

SDG indicator metadata

(Harmonized metadata template - format version 1.1)

0. Indicator information (SDG_INDICATOR_INFO)

0.a. Goal (SDG_GOAL)

Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

0.b. Target (SDG_TARGET)

Target 16.4: By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime

0.c. Indicator (SDG_INDICATOR)

Indicator 16.4.2: Proportion of seized, found or surrendered arms whose illicit origin or context has been traced or established by a competent authority in line with international instruments

0.d. Series (SDG_SERIES_DESCR)

VC_ARM_SZTRACE - Proportion of seized, found or surrendered arms whose illicit origin or context has been traced or established by a competent authority in line with international instruments [16.4.2]

0.e. Metadata update (META_LAST_UPDATE)

2024-09-27

0.f. Related indicators (SDG_RELATED_INDICATORS)

Not applicable

0.g. International organisations(s) responsible for global monitoring

(SDG_CUSTODIAN_AGENCIES)

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

1. Data reporter (CONTACT)

1.a. Organisation (CONTACT_ORGANISATION)

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

2. Definition, concepts, and classifications (IND_DEF_CON_CLASS)

2.a. Definition and concepts (STAT_CONC_DEF)

Definition:

Proportion of seized, found or surrendered arms whose illicit origin or context has been traced or established by a competent authority in line with international instruments

Concepts:

Arms: arms refer to 'small arms and light weapons', defined as any portable lethal weapon that expels or launches, is designed to expel or launch, or may be readily converted to expel or launch a shot, bullet or

projectile by the action of an explosive, excluding antique small arms and light weapons or their replicas. Antique small arms and light weapons and their replicas will be defined in accordance with domestic law, and in no case will they include those manufactured after 1899. Arms include all firearms, as defined in the “Protocol against the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition”.

In particular, ‘small arms’ are, broadly speaking, weapons for individual use, including revolvers, pistols, rifles and carbines, shotguns, sub-machine guns and light machine guns. ‘Light weapons’ are, broadly speaking, weapons designed for use by two or three persons serving as a crew, although some may be carried and used by a single person. They include, heavy machine guns, hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft guns, portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-tank missile and rocket systems, portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems, and mortars of a calibre of less than 100 millimetres.

Seized: arms that have been physically apprehended during the reported period by a competent authority, whether temporarily or not, in relation to a suspected criminal offence or administrative violation related to these arms. For the purpose of the calculation of indicator 16.4.2, only arms that were seized due to criminal offences are considered.

Found: arms apprehended by authorities that are not linked to an intentional or planned investigation or inspection, neither attributable to any apparent holder or owner, regardless of whether the items were reported lost or stolen.

Surrendered: arms willingly handed over to authorities that are not linked to a planned investigation or inspection. The surrender may occur as a personal initiative of a citizen in the context of a voluntary surrender campaign and disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration processes, inter alia.

Illicit origin: Earliest point in time in the life of an arm where it was of an illicit nature. In order to establish the illicit origin, it is necessary to identify the point of diversion of the arm and the circumstances around it.

Point of diversion: the point in space and time and/or circumstances when arms left the licit circuit and entered the illicit one. If identified through tracing, the last legal record needs to be found. For arms illicitly manufactured, the point of diversion is the manufacture itself.

Last legal record: last recorded information available about the item, its status (deactivated, stolen, lost, seized, found, surrendered, sent for destruction, confiscated, in transit, etc.) and its legal end-user. The identification of the last legal record may require the initiation of several individual tracing requests.

Tracing: the systematic tracking of weapons and, where possible, their parts and components, and ammunition, at the national and/or international level for the purpose of assisting the competent authorities of States parties in detecting, investigating and analysing illicit manufacturing and illicit trafficking.

Illicit origin established by a competent authority in line with international instruments: illicit origin established through means other than tracing, e.g. through intelligence. In the case of arms that are not traceable, this is the only mean to establishing the illicit origin.

Marking: A uniquely marked item has a unique marking providing the name of the manufacturer, the country or place of manufacture and the serial number, or maintain any alternative unique user-friendly marking with simple geometric symbols in combination with a numeric and/or alphanumeric code, permitting ready identification by all States of the country of manufacture.

2.b. Unit of measure (UNIT_MEASURE)

Percent (%)

2.c. Classifications (CLASS_SYSTEM)

Not applicable

3. Data source type and data collection method (SRC_TYPE_COLL_METHOD)

3.a. Data sources (SOURCE_TYPE)

At national level data are produced by Law Enforcement or other Agencies responsible for firearms issues.

Such data are reported at international level through tables 5.1 to 5.3 of the UN-IAFQ. Please refer to the following link for detailed information: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/data-collections.html>.

These data will also be supplemented by data collected through the Programme of Action (PoA) national reports; in particular, Section 6 of its reporting form (national reports submitted by States are available at: www.smallarms.un-arm.com/sustainable-development-goals).

Additional data sources include national official publications, as well as data from international organizations such as the World Customs Organization and INTERPOL.

3.b. Data collection method (COLL_METHOD)

The IAFQ is sent to Member States every year (first data cycle in 2018). The official counterparts at the country level are designated Focal Points that are in charge of coordinating the data collection among different national institutions.

Relevant data are also collected on a biennial basis through the PoA National Reports (as revised in 2022). Data from alternative sources is collected throughout the year and incorporated into the internal database in parallel to the data collections above. Both UNODC and UNODA carry-out data validation processes of their respective dataset with Member States, and cooperate on data consolidation.

After data is consolidated, UNODC will share its dataset with Member States for their review before publication.

3.c. Data collection calendar (FREQ_COLL)

The first data collection cycle for compiling the indicator through the IAFQ started in 2018, covering the reporting years of 2016 and 2017. Since then, main data from the IAFQ is collected directly from Member States every year between May and July. Data are validated and reported for inclusion in the global database yearly in Q1.

Regarding supplementary data, the first data collection cycle for the PoA National Reports started in 2018, covering the reporting years of 2016 and 2017. The 2020 data collection cycle covered the period 2018-2019, data received in 2022 covered the reporting period 2020-2021 and data received in 2024 covered the reporting period 2022-2023. Data collection for the PoA National Reports is to continue on a

similar biennial basis, where Member States submit their report ahead of PoA process meetings and conferences.

3.d. Data release calendar (REL_CAL_POLICY)

It is expected that preliminary calculations for the annual indicator at the national, regional and sub-regional levels will be shared in March of every year.

3.e. Data providers (DATA_SOURCE)

Most of the data providers are Law Enforcement Agencies, including National Police, Regional/State Police, Customs, Military, etc. Focal Points at the national level are responsible for compiling the data and submitting it.

3.f. Data compilers (COMPILING_ORG)

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

3.g. Institutional mandate (INST_MANDATE)

CTOC/COP/2020, Res 10/2, The Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime:

8. Calls upon States to develop or strengthen their national capacity for the collection and analysis of data on illicit trafficking in firearms, with a view to identifying trends and patterns, fostering the exchange of information and enabling the global monitoring of progress on indicator 16.4.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, and invites States parties to participate in and contribute to the upcoming data-collection cycle of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime by providing quantitative and qualitative data and information.

A/RES/72/57, The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects:

8. Underlines the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument for attaining Goal 16 and target 16.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals;

And subsequent resolutions on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, including paragraph 10, **A/RES/77/71**.

A/CONF.192/BMS/2022/1: BMS8 Outcome document:

25. To highlight, as appropriate and on a voluntary basis, progress in data collection efforts under indicator 16.4.2 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as part of national reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, optimizing the use of national reports.

4. Other methodological considerations (OTHER_METHOD)

4.a. Rationale (RATIONALE)

While Target 16.4 aims at significantly reducing illicit arms flows, directly measuring these types of flows is extremely difficult due to the underground nature of illicit arms trafficking. Therefore, the indicator does not aim at measuring these flows, but the efficiency with which the international community combats the phenomenon of illicit arms trafficking.

In addition to indicator 16.4.2 as defined in this document, other non-official indicators may be of assistance when interpreting the reporting values for Goal 16.4. In particular, information is collected on the number of international and national tracing requests placed and responded to, and the total number of arms seized, found and surrendered by whether they are uniquely marked or not, the total number of arms that have been marked, recorded or destroyed. In addition, data on the number of individuals in contact with the police, prosecuted and convicted, in relation to illicit trafficking of arms is available. All these indicators could help complete the picture regarding the extent of Law Enforcement activities at the national level to counter illicit trafficking in arms.

4.b. Comment and limitations (REC_USE_LIM)

There are certain limitations to the methodology used in the calculation of indicator 16.4.2:

- Information on the illicit circumstances of arms not uniquely identifiable, which include illicitly manufactured firearms and firearms with erased or altered markings, is scarce, and these arms are very difficult to trace. Therefore, information on the establishment of the illicit origin for these arms is excluded from the calculation, with the indicator focusing on arms that are potentially traceable (i.e., uniquely identifiable through marking or unknown status with respect to marking).
- The values for indicator 16.4.2 may be affected by whether the country has a significant proportion of apprehended arms that are traceable, which is usually a consequence of the context of illicit arms trafficking in the country and is not related to its Law Enforcement efforts.
- The process of tracing firearms can be notably long, especially if several requests are involved. Therefore, the information on tracing results provided on the questionnaire for the reference year may be incomplete. While the fact that countries are requested to review the figures reported during the previous data collection cycle may partially correct for this, there may still be a bias in the calculation.
- Due to the year-to-year volatility of the estimates, the data is published as a 2-year moving average to increase robustness.

4.c. Method of computation (DATA_COMP)

The indicator is calculated as a proportion, and can be computed separately for each of seized, found and surrendered arms, as well as all three taken together.

The denominator of the proportion is the total number of arms seized, found and surrendered that are potentially traceable (i.e., uniquely identifiable through marking or unknown status with respect to marking).

The numerator includes all those arms for which the point of diversion was established / identified, either through tracing or by a competent authority (e.g. through intelligence).

$$SDG\ 16.4.2 = \frac{\text{Number of arms for which the illicit origin or context was established/identified (A + B + C)}}{\text{Total number of arms seized, found or surrendered (A + B + C + D + E + F + G)}}$$

- A:** Weapon seized/found/surrendered from illegitimate owner and weapon found in national registry (e.g., lost or stolen) (national tracing)
- B:** Point of diversion of the weapon (last legal record) identified through tracing and weapon found in foreign registry (international tracing)
- C:** Point of diversion otherwise established by a competent authority
- D:** Tracing attempted, but not enough information to identify point of diversion
- E:** Tracing procedure still pending
- F:** No tracing procedure initiated
- G:** Unknown status with respect to marking

Data are published as a two-year moving average to increase robustness.

4.d. Validation (DATA_VALIDATION)

Any discrepancies in a data set from a specific country will be verified through follow-up correspondences with national authorities of the country. Data for the indicator are shared with countries for their review before submission to UNSD, both with regards to the compiled indicator and supplementary data. UNODC and UNODA are responsible for carrying-out data validation processes of their respective datasets and verification with Member States.

4.e. Adjustments (ADJUSTMENT)

Not applicable

4.f. Treatment of missing values (i) at country level and (ii) at regional level

(IMPUTATION)

- **At country level**

A first step to follow when there is missing data to produce these estimates is to consult and follow up with the Member States. In particular, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) will request further information directly to the relevant Focal Points.

In the absence of feedback, alternative sources would be consulted to obtain the missing information. This information will be shared with the Member State for their approval. Finally, if no additional information is available through these two channels, the country's indicator will not be published.

- **At regional and global levels**

In order to calculate regional and global levels, the indicator for those Member States that were not published after treatment at the country level, will be estimated using information from alternative sources and/or from similar countries. The selection of these "similar countries" will be based on geographical location (e.g. regional or sub-regional averages), and/or structural similarities, such as the proportion of uniquely marked arms seized or the total number of arms seized, found and surrendered per capita. As historical data for countries becomes available with time, it will be possible to impute using the same country's data as well.

4.g. Regional aggregations (REG_AGG)

Once values of indicators for countries have been imputed, the sub-regional, regional and global estimates will be obtained by separately adding the numerator and denominator values for countries within a specific sub-region and region, and calculating the proportion. The global value would be calculated by aggregating the regional values in a similar manner.

There are certain thresholds to be met for the regional and global estimates to be acceptable. If these thresholds are not met, the estimates will not be published.

4.h. Methods and guidance available to countries for the compilation of the data at the national level (DOC_METHOD)

Guidelines for countries on the compilation of these data are available at:

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/statistics/crime/iafq.html>

4.i. Quality management (QUALITY_MGMNT)

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has a statistical section with dedicated staff to support the data collection through technical assistance, collating and verifying the received data and continuously improve data collection mechanisms including guidelines.

4.j Quality assurance (QUALITY_ASSURE)

- The data received from Member States goes through a thorough internal validation process. The IAFQ already has a built-in validation procedure that allows the respondent to see on the spot whether the reported values add up to the corresponding totals reported in other parts of the questionnaire.
- Internal validation is also performed automatically in the internal database system.
- The data is also externally validated by comparing it to other (preferably official) available sources.
- Once the information has been validated and information from additional sources incorporated, it is shared with Member States for their approval. After Member States have approved the corresponding values, data are ready to be published and sub-regional, regional and global totals are ready to be estimated.

4.k Quality assessment (QUALITY_ASSMNT)

Country level estimates will not be published where there is insufficient information available for either the nominator or denominator.

5. Data availability and disaggregation (COVERAGE)

Data availability:

The IAFQ data collection started in 2018 and countries are expected to submit their responses yearly between May and July. Between 2018 and 2023, 115 Member States have submitted at least once the IAFQ. Out of these, 29 countries have provided data relevant for the calculation of the indicator. With ongoing capacity building activities taking place, it is expected that this number will rise in the future.

In 2024, 100 States have provided information in their PoA National reports, which will be also used as information for the calculation of the denominator of indicator 16.4.2 (see at: www.smallarms.un-arm.com/sustainable-development-goals)

Between 2018 and 2024, States have submitted a total of 411 PoA national reports from 145 countries, in an average of 103 reports in each biennial cycle.

Time series:

2016 – most recent year

Disaggregation:

The collected data allows for the annual calculation of indicator 16.4.2 at the national level, which can be aggregated to sub-regional, regional and global levels. Disaggregating the indicator by a number of variables is also possible:

- By arms seized, arms found and arms surrendered.
- By different “levels of tracing” in cases where tracing was not successful. For example, cases where tracing is still pending or there was not enough information to establish the point of diversion, could be disaggregated from the cases where there was no attempt to trace the weapon whatsoever.
- By whether the illicit origin was determined through tracing or established by a competent authority.

6. Comparability / deviation from international standards (COMPARABILITY)

Not applicable

7. References and Documentation (OTHER_DOC)

www.unodc.org

<https://dataunodc.un.org/sdgs>

<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/statistics/crime/iafq.html>

<https://smallarms.un-arm.org/sustainable-development-goals>

<https://smallarms.un-arm.org/national-reports><http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/statistics/crime/iafq.html>

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