

Statistics¹

The gun trade

There are about 640 million small arms in the world or one for every ten people on earth. The majority, 59%, are in the hands of civilians. 38% are owned by government armed forces, 2.8% by police and 0.2% by armed groups.

The gun trade is worth US\$4 billion a year, of which up to US\$1 billion may be unauthorised or illicit.

Eight million new guns are manufactured every year by at least 1,249 companies in 92 countries.

Ten to 14 billion units of ammunition are manufactured every year, which is enough to kill every person in the world twice over.

Illicit guns start out in the legal trade. 80% of the guns used in crime in Mexico were legally bought in the US, and 72% of the guns used in crime in Rio de Janeiro were once legally owned in Brazil.

The biggest exporters of guns:²

Country	Annual value of gun exports (US \$ millions)
USA	533
Italy	at least 250
Brazil	164
Germany	at least 159
Belgium	at least 145
Russia	41 – 130
China	100
UK	79
Austria	at least 86
Japan	65
Switzerland	54
Canada	52
Czech Rep	at least 51
France	at least 48
Spain	at least 47
Norway	45
Turkey	30
Finland	26

Casualties of the gun trade

- A thousand people a day die as a result of guns. Of these 1000 deaths, on average 560 are criminal homicides, 250 are direct war deaths; 140 are suicides, while 50 are accidents or cases of undetermined intent. Three people are wounded for every one killed.
- Small arms are responsible for 60-90% of the direct conflict deaths that occur each year.

¹ These statistics are taken from the full text of the report, 2006: *Bringing the global gun crisis under control*, where they are footnoted

² According to publicly available information

- Tens of thousands of children are armed and fighting in more than 20 conflicts around the world.
- Between January 2003 and April 2004, almost 600,000 deaths occurred in the Democratic Republic of Congo as an indirect result of the instability and conflict.
- In Iraq, guns have been identified by the Iraq Body Count organisation as the single greatest threat to civilian security. Between 1 May 2003 and 18 March 2005, 5,502 civilians were killed in incidents involving explosions, while 8,894 people were killed in crime, nearly all by small arms.
- The International Committee of the Red Cross estimates that for the 18 months after the official end of a conflict, weapons-related casualties are 60-80% higher than before the conflict.
- 85 % of firearm homicide victims are under 44, and 90% of gun related homicides occur amongst men. In addition, men comprise 88% of gun suicides.
- In Rio de Janeiro, at least 5,500 of the 12,000 children and teenagers involved in the narcotics trade carry arms.
- In South Africa, every 30 hours a woman is shot dead by her current or former partner using a legally-acquired firearm.

Lethality of firearms

- A study of hospital admissions in Australia showed that the mortality rate of gunshot wounds was twice as high as that for stabbings
- A US study showed that domestic assaults involving a firearm were twelve times more likely to be lethal than similar attacks with other weapons.
- Guns are more lethal in suicide attempts than other methods, according to suicide prevention experts.

Guns don't make people safer

- A study from El Salvador showed that people who attempted to use a gun in self-defence were four times as likely to die as those who did not.
- A 2003 study in the US showed that having a gun in the home increases the risk of someone in the household being murdered by 41%.
- Domestic violence is more likely to be lethal if there is a gun in the home. For women, the risk of being killed if there is a gun in the home is increased by 172%.

The cost of gun violence

- Gun violence is a leading cause of hunger - a survey by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation showed that armed conflicts are the largest single cause of food emergencies, responsible for 35% of these emergencies between 1992 and 2003.
- The Inter-American Development Bank roughly estimated that the annual cost of armed violence to Latin America was some US\$140 billion, or 12% of GDP.

- Of the 32 countries at the bottom of the UN Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Index, 22 were affected by armed conflicts.
- A typical civil war in a low-income country costs US\$50 billion per year - or 250% of an average country's GDP.
- A study in 2002 calculated the full cost of gun violence in the US, including the costs to the health system as well as lost earnings and productivity, at \$100 billion a year.

Restricting access to guns can help reduce gun violence

- In Brazil, a new gun law in 2003 restricted who could own guns and included a voluntary weapons collection drive. The following year, gun deaths dropped by 8%, which translated into more than 3,200 lives saved in one year.
- In Australia, an evaluation in October 2004 of the 1990s gun law reforms found that they had produced dramatic reductions in firearms-related deaths.
- In Canada, where a series of gun law reforms have been introduced since 1991, there was a 46% drop in the recorded gun homicide rate by 2003. This effect was most pronounced for women – while the gun homicide rate for men fell by 37%, it decreased by 61% for women.
- In the UK, the gun laws were reformed in 1997. By 2003, the gun homicide rate for men in England and Wales had dropped 33%, while the gun homicide rate for women had fallen by 48%.