

**Speaker:** Quitterie De Labbey

**Presentation title:** From diversion to misuse: A study of gun violence committed with diverted firearms in the European Union

This presentation aims to address the research gap on the misuse of diverted firearms. Research has shown that most gun-related crimes in Europe are committed with illegally held firearms. The majority of illegally held firearms in Europe are weapons which were legally produced and traded, but at some point diverted into the illicit sphere. At the moment there is a lack of sound understanding on the various diversion patterns and the linkages with gun violence.

Our analyses are based on the findings of Project DIVERT, an EU-funded comparative research project which analyses firearms diversion in the EU, with a particular focus on theft, documents fraud, and the absence of legalisation of firearms (for example after legislative changes). Our analyses are built on official statistics, complemented by a substantial database of cases of diversion and more than 40 interviews with firearms experts.

The presentation will first introduce the audience to firearms diversion by providing an overview of the scope and characteristics of the phenomenon in the EU. We will then review the various contexts in which diverted firearms have been misused, including neighbour disputes, the criminal milieu or even armed conflicts where human rights abuses have been reported. Hereby, we depict various types of gun violence (inter-personal, criminal, or state-based). We conclude by pointing out future research avenues to complement the intelligence picture of this new research topic which currently relies on fragmented data.