: the only reason it might be lower is that it is most likely that not all guns will be found during a search, however thorough, as concealment techniques can be very refined.

⁵⁷ The claim, advanced by some interviewees, that every single household in Kosovo holds guns seems implausible, however. In fact, even intelligence-based KFOR operations to seize weapons in households do not have a 100 per cent success rate: rather, weapons are found in 70 per cent of the interventions.

⁵⁸ Obviously, neither KFOR nor police seizures are random, and so the distribution of types and makes among the seized weapons might not perfectly reflect the distribution among civilians. This is particularly true of KFOR seizures, which include a large number of militia weapons caches.

⁵⁹ This information is also corroborated by the focus group of children and youth in Gjilan/Gnjilane, which named various shops where weapons were held under the counter.

⁶⁰ Data provided by KFOR, March 2003.

⁶¹ In fact, approximately 70 per cent of WAC cards are in the hands of bodyguards, although these do not serve only political leaders.

⁶² Over and above this, there were a number of murders and attempted murders, without indication of whether guns were involved. Given what is known about guns in murders in Kosovo (see Section VII), it can be assumed that the percentage should be raised.

⁶³ Interviews, OSCE, March 2003.

⁶⁴ The demobilization of the KLA is discussed in Section III.

⁶⁵ Interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 30 January 2003.

⁶⁶ Calculated from KFOR (2002a). Some articles refer to both international and national leaders.

⁶⁷ Interview, personnel working in Kosovo security and policies sector, 30 January 2003.

⁶⁸ Interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 27 January 2003.

⁶⁹ For details, see Box 6.1.

⁷⁰ The 200,000 figure appears in Kanani (2002).

⁷¹ Information gathered from interviews with ex-KLA militia, undertaken by KIDS, February 2003; private security personnel, Kosovo, 27 February 2003; personnel working in the security sector in Kosovo and Albania, April 2003.

⁷² Communication, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 5 April 2003; interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 27 February 2003.

⁷³ Customs have recognised the difficulties presented by the porousness of the 'green border and boundary' and in March 2003, they introduced Mobile Anti Smuggling Teams. They expect these teams to provide additional interdiction capability along unapproved routes from the boundary and along the border.

⁷⁴ All personnel working in the Kosovo security sector were of this opinion.

⁷⁵ Put very simply, there are two main Balkan smuggling routes which transport a range of illicit goods, one southern and one northern. The entry point to the Balkans is Turkey. The northern route then goes through Romania, and further: either through Hungary and the Czech Republic into western Europe, or passing by the Ukraine and Poland. The so-called southern route passes through Bulgaria, FYROM, Kosovo, and Albania on its way to Italy (Hajdinjak, 2002, p. 42).

⁷⁶ There have been attempts to include Kosovans in the highest echelons of the customs service, but the locals have resigned after receiving repeated and serious threats against themselves and their families (interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 28 February 2003; for details, see Hajdinjak, 2002).

⁷⁷ At the checkpoints along the administrative boundary line, KFOR was previously responsible for passenger control, but has been replaced by the border police. Customs act as a tax collection and enforcement agency on the administrative boundary line. Goods of Serbian and Montenegrin origin are not subject to customs duty but are subject to VAT and excise. Customs collect these taxes at the boundary line from commercial consignments of goods.

⁷⁸ Customs are making two important improvements in 2003. The first is the introduction of a new EU compliant Customs Law. The second is a customs computer system to complement the new law. Both will provide for effective risk analysis, and hold an intelligence database. This will enable customs to concentrate their resources on passengers and goods that present the highest risk,

and facilitate passage for low risk and compliant importers. Customs believe that this, alongside the deployment of Mobile Anti Smuggling Units, will release resources that should enable them to deploy more staff on their protection of society responsibilities.

⁷⁹ Interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 28 February 2003.

⁸⁰ Interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 28 February 2003.

⁸¹ The only exception to this is radiation detection equipment, which was acquired because of concerns that Ukrainian contaminated building material was reaching Kosovo (interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 28 February 2003).

⁸² Interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 28 February 2003.

⁸³ Interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 28 February 2003.

⁸⁴ Interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 1 March 2003.

⁸⁵ During the Yugoslav era, Bosnia and Herzegovina was home to more than 40 per cent of the federation's defence industry, employing circa 38,000 workers. The bulk of Yugoslav SALW production took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since the end of the civil war in 1995, production has been re-established. Small arms ammunition is produced at Konjic (Igman) and Gorazde (Pobjeda), and exports of small arms are reported as early as in 1998 (Small Arms Survey, 2003, p. 43).

⁸⁶ Interview, personnel working in Kosovo security sector, 28 February 2003.

⁸⁷ KIDS interviews with ex-KLA members.

⁸⁸ The research team has not been able to obtain documentation on such trafficking, however.

⁸⁹ Here the Kanuni i Lekë Dukagjinit [The Code of Lekë Dukagjini] (1989) has been used.

⁹⁰ It is worth noting that the reconciliation movement of the early 1990s in Kosovo did not focus on guns, but attempted to break the cycle of blood feuds within elements of Kosovan society.

⁹¹ KFOR may also issue weapons authorization cards, but only to KPC members.

⁹² Regulation No. 2001/7 on the Authorisation of Possession of Weapons in Kosovo, para. 8.6.

⁹³ The types of weapons permitted are shotguns no greater than of 12 bore gauge, hunting rifles of a maximum calibre of 8mm, civilian small bore target rifles with a maximum calibre of 6mm, civilian small bore target pistols with a

maximum calibre of 6mm, air-powered rifles and pistols with a maximum calibre of 6mm. Weapons primarily manufactured for military use and military inventory weapons are not eligible for registration.

⁹⁴ The UNMIK Weapons Registration Office, now responsible for the registration of hunting and recreational weapons, was established with financial and technical assistance from UNDP/ISAC in support of the Kosovan Small Arms Regulatory Framework.

⁹⁵ The membership rate of the various hunting associations in Kosovo, in 2001, ranged from as few as ten members to more than a thousand (information derived from a list of hunters associations, Members of Hunters' Federation of Kosovo in year 2001 and other information).

⁹⁶ Information obtained by the Small Arms Survey from the Pristina University Hospital.

⁹⁷ This shows that the concern with reckless drivers of many women in the focus group research (see above Section III) corresponds well to the statistically most important dangers in Kosovo.

⁹⁸ This is not to say that crime levels in general are low: in fact, smuggling, contraband, and other forms of economic crime are rife.

⁹⁹ Given different national recording procedures, comparisons should be made only cautiously. UNMIK police officers responsible for recording the information also come from various countries, with very different classification systems and uneven knowledge of the guns most often found in the Balkan region. As a consequence, the reliability of original police classifications might suffer. As a result, Table 7.2 should be read with caution.

¹⁰⁰ The 15 schools were as follows: Primary schools: Elena Gjika (Pristina), Vaso Pashe Shkodrani (Pejë/Peć), Janjeva (Lipjan/Lipljane), Bashkimi (Glllogovc/Glogovac), Edmond Hoxha, Junik (Deçan/Deçane), 7 Marsi (Suharekë/Suva Reka), Ponesh (Gjilan/Gnjilane). Secondary schools: Economy, Ferizaj/Uroševac (Ferizaj/Uroševac), Economy, Kamenicë/Kamenica (Kamenicë/Kamenica), Shala (Lipjan/Lipljane), Sami Frasheri, Pristina, Mitrovica South (Mitrovica), Economy Podujevë/Podujevo (Podujevë/Podujevo), Technical Secondary School, Prizren.

¹⁰¹ The interviewer undertook two informal interviews with students of a secondary school. In both interviews, it was claimed that students have access to arms, and carry arms from time to time in school.

Annex 1: Responses to selected questions of the SABA household survey

The SABA household survey, commissioned by UNDP/ISAC for this study, was conducted throughout Kosovo by Index Kosova (a joint venture with BBSS Gallup International) between 4 and 10 February 2003. It comprised face-to-face interviews with 1,264 people, 259 Kosovo Serb and 1,005 mainly Kosovo Albanian respondents. In order to increase the reliability of the results regarding the Serb minority, its share among the respondents was chosen to be higher than their percentage of the entire population of Kosovo.

The sample was multi-staged random, according to the residential (urban/rural) and ethnic characteristics of the population. The selection of a household was carried out according to the 'random route' method. Men above the age of 18 were targeted as the main gun owners.

Q.2a Whom would you address/call, if your car or motorcycle, or other asset were robbed?

Answers	All respondents %	K/A* %	K/S** %
Relatives, friends and neighbors	2	2	1
KPS	84	90	17
UNMIK Police	11	6	65
KFOR	1	1	6
Private security company	<1	0	<1
Community elders	<1	<1	1
Head of family	<1	<1	<1
Other	1	1	3
Nothing	0	<1	2
Don't know	<1	<1	5

Q.3a Whom would you address/call, if someone threatened to kill you?

Answers	All respondents %	K/A* %	K/S** %
Relatives, friends and neighbors	4	4	3
KPS	80	87	13
UNMIK Police	8	4	56
KFOR	4	3	14
Private security company	<1	<1	<1
Community elders	0	0	0
Head of family	<1	<1	2
Other	1	1	2
Nothing	1	<1	3
Refused	<1	0	<1
Don't know	1	<1	7

Q.6a Do you think that there are too many guns in society?

Answers	All respondents %	K/A* %	K/S** %
Yes	47	47	46
No	21	20	32
Refused	1	1	<1
Don't know	31	33	21

Q.6b In which parts of society?

Answers (multiple answers allowed)	All respondents %	K/A* %	K/S** %
Criminal groups	70	71	54
Businessmen	14	15	1
Politicians	7	8	0
In households	23	25	1
Among ex-fighters/ex-military	14	12	37
Whole society	6	3	26
The youth	2	3	0
Hunters	2	2	0
K-Serbs	1	1	0
K-Albanians	1	0	12
Other	3	3	0
Don't know	8	9	5

Q.10 Compared to one year ago, is the security in this area better or worse?

Answers	All respondents %	K/A* %	K/S** %
Improved	61	65	19
Got worse	10	11	6
Same	27	22	70
Volatile (up and down)	2	2	4
Don't know	<1	<1	<1

Q.17 In your opinion, how many households in your neighbourhood have firearms?

Answers	All respondents %	K/A* %	K/S** %
All households	<1	<1	1
Almost all households	1	1	2
Most households (3/4)	2	2	1
Every other household (1/2)	2	2	5
Few households (1/4)	11	11	13
Almost no households	16	16	17
Not a single household	18	19	5
Refused	6	1	57
Don't know	43	47	0

Q.18 Why do you think people keep firearms?

Answers (multiple answers allowed)	All respondents %	K/A* %	K/S** %
Personal protection	65	67	48
Protect property	16	17	5
Protect community	1	1	<1
Political security	6	4	27
Work	<1	<1	2
Sport shooting	3	3	3
Left from the war	7	8	6
For hunting	40	40	39
Valued family possession	3	3	4
Part of the tradition	5	6	2
Hobby/own will	2	2	0
Arrogance	1	1	0
To commit crimes/killings/threats	1	1	0
Revenge	1	2	0
Low awareness/naïve	1	1	0
Others	2	2	<1
Refused	<1	<1	2
Don't know	8	8	11

Q.19b On average, what types/makes do you think are the most common in Kosovo?

Answers (multiple answers allowed)	K/A* %	K/S** %
Pistols/Revolvers	66	40
Automatic rifle (such as AK-47)	29	56
Hunting rifle (single shot, bolt)	57	34
Shotgun (non-automatic or pump)	1	0
Medium or heavy machine gun	6	0
Mortar	<1	0
RPGs	<1	0
Grenade	5	7
Other	<1	2
Don't know	3	2

Q.20a If your household could own a gun legally, would you choose to do so?

Answers	All respondents %	K/A* %	K/S** %
Yes	40	38	61
No	54	56	33
Refused	1	1	2
Don't know	5	5	4

Page 49

Q.20c Why would your household choose to own a firearm?

Answers (multiple answers allowed)	All respondents %	K/A* %	K/S** %
To protect myself/family	69	70	64
To protect my property	18	19	11
To protect my community	3	3	4
For political reasons	4	0	31
For my work	1	1	1
Sport shooting	3	3	3
Because all other people have guns	1	1	0
For hunting	32	32	31
Other	4	4	1
Don't know	<1	<1	0

Q.22 If a person from your neighbourhood, for whatever reason, would need a weapon, where do you think he/she could get one?

Answers (multiple answers allowed)	All respondents %	K/A* %	K/S** %
Would not be able to get one	6	6	6
Would have to ask	4	3	8
Buy one from the black market	14	14	15
Buy one from someone else	4	4	1
Know of a hidden cache	1	<1	2
Buy from a friend in the armed forces	2	2	<1
Borrow one	4	4	6
Get from family member	1	2	<1
Get in specific town/region	1	1	2
Get a licence and buy a gun	12	12	8
Police/KPS	1	1	0
Hunters' society	<1	<1	0
KFOR/UNMIK	<1	<1	0
Other	<1	1	0
Refused	2	1	3
Don't know	58	58	56

Page 50

Q.21b How likely do you think it is that people in your neighbourhood will hand in their weapons, if there are any such, in exchange for investments in your municipality?

Answers	All respondents %	K/A* %	K/S** %
Very likely	22	24	2
Somewhat likely	29	31	6
Somewhat unlikely	6	5	11
Very unlikely	16	13	45
Refused	1	<1	3
Don't know	27	26	33

Q.5 Many people feel that having a gun helps to protect their families. Other people believe that having guns is dangerous to their families. Which opinion do you agree with?

Answers	All respondents %	K/A* %	K/S** %
Helps protect	20	18	40
Makes no difference	6	5	16
Is dangerous	71	74	36
Refused	1	1	<1
Don't know	2	1	7

Q.7 What type of violent crime and violence occurs most often in this area nowadays?

Answers (multiple answers allowed)	All respondents %	K/A* %	K/S** %
Armed robbery	22	24	3
Theft (victim not aware)	46	47	36
Kidnapping	4	4	3
Threats	13	14	11
Murder	25	27	5
Assault/beatings	10	10	16
Rape	7	7	0
Gangs	3	3	2
Fighting	3	3	1
Violence related to smuggling	3	3	2
Revenge	1	1	2
Domestic violence	2	2	3
Drunken disorder	2	<1	14
Burglary	17	16	25
Drug dealing	7	6	11
Other	1	1	2
There is no violence	20	21	9
Don't know	8	6	19

Q.4 Ideally, who do you think should be responsible for security?

Answers	All respondents %	K/A* %	K/S** %
Local authorities	3	2	7
UNMIK	6	6	2
KFOR	9	9	5
KPS	66	71	8
UNMIK Police	3	2	7
KPC	2	2	0
Local militias	3	<1	28
The neighborhood or family	1	1	0
Co-ordination center	<1	0	3
The people	1	1	0
Kosovo government	1	1	0
MUP/Serb Police/Army	3	0	38
Others	1	2	0
Don't know	2	1	3

*K/A: Kosovo Albanian respondents

**K/S: Kosovo Serb respondents

Annex 2: SABA household survey questionnaire

Q.1a. Has anyone in your household been injured in an accident (in the last three months)?

1. Yes
2. No

3. Refused
4. Don't know

Q.1b. Has anyone in this household been a victim of a crime or a violent encounter (in the last three months)? **(Interviewer: If any such, after the first case probe) Has anyone else?**

1. Yes **Go to Annex 1 and fill out for each incident**
2. No

3. Refused
4. Don't know

Q.1c. Has anyone in this household been threatened or made to feel fearful (in the last three months)? **(Interviewer: If any such, after the first case probe) Has anyone else?**

1. Yes **Go to Annex 1 and fill out for each incident**
2. No

3. Refused
4. Don't know

Q.2a. Whom would you address/call, if your car or motorcycle, or other asset were robbed? **(Single response)**

1. Turn to relatives, friends and neighbors for help
2. Go to KPS
3. Go to UNMIK Police
4. Go to KFOR
5. Go to private security company or similar
6. Turning to community elders
7. Turning to the head of the family

96. Other (specify) _____
97. Nothing (no point in doing anything)
98. Refused
99. Don't know

Q.2b. If such an event has happened, how likely is that you will do any of the following? Is it very likely (VL), somewhat likely (SL), somewhat unlikely (SU) or very unlikely (VU) that you will ... **(Interviewer: Read out)**

	VL	SL	SU	VU	Ref.*	DK**
a) turn to community elders?	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) turn to relatives, friends or neighbors?	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) shoot/attack thief if possible?	1	2	3	4	5	6

Q.3a. Whom would you address/call, if someone threatened to kill you? **(Single response)**

1. Turn to relatives, friends and neighbors for help
2. Go to KPS
3. Go to UNMIK Police
4. Go to KFOR
5. Find private protection (security company or similar)
6. Turn to community elders
7. Turn to the head of the family

- _____
96. Other (specify) _____
 97. Nothing (no point in doing anything)
 98. Refused
 99. Don't know

Page 54

Q.3b. If such an event has happened, how likely is that you will do any of the following? Is it very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely or very unlikely that you will... **(Interviewer: Read out)**

	VL	SL	SU	VU	Ref.	DK
a) turn to community elders?	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) turn to relatives, friends or neighbors?	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) threaten back?	1	2	3	4	5	6
d) shoot/attack thief if possible?	1	2	3	4	5	6

Q.4. Ideally, who do you think should be responsible for security? **(Single response)**

1. Local authorities
2. UNMIK
3. KFOR
4. Kosovo Police Service (KPS)
5. UNMIK Police
6. Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) (*Kosovo Albanian + sub-set only*)
7. Private security firms
8. Local militias
9. The neighborhood or family
10. Co-ordination center (*Kosovo Serb + sub-set only*)

- _____
97. Others (specify) _____
 98. Refused
 99. Don't know

*Refused

**Didn't know

Q.5. Many people feel that having a gun helps to protect their families. Other people believe that having guns is dangerous to their families. Which opinion do you agree with?

1. Helps protect
2. Makes no difference
3. Is dangerous
- _____
4. Refused
5. Don't know

Q.6a. Do you think that there are too many guns in society?

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1. Yes | Go to Q.6b |
| 2. No | Skip to Q.7 |
| _____ | |
| 3. Refused | Skip to Q.7 |
| 4. Don't know | Skip to Q.7 |

Q.6b. (Filtered) In which parts of society? (Multiple response)

1. Criminal groups
2. Businessmen
3. Politicians
4. In households
5. Among ex-fighters/ex-military
- _____
7. Other (specify) _____
8. Whole society
9. Refused
10. Don't know

Q.7. (Ask All) What type of violent crime and violence problems occur most often in this area nowadays? (Multiple response)

1. Armed robbery
2. Theft (victim not aware)
3. Kidnapping
4. Threats
5. Murder
6. Assault/beatings
7. Rape
8. Gangs
9. Fighting
10. Violence related to smuggling
11. Revenge
12. Domestic violence
13. Drunken disorder
14. Burglary

15. Drug dealing

96. Other (specify) _____

97. There are no violent crimes and violence problems whatsoever

98. Refused

99. Don't know

Q.8. Do you think your town/neighbourhood is safer, the same or more dangerous than other areas in Kosovo?

1. Safer

2. Same

3. More dangerous

4. Refused

5. Don't know

Q.9. Since when has your household lived in this area?

1. Less than a year **Skip to Q.11**

2. One year to 4 years **Go to Q.10**

3. More than 4 years **Go to Q.10**

Page 56

Q.10. **(Filtered)** Compared to one year ago, is the security in this area better or worse?

1. Improved

2. Gotten worse

3. Stayed the same

4. Volatile: goes up and down

5. Refused

6. Don't know

Q.11. Do you think that improving the control of firearms in Kosovo would increase security?

1. Yes

2. No

3. Refused

4. Don't know

Q.12. How much do you think each of the following will increase security? Do you think that tightening border control will increase security a lot, somewhat, make no difference or make the situation worse in Kosovo? And how much will licensing for legal firearms possession increase security...

	A lot	Somewhat	The same	Worse	Ref.	DK
a) Tightening border control	1	2	3	4	5	6
b) Licensing for legal firearms possession	1	2	3	4	5	6
c) Control of arm sellers	1	2	3	4	5	6

Q.13. What do you think is an appropriate age for a person to possess a gun?

1. Younger than 15 years
2. 16–20 years
3. 21–30 years
4. Older than 31
- _____
5. A man does not need to have a gun
6. Refused
7. Don't know

Q.14. What do you think is an appropriate age for starting to handle weapons?

1. Younger than 9 years old
2. 10–14 years old
3. 15–18 years old
4. 19–21 years old
5. Above 22 years old
- _____
6. Should not start handling a gun
7. The later the better
8. Refused
9. Don't know

Q.15a. On average, how often do you hear weapon-shots in your neighbourhood?
(Show card)

Q.15b. And apart from UNMIK Police, KPS, KPC (*Kosovo Albanian + sub-set only*) and KFOR, how often do you see firearms in your neighbourhood? (**Show card**)

	Q.15a	Q.15b
	Hear	See
Never	1	1
Less often	2	2
Once a month	3	3
Once a week	4	4
Several times a week	5	5
Daily	6	6

Refused	7	7
Don't know	8	8

Q.16. How do you think that the number of firearms in your neighbourhood has changed in the last three years? Has it decreased, increased or remained the same?

1. Has decreased
2. Has increased
3. The same
- _____
4. Refused
5. Don't know

Page 58

'Please remember that all we are talking about is strictly confidential. We do not want the names of any people. We are only trying to understand the situation in this community.'

Q.17. In your opinion, how many households in your neighbourhood have firearms? (**Show card**)

1. All households
2. Almost all households
3. Most households (three-quarters)
4. Every other household (one out of two)
5. Few households (a fourth)
6. Almost no households
7. Not a single household
- _____
6. Refused
7. Don't know

Q.18. Why do you think people keep firearms? (**Multiple response**)

1. Personal protection
2. Protect property
3. Protect community

- 4. Political security
- 5. Work
- 6. Sport shooting
- 7. Left from the war
- 8. For hunting
- 9. Valued family possession
- 10. Part of the tradition
- _____
- 97. Others (specify) _____
- 98. Refused
- 99. Don't know

Q.19a. Among those households that possess a gun, on average, how many firearms do you think they have?

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| __ (record actual number) | Go to Q.19b |
| _____ | |
| 97. None | Skip to Q.20 |
| 98. Refused | Skip to Q.20 |
| 99. Don't know | Skip to Q.20 |

Q.19b. (Filtered: Ask if any to previous Q.19a) On average, what types/makes do you think are the most common in Kosovo? (Multiple response)

- 1. Pistols/revolvers
- 2. Automatic rifle (such as AK-47)
- 3. Hunting rifle (single-shot, bolt)
- 4. Shotgun (non-automatic or pump)
- 5. Medium or heavy machine gun
- 6. Landmine
- 7. Grenade
- 8. Mortar
- 9. RPGs (rocket-propeller grenade launcher)
- _____
- 97. Other (specify) _____
- 98. Refused
- 99. Don't know

Q.20a. If your household could own a gun legally, would you choose to do so?

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1. No | Skip to Q.20b |
| 2. Yes | Go to Q.20c |
| _____ | |
| 3. Refused | Skip to Q.21 |
| 4. Don't know | Skip to Q.21 |

Q.20b. (Filtered: Ask those, who would NOT own in Q.21a) Why would your household choose NOT to own a weapon? (Multiple response)

1. Do not like guns
2. Dangerous for family in the house (i.e. children)
3. Don't need one
4. Dangerous for community
5. Don't know how to use one
6. Afraid
7. Only women in the house
8. License too costly/difficult to obtain
- _____
97. Other (specify) _____
98. Refused
99. Don't know

Q.20c. (Filtered: Ask those, who WOULD own in Q.20a) Why would your household choose to own a firearm? (Multiple response)

1. To protect myself/my family
2. To protect my property
3. To protect my community
4. For political reasons
5. For my work
6. Sport shooting
7. Because all other people have guns
8. For hunting
- _____
97. Other (specify) _____
98. Refused
99. Don't know

Page 60

Q.21a. Under what conditions do you think people in your neighbourhood would be willing to hand in their guns?

1. Would be willing to do it today
2. Improvement of the economic situation of the community
3. If political settlement regarding the future status of Kosovo
4. For cash
5. If part of an agreement between local communities
6. If there would be less crime
7. If there would be severe penalty
8. If we would get a regular army (*Kosovo Albanian + sub-set*)
9. If Serb police/military would return (*Kosovo Serb + sub-set*)
- _____
96. Never
97. Other (specify) _____
98. Refused to answer
99. Don't know

Q.21b. How likely do you think it is that people in your neighbourhood will hand in their weapons, if there are any such, in exchange for investments in your municipality? Is it...

1. Very likely
2. Somewhat likely
3. Somewhat unlikely
4. Very unlikely
- _____
5. Refused
6. Don't know

Q.22. If a person from your neighbourhood, for whatever reason, would need a weapon, where do you think he could get one? **(Multiple response)**

1. Would not be able to get one
2. Would have to ask
3. Buy one from the black market
4. Buy one from someone else
5. Know of a hidden cache
6. Buy from a friend in the armed forces
7. Borrow one
8. Get from family member
9. Get in specific town/region (specify) _____
10. Get a licence and buy a gun
- _____
97. Other (specify) _____
98. Refused
97. Don't know

Q.23. Do you know who is allowed to keep guns AT HOME legally now? **(Multiple response)**

1. No, I don't know
2. Police and soldiers
3. People who work in ministries
4. High officials
5. Local officials (politicians, civil servants)
6. Body/security guards
7. Any adult
8. Hunters
9. Important businessmen
- _____
97. Other (specify) _____
98. Refused

Annex 3: Variables in the feasibility and volatility indices

Feasibility Index

Variable	Available indicators (per municipality)	Assumptions
<i>Legitimate economic opportunities</i>	Tax collection (UNMIK, 2003)	The more taxes are collected, the more people are involved in legitimate economic activities.
<i>Trust in and cooperation with public authorities</i>	Electoral participation rates in % (OSCE, 2002)	The more people vote, the more they trust and are willing to cooperate with public and international authorities.
<i>Gun scepticism, attitudes towards weapons collection</i>	Household survey – composite index of answers to questions, Q.5, Q.6a, Q.18, Q.20a, Q.21a, Q.21b (see Annex 2)	The more sceptical people are towards guns, the more they will be willing to cooperate with UNDP on a WED program.

Volatility Index

Variable	Indicators (per municipality)	Assumptions
<i>Extent of armed violence/gun misuse, numbers of SALW in circulation</i>	Murder rates with firearms in 2002 per 100,000 (calculated from KPIS) Recorded incidents involving weapons, 2002 per 100,000 (UNMIK Police, 2002) Number of small arms inflicted injuries per 100,000 (Pristina University Hospital)	The higher the firearms related crime and injury rates, the larger the small arms problem.
	Household survey – composite index of answers to questions Q.1b, Q.1c, Q.8, Q.10, Q.15b, Q.16, and Q.17 (see Annex 2)	The higher the perceived and experienced violence and insecurity, the larger the need for a WED programme.
<i>Continued demand for guns and ethnic tensions</i>	Ethnic distribution, computed into the % of minority community among municipality population (OSCE, 2002)	More ethnic disparity heightens the risks of inter-ethnic clashes.
	Household survey – composite index of answers to questions Q.18 and Q.20a	The more willing people are to hold guns, and the keener they are to keep them for personal and political safety.
<i>Prevalence of illicit activities</i>	Reported smuggling incidents and caches seized (various databases)	The more smuggling incidents occur, the more people are involved in illicit activities linked with weapons ownership.
	Number of closed businesses (SOK, June 2002)	The higher the level of unemployment, the more people risk getting involved in illicit activities linked with weapons ownership.

Annex 4: Kosovo municipalities ranked according to the feasibility and volatility indices

Municipality	Feasibility Index		Volatility Index	
	Value	Rank	Value	Rank
Vushtrri/Vučitrn	74.12	1	51.23	6
Viti/Vitina	72.21	2	32.10	24
Deçan/Deçane	72.01	3	30.73	25
Malishevë/Mališevo	67.81	4	29.81	27
Istog/Istok	65.70	5	36.27	18
Shtime/Štimlje	64.34	6	30.57	26
Kaçanik/Kaçanik	64.26	7	36.28	17
Pejë/Peć	64.03	8	71.70	1
Klinë/Klina	63.92	9	44.02	12
Prishtinë/Priština	63.81	10	50.27	7
Suharekë/Suva Reka	61.72	11	39.80	15
Prizren/Prizren	60.20	12	48.59	9
Rahovec/Orahovac	59.63	13	32.16	22
Gjilan/Gnjilane	59.24	14	39.06	16
Skënderaj/Srbica	59.19	15	35.51	19
Ferizaj/Uroševac	58.83	16	25.47	28
Gjakovë/Đakovica	57.39	17	68.01	2
Obiliq/Obilić	54.30	18	32.14	23
Dragash/Dragaš	54.05	19	49.13	8
Mitrovicë/Mitrovica	51.31	20	64.58	3
Podujevë/Podujevo	50.19	21	40.17	14
Gllgovc/Glogovac	48.65	22	25.30	29
Lipjan/Lipljane	45.91	23	52.19	4
Kamenicë/Kamenica	44.44	24	32.19	21
Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje	38.94	25	45.77	11
Shtërpcë/Štrpce	29.14	26	32.53	20
Zubin Potok/Zubin Potok	27.70	27	43.35	13
Zveçan/Zveçane	27.02	28	51.90	5
Novobërdë/Novo Brdo	26.37	29	16.01	30
Leposaviq/Leposavić	23.54	30	46.44	10

Annex 5: Data used in figures

Section III

Figure 3.1 Kosovo crime rates in comparative perspective			
	Homicides/100,000	Robberies/100,000	Aggravated assaults/100,000
Albania, 2001	16.88	7.39	4.41
Bulgaria, 2000	6.19	52.08	0.93
Croatia, 2000	5.96	16.76	21.09
Estonia, 2000	13.73	335.65	32.61
Hungary 2000	3.53	34.79	75.88
Kosovo 2001	4.45	20.05	9.3
FYROM 2002	6.53	22.72	22.96
Romania, 2000	7.44	30.30	5.50
Slovenia, 2000	4.07	27.06	21.92

Sources: KPIS; Interpol (categories 1, 3, and 4.1.1). Population estimate for Kosovo from SOK (2002)

Page 64

Section IV

Figure 4.1 SALW type seized by the police, 2000–2002		
Weapons	Percentage	Total number
Assault rifles	20	983
Machine guns	1	34
Pistols	44	2148
Rifles	15	742
Rocket launchers	1	46
Shotguns	15	738
Sub-machine guns (SMG)	2	108
Other (air rifles, grenades, sniper rifles etc.)	1	75
Unknown	1	57
Total	100	4931

Source: Calculated from KPIS

Figure 4.4 Geographic distribution of police seizures, mid-2000 to end-2002

Region	Number of seizures	Percentage SALW seizures	Percentage population
Border	37	0.8	–
Gjilan/Gnjilane	512	10.4	17
Mitrovica	850	17.2	13
Pejë/Peć	1175	23.8	15
Pristina	1776	36.0	37
Prizren	581	11.8	19
Total	4931	100	101

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Source: Calculated from KPIS

Figure 4.5 Comparison of the yields of the KFOR seizure operations and weapons amnesty, 15 March–15 April 2002

Weapons type	KFOR seizure operations	Weapons Amnesty
Rifles	120	417
Pistols	30	75
Machine guns	7	24
Mortars	2	1
Anti-tank	12	45
Rockets/ Missiles	4	9
Grenades	409	726
Mines	23	94
Ammunition	31347	59200
Misc. items*	557	895
Total (excluding ammunition and misc.)	607	1391

*Miscellaneous items include uniforms, gas masks, jerrycans, etc.

Source: KFOR

Figure 4.6 Weapons seized by KFOR troops in 2001 and 2002

Multinational brigade (MNB)	Rifles		Pistols		Machine guns		Mortars		ATs	
	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002
FSU Force	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
MNB Central	358	501	157	184	0	21	0	3	17	50
MNB East	300	51	53	19	0	5	0	23	151	5
MNB North-East	90	598	46	139	0	9	0	35	17	32
MNB South-West	559	262	123	110	0	7	0	0	139	20
MSU (Military Specialized Unit)	30	13	15	13	0	0	1	0	5	2
Total	1339	1426	394	467 *	0	42	1	61	329	109

Multinational brigade (MNB)	Rockets		Grenades		Mines		Ammunition		Misc.	
	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002
FSU	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MNB Central	0	22	0	498	0	70	0	91526	0	1272
MNB East	0	2	0	950	0	5	0	3084	0	286
MNB North-East	0	17	0	335	0	6	0	97924	0	1442
MNB South-West	0	7	2	195	0	27	200	31526	0	312
MSU	12	2	0	9	0	0	5	929	250	15
Total	12	50	2	1987	0	108	205	224989	250	3327

*Total includes one pistol seized by KFOR Headquarters

Source: KFOR

Section VII

Figure 7.1 Hospital reporting on reasons for visit/injury

Municipality	Firearms		Knives		Beatings	
	1999 June-Dec.	2002	1999 June-Dec.	2002	1999 June-Dec.	2002
Deçan/Deçane	–	1	–	3	–	2
Dragash/Dragaš	–	–	–	–	1	1
Ferizaj/Uroševac	3	4	3	4	1	7
Fushë Kosovë/Kosovo Polje	–	1	–	12	5	28
Gjakovë/Đakovica	–	3	–	2	–	4
Gjilan/Gnjilane	7	–	1	5	–	6
Glogovc/Glogovac	6	3	4	11	3	14
Istog/Istok	–	–	–	–	–	3
Kaçanik/Kaçanik	–	3	–	4	–	5
Kamenicë/Kamenica	1	5	–	1	2	5
Klinë/Klina	1	2	–	–	2	6
Leposaviq/Leposavić	–	–	–	–	–	1
Lipjan/Lipljane	1	2	0	11	2	16
Malishevë/Mališevo	3	2	2	1	3	19
Mitrovicë/Mitrovica	7	2	1	4	4	5
Novobërdë/Novo Brdo	–	–	–	–	–	–
Obiliq/Obilić	–	3	–	3	–	16
Pejë/Peć	2	3	1	–	–	2
Podujevë/Podujevo	5	7	2	4	11	14
Prishtinë/Priština	43	32	23	102	46	310
Prizren/Prizren	1	2	–	4	2	9
Rahovec/Orahovac	–	2	–	2	–	–
Shtime/Štimlje	–	3	–	3	–	7
Skënderaj/Srbica	5	4	–	3	2	6
Shtërpcë/Štrpce	2	–	–	–	1	–
Suharekë/Suva Reka	–	–	–	2	1	2
Viti/Vitina	3	2	1	1	1	1
Vushtri/Vučitrn	9	8	3	4	3	24
Zubin Potok/Zubin Potok	–	–	–	–	–	–
Zveçan/Zveçane	–	–	–	–	–	–
Other	1	4	3	1	10	8
Total	100	98	44	187	100	512

Source: Pristina University Hospital statistics obtained by SAS

**Figures 7.3, 7.4, 7.5 and 7.6
Types of small arms used in crimes, 2002**

Type of crime Type of SALW involved	Murder	Kidnapping	Robbery*	Aggravated assault*
AK-47	6	2	5	7**
Pistol	8	3	13	15***
Shotgun	1	-	1	-
Hunting rifle	2	-	1	4
Fake gun	0	-	1	2
Grenade	1	-	1	-
Machine gun	-	-	2	-
Unknown type	33	2	53	25

Note: Several guns were sometimes used to commit one crime. In the case of murders, one gun was sometimes used to commit several murders.

**These are based on a random sample comprising 50 per cent of the total number of cases.*

***Includes one gun recorded as 'automatic rifle'.*

**** Includes two guns recorded as 'handgun'.*

Source: KPIS

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Interviews

Fifteen interviews with KLA ex-combatants, undertaken by Kosova Initiative for Democratic Society (KIDS) for the SABA household survey, February 2003. Nine of the ex-KLA interviewees had higher positions in the KLA hierarchy; the other six were soldiers. The interviewees come from all seven operational zones of the KLA (Dikagjini, Pashtrik, Drenica, Llapi, Nerodene, Shala, and Karadak). At certain periods of the war, two of the officers interviewed were in charge of logistics, and in particular of arms supplies.

Fifteen interviews in schools throughout Kosovo:

Primary schools: Elena Gjika (Pristina), Vaso Pashe Shkodrani (Pejë/Peć), Janjeva (Lipjan/Lipljane), Bashkimi (Glllogovc/Glogovac), Edmond Hoxha, Junik (Deçan/Deçane), 7 Marsi (Suharekë/Suva Reka), Ponesh (Gjilan/Gnjilane). Secondary schools: Economy, Ferizaj/Uroševac (Ferizaj/Uroševac), Economy, Kamenicë/Kamenica (Kamenicë/Kamenica), Shala (Lipjan/Lipljane), Sami Frasheri, Pristina, Mitrovica South (Mitrovica), Economy Podujevë/Podujevo (Podujevë/Podujevo), Technical Secondary School, Prizren.

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