

# *Nearly half of the world's guns in the hands of US civilians*

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Geneva, June 19 (RHC)—A new report by the Small Arms Survey says U.S. citizens own 40 percent of world's guns, that is 393 million firearms more than the combined total owned in the survey's other top 25 countries.

According to the document released Monday by the Geneva-based independent research project, there are more than 1 billion firearms in the world, of which civilians own 85 percent, while the rest are in the hands of the military or law enforcement agencies.

During the presentation of the report, survey author Aaron Karp told reporters that the biggest force pushing up gun ownership around the world is civilian ownership in the United States.

"Ordinary American people buy approximately 14 million new and imported guns each year," Karp said

He added the U.S. gun market is not just large, but unique. "It is unusual in that ordinary people can buy very powerful weapons that are not available in a lot of other countries — semi-automatic rifles being the most profound example," he said.

Mass shootings in schools and public venues is a frequent occurrence in the United States. According to the Gun Violence Archive website, just in 2017 there were almost 61 thousand documented incidents that left 15,625 people dead and 31,000 people injured.

The figure does not include annual suicides.

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