



Market Update 2024.

# Argentina, an ideal destination to develop Clinical Trials.

Cámara Argentina de Organizaciones de Investigación Clínica (Argentine Chamber of Clinical Research Organizations).

**07-07-2024**

## Introduction.

In a global context where clinical research needs resources to support the speed of the sector's growth, Argentina has become from a promising destination to an outstanding player in terms of quality, resources, infrastructure and talent.

This article analyzes and details the reasons why Argentina is positioned as one of the leading options to conduct clinical trials.

## Infrastructure and Quality Professionals in the Health Sector.

According to official data from the Ministry of Health of Argentina and the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) published in the Basic Indicators 2023<sup>1</sup> report, Argentina has 3,621 health care centers with inpatient capacity and 30,063 health care centers without inpatient capacity. The same report shows that the country has 186,137 physicians.

In addition to its healthcare infrastructure, the country has nearly 6,500 clinical laboratories<sup>2</sup> to support the mixed healthcare system.

Argentina is ranked #20 in the "Medical Tourism Index 2020 -2021"<sup>3</sup>, the latest edition at the time of this report in July 2024. The importance of this index for this report is based on three key factors for its preparation: The environmental issues of the destination, the medical tourism industry, and the quality of facilities and services, the latter being of vital relevance for this report.

In addition to the first-rate medical infrastructure that supports clinical studies, Argentina has additional resources and advantages to carry out quality clinical trials, such as the presence of CROs with global, regional and local reach, research organizations and highly qualified personnel in various related areas.

## Presence and availability of CROs (Clinical Research Organizations) in Argentina.

Argentina has a strong presence of contract clinical research organizations known as Clinical Research Organizations (CROs), companies specialized in the management and execution of clinical studies, contracted by the sponsor to perform one or more of its functions or activities related to the clinical study.

CROs offer comprehensive services ranging from study design and planning to clinical trial coordination at national and international level. The availability of this type of organization in Argentina

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<sup>1</sup> [https://iris.paho.org/bitstream/handle/10665.2/59380/indicadores\\_basicos.pdf](https://iris.paho.org/bitstream/handle/10665.2/59380/indicadores_basicos.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.trade.gov/market-intelligence/argentina-clinical-laboratory>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.medicaltourism.com/mti/home>

## Argentina, un destino ideal para el desarrollo de Ensayos Clínicos.



provides researchers and sponsors with access to specialized and additional resources to ensure the success of their projects.

According to the industry report "Clinical Research in Argentina 2023"<sup>4</sup> presented by the Argentine Chamber of Clinical Research Organizations (CAOIC 2023), Argentina has more than 3,500 clinical research professionals employed by the 19 companies that make up CAOIC.

The country has a large number of international and local CROs such as: Fortrea, ICON, IQVIA, LAT Research, Medpace, Nuvisan, Parexel, PPD, PSI, Research & Development, Syneos Health, Worldwide Clinical Trial and Zenter Research, among others.

## Population, Patients and Pathologies.

With more than 46 million inhabitants<sup>5</sup>, Argentina has an ethnic, socioeconomic and geographic diversity, offering a unique advantage for clinical research. This diversity presents an advantage when it comes to making representative samples and address a wide variety of pathologies, allowing access to patients and volunteers who are able to participate in clinical trials, which facilitates efficient recruitment and study conduct.

According to the industry report "Clinical Research in Argentina 2023"<sup>6</sup>, *"The therapeutic areas in which clinical studies are conducted in Argentina have diversified enormously: oncology, immunology, infectious diseases, respiratory system, central nervous system, cardiovascular system, ophthalmology, digestive system, genitourinary system, metabolism, dermatology, rare diseases, among others."*

## Transparent Regulatory Framework and Efficient Supervisory Bodies.

In Argentina, "ANMAT is the agency in charge of the authorization and control of experimental clinical research on drugs, food and medical products, and the development of the regulations governing the research activity."<sup>7</sup>

ANMAT supervises and regulates all aspects related to the conduct of clinical trials<sup>8</sup>, ensuring compliance with the highest ethical and safety standards. These clinical trials cover their different phases.

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4 Industry Report: Clinical Research in Argentina 2023 - Argentine Chamber of Clinical Research Organizations ([caoic.org.ar](http://caoic.org.ar))

5 <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/pais/poblacion>

6 Industry Report: Clinical Research in Argentina 2023 - Argentine Chamber of Clinical Research Organizations ([caoic.org.ar](http://caoic.org.ar))

7 <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/anmat/regulados/investigaciones-clinicas-farmacologicas/normativa>

8 <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/anmat/regulados/investigaciones-clinicas-farmacologicas/normativa>

Regarding approval times, according to the industry report "Clinical Research in Argentina 2023"<sup>9</sup>, in recent years, measures have been implemented to speed up the processes of evaluation and approval of clinical trial protocols by the Regulatory Agency, from 137 days in 2017 to 65 days in 2022, and even 36 days in COVID-related trials during the pandemic.

### Data confirming growth

Approval data for clinical pharmacology studies, provided by statistics from the National Administration of Medicines, Food and and Medical Technology (ANMAT)<sup>10</sup> show a 20% growth (2023 vs. 2022) and by 40% comparing 2019 to 2023, reaching 269 approvals in the latter year.

According to data from the report of indicators for "Research and Development in Argentina 2022"<sup>11</sup>, published in December 2023, investment in clinical research accounted for 42.5% of business investment in R&D in 2022.

The investment in the sector grew 130% in 5 years and the number of experts dedicated to the sector doubled over the same period.<sup>12</sup>

For more than 17 years CAOIC, together with several CROs and companies involved in clinical research, have been promoting the development of the activity and the training of new specialized human resources for the sector.

*On the other hand, "CAOIC and CAEME seek to constantly increase the level of federalization of the activity, through different initiatives, reaching different corners of Argentina, so that the benefits it generates have an impact on the entire population of the country. To achieve this goal, CAOIC and CAEME have collaborated in the drafting of the Clinical Research Law of the Province of Buenos Aires; in CABA and PBA, they are working to add public hospitals as research sites; and in Cordoba and Mendoza, they are seeking to expand the number of clinical trials carried out there (CAOIC 2023). Currently, investment in R&D for contracting health institutions reaches 20 jurisdictions in Argentina: CABA, Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Santa Fe, Tucumán, Mendoza, San Juan, Rio Negro, La Rioja, Corrientes, Salta, Neuquén, Jujuy, Santiago del Estero, La Pampa, Entre Rios, Formosa, San Luís and Misiones."*<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Industry Report: Clinical Research in Argentina 2023 - Argentine Chamber of Clinical Research Organizations (caoic.org.ar)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/anmat/regulados/base-de-datos-estudios-de-farmacologia-clinica>

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.argentina.gob.ar/sites/default/files/informe\\_indicadores\\_2022.pdf](https://www.argentina.gob.ar/sites/default/files/informe_indicadores_2022.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.infobae.com/salud/ciencia/2023/04/06/argentina-se-posiciona-como-lider-en-investigacion-clinica-y-duplica-la-cantidad-de-expertos-en-5-anos/>

<sup>13</sup> Industry Report: Clinical Research in Argentina 2023 - Argentine Chamber of Clinical Research Organizations (caoic.org.ar)

## Scenario with encouraging signs for business

Despite its recent economic history and inflationary rate, Argentina has always provided a friendly environment for business related to services and technology, leveraged on its quality, professionals and regulations such as the regime for the promotion of the knowledge economy<sup>14</sup>. This scenario allowed for the growth of clinical research in the country and, at the same time, Argentina reached the second place in the region in the number of Unicorns<sup>15</sup>.

After the inauguration of the new president in December 2023, a path of deregulation of the economy and foreign trade in order to *"better align Argentina with international standards, particularly those related to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and to promote changes that facilitate foreign trade transactions, the opening of imports, and the reform of customs procedures."*<sup>16</sup>

In the framework for the import of products intended for the diagnosis and treatment of human health, these products are covered by tax benefits and exemptions.<sup>17</sup>

## Conclusion

In conclusion, in recent years, Argentina has shown a growth that has placed it among the leaders in the region in terms of the number of clinical trials leveraged on its infrastructure, expertise and investment in clinical research.

The major players in the sector have offices and qualified personnel in the country, which positions it as a privileged destination for the activity.

Thus, Argentina proves to be an ideal country for the development of clinical research offering an outstanding combination of infrastructure, qualified professionals, presence of CROs, a transparent regulatory framework, patient diversity, policies that foster industry and the knowledge economy, together with a favorable business scenario forecast.

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<sup>14</sup> <https://portal.produccion.gob.ar/inclusion-y-desarrollo-laboral/regimen-de-promocion-de-la-economia-del-conocimiento>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.forbesargentina.com/negocios/unicornios-america-latina-oportunidades-desafios-mercado-evolucion-n35221>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.trade.gov/market-intelligence/argentina-economy-and-foreign-trade-deregulation>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.argentina.gob.ar/acceder-la-excencion-de-pago-de-productos-de-salud-importados>