

## Gun Violence in the U. S.

*Gun Violence represents a challenge to everyday life in the United States. Between 2008 and 2017, 342439 people were killed by a gunshot, meaning that 1 person was shot dead every 15 minutes across the U. S.<sup>i</sup> Gun violence represents a multifaceted problem requiring a nuanced approach focusing on prevention. Prevention based on research on the development of risks can largely reduce the probability that firearms will be introduced into community and family conflicts or criminal activity.<sup>ii</sup>*

(definitions sorted by alphabetical order)

**Gun violence:** Gun violence is violence committed with the use of firearms, for example pistols, shotguns, assault rifles or machine guns.<sup>iii</sup>

**Mass shooting:** it occurs “when four or more people have been shot and killed, not including the attacker”.<sup>iv</sup> A mass murderer is someone who “kills four or more people in a single incident (not including himself), typically in a single location”.<sup>v</sup>

**Unintentional shooting:** Unintentional is the description used in public health for an injury or death that was not caused purposely (in contrast with suicide and homicide, in which there is an intent to cause harm). Unintentional shootings can be self-inflicted or inflicted by someone else.<sup>vi</sup>



### Gun Violence in the United States: Statistics



- ❖ In 2019, there were 39,707 firearm deaths in the United States, or **12.1 per 100,000 people**.<sup>vii</sup>
- ❖ In 2021, Deaths from gun violence **increased by 23%** compared to 2020.<sup>viii</sup>
- ❖ Americans account for less than five percent of the global population but **own nearly half (46%) of all civilian guns in the world**.<sup>ix</sup>
- ❖ **Eight children and teens are killed or injured** in unintentional shootings involving an improperly stored gun **each day** in America.<sup>x</sup>
- ❖ Since 1963, nearly 193,000 children and teens have been killed with guns on American soil — **more than four times** the number of U.S. soldiers killed in action in the Vietnam, Persian Gulf, Afghanistan, and Iraq wars combined.<sup>xi</sup>
- ❖ Even with much of the country on lockdown, mass shootings hit a record high in 2020. Children witnessed, suffered, or died in **611 mass shootings in 2020—up from 417 in 2019**.<sup>xii</sup>



- ❖ According to the Gun Violence Archive, there have been 611 mass shootings in the U. S. in 2020.<sup>xiii</sup>
- ❖ The spike in gun selling might have contributed to the higher murder rates registered in 2020.<sup>xiv</sup>

## Visualizing the Data: Gun Violence in the United States

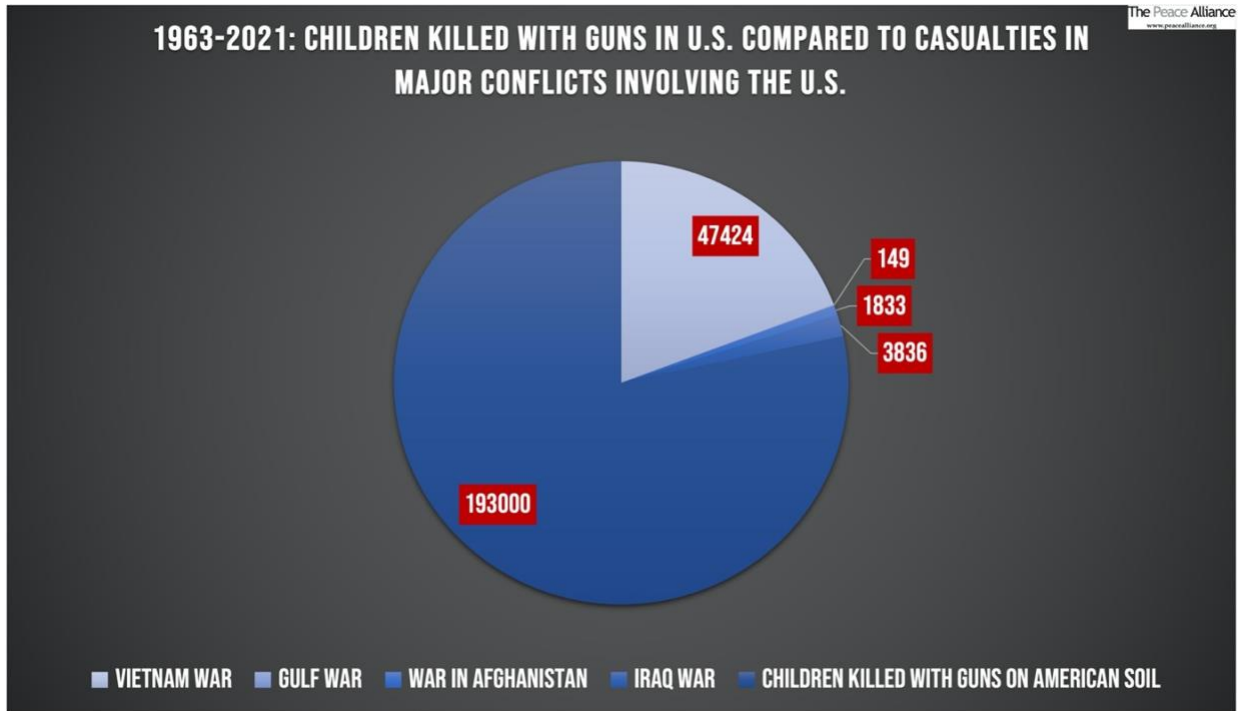


TABLE 1: compiled by author using data accessed at [https://web.archive.org/web/20121024024231/http://www.fas.org/press/\\_docs/RL32492.pdf](https://web.archive.org/web/20121024024231/http://www.fas.org/press/_docs/RL32492.pdf) and <https://www.defense.gov/casualty.pdf>. Note: only considers deaths in combat, not injuries.)

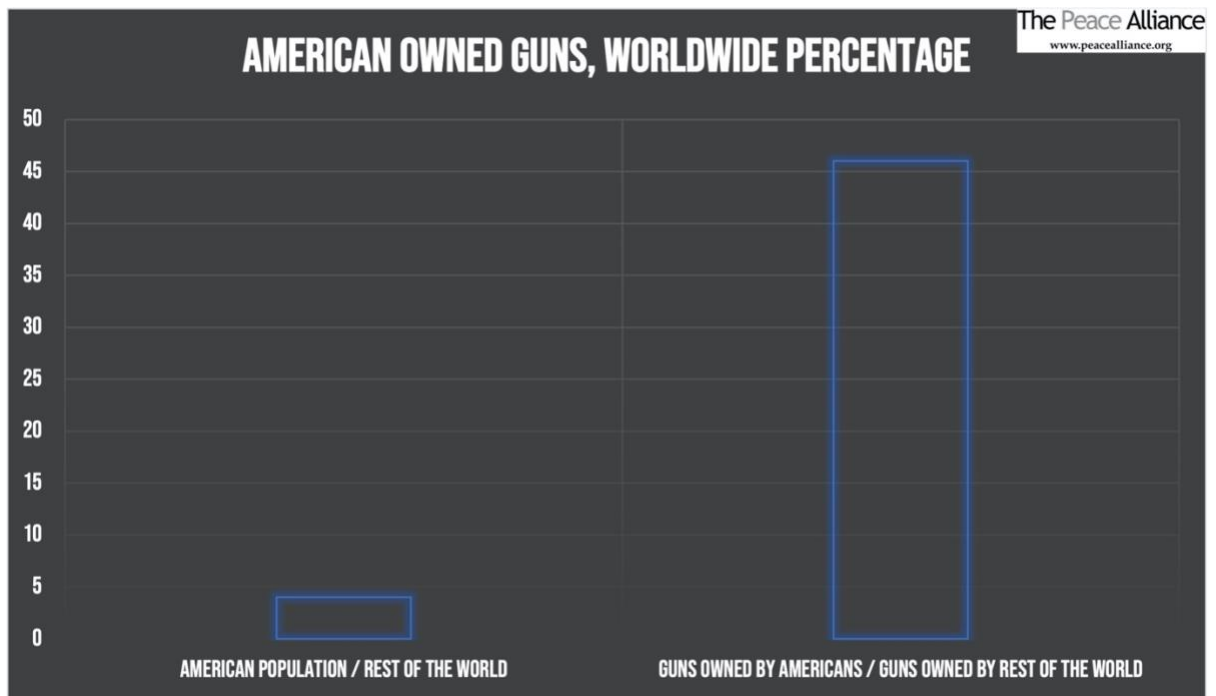


TABLE 2: compiled by author using data accessed at: Karp, Aaron. 2018. "Estimating Global Civilian-Held Firearms Numbers," p. 4. Small Arms Survey, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.

## Gun Violence: Worldwide

- ❖ In 2017, **75% of the world's 857 million guns were civilian controlled.**<sup>xv</sup>
- ❖ Firearms were involved in **more than half of all homicides worldwide**, in 2017.<sup>xvi</sup>
- ❖ Japan has the fewest gun deaths per year in the world. Japan has some of the strictest gun laws in the world and experiences 100 or fewer gun deaths per year in a population of over 127 million and a gun death rate of .06 deaths per 100,000 people. For Japanese citizens to purchase a gun, they must attend an all-day class, pass a written exam, and complete a shooting range test, scoring at least 95% accuracy. Candidates will also receive a mental health evaluation, performed at a hospital, and will have a comprehensive background check done by the government. Only shotguns and rifles can be purchased. The class and exam must be retaken every three years.<sup>xvii</sup>
- ❖ The Americas continue to report high homicide rates. Young men are especially at risk, with a **homicide rate for men aged 18 to 19 estimated at 46 per 100,000** – far higher than the risk faced by their peers in other regions. Firearms are also involved far more often in homicides in the Americas than in other parts of the world. In the Americas, firearms are involved in approximately three quarters of homicides.<sup>xviii</sup>
- ❖ Since 2003, when Switzerland cut the size of its military nearly in half (as well as introducing firearm restrictions), gun related deaths have sharply decreased.<sup>xix</sup>



## Visualizing the Data: Gun Violence Worldwide

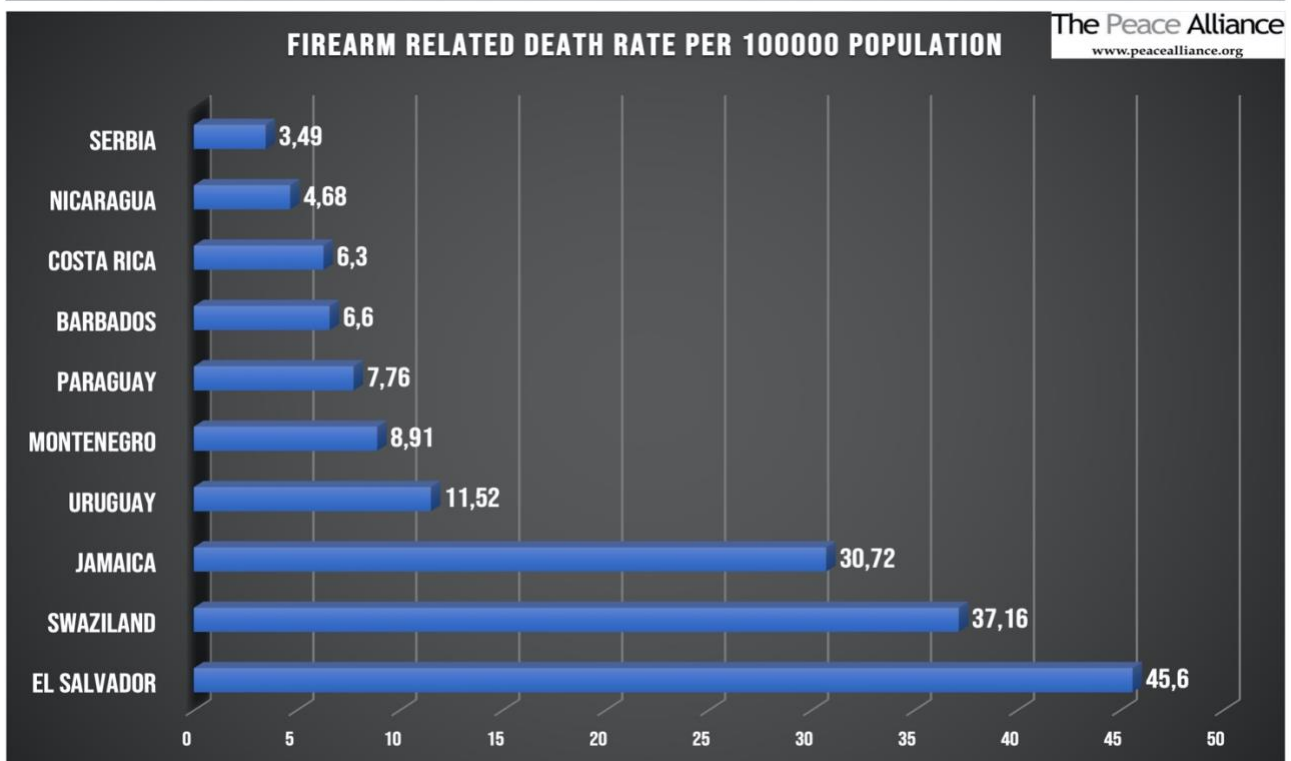
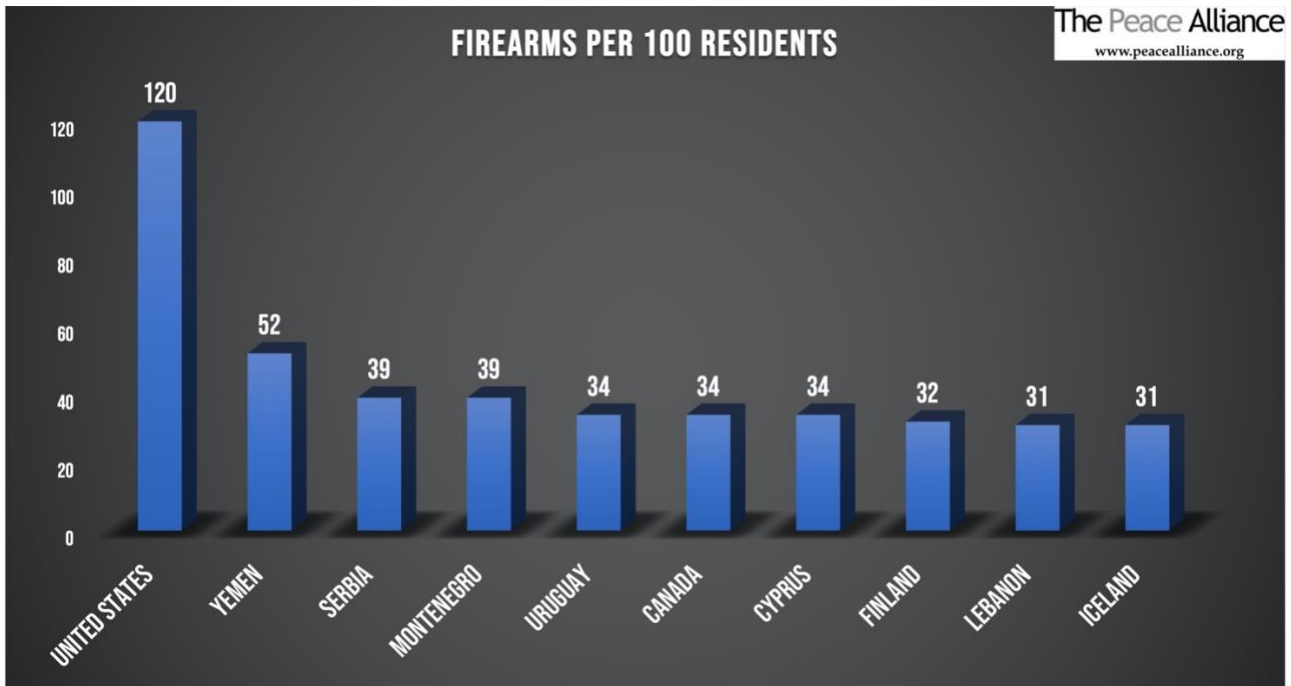


TABLE 3: compiled by author using data accessed at: <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/M-files/SAS-Annual-Report-2018.pdf>

TABLE 4: compiled by author using data accessed at: <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/gun-deaths-by-country>

## Endnotes

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- <sup>i</sup> <https://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/mortrate.html>
- <sup>ii</sup> <https://www.apa.org/pubs/info/reports/gun-violence-prevention>
- <sup>iii</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/arms-control/gun-violence/>
- <sup>iv</sup> <https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/>
- <sup>v</sup> Krouse, William J., and Daniel J. Richardson, *Mass Murder with Firearms: Incidents and Victims, 1999–2013*, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, R44126, 2015.
- <sup>vi</sup> <https://efsgv.org/learn/type-of-gun-violence/unintentional-shootings/>
- <sup>vii</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. *Underlying Cause of Death 1999-2019 on CDC WONDER Online Database*, released in 2020. Data are from the Multiple Cause of Death Files, 1999-2019, as compiled from data provided by the 57 vital statistics jurisdictions through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program. Accessed at <http://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html>
- <sup>viii</sup> <https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/>
- <sup>ix</sup> Karp, Aaron. 2018. “Estimating Global Civilian-Held Firearms Numbers,” p. 4. *Small Arms Survey, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies*. <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/T-Briefing-Papers/SAS-BP-Civilian-Firearms-Numbers.pdf>
- <sup>x</sup> End Family Fire. 2020. “What is Family Fire?” Washington, DC: Brady. <https://brady-static.s3.amazonaws.com/resources/EFF-InformationalBrochure.pdf>.
- <sup>xi</sup> CDC. 2015. “Vital Statistics in the United States,” 1963-1967. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/vsus.htm>; CDC. 2019. “Underlying Cause of Death,” Compressed Mortality File, Mortality for 1968-1978 and Mortality for 1979-1998. <https://wonder.cdc.gov/mortsq1.html>; CDC. 2020. “Underlying Cause of Death, 1999-2019,” Detailed Mortality Tables. Accessed using CDC WONDER Online Database. <https://wonder.cdc.gov/ucd-icd10.html>; U.S. Department of Defense. 2021. “Conflict Casualties.” Accessed using Defense Casualty Analysis System. <https://dcas.dmdc.osd.mil/dcas/pages/casualties.xhtm>
- <sup>xii</sup> Gun Violence Archive (GVA). 2021. “Mass Shootings in 2020” and “Mass Shootings in 2019.” Washington, DC: GVA. <https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/past-tolls>.
- <sup>xiii</sup> <https://www.gunviolencearchive.org/>
- <sup>xiv</sup> <https://theintercept.com/2021/02/21/2020-murder-homicide-rate-causes/>
- <sup>xv</sup> <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/weapons-and-markets/tools/global-firearms-holdings.html>
- <sup>xvi</sup> [https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/gsh/Booklet\\_5.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/gsh/Booklet_5.pdf)
- <sup>xvii</sup> <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/gun-deaths-by-country>
- <sup>xviii</sup> [https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/gsh/Booklet\\_3.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/gsh/Booklet_3.pdf)
- <sup>xix</sup> Reisch, T., Steffe, T., Habenstein, A., Tschacher, W. (2013) “Change in Suicide Rates in Switzerland Before and After Firearm Restriction Resulting from the 2003 “Army XXI” Reform”. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 170, Issue 9.