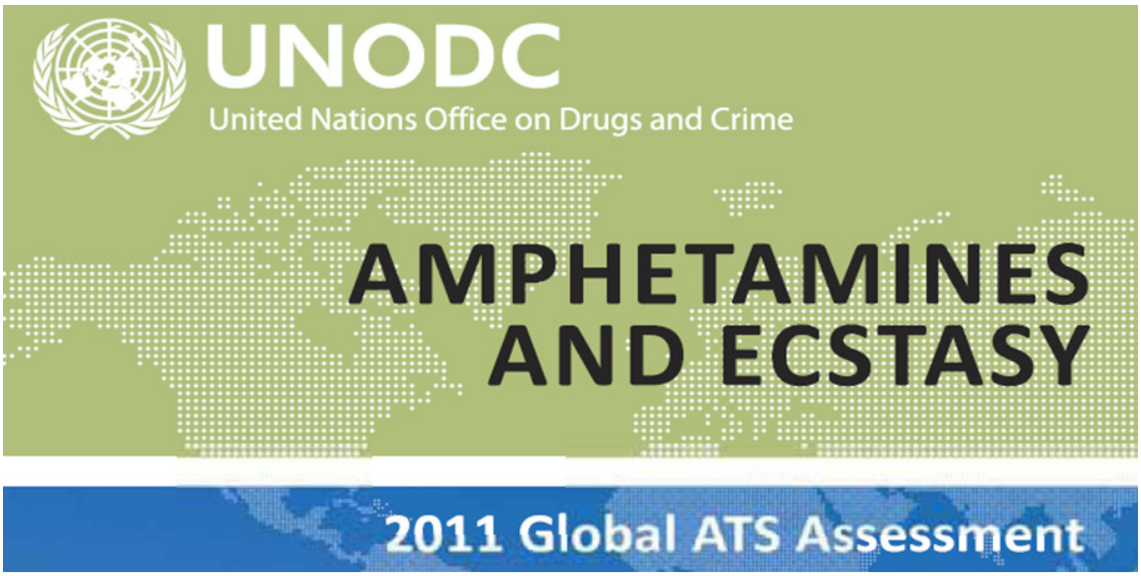


References to Brazil and the Southern Cone

Reports of ATS manufacture have also emerged from countries in Central America and South America. Six illicit ATS laboratories were reported seized in 2009. However, as ATS data from the region is in short supply, partly due to the traditional focus of drug control authorities on traditional drugs such as cocaine and cannabis, it is likely that the true situation is underreported. ATS manufacture has been reported from **Argentina**, Belize, **Brazil**, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Suriname. **Pag 09**

Regional Overview

Drug control efforts in South America, Central America and the Caribbean have traditionally focused mostly on cocaine and its derivatives and cannabis. Illicit manufacturing, trafficking and use of ATS have not been perceived as a significant threat. ATS awareness tends to be low, and lack of data on the illicit manufacture, trafficking and use of ATS is one of the main challenges in assessing the situation in these subregions. Close proximity to major ATS markets (such as North America) render countries in these regions vulnerable to the risk of being used as manufacturing bases and transit points for the illicit transhipment of ATS as drug traffickers increasingly look to avoid the ever-stricter controls enforced in North America, particularly with regard to precursor chemicals used in the manufacture of ATS. **Pag 83**

Illicit manufacture of ATS has recently emerged in countries in Central and South America which had little or no previous history of reported manufacture, such as **Argentina**, Belize, **Brazil**, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Suriname. A record high of six laboratories was reported from the region in 2009, including two methamphetamine laboratories in **Brazil** and Nicaragua, one ecstasy laboratory in **Brazil** and three combined amphetamine and ecstasy group laboratories in Guatemala. **Pag 83**

South America, Central America and Caribbean: ATS laboratories, seizures and annual prevalence rates 2005-2009

MEASURE	DRUG GROUP	2005	2006	2007*	2008	2009
Laboratory (#)	Methamphetamine	-	-	-	1	2
	Amphetamine	-	-	-	-	-
	Other synthetic/combined stimulants	-	-	-	-	3
	Ecstasy-group substances	1	-	-	3	1
	Total	**1**	**0**	**0**	**4**	**6**
Seizures (kg)	Methamphetamine	0.2	-	-	30.4	0.0
	Amphetamine	35.6	57.6	496.7	10.5	162.9
	Non-specified amphetamines	104.6	29.1	22.7	0.4	25.8
	Ecstasy-group substances	140.8	52.8	102.5	46.4	54.5
	Total	**281.2**	**139.5**	**621.9**	**87.7**	**243.2**
Annual Prevalence (15-64)	Amphetamines-group substances	0.7%	0.7%	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%
	Ecstasy-group substances	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%

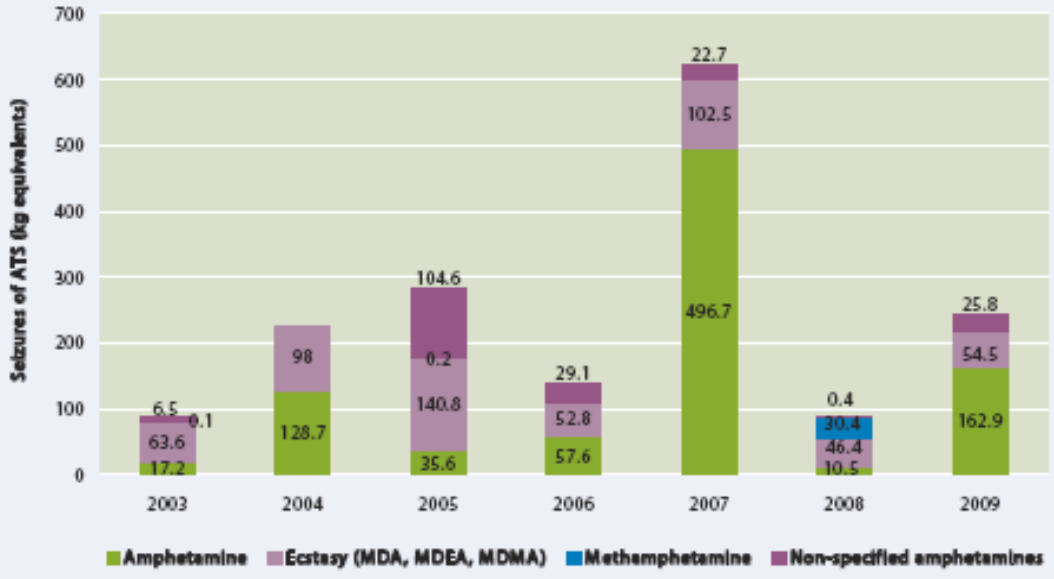
**From 2007 onwards, reported prevalence percentage is based on midpoint of range.*
- Not reported.
Source: UNODC ARQ/DELTA

ATS seizures in the region fluctuated between 2003 and 2009, reaching a peak of 622 kg in 2007, largely due to the high quantity of amphetamine seizures reported that year by Colombia (490 kg), dropping to 88 kg in 2008 and increasing again to 243 kg in 2009. Amphetamine and ecstasy-group substances have dominated ATS seizures, with only two significant seizures of methamphetamine being reported by **Argentina** (20.2kg) and the Dominican Republic (10.2kg) in 2008. In 2009, most ATS seizures in the region concerned amphetamine. **Pag 83**

Concern over rising levels of use of synthetic drugs such as ecstasy among South American youths has been growing in recent years. Use of amphetamines-group substances in South America is close to the world average, with 0.5 to 0.7% of the population aged 15-64 reporting having used the drug at least once a year. **Brazil**, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and **Argentina** report the highest prevalence rates of amphetamines use in South America. **Pag 83**

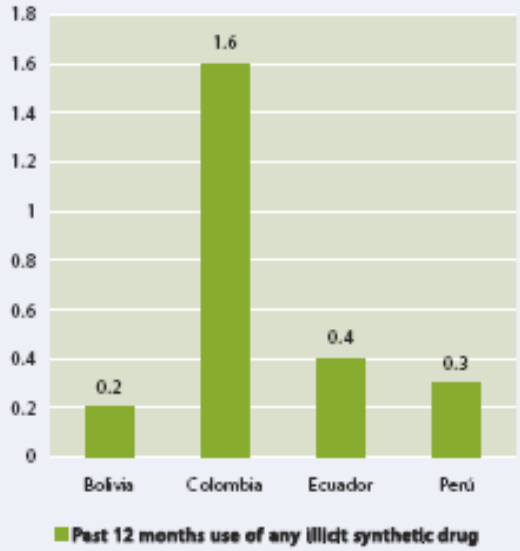
Some countries in Central America have comparatively high prevalence rates of amphetamines-group substance use, with El Salvador (3.3%), Belize (1.4%) and Costa Rica (1.3%) reporting the highest annual prevalence rates among the general population. Numerous studies carried out among various segments of general population show that the use of pharmaceutical preparations containing stimulant substances is widespread in the region. **Pag 83-85**

South America, Central America and the Caribbean: ATS seizures, 2003-2009



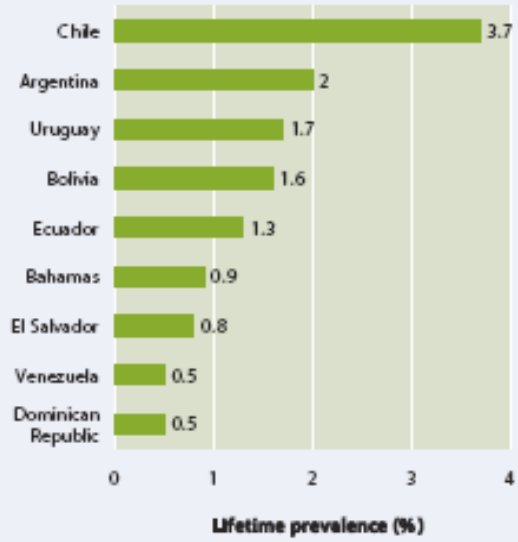
Source: UNODC ARQ/DELTA

Past 12 months use of any illicit synthetic drug among undergraduates in Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, 2009



Source: DROSICAN and EU/Andean Community, 2009

South and Central America and the Caribbean: lifetime prevalence of ecstasy use among youth, 2008 or 2009



Source: UNODC ARQ

For ecstasy use, the highest annual prevalence rate in the region was reported from **Argentina** (0.5%). Several countries in the region, for example, El Salvador, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago reported a perceived increase in ecstasy use in 2009. A recent national survey conducted among university students in **Brazil** 2009 showed an annual prevalence of 3.1%.
Pag 85

An epidemiological study on ATS use among 22,000 students from Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru carried out in 2009 showed a high rate of past 12 month use of synthetic drugs in Colombia (1.6%). The most frequently used drug in Colombia was found to be ecstasy, although use of LSD was also prevalent. **Pag 85**

Ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, the main precursors used in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine, are routinely seized in countries in Central and South America. In the Caribbean, only the Dominican Republic has been reporting seizures. Seizures of ephedrine, in particular, have shown an increasing trend. While no or insignificant seizures of ephedrine were reported in 2005 and 2006, quantities have increased significantly since then, to almost 12
tons in 2009. **Pag 85**

In 2009, **Argentinian** authorities seized a total of almost 10.5 mt of ephedrine, accounting for about 25% of global seizures. Although manufacture in **Argentina** cannot be ruled out, it is likely that the large quantity of this precursor chemical was intended for other destinations, possibly Mexico. Seizures of ephedrine destined for Mexico were also reported by **Paraguay** and **Chile** in 2009. **Chile** reported total ephedrine seizures of almost 1.2 mt in 2009.2 In July 2010, Guatemalan police reportedly seized over half a million capsules containing ephedrine close to the Honduran border. **Pag 85**
Seizures of pseudoephedrine have also been increasing since 2005, with large quantities being confiscated in Central American countries in recent years. **Pag 85**

Between the second half of 2009 and the first half of 2010, authorities in El Salvador reportedly confiscated over 42 mt of pseudoephedrine. Significant seizures were also reported from Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and the Dominican Republic. In Belize, pseudoephedrine is reportedly combined with cocaine and cannabis into packaged shipments for onward transit. In 2009, 423 kg of pseudoephedrine were seized in Belize. In addition, more than 40 mt of phenylacetic acid, a chemical used in the manufacture of methamphetamine, were reportedly seized by Belize Customs officials in 2010. **Pag 85**

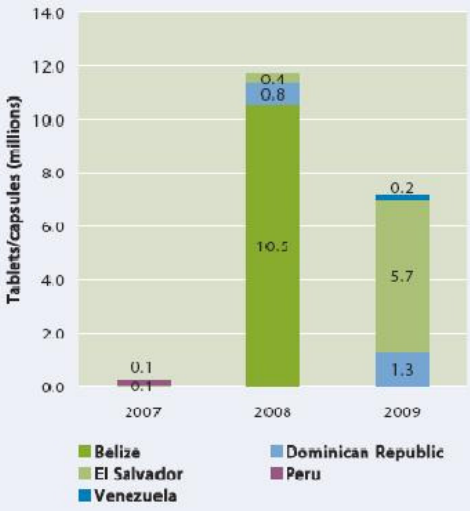
Along with Mexico, countries in Central America and the Caribbean such as Belize, the Dominican Republic and Jamaica were identified as destination countries for suspicious shipments of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine in 2009. Illicit shipments of ATS precursors have also transited Panama. European countries such as the Netherlands,

Spain, Germany and the United Kingdom are also used as transit points for precursors destined for the region. **Pag 85**

Many countries in the region have recently strengthened legislation to prohibit the import of pseudoephedrine and ephedrine in an attempt to prevent illicit ATS activity occurring on their territories. **Pag 85**

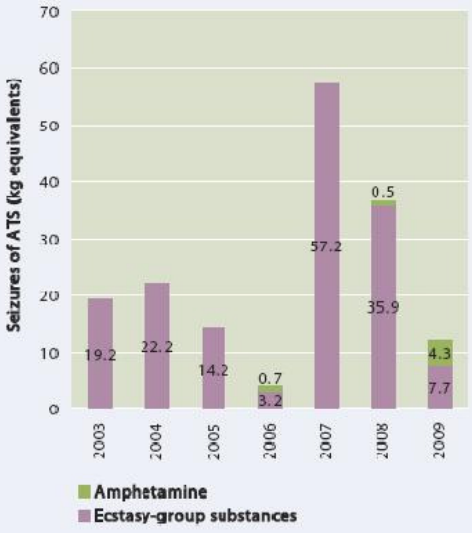
Between 2007 and 2009, several countries in the region reported seizures of pharmaceutical preparations containing pseudoephedrine (in pill and capsule form), with quantities totaling over 19 million pills or capsules. **Pag 85**

South America, Central America and the Caribbean: seizures of pharmaceutical preparations containing pseudoephedrine, 2007-2009



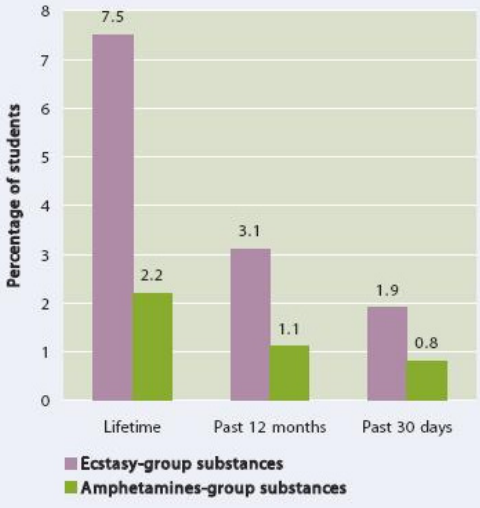
Source: OAS/CICAD/MEM, 2011

Brazil: seizures of ATS, 2003-2009



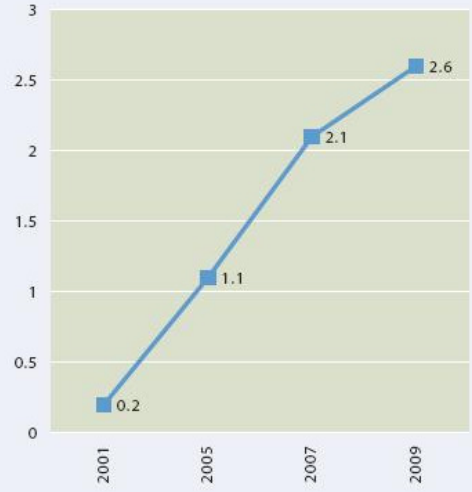
Source: UNODC ARQ/DELTA

Brazil: use of ecstasy-group substances and amphetamines-group substances among undergraduates, 2010



Source: SENAD, 2010

Argentina: trends in lifetime use of ecstasy (%) among students



Source: OAS/CICAD/MEM, 1999-2009

Norephedrine, a precursor used in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine, was reported seized in 2009 in Costa Rica, totaling 30 kg and allegedly destined for Mexico. The precursor had entered the country through Panama but its origin was unknown. **Pag 87**

South America

Brazil

Recent reports indicate that illicit ATS manufacture is taking place in **Brazil**. **Brazil**ian authorities seized ecstasy laboratories in 2008 and 2009 as well as one methamphetamine laboratory in 2009. In 2010, **Brazil** seized 2,740 ecstasy pills and 5,910 units of methamphetamine. **Pag 87**

Reports point to a continuous air passenger and cargo flow of the drugs from Europe to **Brazil**. In 2009, the Federal Police of **Brazil** reportedly dismantled a significant drug courier organization that transported cocaine to Europe and ecstasy and LSD to **Brazil**. **Pag 87**

In **Brazil**, a 2009 survey among undergraduates in the 27 state capitals in **Brazil** revealed that lifetime use of ecstasy was 7.5%, while use within the past 12 months and past 30 days was reported as 3% and 2% respectively. The same survey reported a 2% lifetime rate of amphetamines use and about 1% for use in the past 12 months and 30 days. Nearly 4% of amphetamine users were classified as being at moderate risk of drug dependence, second only to cannabis users (7.8%). **Pag 87**

Argentina

ATS seizures in **Argentina** have fluctuated over the past seven years. In 2009, seizures of ecstasy pills increased more than 10 fold, from 11,072 in 2008 to 136,550 in 2009. Methamphetamine both in powdered form as well as methamphetamine pills are seized regularly. In 2008, **Argentina** reported the seizure of one ecstasy laboratory. **Pag 87**

Chile

No illicit ATS laboratories have been reported to UNODC to date, but in 2009 **Chile** reported the seizure of one illicit laboratory manufacturing the hallucinogen mescaline. Ephedrine has been trafficked from **Chile** to Mexico for the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine. Reported seizures of ecstasy pills in **Chile** showed a decline of almost 40% from 4,153 in 2006 to 2,590 in 2008, with no seizures being reported in 2009. **Pag 87**

Trafficking trends

Trafficking routes for the precursors of ATS have become more complex. In addition to trafficking precursor chemicals in bulk, traffickers are increasingly targeting pharmaceutical preparations containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine. This is evidenced by increased seizures in Europe of pills in transit. For example, authorities in the Netherlands seized 11 million pseudoephedrine pills in transit from Viet Nam to Guatemala. Similarly, other European countries including France as well as the United Kingdom and the USA seized shipments of preparations in transit from Asian countries destined for South and Central America. **Pag 97**

Other examples of the increasing complexity of trafficking in precursors include the increasing use of masked precursors not under international control and the creation of new trafficking routes as a result of increased controls on precursors. For example, as a result of the restrictions on ephedrine and pseudoephedrine put in place by Mexican authorities in 2008 and 2009, there has been an increase in manufacturing and trafficking in countries in Central and South America. The main precursor of ecstasy-group substances, 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl-2-propanone (3,4-MDP-P-2-P), is mostly manufactured in illicit laboratories as evidenced by decreased levels of seizures in recent years. As a result, there has been increased trafficking in precursors of 3,4-MDP-P-2-P such as piperonal and safrole-rich oils and increased manufacture of ecstasy-group substances in regions of Asia where these starting materials are produced. **Pag 97**

Safrole-rich oils*

Safrole-rich oils are the main raw materials for the manufacture of safrole for commercial purposes. They are marketed worldwide in large quantities as starting materials for the fragrance and pesticide industries.

There are a number of safrole-rich plant species that constitute the starting materials for the extraction of safrole; they are found in North America, South America, East Asia and South-East Asia. Safrole can be present in their essential oils at concentration levels of more than 90%.

Safrole-rich oil tree species grow naturally and/or are cultivated for commercial purposes. To produce the oil, the trees are typically felled and the oil distilled from the timber, the root and stump. Oil yields from the distillation process typically range between 1% and 3.5%. However, many of these operations remain unregulated and as a consequence, there are not only concerns from the point of view of diversion into illicit drug manufacture, but also concerning environmental aspects, ecology systems and forestry.

A recent survey in six countries in East and South-East Asia found 361 plants that contain essential oils rich in safrole, most of which were of the *Cinnamomum* species. Other plant species rich in safrole include the North American *Sassafras albidum* (~80% safrole) and the Brazilian *Ocotea pretiosa* (~80% safrole) and *Piper hispidinervum* (~90% safrole).

The reported global licit trade of safrole-rich oils for 2009-2010 was estimated at 101,840 litres.

* Safrole-rich oils are defined as "any mixtures or natural products containing safrole present in such a way that it can be used or recovered by readily applicable means" (INCB, 2011b).