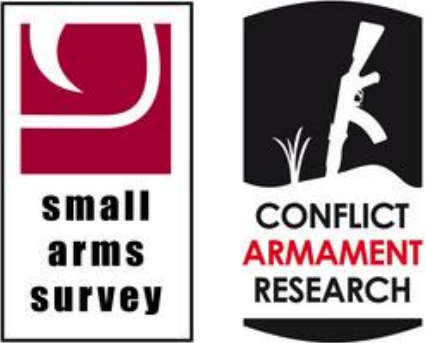


Regional profiles of illicit small-calibre ammunition (2015-2021)



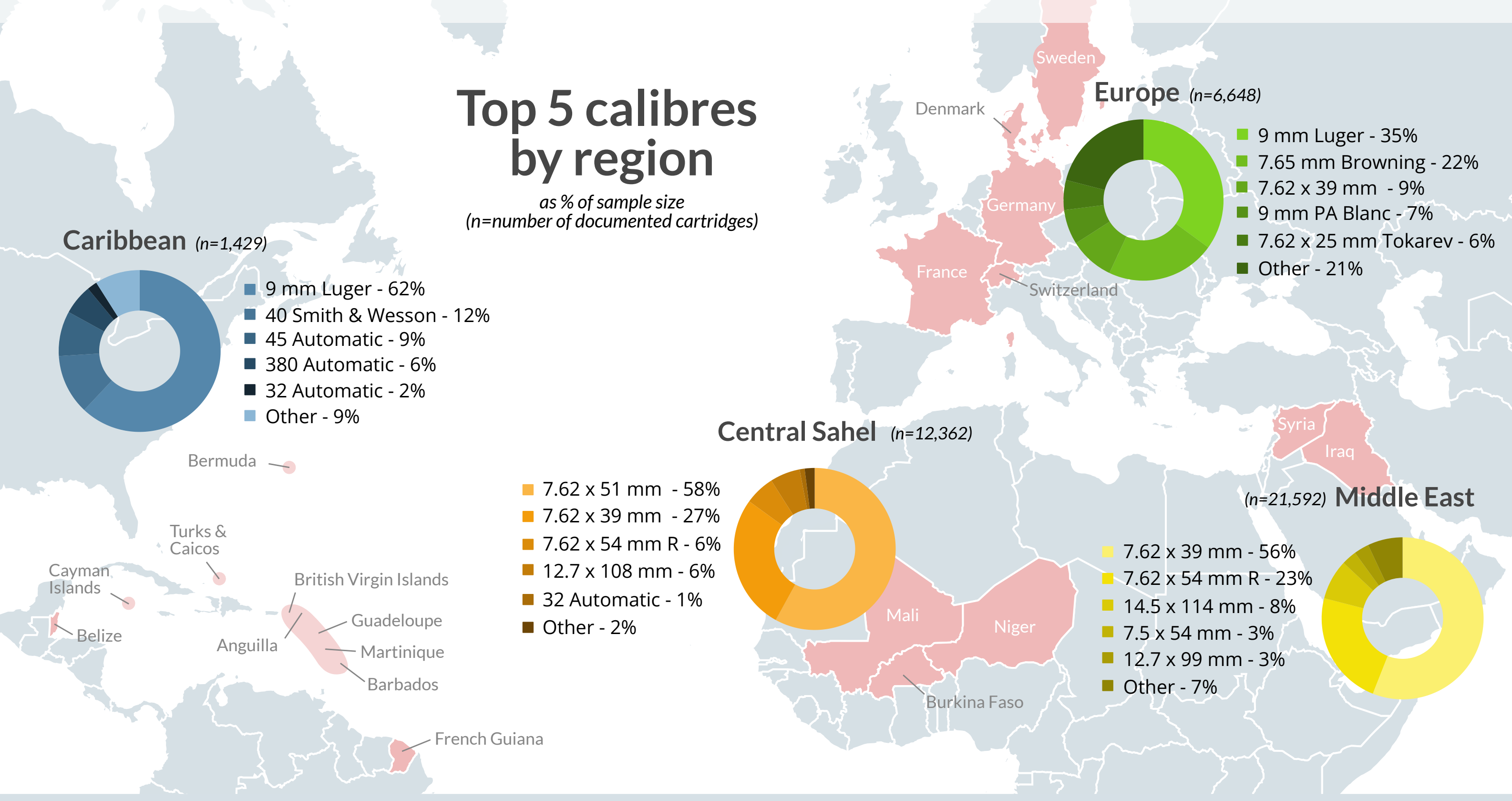
Under the [Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management](#), States committed to enhance the marking and tracing of conventional ammunition under national ownership and control (Objective 11), including by applying markings such as the manufacturer, the calibre or type, the year of production and the lot number.

States, international organizations, and civil society can collect data on the markings observed on recovered illicit ammunition to:

- monitor the implementation of the Framework's commitments and measures related to marking (Objective 11);
- foster voluntary information-sharing on subregional, regional and international trends in ammunition diversion and illicit trafficking (Objective 12).

National authorities and investigative bodies can use this data to identify leads for investigating suspected cases of ammunition trafficking and diversion (Objective 13).

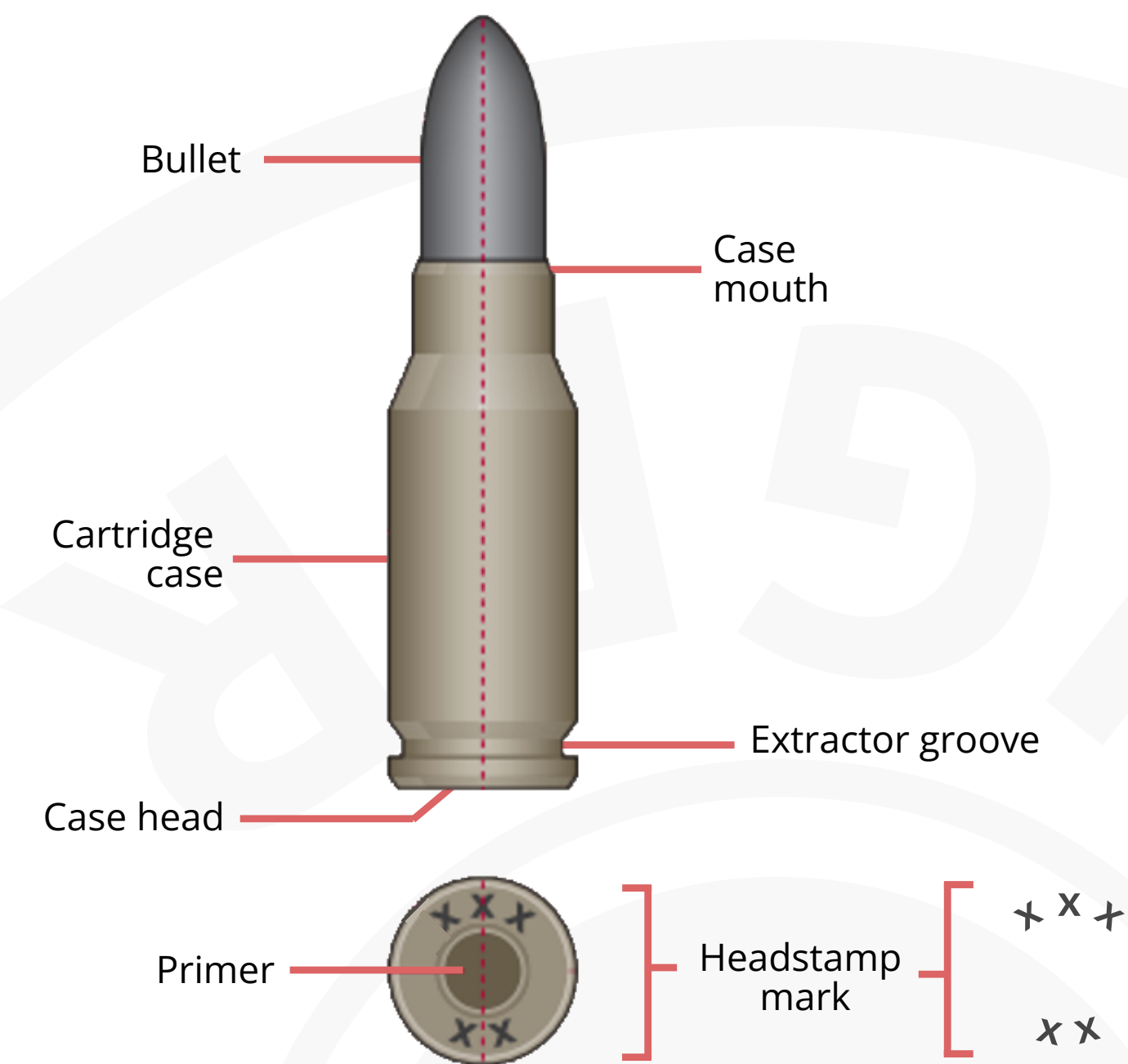
For this infographic, the [Small Arms Survey](#) and [Conflict Armament Research \(CAR\)](#) analysed multi-year data on markings observed on seized illicit small-calibre ammunition in a combined 20 countries and territories in the context of crime (in the Caribbean and Europe) and conflict (in the Central Sahel and Middle East).



Notes on the data

	Caribbean (2016-21)	Europe (2015-21)	Central Sahel (2015-21)	Middle East (2015-21)
Sample size (number of documented cartridges)	1,429	6,648	12,362	21,592
Countries and territories where the illicit ammunition was documented	Anguilla, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Turks and Caicos	Denmark, France, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland	Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger	Iraq, Syria
Context of illicit ammunition	Spent cartridges recovered at the scenes of violent crime (homicides, assaults, and attempted homicides)	Spent cartridges recovered at crime scenes (primarily homicides and assaults)	Ammunition recovered from four armed groups that claim allegiance to Al-Qaeda or Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh)	Ammunition recovered from Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh)
Sources	Small Arms Survey and CARICOM IMPACS, 2023	Small Arms Survey and Flemish Peace Institute, 2023; Small Arms Survey, ESC-UNIL, and Arquebus Solutions, 2022	Conflict Armament Research, 2022; Conflict Armament Research, 2024a	Conflict Armament Research, 2017; Conflict Armament Research, 2024b

Basic components of a small-calibre cartridge



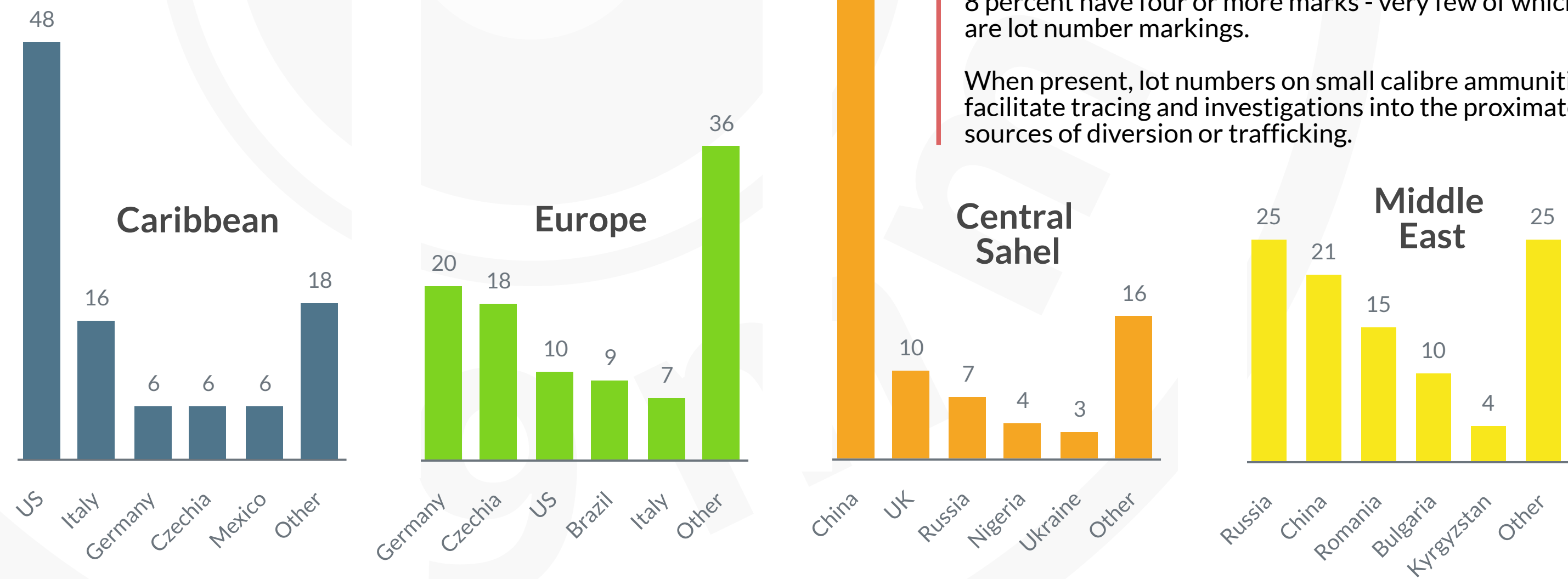
Headstamp marking practices



Source of images: CAR

Source: Small Arms Survey

Top five identified countries of manufacture of recovered illicit small-calibre ammunition, by region (in percentages)



The main calibres (see page 1) and countries of production (below) of seized ammunition vary across settings and over time, pointing to contextual and temporal specificities in how illicit ammunition is diverted, trafficked, or sourced.

CAR has documented more than 2,000 unique small-calibre headstamps between 2011 and 2024. Less than 8 percent have four or more marks - very few of which are lot number markings.

When present, lot numbers on small calibre ammunition facilitate tracing and investigations into the proximate sources of diversion or trafficking.

Year of manufacture marks on recovered illicit small-calibre ammunition, by region

	Caribbean	Europe	Central Sahel	Middle East
% of cartridges marked with the year of production	11 %	29 %	91 %	96 %
Shortest time from production to seizure or crime, in years	1 year	0 (same year)	1 year	0 (same year)

The year of production is rarely marked on cartridges used in crime in the Caribbean and Europe. Across regions, ammunition can be seized or misused very quickly after production, sometimes the very same year. A focus on seized ammunition with a short 'time to crime' can provide leads for investigating the diversion of ammunition, as the supply chain is likely to be smaller.

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