

Project FIRE “Fighting Illicit Firearms Trafficking Routes and Actors at European Level” (HOME/2012/ISEC/FP/4000002325)

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Illicit trafficking in firearms at European level: results of the analysis

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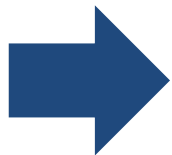
Section n. 1

Illicit firearms market in the EU



- Firearms as vulnerable goods → available (easy to find), valuable (easy to sell with high profit)
- Firearms as durable goods → episodic trade (UNODC 2010)
- Firearms as a serious threat for the security
- Firearms market as a dual market:
 - Licit market
 - Illicit market

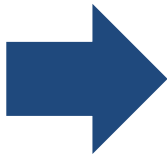
GREY ZONE



Fight against illicit trafficking in firearms as one of the EU priorities within the 2014-2017 policy cycle against serious and transnational crime

▪ Firearms production:

- Licit production → licit firearms can be diverted to the illicit market
 - leakage from factories or surplus stocks
 - theft from stockpiles
 - theft from dealers or individual owners
 - transport diversion
 - firearms conversion



Reactivation of deactivated firearms
Modification of semi-automatic firearms into automatic ones
Conversion of replicas

▪ **Firearms production:**

- Illicit production → rare if compared to the licit production
 - original designs produced by amateurs or employees of arm factories at home
 - illicit copies of existing designs produced in factories
 - handmade production in private residencies

▪ **Firearms trafficked among illicit end-users:**

- Sale and purchase of firearms already used
 - among criminals and terrorists
 - among amateurs

Supply of illicit firearms

ORGANIZED CRIMINAL GROUPS

- In addition to other illicit activities
- Strong expertise in the illicit trafficking (routes, contacts, services)

CORRUPTED OFFICIALS & PROFESSIONALS

- Poor control over the documents
- Poor control over the firearms

HOBBYISTS & AMATEURS

- Strong expertise in altering firearms
- Network of people interested in firearms

Demand for illicit firearms

- Why people want to buy an illegal firearm?
 - Not eligibility to access a legal weapon
 - Pianification of an illegal activity
 - Firearm not accessible on the legal market

- Main purposes:
 - Collection
 - Recreational
 - Instrumental
 - Criminal



Demand for illicit firearms

CRIMINAL GROUPS

- Criminal purposes
- Instrumental purposes → symbolic value

TERRORIST GROUPS

- Criminal purposes → growing threat
- Link with organized criminal groups

INDIVIDUAL GUN OWNERS

- Collection purposes
- Recreational purposes



Section n. 2

Methodology to study ITF

Open sources as source of data

1. Absence of any systematized data
2. Absence of homogeneous official data available for all the 28 EU MSs



To overcome these obstacles

Open sources as a complementary data-gathering approach

- Press releases and online articles
- Context: 28 EU MS
- Time span: January 2010 – March 2015
- Sources: Customs and LEA websites, EMM News Brief
- Objectives of the activity:
 - Collect articles related to seizures and gun crimes in the EU
 - Identify events from the collection
 - Extract relevant entities related to the events, such as actors, *modi operandi* and products

Explorative research

- Analysis of firearm seizures in the 28 EU MS
- Analysis of deadly and non-deadly shootings with firearms in the 28 EU MS
- Analysis of the deep web (online black market)

Section n. 3

Firearm seizures



Scale of illicit market (2010-2015)

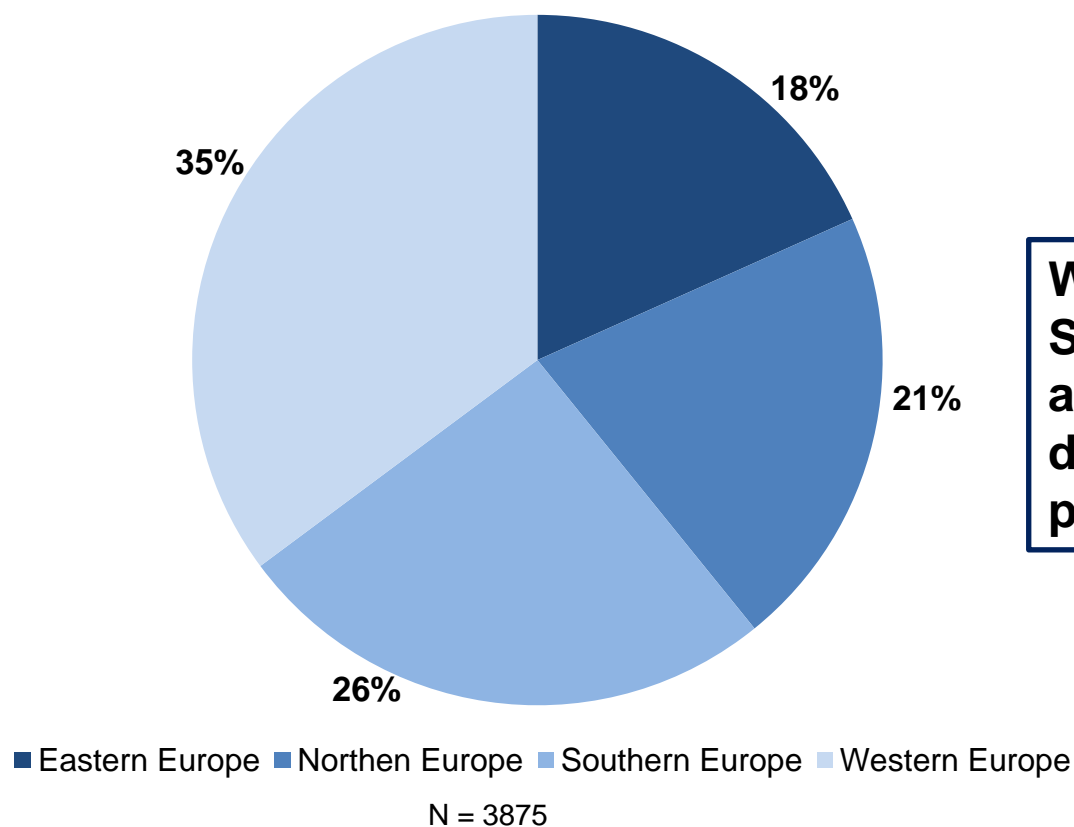
	Number of cases	Number of firearms
Small-scale	1893	1893
Medium-scale	1139	3848
Large-scale	243	12980
Total	3275	18721

Small-scale: 1 or 2 firearms seized

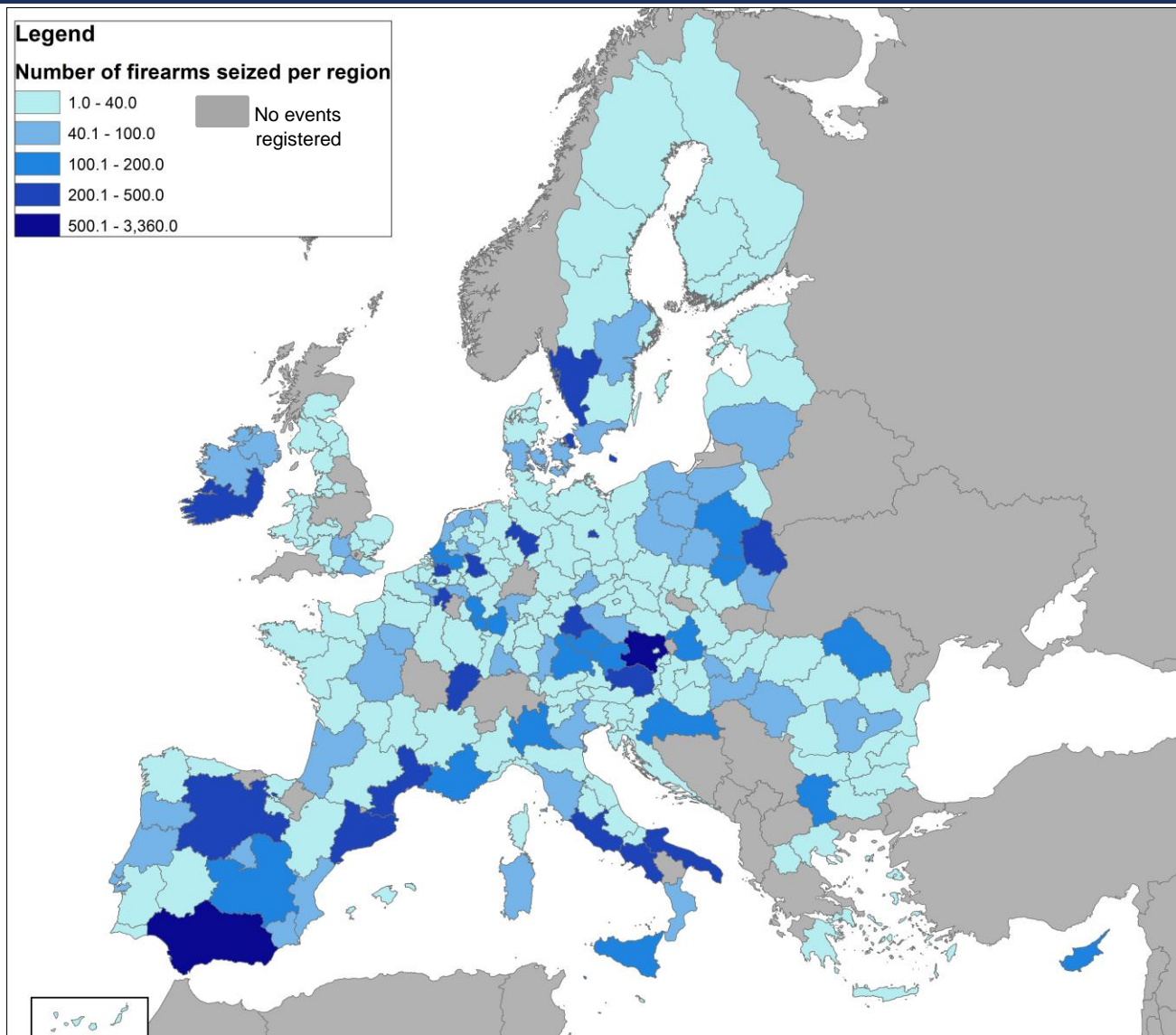
Medium-scale: from 3 to 9 firearms seized

Large-scale: more than 10 firearms seized

Share of seizures in the EU divided by macro-region (2010-2015)



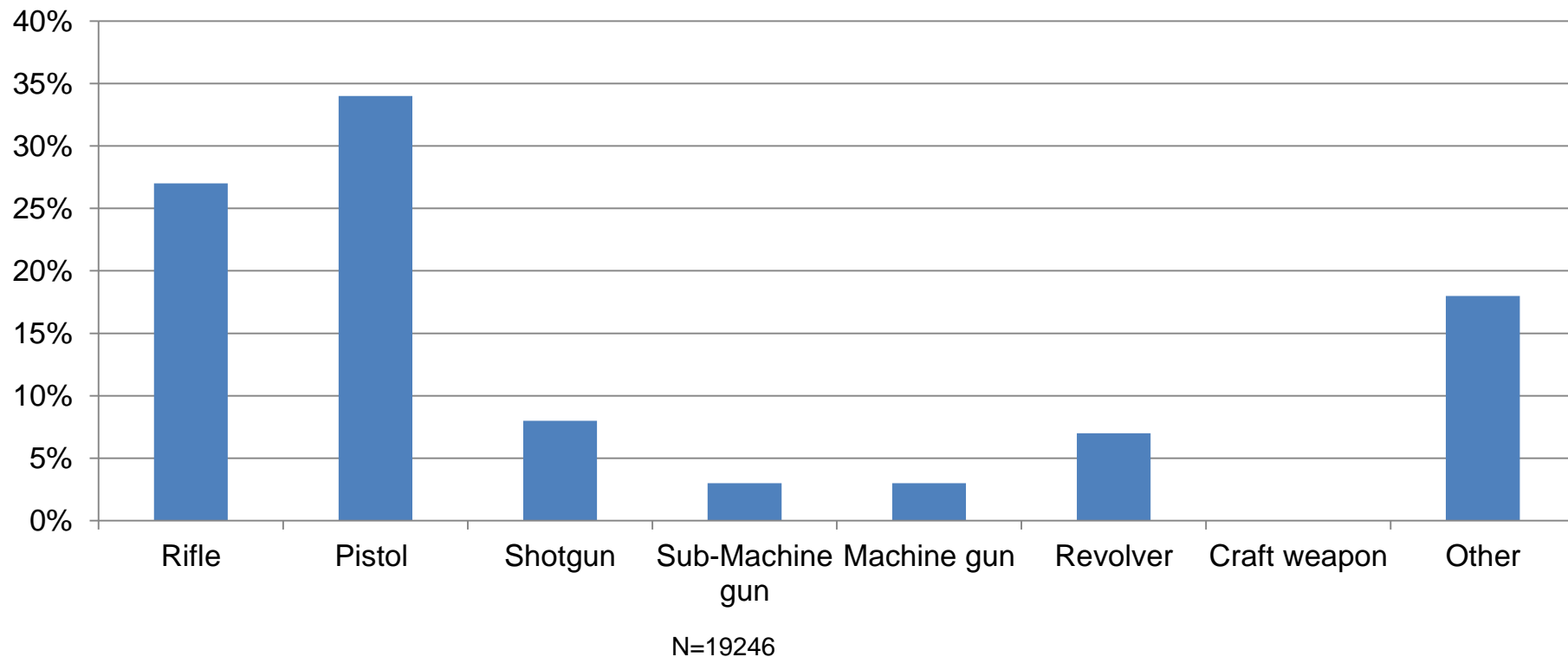
Results



Number of firearms seized per region (2010 – 2015)

High numbers along the borders

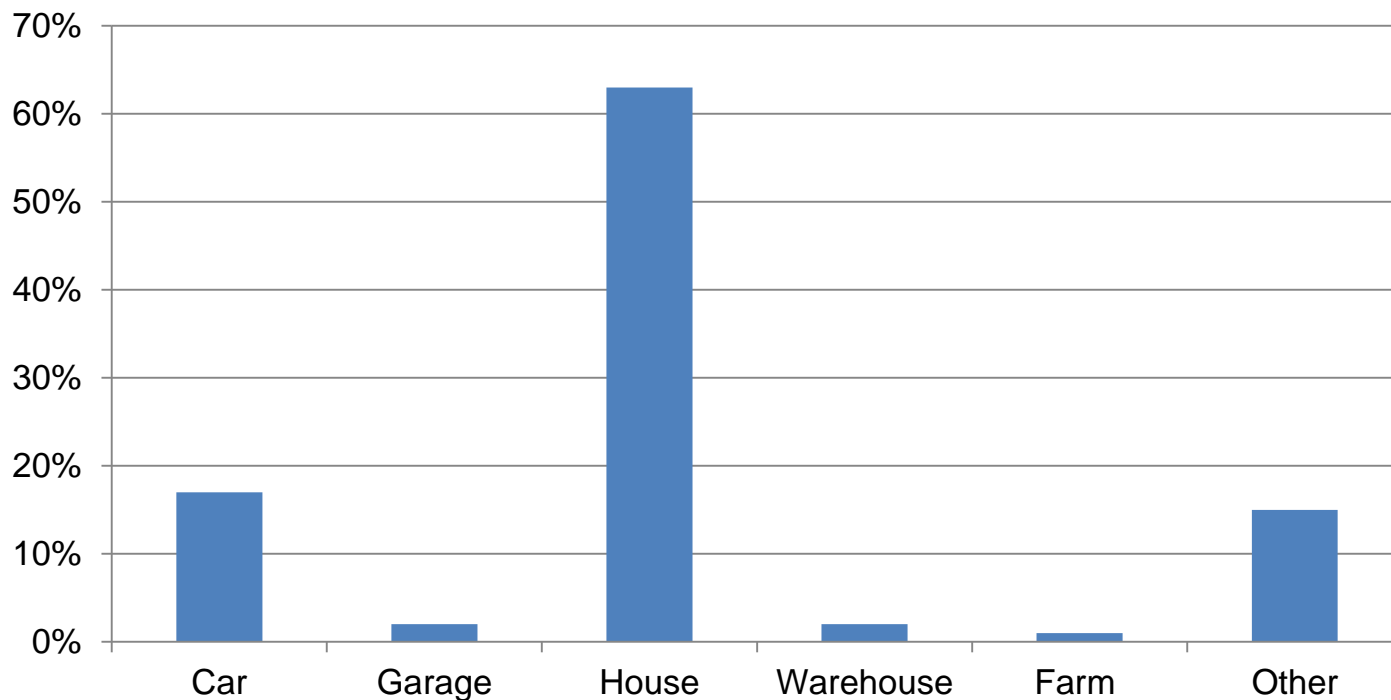
Types of firearms seized in the EU (2010-2015)*



*Firearms classification from UNODC

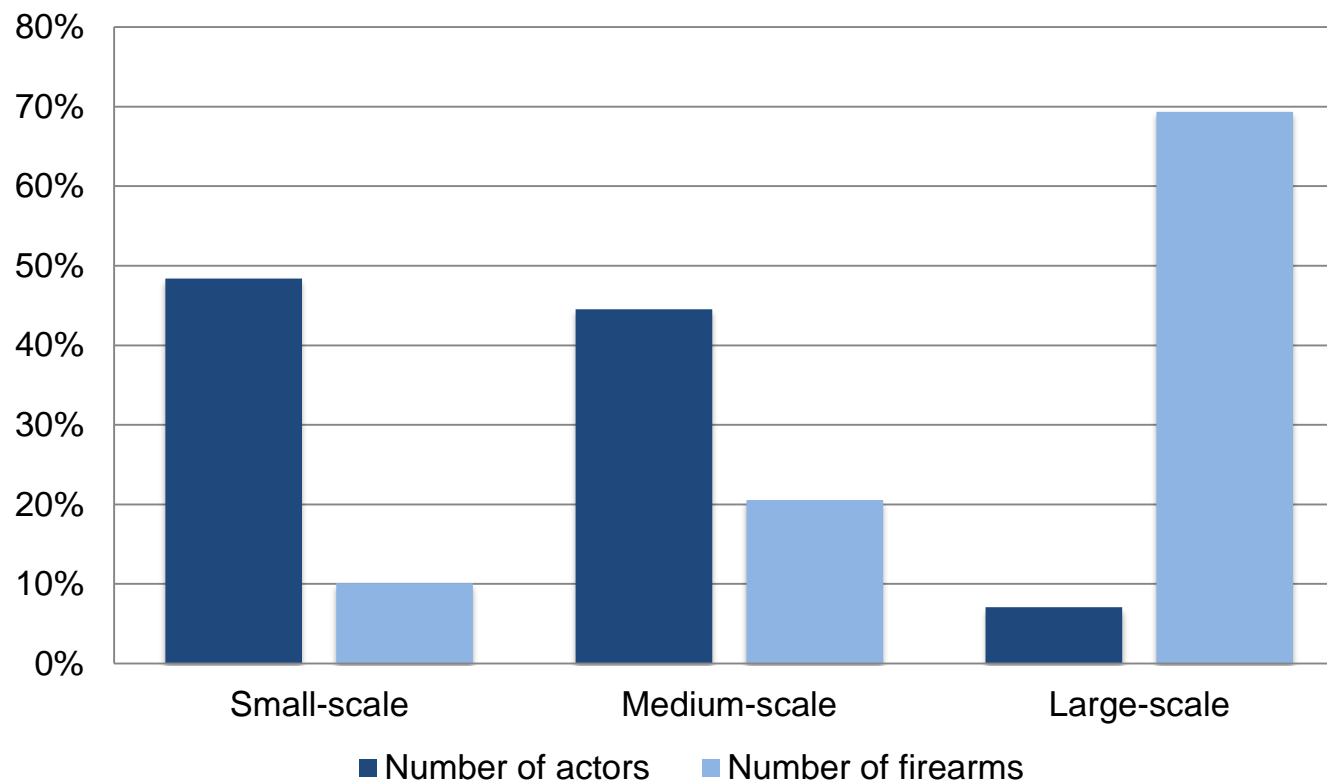


Storage of firearms in the EU (2010-2015)



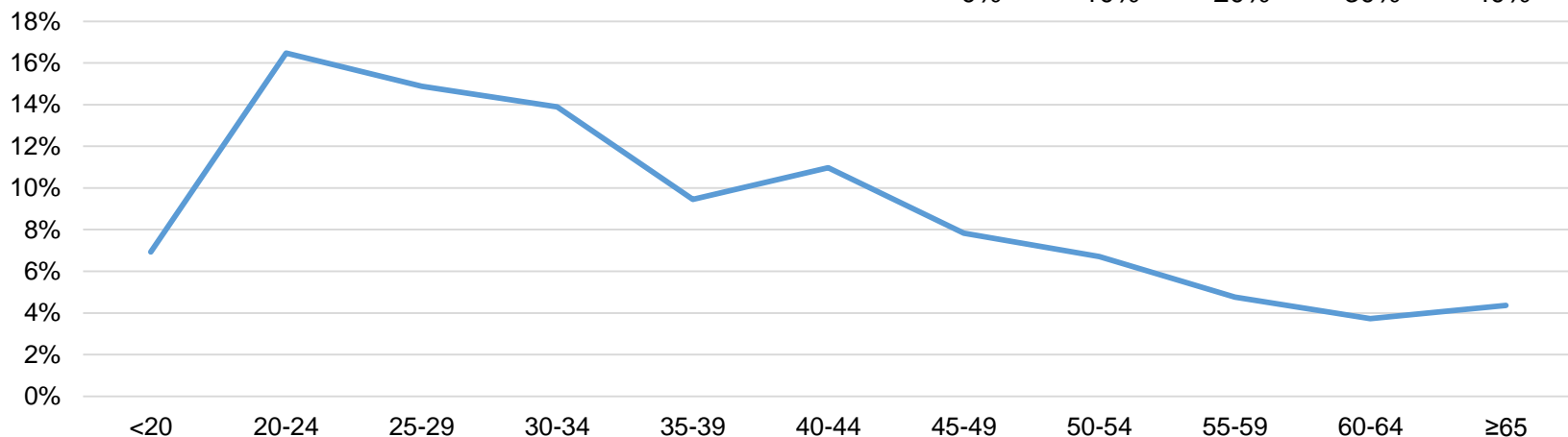
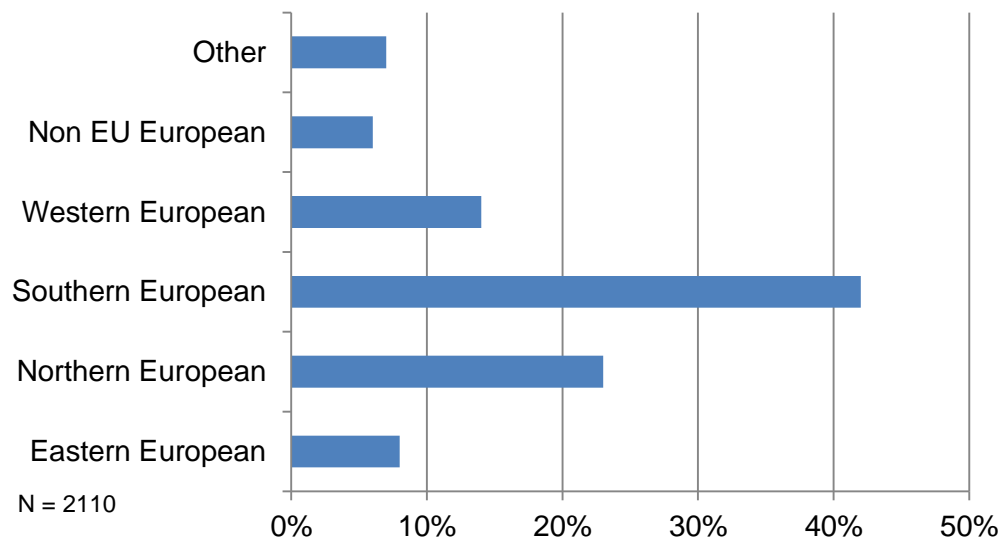
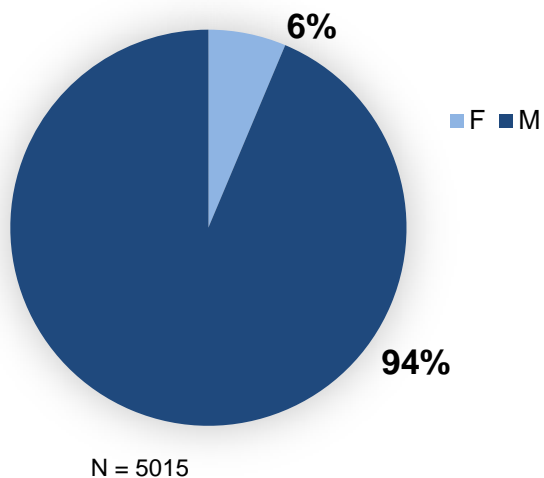
N= 19246

Share of actors and share of firearms seized in the EU (2010-2015)



Very few actors responsible for the highest number of firearms seized

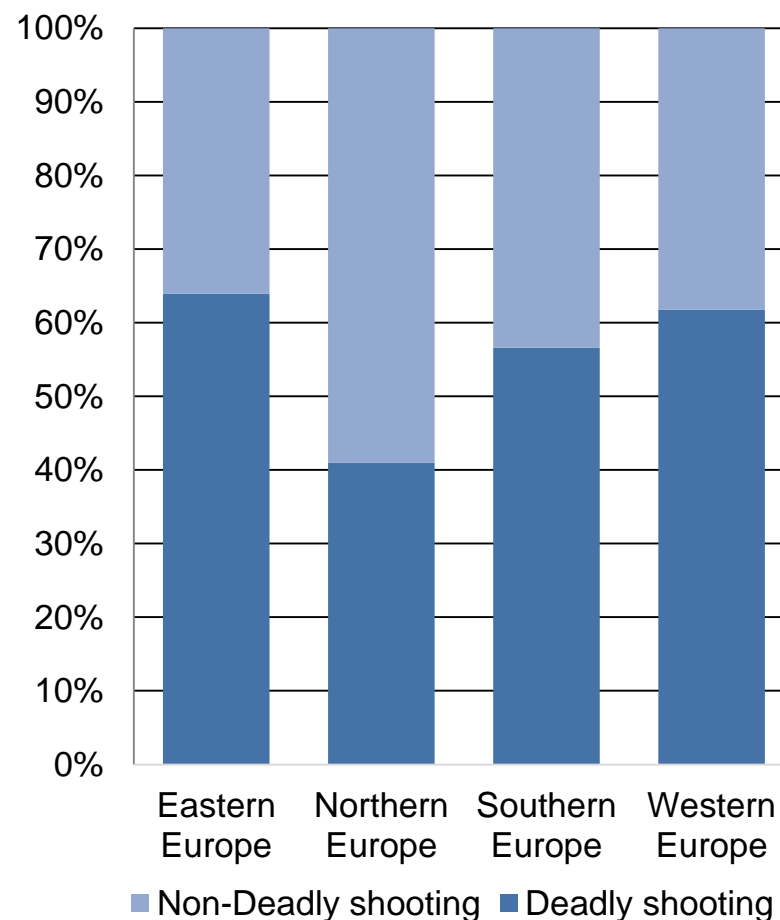
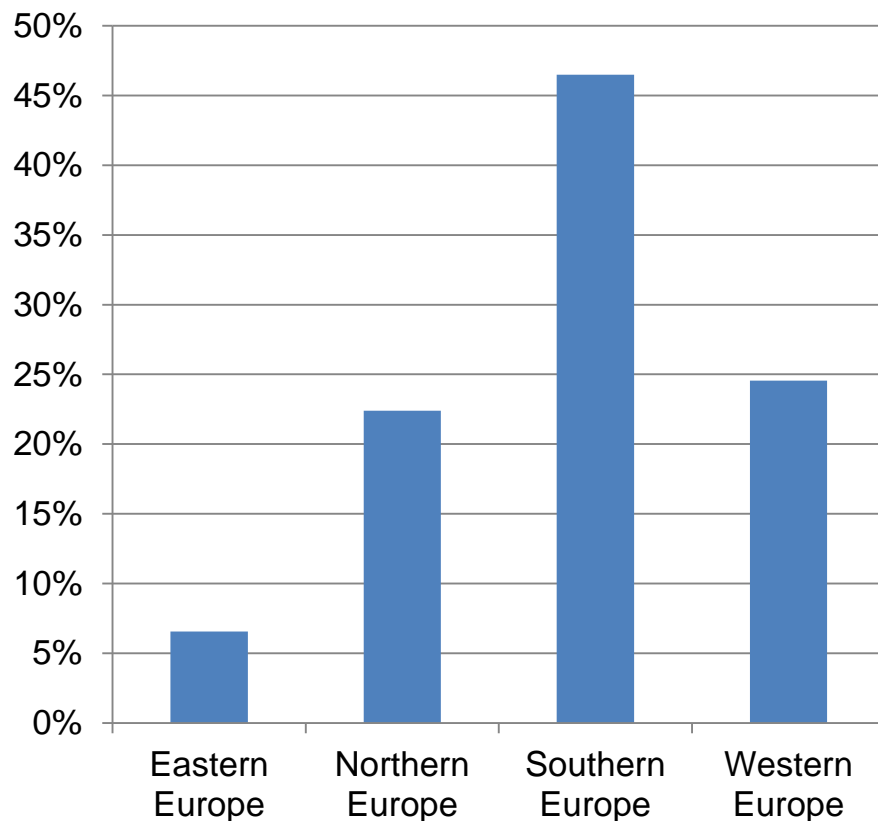
Main characteristics of the actors in the EU (2010-2015)



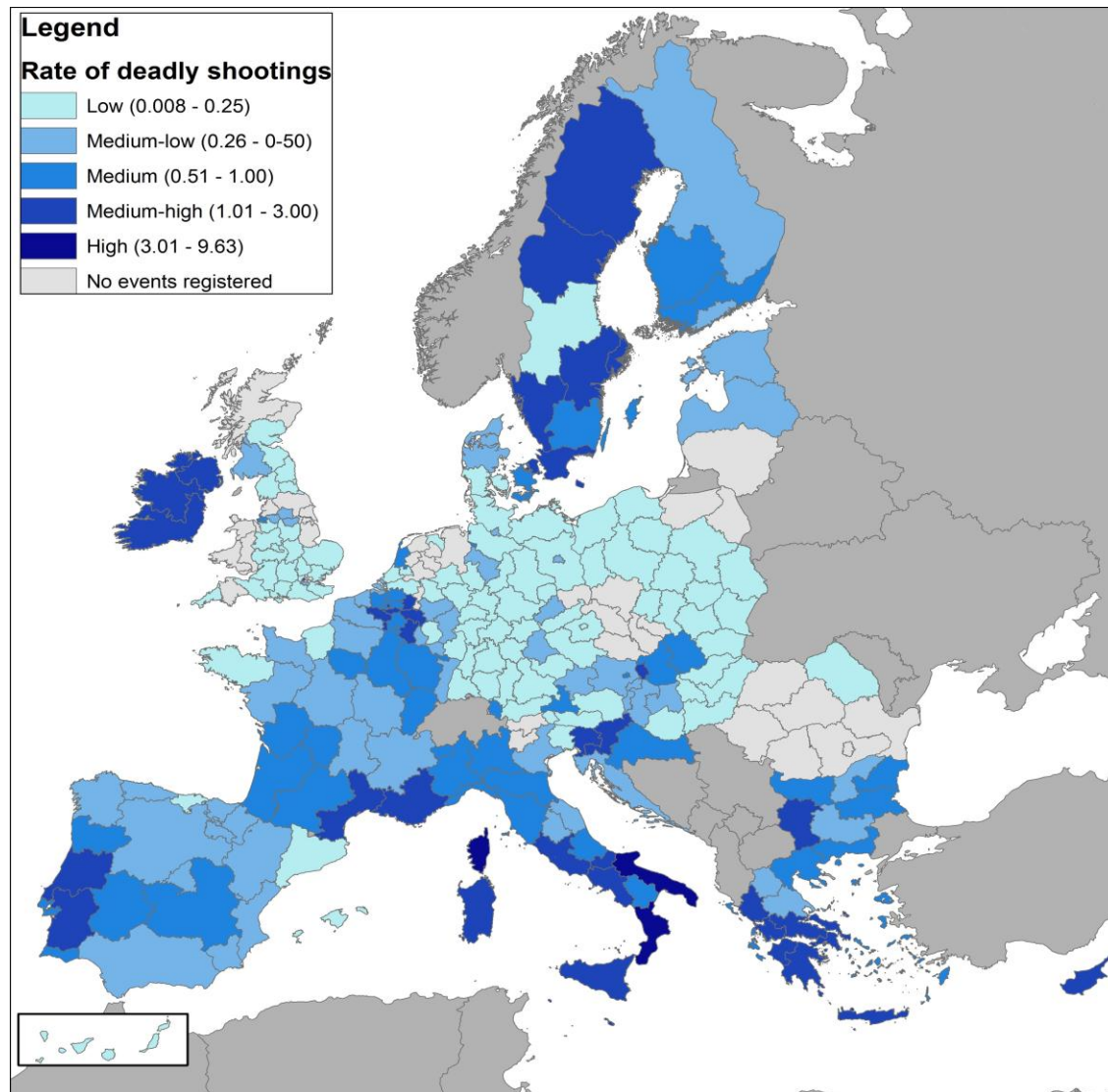
Section n. 4

Deadly and non-deadly shootings

Deadly and non-deadly shootings per macro-region (2010-2015)



N= 4859

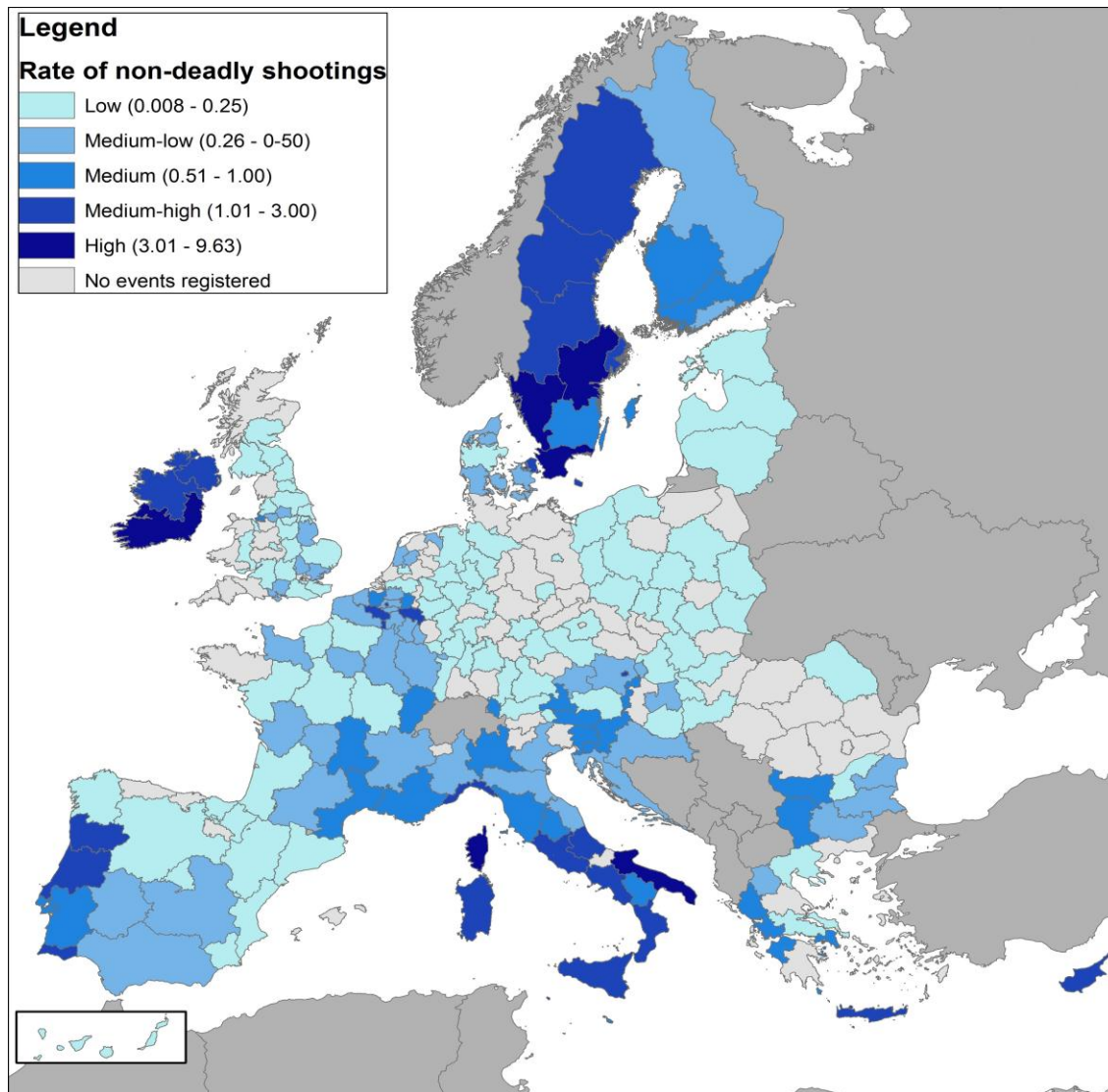


Rate of deadly shootings per 100,000 inhab. per region (2010 – 2015)

High concentration in countries with:

- traditional OCGs
- gangs
- specific incidents

Results



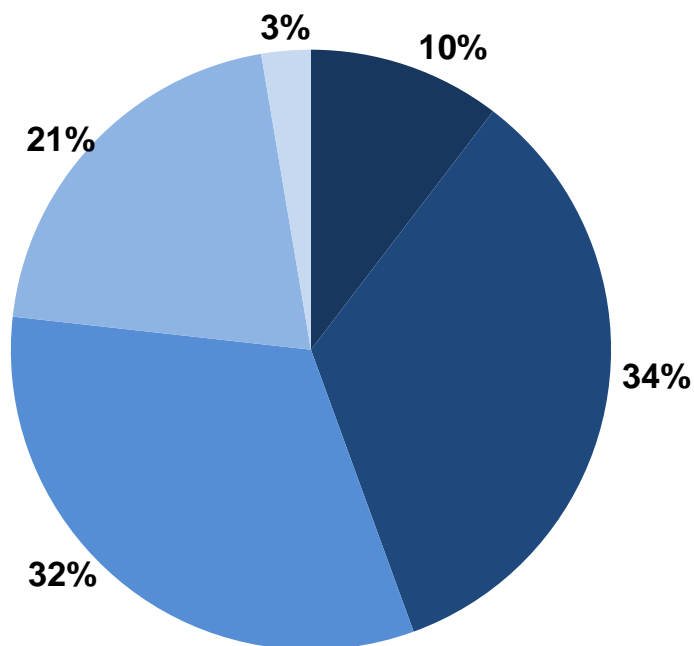
Rate of non
deadly
shootings per
100,000 inhab.
per region
(2010 – 2015)

**High concentration in
countries with:**

- traditional OCGs
- gangs
- specific incidents

Motivation of the shootings in the EU (2010-2015)

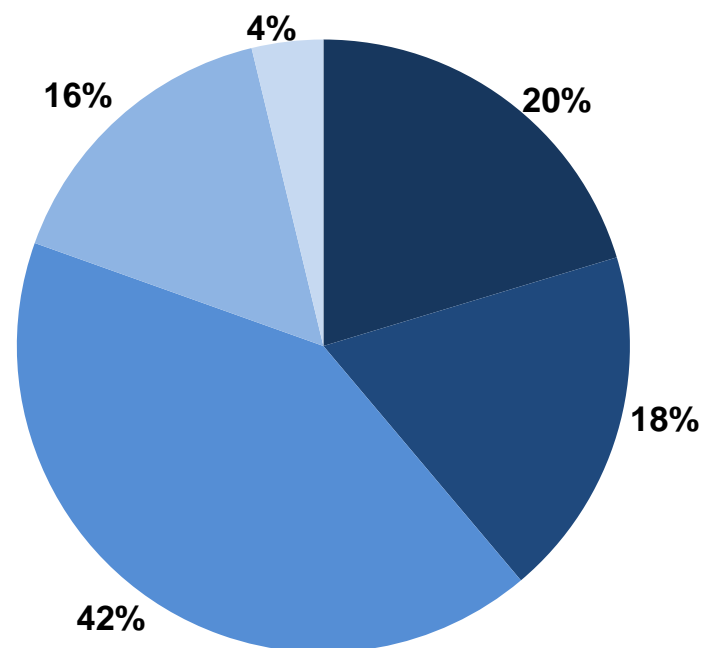
DEADLY SHOOTINGS



■ Criminal act ■ Family ■ Interpersonal ■ OCGs ■ Socio-political

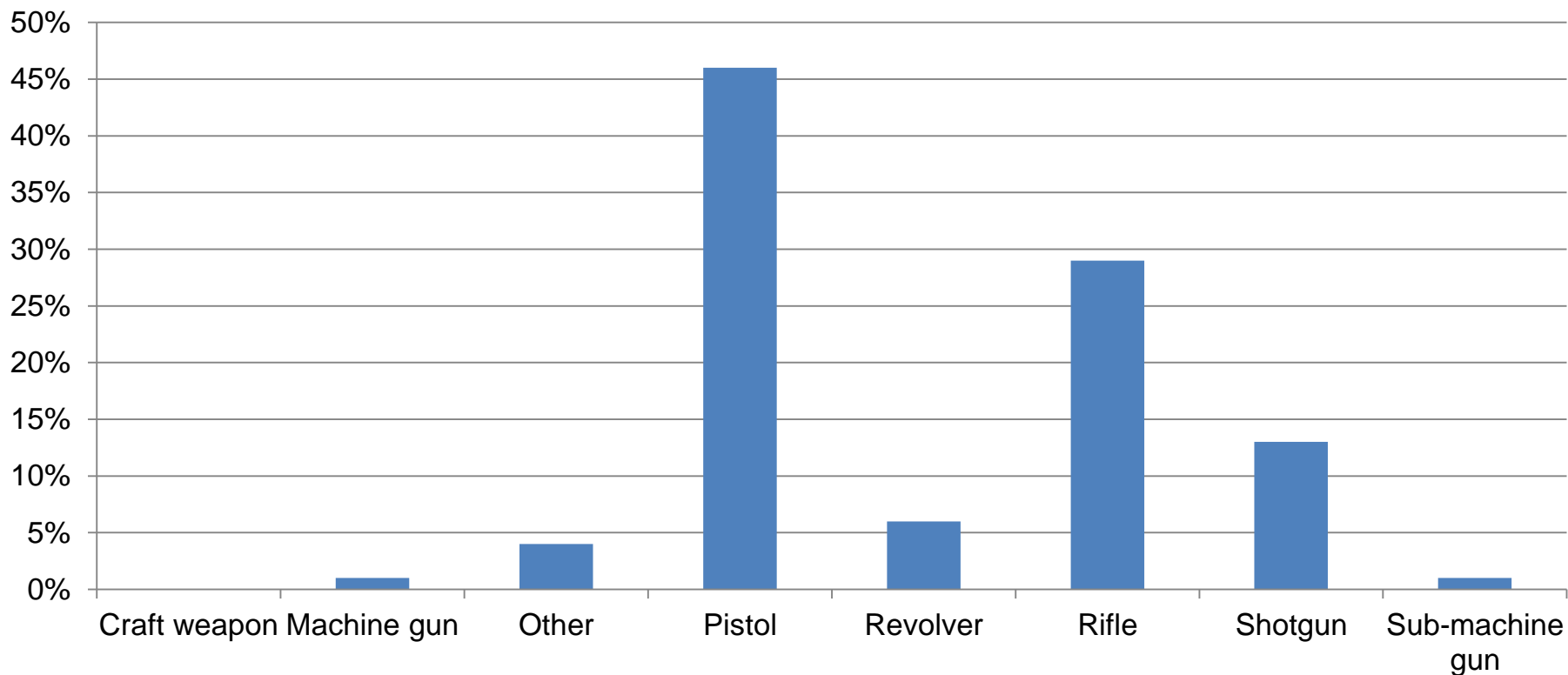
N = 1618

NON DEADLY SHOOTINGS



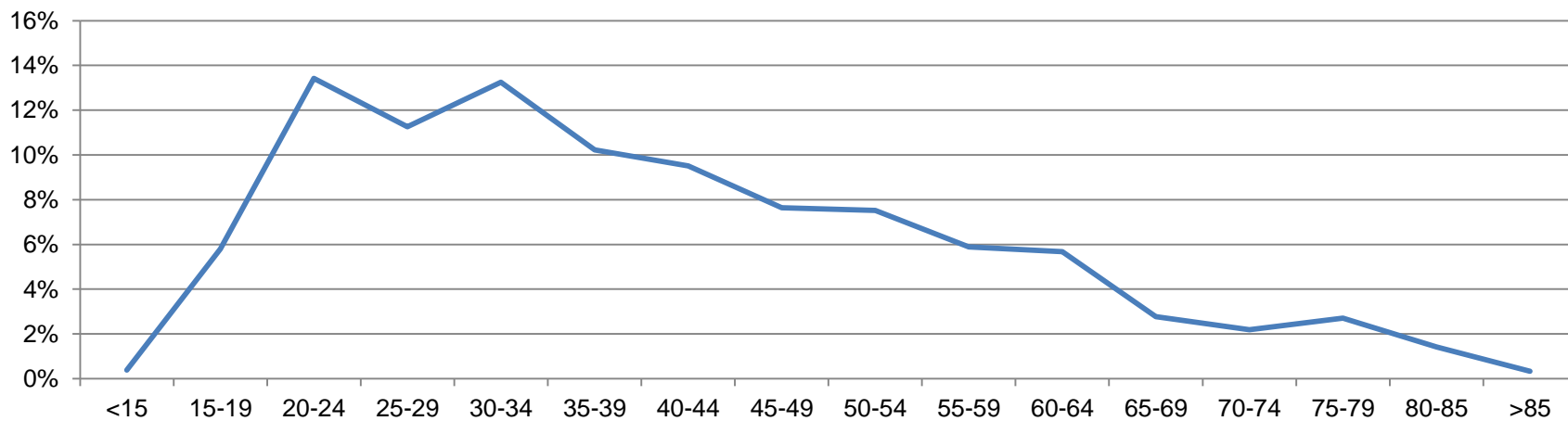
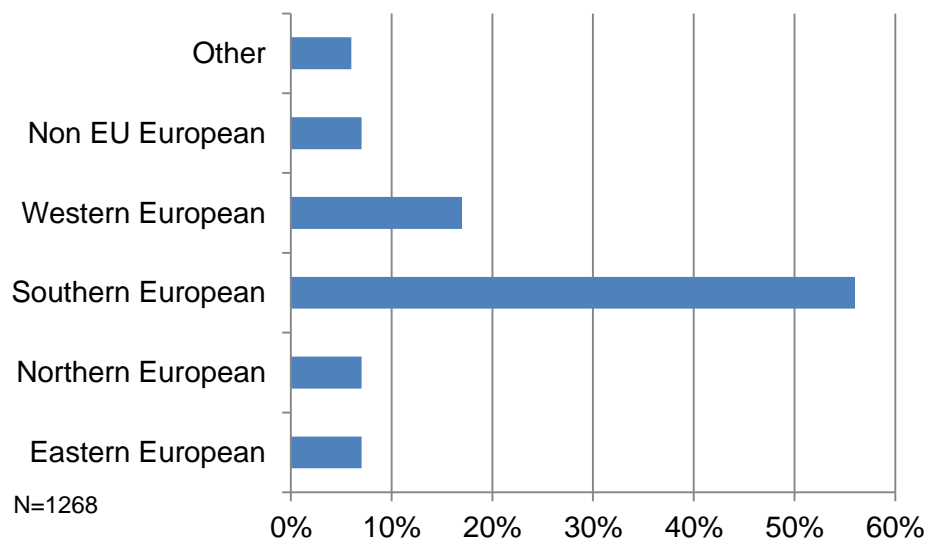
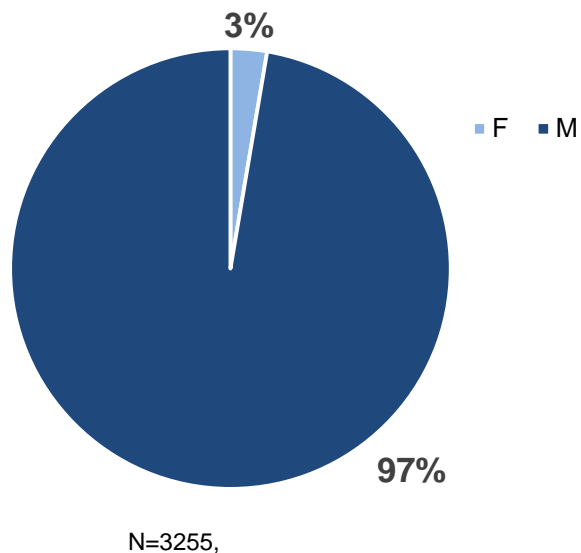
N = 1274

Share of firearms used (2010-2015)



N= 1973

Main characteristics of the shooters in the EU (2010-2015)

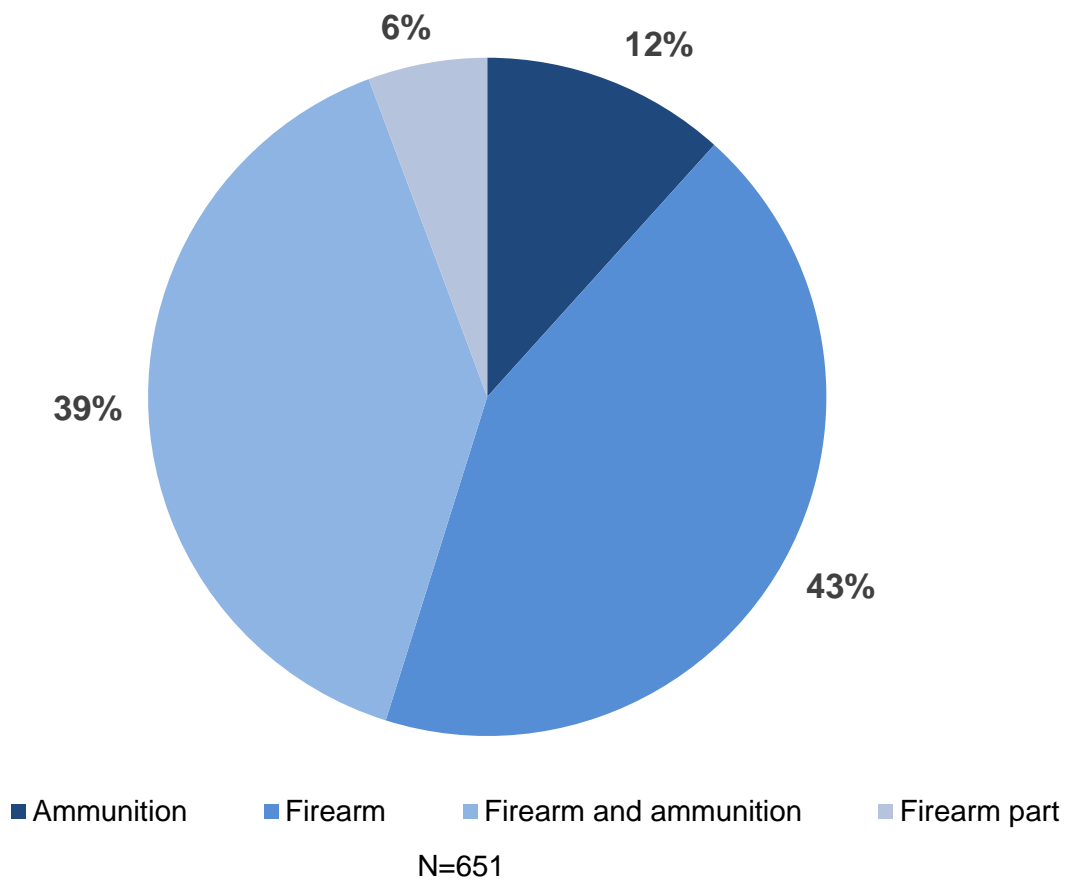


Section n. 5

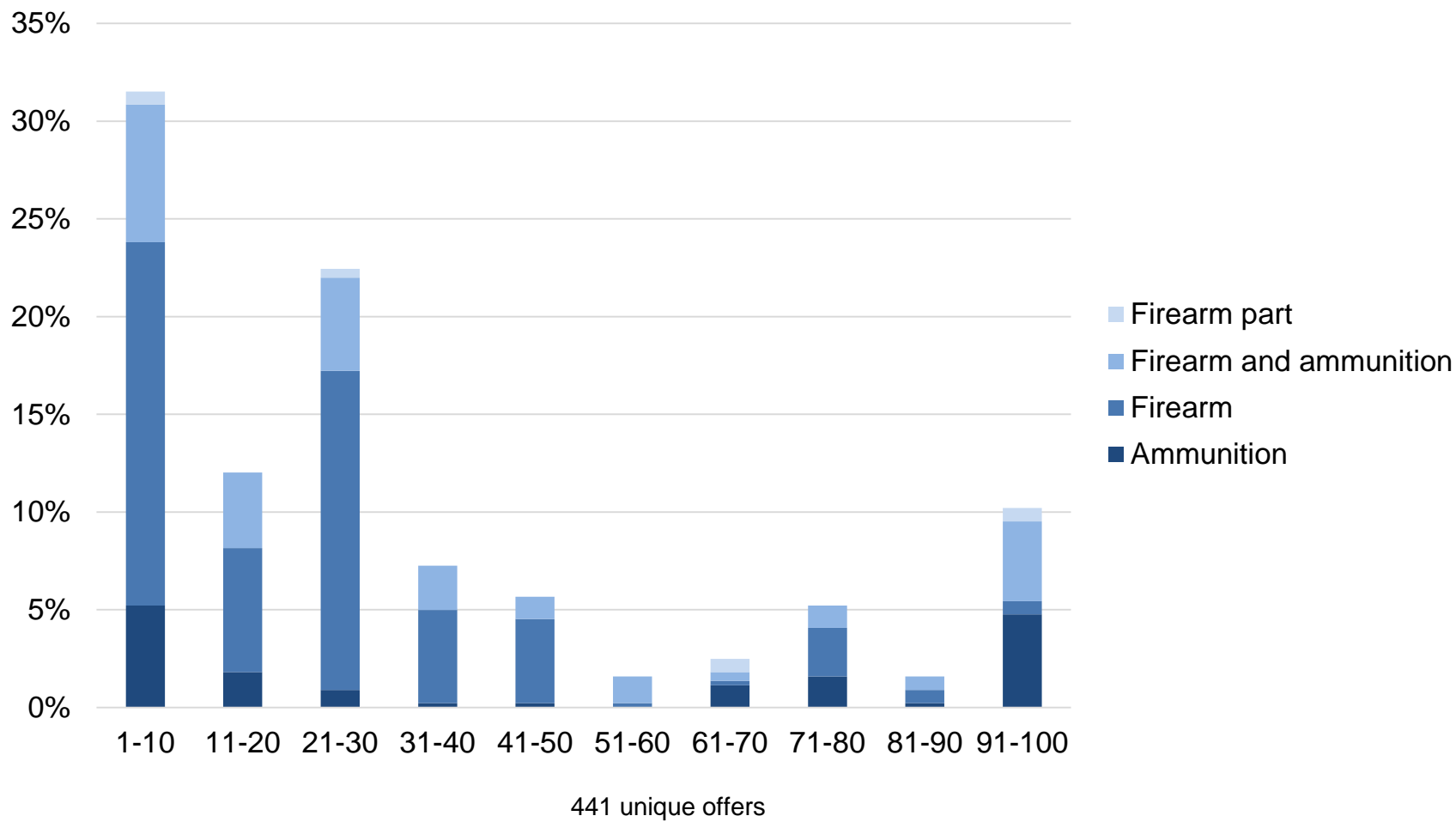
Deep web

- The Onion Router - TOR
- Keywords
- Temporary monitoring (2 weeks). Aims:
 - Checking available information
 - Verifying if websites were not fleeing
 - Verifying if websites were not fraudulent
- Identification of 12 suitable websites
- Systematic collection of information on these websites

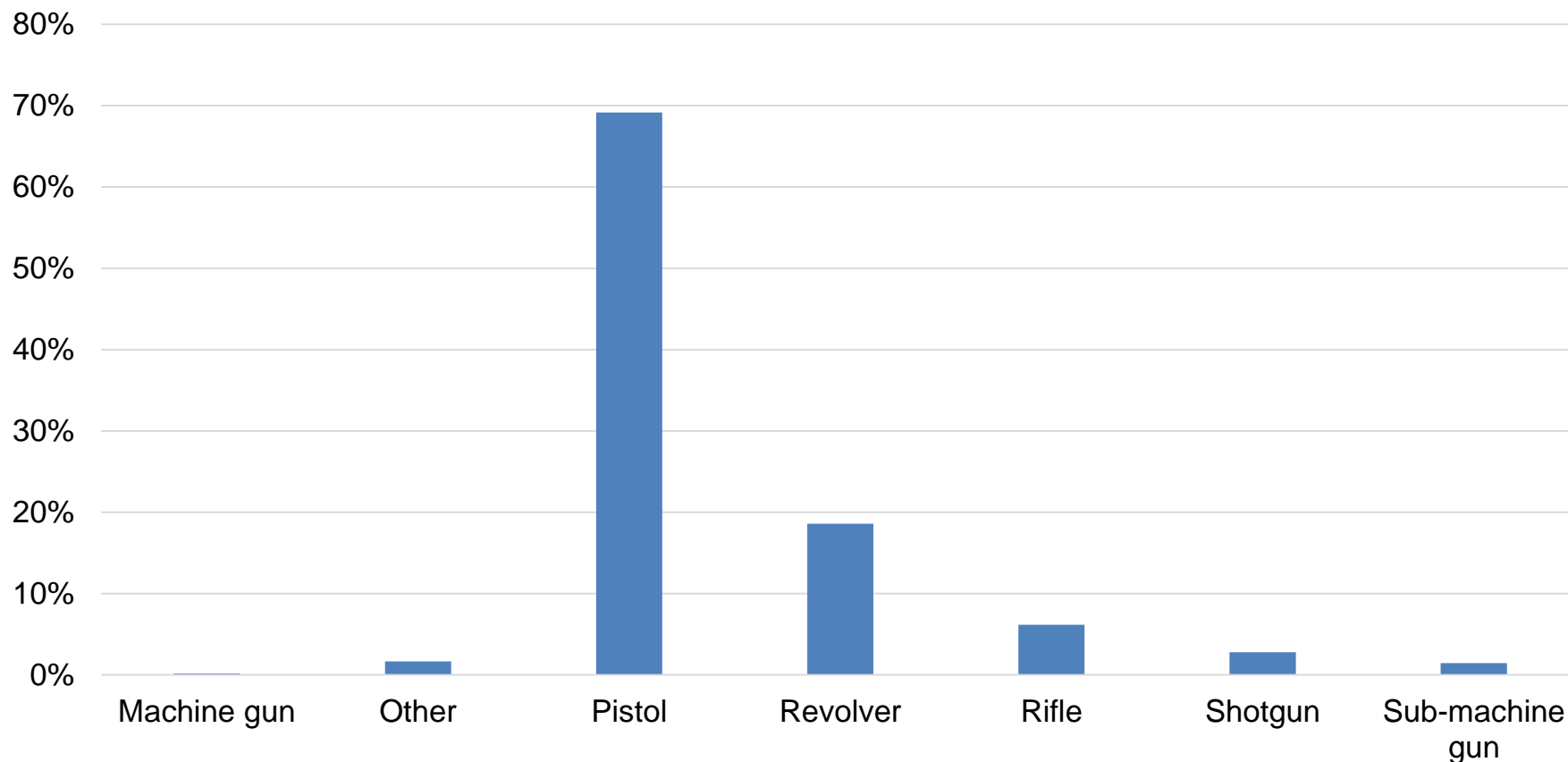
Types of products



Days online per type of product



Types of firearms*



N=1731

*Firearms classification from UNODC



Conclusions and recommendations

- First attempt of analysis
- The analysis of firearm seizures using open sources has some limitations, but it is an option in absence of official data
→ **more reliable and official data**
- Firearm seizures provide a partial picture of the phenomenon (underestimation of the real market), but the added value is having data on firearm seizures for the 28 EU MS
- Deepweb as emerging exchange market → **more research and studies**



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