

# ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS) INTER-AMERICAN DRUG ABUSE CONTROL COMMISSION (CICAD)

## REPORT ON DRUG USE IN THE AMERICAS 2019



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# The Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission

The Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (known by its Spanish language acronym, CICAD) is the consultative and advisory body of the Organization of American States (OAS) on the drug issue.

Since its establishment in 1986, CICAD and its Executive Secretariat have responded to the ever-changing challenges of drug control by promoting regional coordination and cooperation with and among OAS member states.

The OAS Hemispheric Drug Strategy, adopted in 2010, approaches the world drug problem as a complex, dynamic and multi-causal phenomenon requiring a comprehensive, balanced, and multidisciplinary approach.


CICAD's Hemispheric Plan of Action on Drugs (2016 – 2020), a guide for the implementation of the Strategy, sets priority actions for OAS member states, placing individuals at the core of drug policies and including a cross-cutting perspective on human rights, gender, and development, with a focus on evidence-based drug policies.



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# The Inter-American Observatory on Drugs



**Inter-American  
Observatory on  
Drugs (OID)**

The Inter-American Observatory on Drugs (known by its Spanish language acronym, OID) is CICAD's research unit, providing support to OAS member states in the collection and analysis of data on the drug problem so that they can design more effective drug policies.



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# The Inter-American Observatory on Drugs

## LINES OF ACTION

- Prepares and publishes reports on drug use in the Americas and supports national surveys and publications.
- Develops and disseminates standardized protocols for the collection of data and the implementation of drug-related studies.
- Promotes strong national drug observatories that use standardized data collection methods.
- Supports the establishment of drug information networks and early warning systems to improve drug-related data collection, analysis, and dissemination.



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# Report on Drug Use in the Americas 2019

The Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) published the **Report on Drug Use in the Americas 2019** in March, 2019.

The report provides an overview of drug use across the Hemisphere based on data submitted by 33 OAS member states.



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# Report on Drug Use in the Americas 2019

*“The Report represents robust collaboration with OAS member states on data collection methodology, and careful analysis by CICAD experts. This document provides a snapshot of key indicators of drug consumption across the Americas, as well as unique, valuable information on trends that will assist in the design and implementation of more effective drug policies.”*

**CICAD Executive Secretary Adam E. Namm**



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# Report on Drug Use in the Americas 2019

## Four main areas relevant to hemispheric drug policy

- Trends in drug use
- Early onset of drug use
- Use by sex
- New challenges



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# Report on Drug Use in the Americas 2019

## Key findings and recommendations



### Early onset of drug use

- Drug use is appearing at young ages, in many countries as young as the eighth grade.
- The younger people begin using drugs, the greater the health risks and other consequences.
- Prevention programs and interventions that can delay the age when someone first uses drugs should be accorded high priority.



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# Report on Drug Use in the Americas 2019

## Drug Use Trends



Cannabis use among secondary school students is increasing in most countries that have trend data.



Cannabis use in the general population is increasing in most countries that have trend data.



Tobacco is the only substance that is showing systematic decreases in use over time in the general population.



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# Report on Drug Use in the Americas 2019

## Drug Use Trends



About half of the countries show increases in cocaine use in the general population.



Cocaine shows more variability in secondary school students: increases, decreases, and plateaus in different countries.



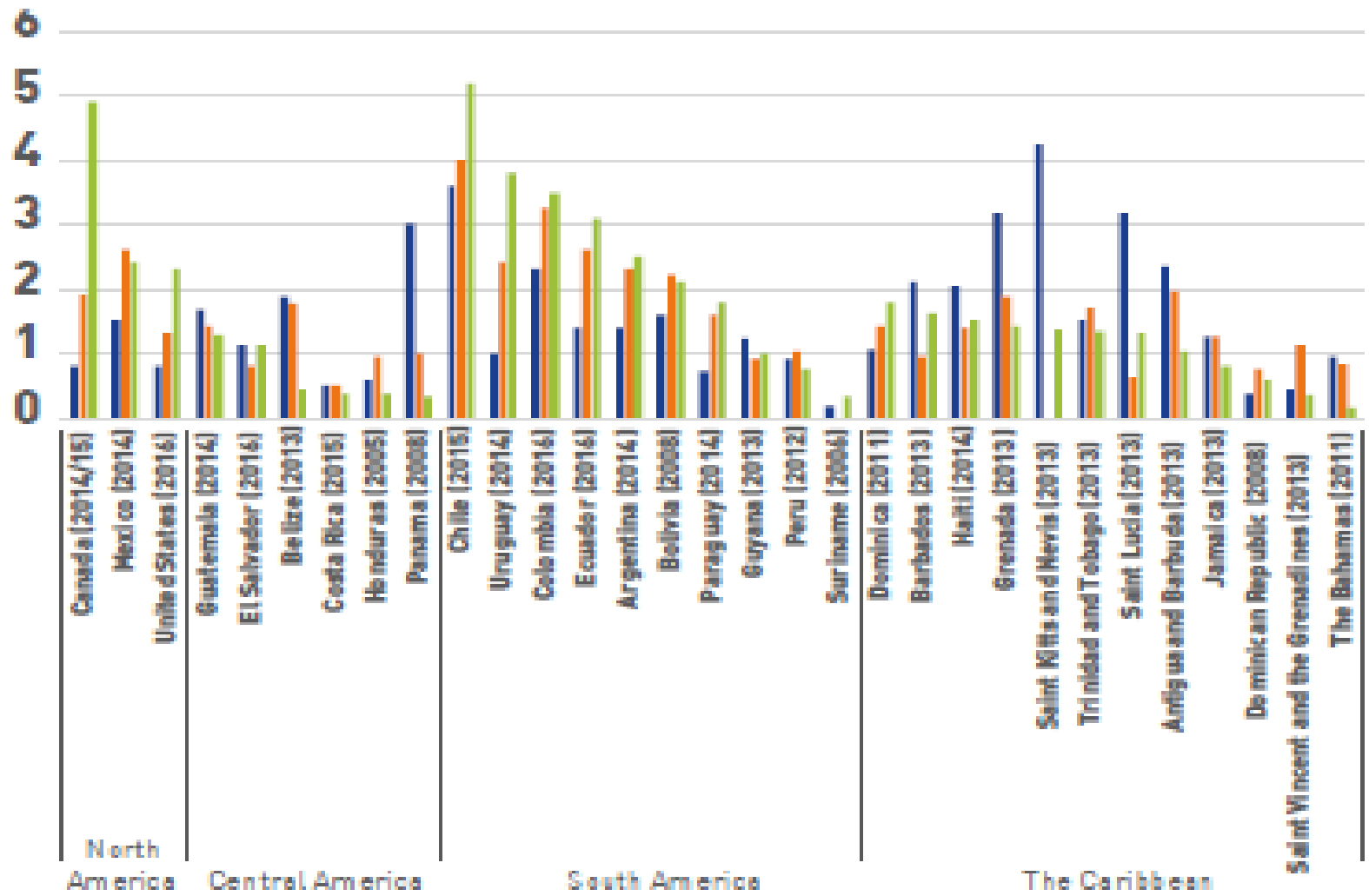
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# Early use

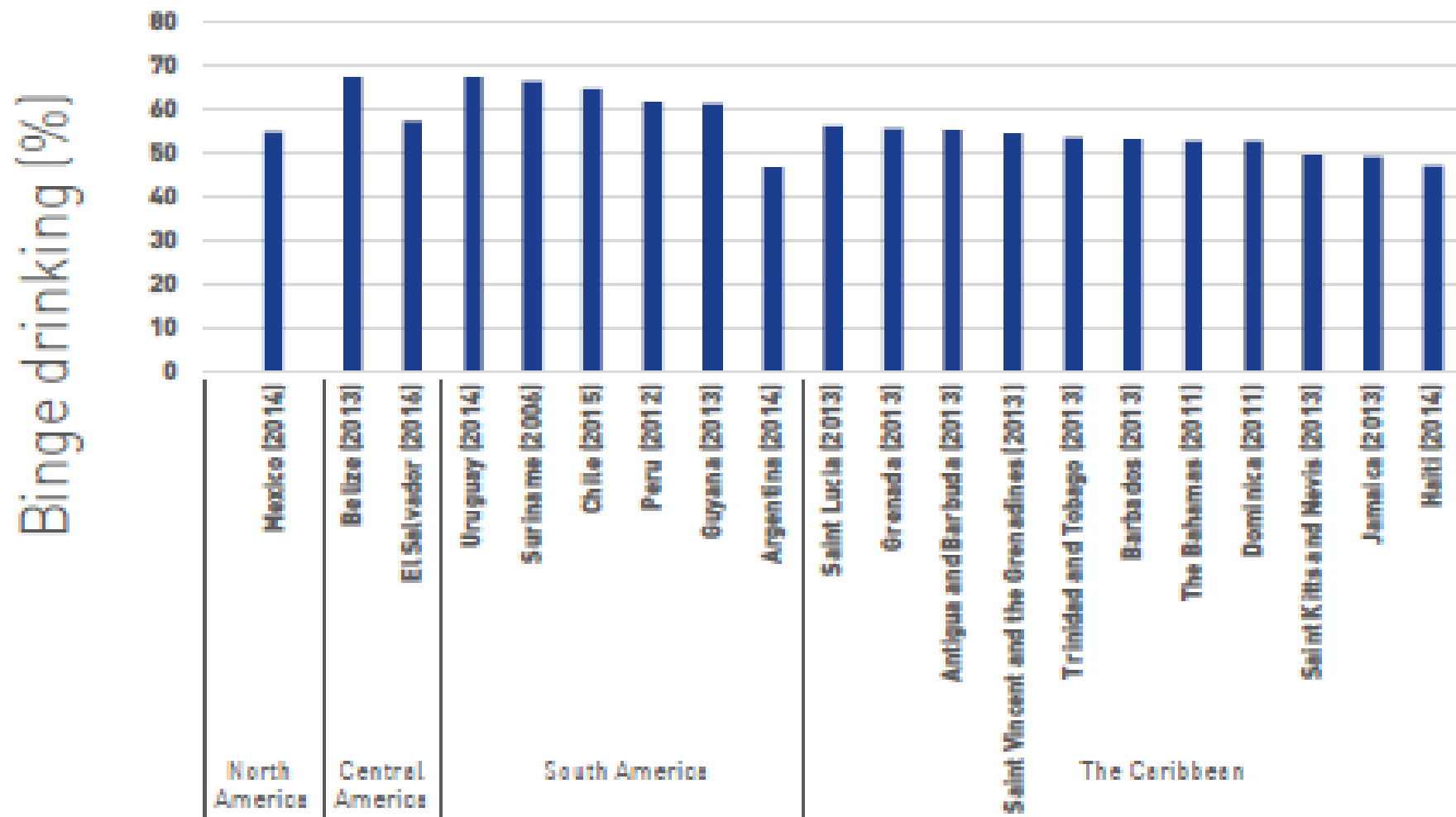
## Past year prevalence of cocaine use among secondary school students, by grade and by country and subregion

Past year prevalence (%)



## Early use

Percentage of secondary school students who engaged in binge drinking, out of all students who drank alcohol in the past month, by country, sorted by subregion



# Report on Drug Use in the Americas 2019

## Changes in use by sex

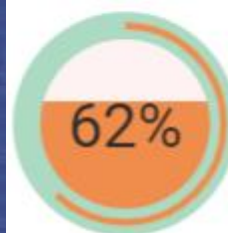
- Drug use has historically been seen as a male phenomenon, but recent data show that females in some countries are now using certain drugs either at the same, or at higher rates, than males.
- Misuse of tranquilizer pharmaceuticals is higher among females in every population in nearly every country.



Tranquilizers



Proportion of countries with **past year prevalence** higher among women



General Population



Secondary school students



University Students



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## New Challenges for Drug Policy

The prevalence of new psychoactive substances (NPS), opioids, and benzodiazepines presents new challenges for drug treatment and public health.

The United States and Canada are experiencing serious epidemics of opioids and NPS, resulting in some of the highest overdose rates in the history of drug use.

High-risk behaviors associated with alcohol, such as early initiation of use and binge drinking, are a concern across the region.

Changes in the legal and regulatory status of marijuana have continued unabated throughout the Hemisphere and the decriminalization of marijuana for recreational or medicinal purposes has led to increased access for adults.



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For more information or to  
download the full report go to:

[www.cicad.oas.org](http://www.cicad.oas.org)



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