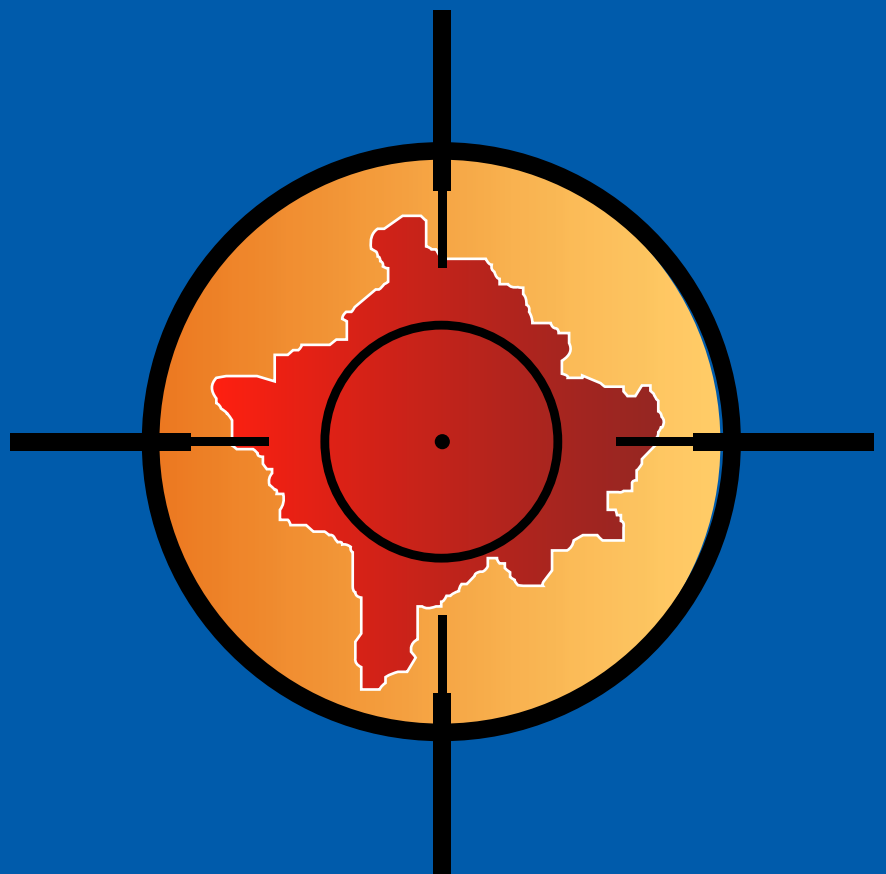


# Through the cross-hairs

A survey of changing attitudes towards small arms in Kosovo



VENDI SIGURTË  
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The Forum for Civic Initiatives (FIQ) is a non-governmental organization with a focus on the rule of law that works to increase citizen participation in decision-making processes for a just, peaceful and developed Balkan region.



Saferworld is an independent non-governmental organisation that works to prevent and reduce violent conflict and promote cooperative approaches to security. We work with governments, international organisations and civil society to encourage and support effective policies and practices through advocacy, research and policy development and through supporting the actions of others.

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# Introduction

The presence of weapons in Kosovo continues to undermine the security of Kosovo's citizens, but at the same time poses dilemmas for how to reduce the prevalence of weapons without further damaging often fragile feelings of security among the population. Since March 2006, Saferworld and the Forum for Civic Initiatives have been tracking attitudes towards weapons in Kosovo and the links between feelings of safety and the presence of weapons in communities. This paper looks at changing perceptions of civilian possession and prevalence of weapons, and suggests key issues to consider in developing a framework for weapons collection and control.

After the declaration of independence by the Kosovo administration on 17 February 2008<sup>1</sup>, the legal framework for weapons possession, use and transfer is changing. The Kosovo Assembly is now considering a draft law on weapons which should be adopted later in 2008. It is hoped that this law will contribute to the reduction of the illegal possession of weapons by the citizens of Kosovo and regulate the use, production, sale, possession, export, import, transit, trans-shipment and brokering of weapons and their components and ammunition.

It was estimated in 2006 there were around 400,000 weapons in Kosovo. Of these, 33,936 were in the legal possession of individual citizens; 45,217 were in the hands of official agencies and international private security companies; and at least 317,000 were in the illegal possession of individual citizens and other groups<sup>2</sup>. Part of the explanation for the high level of illegal

weapons possession is that there was only a weak legal framework regulating civilian weapons possession. Once it is passed, the Law on Weapons should strengthen this framework<sup>3</sup>.

The other side of the coin to strengthening the framework for weapons possession is the development of a framework for dealing with illegal possession, using a combination of legal registration of weapons currently in civilian hands, weapons collection initiatives to reduce the overall number of weapons held, and reducing demand for weapons by improving people's feelings of security. This paper offers some suggestions for how to design any weapons collection initiatives to ensure that they are locally owned, locally appropriate and conflict-sensitive.

A further aspect of weapons control is that of the control of international transfers of weapons. As the Kosovo Government is now entering into trade relations with sovereign states regarding the transfer of weapons, it is essential that a legal framework is created in Kosovo which regulates these transfers and conforms to international best practice. Specifically, given Kosovo's desire to join Euro-Atlantic structures including the European Union, Kosovo should align itself to the European Union Code of Conduct on Arms Exports<sup>4</sup>, which politically binds states to a criteria-based system for assessing arms transfers.

This paper is based on findings of a survey conducted in April and May 2008, part of a series of surveys tracking citizens' perceptions of community safety, security and justice and

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1 On 17 February 2008, Kosovo unilaterally declared independence from Serbia. At the time of writing, 51 countries had recognised this independence, largely on the basis of the adoption of the Comprehensive Proposal for Kosovo Status Settlement by the Kosovo Assembly, available at: <http://www.unosek.org/unosek/en/statusproposal.html>

2 Small Arms and Light Weapons Survey in Kosovo, SEESAC, Saferworld and Forum for Civic Initiatives (2006), available at: <http://www.seesac.org/reports/KOSOVO.pdf>

3 According to the Draft Law on Weapons of the Kosovo Assembly, a "Weapon" is considered "any object or device manufactured in the way that under pressure of gases, which are released during the burning of explosive materials, compressed gas or other potential energy, expels projectiles in the form of a bullet, shotgun shells, gas, liquid, arrows or other components, which causes dangerous injuries for health and the life of people," and also "any other object which main purpose is carrying out a physical attack towards physical integrity of people."

4 Available at: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/08675r2en8.pdf>

prevalence of weapons in Kosovo. Where appropriate, it draws on data from earlier surveys in this series, conducted in March 2006<sup>5</sup>, December 2006<sup>6</sup> and June 2007<sup>7</sup>.

## Key findings

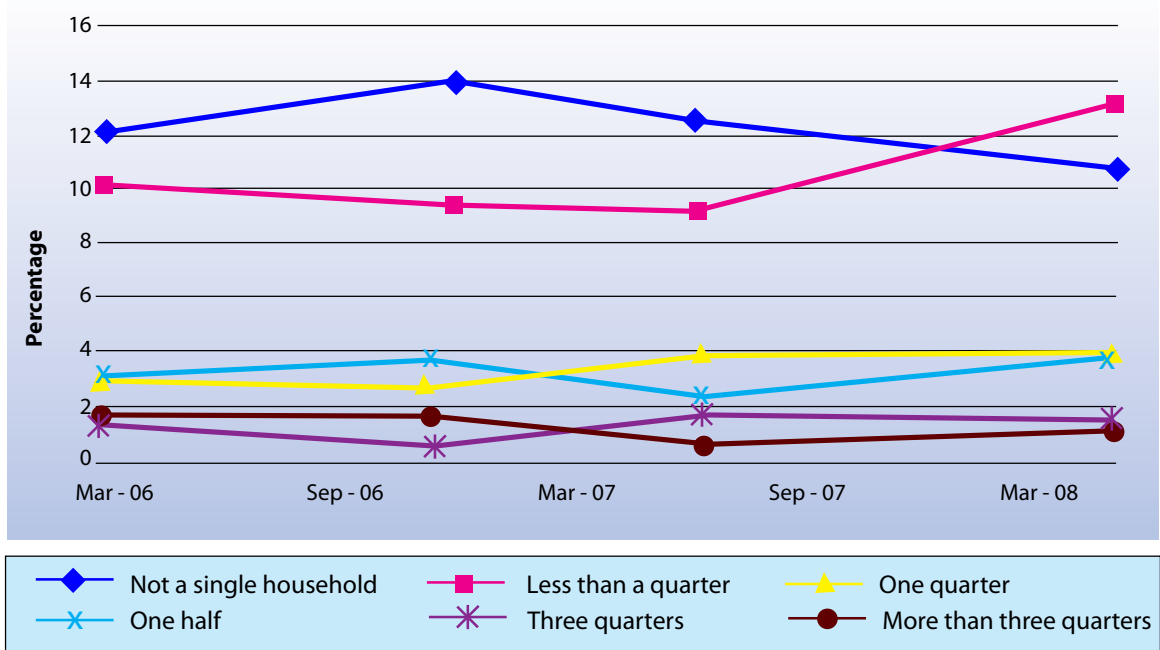
- The percentage of respondents saying that there are weapons in their community rose between March 2006 and April/May 2008 (14.6% of respondents thought at least a quarter of households in their community had weapons in April/May 2008; 9.3% did in 2006).
  - Respondents heard gunshots more often in April/May 2008 than in March 2006 (62.3% of respondents hear gunshots “a few times per year” compared with 46.0% in 2006).
  - Gunshots are heard more by the Serbian community: against an average of 7.4%, 13.6% of Kosovo Serb respondents heard them “a few times a month”.
  - 29.2% of the respondents would acquire a weapon if they were able to, up from 23.6% in March 2006.
  - Most respondents (78.3%) who would acquire a weapon would do so to protect themselves and their families.
- Many fewer would do so “to protect my community” in April/May 2008 (3.7%) than in March 2006 (21.5%).
- 60.8% of respondents said that possession of a weapon would not make them or their family feel safer.
  - Broadly, the safer someone feels, the less likely they are to think that owning a weapon would improve their safety. Of those respondents who felt their neighbourhood was “very safe” or “somewhat safe”, 41.5% would not acquire a weapon if they were able to against 15.2% who would, significantly lower than the average of 29.2% of all respondents.
  - The better people know each other, the less likely they are to admit to the presence of weapons in their neighbourhood. Respondents who engage in more intimate social interaction are much more likely to answer “don’t know” or to refuse to answer how many households in the neighbourhood have weapons. Only 16.5% of respondents who “have a cup of tea” with their neighbours regularly state that households have weapons in their community against an average of 27.4%.

5 Small Arms and Light Weapons Survey in Kosovo, op. cit.

6 Human security in Kosovo: A survey of perceptions (May 2007), Forum for Civic Initiatives and Saferworld, available at: [www.safeplaceproject.org](http://www.safeplaceproject.org)

7 Other data from this survey has been analysed in Policing in Kosovo: A survey of perceptions of policing (February 2008), Forum for Civic Initiatives and Saferworld, available at: [www.safeplaceproject.org](http://www.safeplaceproject.org)

■ **Figure 1: Perceptions of weapons held in households in Kosovo**



## Weapons prevalence in Kosovo today – increasing numbers or increasing awareness?

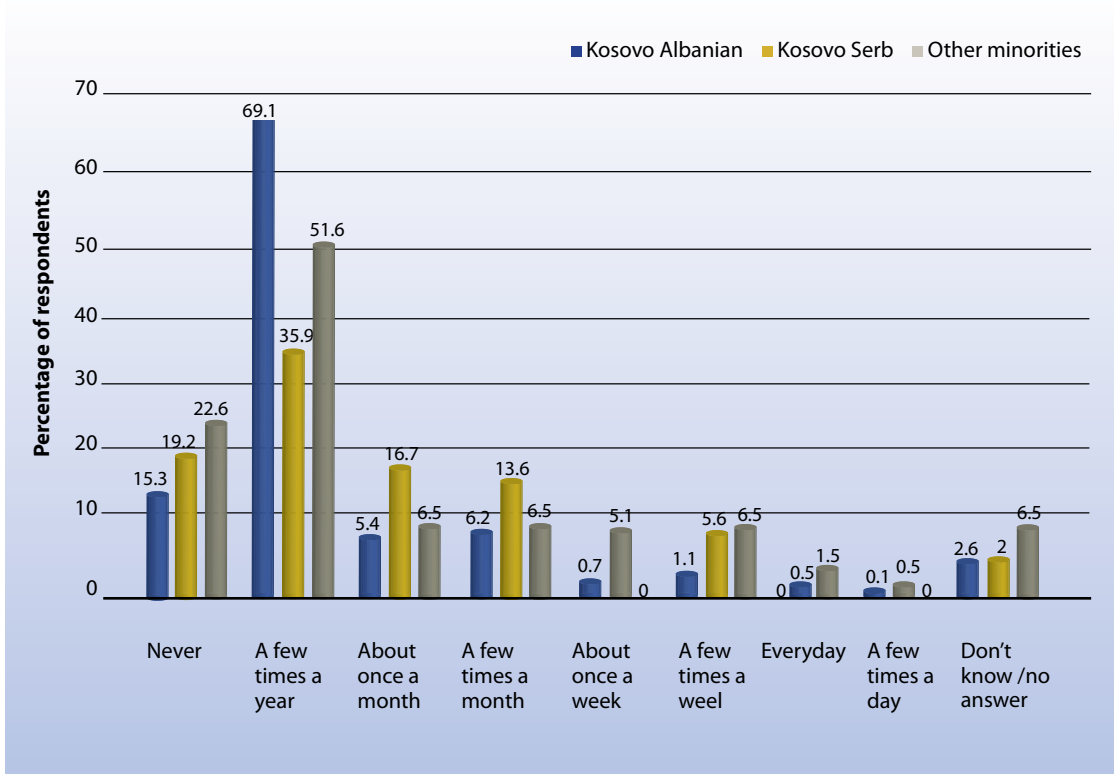
A main indicator of weapons prevalence is respondents' estimates of the number of weapons in their community. Figure 1 below could illustrate increasing numbers of weapons in households, as more respondents answer that there are weapons in their community (14.6% of respondents thought at least a quarter of households in their community had weapons in April/May 2008, up from 9.3% two years previously) and fewer respondents answer that "not a single household" has weapons. However, large numbers of respondents continue to refuse to answer the question or state that they don't know whether there are weapons in households. In focus groups, participants tend to deny that there are weapons in their community, but in discussing other subjects, it is obvious that weapons are present. For instance, participants often use examples of shootings to illustrate crime in their community. "There are no shootings in the village," stated one focus group

participant from Çagllavicë/Čaglavica, "Robberies are classical, there are no firearms involved." His fellow participant disagreed: "We do not know that. This is why no-one can confront the thieves – because people think they are armed. I heard that in village [name removed], someone shot the thieves."

Data from March 2006 shows that while 12.8% of respondents stated that no households in their community held a firearm, two-thirds were unwilling to answer this question. By April/May 2008, the number of respondents unwilling to answer this question had fallen to 61.9%, with 10.7% stating that no household had a firearm. Taken together, these statistics perhaps suggest that instead of weapons prevalence rising, people are becoming more open to discussion about weapons ownership in Kosovo compared with two years ago. They could also be becoming more aware of weapons use in the community – which can have security implications, particularly for groups which already feel vulnerable.

Given the sensitive nature of weapons possession, especially when it is technically illegal, asking questions directly about whether a household possesses a gun tend not to produce reliable statistics. Instead, there are several indicators

■ **Figure 2.** The number of gunshots heard by the respondents throughout the year



which can track weapons prevalence indirectly.

62.3% of respondents hear gunshots “a few times per year” compared with 46.0% in 2006. Gunshots are heard more by the Serbian community: against an average of 7.4%, 13.6 % of Kosovo Serbs hear them “a few times a month” compared to 6.2% of Kosovo Albanians and 6.5% of other minorities (in 2006, 6.4% of respondents heard gunshots “a few times a month”, a little lower than the 8.4% of Kosovo Serb respondents). It can therefore be implied that more people have heard more gunshots in April/May 2008 than two years previously.

It is possible that the noises people ascribe to gunshots are in fact firecrackers or fireworks – particularly given the celebrations among many in Kosovo associated with the declaration of independence, some time before this survey was undertaken. However, interim data in June 2007 shows that 54.4% of respondents heard gunshots “a few times a month”, suggesting a steady increase since 2006.

There are geographical differences. The most gunshots were reported in Mitrovicë/Mitrova,

with 13.0% of respondents hearing them “a few times a month”, followed by Pristina with 11.0% and Pejë/Peć 6.4%. There was also a slight difference between urban (7.0%) and rural (7.9%) areas. According to focus group participants, weapons possession is more prevalent in rural and border areas, and many people consider this legitimate given the level of perceived insecurity in these locations.

According to 69.0% of respondents, most often weapons in Kosovo are used for celebrations (March 2006: 20.2%; December 2006: 55.5%; June 2007: 75.2%), particularly in Gjakovë/Djakovica (where 86.1% of respondents gave this reason) followed by Pejë/Peć (80.8%) and Pristina (71.8%). It could therefore be that the increased number of gunshots heard in April/May 2008 is a result of celebratory shooting around Kosovo’s declaration of independence.



**Figure 3:** The relationship between being prepared to acquire a weapon and the number of gunshots heard a few times a year



## Why do people possess weapons?

Currently, 29.2% of the respondents would acquire a weapon if they were able to. This is up from 23.6% in March 2006 (See Figure 3)<sup>8</sup>. In April/May 2008, leading in these statistics were Kosovo Serb respondents with 33.8%, (focus group participants in Northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica stated that “everyone carries a gun”) followed by Kosovo Albanians with 28.4% and other minorities with 22.6%. 32.2% of the respondents were from rural areas whereas 25.7% were from the urban areas. Respondents from Pristina region were

most likely to acquire a gun if they were able to, with 34.1% of respondents giving this answer. In contrast, only 16.2% of respondents from Gjilan/Gnjilane would acquire a weapon if they were able to. There was also a large discrepancy between male and female respondents: 35.6% of male respondents against 22.1% of female said they would acquire a weapon if they were able to.

<sup>8</sup> Small arms and human security in Kosovo: an agenda for action p 18-19, available at: [http://www.fiq-fci.org/images/publications/small\\_arms\\_and\\_security\\_in\\_kosovo\\_an\\_agenda\\_for\\_action.pdf](http://www.fiq-fci.org/images/publications/small_arms_and_security_in_kosovo_an_agenda_for_action.pdf)

## Weapons in daily life: one woman's story

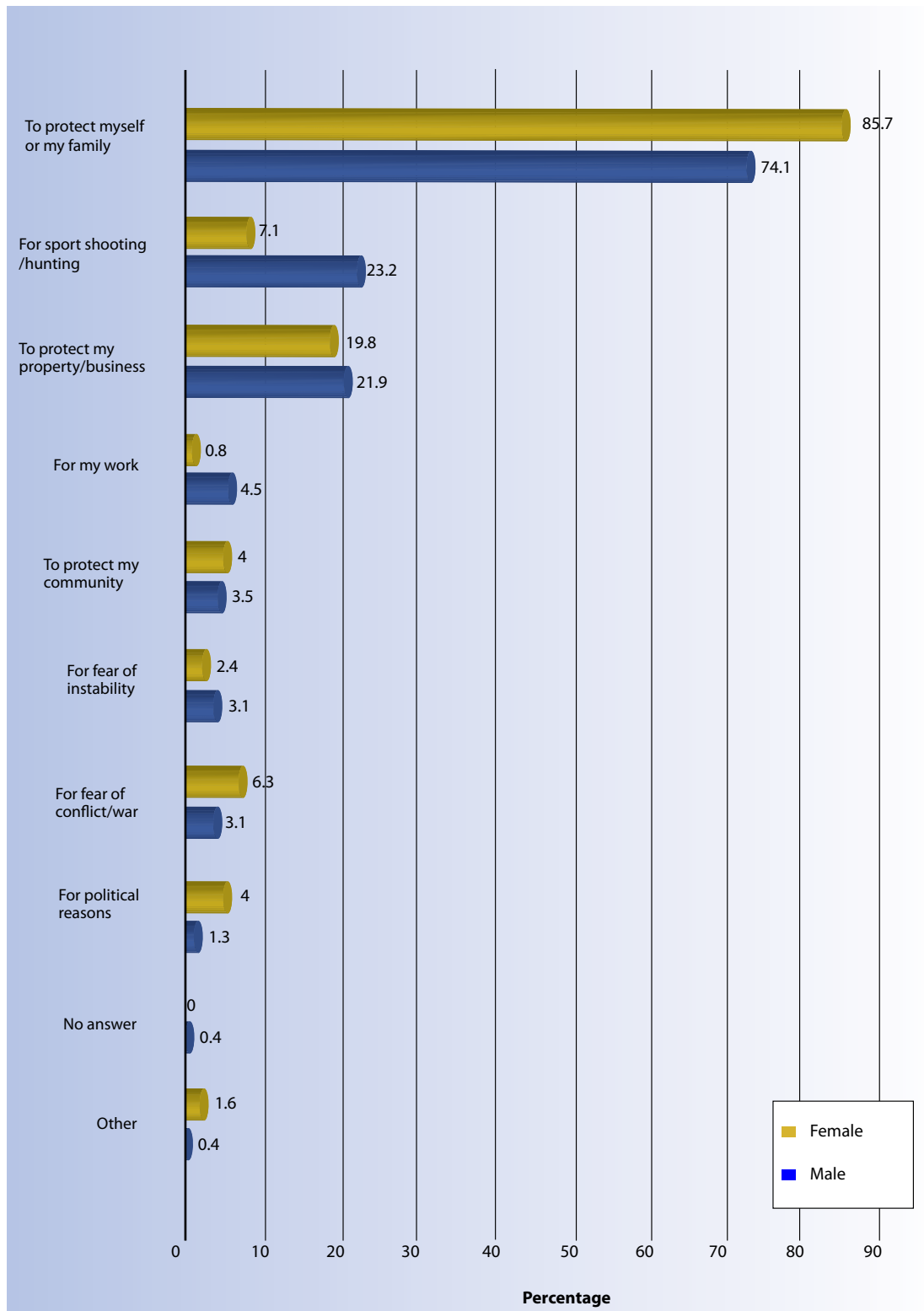
I am not sure whether the KPS was on duty that night or not. The story happened inside a night bar where a large number of people were present. One guy said something to a girl, and then she turned around and hit him in front of everybody there. Around ten people tried to calm the situation down, but she jumped and escaped from them. Finally, when she realised that she cannot fight the guy physically, she pulled out her gun. He also pulled out his gun. Next thing we know people started pulling out their guns! This was happening in a bar where around 300 people were present. Bar security guards came and calmed the situation down.

A 23-year-old female from Northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica

Of those who would acquire a weapon if they were able, 78.3% said the main reason for doing so would be to protect themselves and their families (see Figure 4 for the contrast between male and female respondents' reasons). This is also a slight increase on March 2006, when 76.8% of respondents would acquire a weapon to protect their families (and on June 2007, when the figure was 69.4%). One of the other main reasons for acquiring a weapon is also associated with personal protection: "to protect my business/property", a reason given by 21.1%

of people in April/May 2008 (12.1% in June 2007; 39.4% in December 2006 and 21.5% in March 2006). Interestingly, the number of people giving the reason, "to protect my community" has fallen dramatically, from 21.5% in March 2006 to 6.9% six months later, and again to 3.8% and 3.7% in June 2007 and April/May 2008 respectively. Similarly, while 24.6% of respondents who would acquire a firearm in March 2006 would do it due to "fear of conflict/wars", this had fallen first to 19.3% in December 2006 and then to 4.3% in April/May 2008.

■ **Figure 4:** The main reasons for acquiring a weapon, of those who would (baseline: 350; multiple answers possible)



Overall, 30.6% of respondents feel it is “somewhat likely” that there will be a violent conflict in Kosovo in the next five years. While this is slightly higher than in June 2007, the number of respondents thinking a violent conflict is “very likely” has fallen from 19.0% to 12.1%. Kosovo Serbs are the most worried: 31.8% think a conflict is “very likely” and a further 33.8% think it “somewhat likely”. However, this too is lower than in June 2007, when 39.4% of Kosovo Serb respondents felt it “very likely” and a further 39.4% “somewhat likely”.

The main causes for conflict mentioned in April/May 2008 are “conflicts with Serbia” (24.2% of respondents), “division of Kosovo” (22.4%), “economical issues” (8.3%), and “political issues” (3.3%). This contrasts with June 2007, when 43.3% of respondents gave “non-settlement or delay of status” as the main driver of conflict.

## Do weapons make people feel safer?

Despite the fact that a significant proportion of the population believes that there will be another conflict in Kosovo, possession of weapons would not make individuals or their family members any safer for many respondents: A total of 60.8%, or 64.8% of Kosovo Albanians, 40.9% of Kosovo Serbs, and 64.5% of other minorities, said that possession of a weapon would not make them or their family feel safer. This is slightly lower than 63.4% in June 2007, but significantly higher than the 48.7% of respondents who said weapons would not make them feel safer in December 2006.

The lower number of Kosovo Serbs saying weapons possession would not make them feel safer should be investigated. It is true that unlike other ethnic groups, slightly more Kosovo Serbs say weapons possession would make them feel safer (42.9%) than not (40.9%). However, in April/May 2008, only 10.6% said that it “makes no difference”. In contrast, in December 2006, 20.3% said possession made them feel safer, 13.4% said it would not, and a large majority, 43.6%, said it would make no difference. At the same time, in

2006, only 4.5% of Kosovo Serb respondents felt their neighbourhood was safe or very safe. This had risen dramatically to 66.7% in April/May 2008 (55.1% in June 2007). Therefore, feeling that weapons possession could improve safety could actually be an indicator of improved feelings of safety in this case: Kosovo Serbs felt so unsafe in 2006 that there was nothing they felt they could do to improve the situation; in 2008, this may be gradually changing.

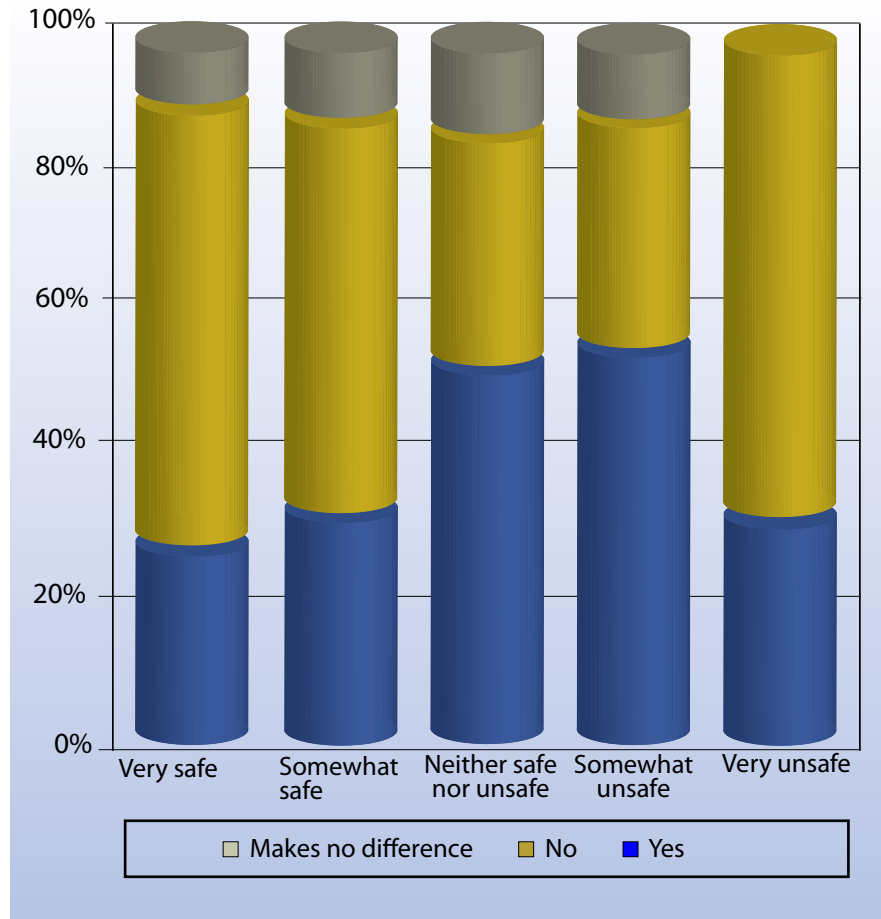
Respondents who mostly believe that possession of a firearm would make them feel safer were from the region of Mitrovicë/Mitrovica (36.0%), while those in Ferizaj/Uroševac region were least likely to believe weapons ownership would improve safety (20.7%). Those aged 18-29 years old were also the most likely to associate safety with weapons possession, with 38.8% of respondents in this age group believing this. In contrast, there was virtually no difference between male and female opinions on this subject.

Of those respondents who felt their neighbourhood was “very safe” or “somewhat safe”, 62.5% felt that weapons possession would not make them feel safer and 41.5% would not acquire a weapon if they were able to against 15.2% who would. This is significantly lower than the average of 29.2% of all respondents who would acquire a firearm if they were able to, and suggests that making people feel safe in their own neighbourhood is a key first step to reducing weapons prevalence in the future.

Figure 5 illustrates the relationship between how safe someone feels and how likely they are to think that owning a weapon would make them feel safer. Broadly, the safer someone feels, the less likely they are to think that owning a weapon would improve their safety.

However, the correlation between feelings of safety and weapons possession is not direct. The relationship breaks down for those people feeling “very unsafe”. This is likely because at this level of extreme insecurity, the feeling of disempowerment is such that respondents feel there is nothing they can do (or that can be done) to make themselves feel safer. The correlation

■ **Figure 5:** The correlation between weapon possession and feelings of safety (Question: Do you believe that possession of firearms makes or would make you or your family safer?)



between how safe people feel and the number of gunshots heard follows a similar pattern: the fewer gunshots a respondent hears, the more likely he/she is to feel safe, except when he/she feels “very unsafe”, when the number of gunshots heard makes little difference. This suggests that reducing weapons prevalence cannot be assumed to automatically improve feelings of safety or vice versa. A focus group participant from Pejë/Peć put it more negatively: “There is no safety even when a person carries weapons. For

instance a person at the bus station was carrying a weapon but suddenly someone shot him. There is no security either way.”

## How can weapons be collected or controlled?

Weapons collection initiatives in Kosovo have to date had little success. It is essential that any effort to control or reduce the number of weapons in civilian possession is based on sensitively conducted research, sound analysis of local perceptions, and tailored to the specific needs of different groups and geographic areas.

People remain uncomfortable with questions related to small arms more than in other fields. According to the interviewers for this research, 36.0% of respondents felt uncomfortable with the small arms related questions, the highest for any of the fields (for instance, 27.5% felt uncomfortable with crime-related questions). The level of discomfort decreased with the level of education respondents had received, and those in the Prizren region were most comfortable, while those in the Pristina region were the most uncomfortable. However, this figure of 36.0% is lower than the comparable figure for June 2007 (39.3%), supporting the suggestion that people are becoming slightly more open to discuss sensitive issues.

When asked about weapon amnesties, focus group participants generally believed that they should be organised by the government with the help of Kosovo Police. Focus group participants in South Mitrovicë/Mitrovica unanimously believed weapons should be handed to authorities but that the responsibility for this lies with the "citizens". Similarly, participants in a female focus group in Ferizaj/Uroševac thought weapons should be handed in on "a government initiative, with police help," and that "people who have no permit to carry a weapon should hand in all their weapons", sentiments echoed in a mixed focus group in Kamenicë/Kamenica. Opinion in a male focus group in Pejë/Peć was more divided as to whether weapons should be handed in, with two participants suggesting weapons should be handed in "if they are carried without permission". Here, there was more focus on the role of the community and family in weapons collection: while one participant suggested that the KP

should be responsible for weapons collection, two others argued that "the community, the kin and the family" should be responsible.

In contrast, those in a focus group in Northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, were unsure about the merits of handing in weapons, with one participant suggesting that "there should be a policy on prohibition of carrying a gun, not owning one. Let us keep the gun at home, but you should not be allowed to carry one with you." Another focus group participant from Çagllavicë/Čaglavica linked lack of trust of security providers and authorities to why it would be difficult to collect weapons: "Most Serbs would not give up their guns if they had them. Kosovo authorities do not offer any kind of security whatsoever." A participant from Kamenicë/Kamenica made a similar link, this time to weapons possession: "There are some moments that if you're not able to help yourself, it's going to be a long time to wait for help. Every civilized country in the world has weapons for these cases."

This research also cross-tabulated questions concerning local social capital with questions concerning weapons ownership prevalence, producing some interesting results. Respondents who "have a cup of tea with each other", "chat about neighbourhood problems" or "chat about personal issues" at least once a week are more likely to state that "not a single household has a weapon" (15.0%, 17.7% and 17.3% respectively), while those with the least intimate social interaction ("say hello to each other") at least once a week were closer to the average of 10.7%, at 11.6%.

Moreover, respondents who engage in the most intimate social interaction researched, "having a cup of tea" with neighbours at least once a week, are much more likely to answer "don't know" or to refuse to answer how many households in the neighbourhood have weapons. 68.5% of respondents who engage in this type of social interaction won't answer or don't know how many households have weapons, against an average of 61.9%, and only 16.5% of these state that households have weapons in their community against an average of 27.4%. Essentially, the better

people know each other, the less likely they are prepared to discuss their neighbours' affairs and the less likely they are to admit to the presence of weapons in their neighbourhood.

These findings have implications for any weapons control initiatives. In more close-knit communities in particular, a community-specific, community-wide and carefully consulted approach will be necessary, engaging in trust-building over the long term before attempting to collect or register weapons.

## Conclusion and recommendations

Illegal possession and misuse of SALW pose challenges to the stability of Kosovo, but there are also positive indications of changing perceptions. Together, these findings suggest either that weapons prevalence in Kosovo is rising (people hear more gunshots, and perceive there to be more weapons in their neighbourhoods) or that people are increasingly comfortable to discuss this sensitive subject (with fewer respondents refusing to answer SALW-related questions). As there has been no major influx of weapons into Kosovo during the tracker period, it is possible that growing feelings of security and better media coverage are slowly encouraging people to talk more openly about weapons in Kosovo. This should be seen as a positive development, and further public discussion and debate should be encouraged.

However, because of sensitivities surrounding weapons possession and prevalence, the way that this is dealt with must be carefully researched and any initiatives to control or collect weapons should be tailored to specific community needs to maximise opportunities for peace and minimise potential drivers of conflict. Communication, trust-building and above all transparency are essential principles for the development of a locally appropriate weapons control regime in Kosovo<sup>9</sup>.

### Any regime for controlling civilian possession of weapons should:

- Be locally appropriate. Every culture has a different attitude towards weapons ownership. These deep-rooted cultural/social attitudes are also likely to be influenced by more transient, immediate factors, such as those highlighted within this report relating to a perceived sense of security. As such, Kosovo's specific history, sensitivities and attitudes towards weapons, as well as the immediate context, need to be taken into account at the design stage to ensure long-term success and sustainability. This may also require flexibility over time as the immediate context changes and longer-held attitudes evolve.
- Be designed in light of resource constraints and with a detailed plan for implementing changes in legislation. Even a legislative framework and institutional structures which conform to international best practice will only be successful if they are accompanied by appropriate training and funding. Ensuring that those tasked with the implementation of legislation, in particular the police and judiciary, understand and can use the legislation with relative ease will be critical.
- Be carefully communicated to the public. As Kosovo develops its institutions and legislative frameworks, the population needs to be fully informed of the legal basis of a new weapons control regime and the requirements of individual citizens. To do this, Kosovo's appropriate institutions should develop a long-term communication campaign using a variety of methods and media throughout the country.

<sup>9</sup> See Small arms and human security in Kosovo: An agenda for action (op.cit.) for more detailed recommendations on how to develop Kosovo's SALW control infrastructure.

- Be integrated into and / or consistent with broader security sector reform. There are dimensions of SALW control in several different security-related areas. Weapons possession by security providers such as the Kosovo Police and the future Kosovo Security Force will need to be linked to wider SALW control regimes. The development of new legislation on the role of private security providers will also have implications for civilian possession of SALW, as will the forthcoming disbandment of the Kosovo Protection Corps. Crime prevention and reduction strategies, including youth and organised crime, will also have ramifications for broader SALW control. The relevant legislative, institutional and strategy development will need to be coherent across these areas. Furthermore, as the survey's findings highlight, the ability of security services to provide and enable a secure environment can be central to reducing the demand for weapons.
- Be transparently developed. Sensitivities around weapons prevalence and possession are only exacerbated by a lack of transparency around the development of weapons control regimes. Openness is a key principle for all policy development in Kosovo, and public discussion is an important way to mitigate sensitivity in the long term. Moreover, the opinions, perceptions and experiences of the public are the necessary foundation for the development of appropriate and effective policy.

### Any weapons collection initiative should:

- Be owned by the institutions and people of Kosovo. For any weapons collection initiative to be effective and sustainable, it needs to be designed by Kosovo's institutions with input from the public, and not imposed from outside.
- Be tailored to the specific needs of different communities. The differences in attitudes towards and prevalence of weapons in different regions and among different ethnic and age groups will require tailored responses. People increasingly possess weapons for their personal security rather than to protect their community, which will ultimately allow for weapons collection at community level to succeed.
- Be preceded by building trust between institutions and communities. There appears to be an inverse relationship between how well people know each other and how comfortable they are to admit the presence of weapons in their neighbourhood. Further, distrust of international and local institutions drives possession of weapons. Until trust is built between institutions and communities, weapons collection initiatives are likely to be incomplete at best.
- Be sensitive to communities' genuine security concerns. Although the link between feelings of safety and weapons prevalence is not simple, in vulnerable communities where insecurity is extreme, poorly thought-through weapons collection is likely to increase insecurity. Community-level analysis of drivers of conflict and insecurity could be



one way to design weapons collection programmes which are responsive to the concerns of specific communities<sup>10</sup>. It may be that to be successful, weapons collection initiatives should be designed and undertaken at the level of community (instead of Kosovo-wide or individual-based).

- Be sequenced appropriately with other SALW, security sector reform (SSR), peacebuilding and development initiatives. The success, or otherwise, of weapons collection programmes is often based upon creating an environment in which those possessing weapons feel comfortable surrendering their arms. A whole range of measures from confidence-building between members of the community and between the community and security services, to enhancing the performance of the police in tackling crime, or better service delivery, may need to be deployed before and after weapons collection programmes to ensure their long-term success. Weapons collection programmes are rarely successful as stand-alone, one-off interventions.
- Be designed with appropriate indicators of impact. Such indicators need to be both short- and long-term, and focused on sophisticated measures relating to the security of individuals and communities, not merely the number of weapons collected. It is important that donors to weapons collection programmes appreciate this need for sophisticated indicators in the project-design stages.

## Any regime for controlling international transfers of small arms and light weapons should:

- Be criteria-based. Each individual transfer of weapons should be assessed on a case-by-case basis against predetermined criteria. The EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports lists eight criteria for a transfer of weapons, including the risk of diversion of the weapons to an unintended recipient (Criterion Seven), the likelihood of weapons being used to commit human rights abuses (Criterion Two) and the impact on sustainable development in the recipient country (Criterion Eight). If it joins the EU, Kosovo will be required to sign up to the EU Code of Conduct.
- Be based on the rigorous vetting of those licensed to carry out the international transfer of SALW (for instance, arms dealers, brokers, air transporters).
- Be transparent. Public reports should be regularly produced and open to public scrutiny, containing sufficient information to enable effective scrutiny of individual licensing decisions. Information should also be provided on overall government policy in this area.

<sup>10</sup> See Kosovo at the crossroads: Perceptions of conflict, access to justice and opportunities for peace in Kosovo, Saferworld and FIQ (2007), for an example of a type of analysis which can identify drivers of conflict and suggest ways of mitigating that conflict in programme design.

## Annex: Methodology

This paper is based on data collected in April-May 2008. Due to security concerns, the majority of interviews were conducted in April 2008 but interviews of Kosovo Serb respondents were conducted in May 2008. The complete questionnaire and raw data can be found at [www.safeplaceproject.org](http://www.safeplaceproject.org). Each of these tracker surveys comprises a household survey and a series of focus groups.

The household survey in April-May 2008 was conducted throughout Kosovo and a representative sample of 1,200 respondents was selected to gather the data. The standard margin of error is 2.89 percent at a confidence level of 95 percent. The data for this study was gathered principally from interviews with heads of households and where appropriate, women (regardless of their position in a household). Because a large majority of heads of household in Kosovo are men, in order to provide an adequate gender

balance, women were interviewed in every second and fourth household. In total, 52.5 percent of respondents were male and 47.5 percent were female. All were over 18 years old.

Six focus groups on security provision were used to validate the data from the household survey and to investigate more deeply the sensitive issues around security provision. These groups were as follows: Ferizaj/Uroševac, Kamenicë/Kamenica, Pejë/Peć, Çagllavicë/Çagllavica, Northern Mitrovicë/Mitrovica and South Mitrovicë/Mitrovica. Participants were male and female, aged 18-30 years.

The paper also includes data from surveys following a similar methodology conducted in March 2006<sup>11</sup>, December 2006<sup>12</sup> and June 2007.

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<sup>11</sup> Small Arms and Light Weapons Survey in Kosovo op. cit.

<sup>12</sup> Human security in Kosovo: A survey of perceptions op. cit.

The SafePlace project is a joint programme of work by the non-governmental organisations Saferworld and FIQ which supports the development of an effective, accountable and conflict-sensitive security sector in Kosovo.

[www.safeplaceproject.org](http://www.safeplaceproject.org)

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