



UNODC



GLOBAL
FIREARMS
PROGRAMME

Countering Illicit Firearms
Trafficking and Related Crimes

Firearms Trafficking: Policy Implications and Responses in Europe

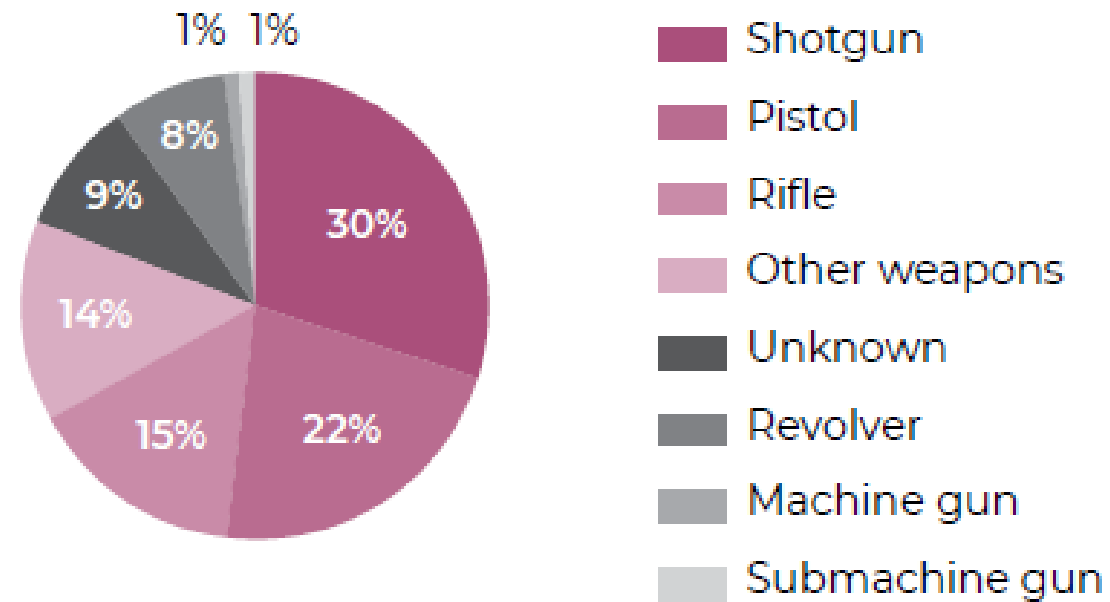
Illicit Trafficking in Firearms, their parts,
Components and Ammunition
to, from and across the European Union

- **Methodology**
- **Seizure data**
- **Demand and supply**
- **Arms flows**
- **Modus operandi**
- **Policy implications**

- **Combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods**
- **Data sources:**
 - Illicit Arms Flows Database
 - Data from previous research projects
 - Especially Project SAFTE and Project DIVERT
 - Cross-regional expert meeting (UNODC, Vienna, 7-8 Oct 2019)
 - Expert interviews
 - Literature review
 - Online search for trafficking cases (to illustrate modus operandi)

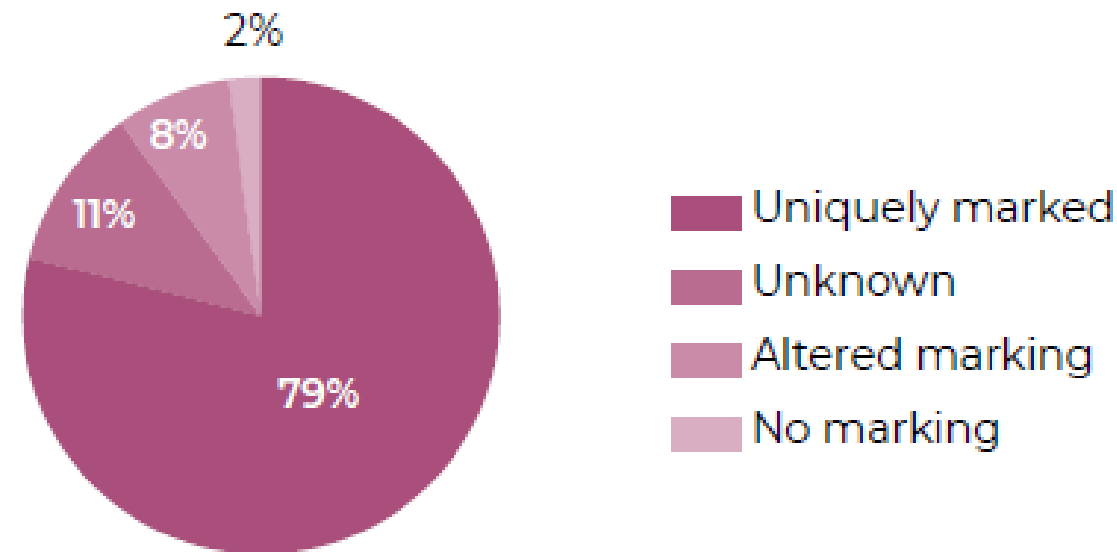
- **16 EU MS reported to IAFQ on firearms seizures in 2016-2017**
 - Varying levels of details and completeness
 - Most seizures within national territory
- **Total numbers:**
 - 50,000 seized firearms & 800,000 rounds of ammo in 2016
 - 40,000 seized firearms & 350,000 rounds of ammo in 2017

FIGURE 1: Distribution of seized firearms by type in 16 European Union Member States, 2016 - 17



Source: IAFQ

FIGURE 2: Distribution of seized firearms by type of marking in 10 European Union Member States, 2016 - 17



Source: IAFQ

INFOGRAPHIC 1: Main actors with demand for illicit firearms within the European Union

Intent for criminal use	No immediate intent for criminal use
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Armed robbers• Drug criminals• Groups specialized in logistical preparation of assassinations• Mafia Organizations• Outlaw motorcycle gangs• Terrorists	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collectors and other individuals with emotional reasons• Individuals with perceived need for self-protection

- **Price differences between and within Member States**
- **Differences in criminal access**
 - Eroding of closed character of illicit gun markets in some MS
- **High demand of EU firearms across the globe**
 - Criminals, non-state armed groups, ...
 - Mainly diversion in third countries after legal export from EU

- **No general trend of increase or decrease in illicit arms flows**
- **Mainly intra-regional flows**
 - Western Balkans: source and transit
 - Between EU Member States
- **Potential future sources:**
 - Ukraine
 - Middle East & Northern Africa

- **Ant trade**
 - Mainly by vehicles, but also by boat
 - Consolidated smuggling routes (together with other goods)
- **Exploiting legal differences**
 - Blank firing weapons, deactivated & AEW, Flobert, components
 - Postal & fast parcel services
 - online or straw purchasers
 - Legal acquisition followed by ant trade
 - professional & non-professional perpetrators

- **Illicit manufacturing & conversion**
 - Relatively high numbers of seized parts & components
 - 4,800 item in 2016 & 1,700 items in 2017
 - 3D printing: vigilance required
- **Fraudulently obtained export licenses**
- **Internet**
 - Open web vs. darkweb
 - Postal & fast parcel services
 - Impact of Covid-19?

- **Close loopholes and harmonize legislative and regulatory frameworks**
- **Improve export risk assessments to prevent diversion**
- **Strengthen law enforcement and border control capacities**
- **Promote effective criminal justice approach**
- **Reinforce international cooperation and information exchange**
- **Improve knowledge on illicit arms flows by better data collection & analysis and by prioritizing investigations into origin of firearms**



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Thank you for your attention.

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