

Research based on data from 2021



Social  
Innovation  
Monitor



# REPORT ON INCUBATORS AND ACCELERATORS IN ARGENTINA



This report is part of the Essentials Project that has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 101031632



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# 1

# Description of this Report

REPORT ON INCUBATORS/  
ACCELERATORS IN ARGENTINA





# Description of this Report on incubators/accelerators in ARGENTINA

This is a report on incubators/accelerators in Argentina.

It has been prepared as part of the Essentials Project that has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 101031632.

Researchers and Professors from the Social Innovation Monitor (SIM), University of Calabria, TechNext, Politecnico di Torino, Social Innovation Teams (SIT), Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, Programa Universitario de Incubación Social (PUIS), and University College Dublin have worked on this Report.

This **Report** is available free of charge.

More information about the EU-funded ESSENTIALS project are available at: <https://www.essentialproject.eu/>

This Report reflects only the authors' views and opinions, neither the European Union nor the European Commission can be considered responsible for them.



# 2

REPORT ON INCUBATORS/  
ACCELERATORS IN ARGENTINA

# Introduction





# Introduction

In recent years, the importance of entrepreneurship has been more and more acknowledged as a means of addressing the new economic, social, and environmental challenges (Zahra and Wright, 2016). As a result, efforts to support entrepreneurial activities are growing (Aernoudt, 2004; Mian et al., 2016; Bergman and McMullen, 2021).

An important area for the development of entrepreneurship is that of incubation/acceleration activities (Gonzalez-Uribe and Leatherbee, 2017). Incubators and accelerators are growing and evolving (Bruneel et al., 2012; Mian et al., 2016), especially after the introduction of new business models and a more marked attention to social and environmental impact of ventures (Sansone et al., 2020).

Due to the significant role of incubators/accelerators, universities and large corporations have begun establishing their own (Lasrado et al., 2016; Shankar and Shepherd, 2019).

In order to monitor these activities, with Social Innovation Monitor (SIM), University of Calabria, TechNext, Politecnico di Torino, Social Innovation Teams (SIT), Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, Programa Universitario de Incubación Social (PUIS), and University College Dublin, we developed this Report on incubators and accelerators in Argentina for the Essentials Project that has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 101031632.

The main objective of this work is to analyse the incubation/acceleration system in Argentina.



# 3

REPORT ON INCUBATORS/  
ACCELERATORS IN ARGENTINA

# The research





# Index of the analyses

## Geographical distribution of incubators/accelerators

- Density of incubators/accelerators in Argentina
- Legal nature and the different types of incubators/accelerators
- Year of foundation and number of employees of incubators/accelerators in Argentina
- Access to incubation/acceleration programs

## Analysis of services provided and structure of incubators/accelerators

- Overview of the services provided by different incubation/acceleration programs
- Average time of incubation/acceleration and sector of specialization
- Overview of the incubators/accelerators' revenues and costs



# 3.1

# Methodology

REPORT ON INCUBATORS/  
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# Data overview

In order to understand the evolution and the features of incubators/accelerators in Argentina, the research was divided into four steps:

1. Creation of an exhaustive list of incubators/accelerators in Argentina and collection of data from different resources.
2. Creation and dissemination of a survey among incubators/accelerators between November 2022 and April 2023, regarding incubation/acceleration activities in 2021.
3. Analyses and integration of the collected data through other data sources.
4. Drafting this report.

Due to the COVID pandemic, some incubators had suspended their activities in 2021 and, therefore, were not included.

## Main Database used

- SIM 2022 database on incubators: data obtained from questionnaires sent to incubators/accelerators.

Throughout the report, the statistical distribution will be reported and not just the mean and the median in order to note the heterogeneity of the results. Indeed, incubators/accelerators show significant differences and variability in terms of many parameters.

Each slide presents the reference number for the analyses shown in the reference slide.



# Main definitions (1 of 2)

**Incubator\***: organisation that actively supports the process of creating and developing new innovative businesses through a series of services and resources offered either directly or through a network of partners (Aernoudt, 2004; Sansone et al., 2020).

Incubators offering multiple incubation programs have been counted once, as the dominance in controlling various incubation programs is held by the same entity. For instance, an incubator offering multiple incubation programs in different places has been counted once, as the dominance in controlling various incubation programs is held by the same incubator.

The following have not been considered incubators:

- programs focusing exclusively on entrepreneurial education, as the ones offered by university professors in the areas of academic activities. They have not been considered as an incubator since their aim is mainly educational and not of launch/support of new enterprises.
- prizes/calls for startups that do not entail incubation programs for participants and the ones in which incubation programs are totally outsourced, that means that are part of the analysed incubators. For instance, if a company or a municipality or another organisation launches a prize/call for startups which includes an incubation program managed autonomously by an incubator X, in this research is considered the incubator X (which may also have other incubation programs) and not the company, municipality or other organisation that has launched the call.
- organizations that create new ventures, also known as Venture Studios or Startup Studios (Sansone et al., 2023), because they do not aim to support the creation and develop of new ventures but instead aim to create and develop them directly.

\*Some reports and scientific papers prefer to use the terms “incubator” and “accelerator” as synonyms, while others consider the two concepts as being distinct from each other. The main differences between an accelerator and an incubator are that the latter focuses more on providing office space and in-house support and its incubation time is longer (Bruneel et al., 2012; Pauwels et al., 2016). Moreover, in accelerators, tenants start their programs together, while they do not do so in incubators (Cohen et al., 2019; Hallen et al., 2020). However, since accelerators have the same aim as incubators (Mian et al., 2016) and the differences are not always straightforward (Sansone et al., 2020), in this work the term incubator also includes accelerators.



# Main definitions (2 of 2)

**University incubator:** an incubator is defined as “University incubator”, specifically “University incubator of the university X”, if the university X has a dominant position in the control of that incubator.

A university has a dominant position in the control of the incubator when:

- the university holds more than 50% of the incubator’s equity, or
- the university holds the majority of votes in shareholder meetings, also through proxies and agreements, or
- the university controls directly or indirectly the Board of Directors of the incubator, or
- the university chooses the president of the incubator.

University incubators hold an important role concerning activities of technology transfer and development of innovation and entrepreneurship for students, employees (student and academic entrepreneurship), and the whole university entrepreneurial ecosystem, central for the so-called third mission of universities (Metz et al., 2022).

**Organisations with significant social or environmental impact:** organisations that introduce social innovation, meaning «a novel solution to a social problem that is more effective, efficient, sustainable, or just than existing solutions and for which the value created accrues primarily to society as a whole rather than private individuals» (Phills et al., 2008; Polychronopoulos et al., 2024).

Examples of organisations with significant social or environmental impact are the Benefit Corporation (B Corp) and the Startup Innovative a Vocazione Sociale (SlaVS) in Italy.



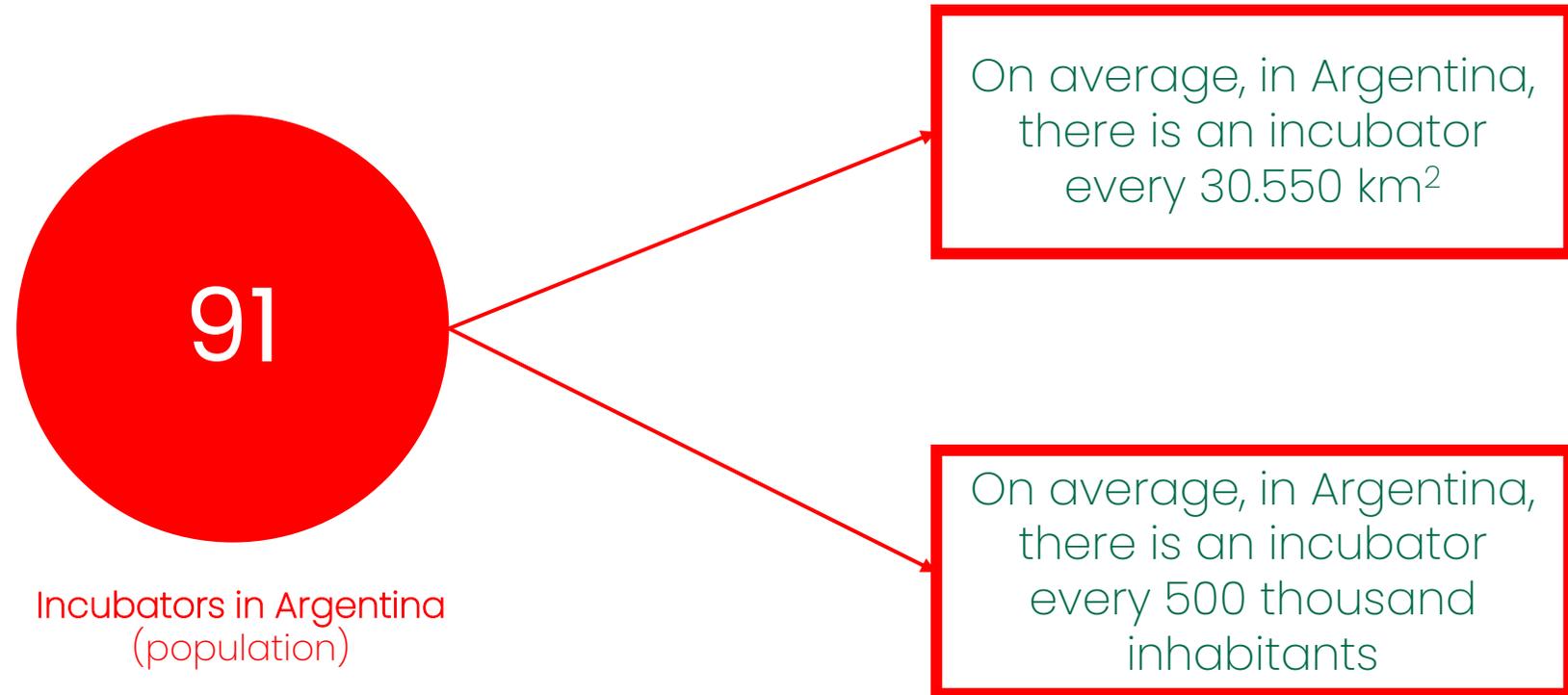
# 3.2

## Geographical distribution of incubators/accelerators

REPORT ON INCUBATORS/  
ACCELERATORS IN ARGENTINA



# Density of incubators

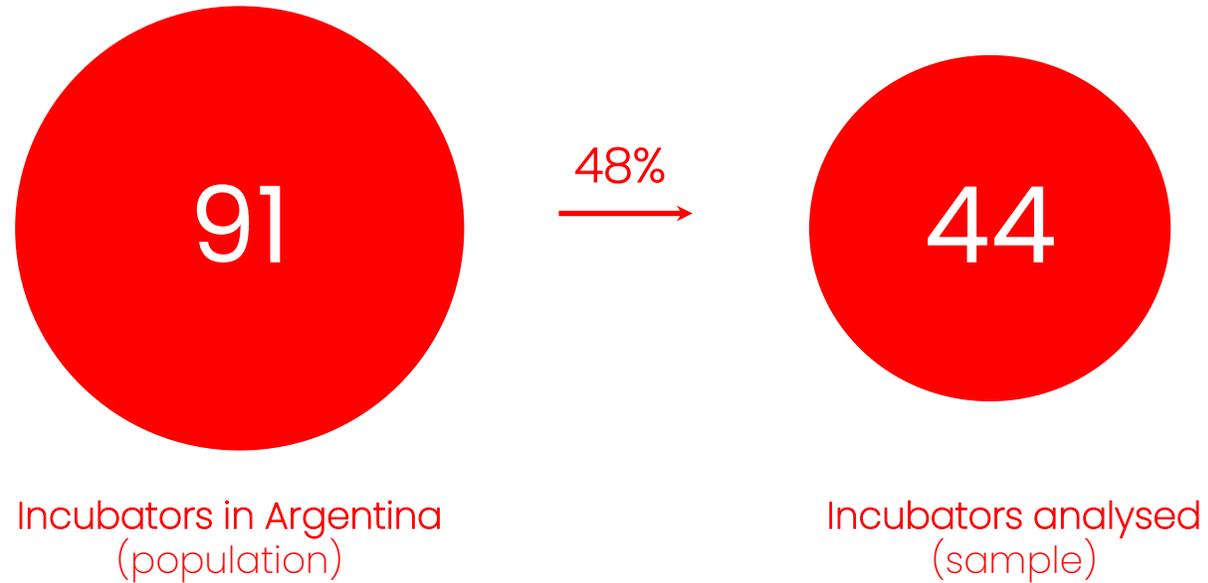


The term incubators is used to refer to both accelerators and incubators (see 3.1 Methodology).

Total area of Continental americana of Argentina: 2.780.085 km<sup>2</sup> (as per Estadístico de la República Argentina data in 2021)

Total inhabitants in Argentina: 45.810.000 (2021 data)

# Sample analysis

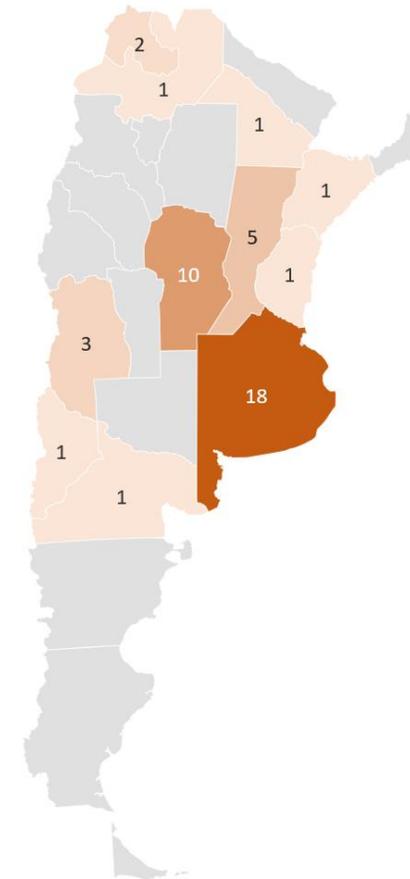




# Geographical distribution of incubators

Sample  
Geographical distribution of the 44 incubators

Region	% population	% sample
Northwest	5,50%	6,82%
Northeast	3,30%	4,55%
Cuyo	8,79%	6,82%
Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires (AMBA)	41,76%	36,36%
Pampeana	36,26%	40,90%
Patagonia	4,39%	4,55%



The sample considered is representative in terms of geographical distribution.

AMBA and Pampeana regions are the regions where most incubators are located.

Npopulation = 91  
Nsample = 44



# Legal nature and affiliation of incubators

Legal nature	Sample	Sample %
Public	18	40,9%
Public-Private	11	25,0%
Private	15	34,1%

**Public incubators:** incubators managed by public administrations.

**Private incubators:** incubators managed by private actors.

**Public-Private incubators:** incubators managed by public and private actors.

In the sample there are 17 university incubators (38,6% of the sample).

Nsample = 44



# Types of incubators



In collaboration with a specialised committee, the SIM team developed the following classification of incubators' types.

This classification was developed in order to understand if and how much incubators are supporting organisations delivering social or environmental impact\*.

This classification, developed by Sansone et al, (2020), allows to analyse the phenomenon of social incubators.

The following classification has been applied based on the tenants:

- **Business incubators:** incubators that do not support startups that have the aim of introducing a positive social or environmental impact.
- **Mixed incubators:** Incubators in which between 1% and 50% of their supported startups aim to achieve a positive social or environmental impact.
- **Social incubators:** Incubators in which over 50% of their supported startups aim to achieve a positive social or environmental impact.

\*For the definition of these organisations with significant social or environmental impact see 3.1 Methodology.



# Types of incubators in the sample

	N°	%
Business incubator	10	23%
Mixed incubator	23	52%
Social incubator	11	25%

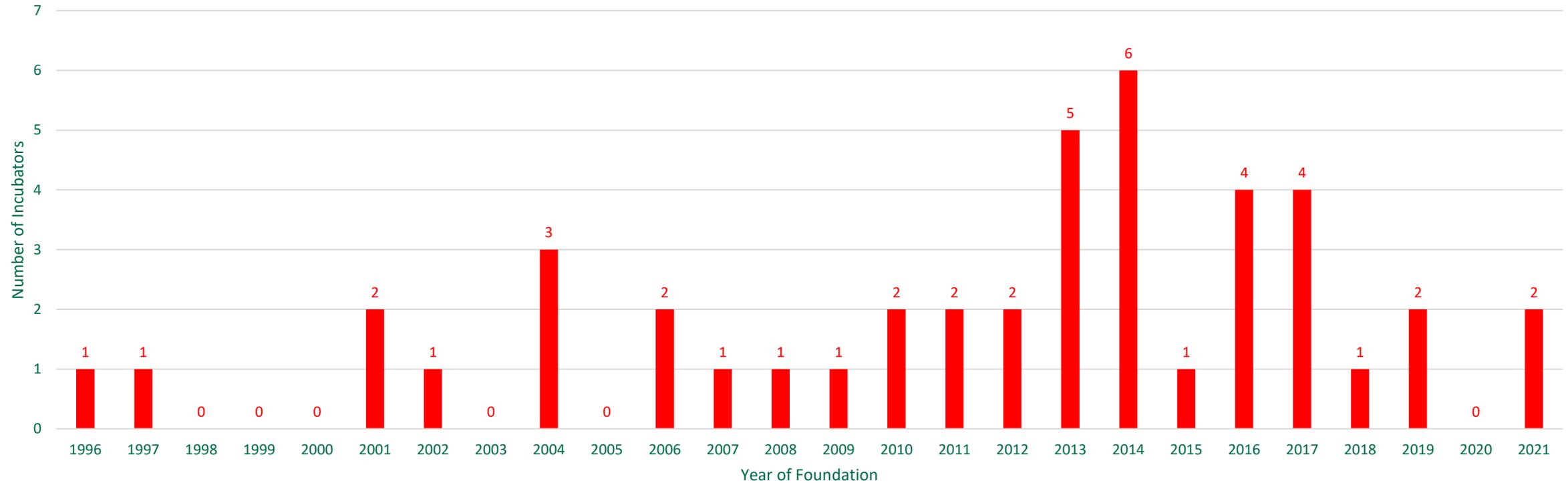
77% of the sample of incubators is supporting organisations that have the aim of introducing a positive social or environmental impact. It underlines the important growth of social startups and consequently the remarkable interest of incubation/acceleration activities to support their development.

Nsample = 44





# Year of foundation



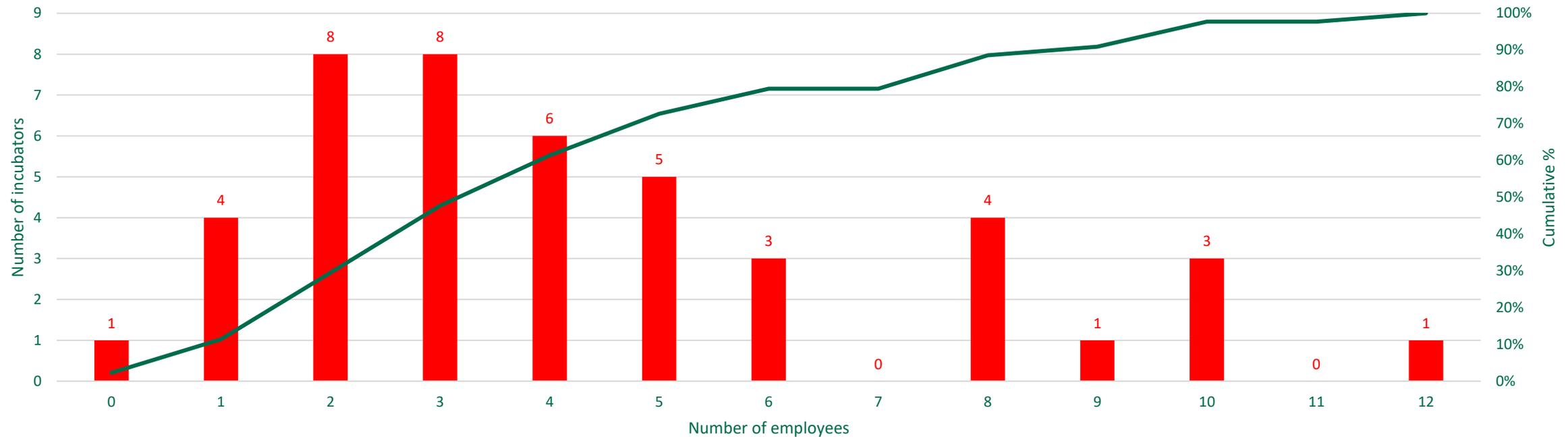
**Key Peaks:** Our sample shows the highest number of incubators founded in a single year to be 5 in 2013 and 6 in 2014, indicating a significant interest in incubators during these years.

Nsample = 44





# Incubators – Number of employees



The incubators in the sample can be considered medium to small size in terms of employees\*.

Only 1 incubator among all the respondents have more than 10 employees.

Mean = 4,4

Median = 4

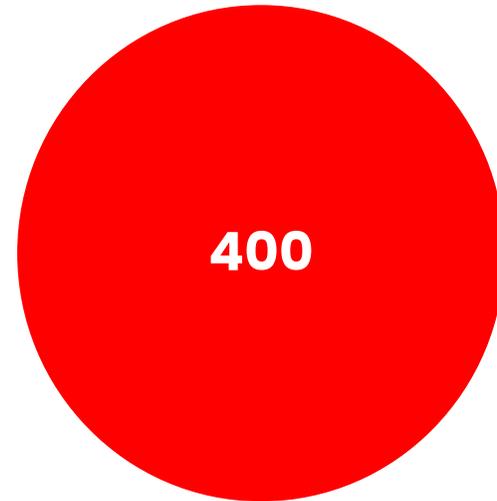
Total employees (in sample) = 194

\*The question in the questionnaire asked for the number of employees Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) in reference to incubation/acceleration activities only. Note that in the questionnaire, by “employees” we mean those who have a contract and receive a salary / remuneration for their work in the organization (including founding members if they receive a salary / remuneration for their work)

Nsample = 44



# Estimated number of employees of incubators



Average employee projection 2021 over the entire population 2021 (91 incubators in Argentina)

According to the responses received from the incubators in Argentina, the total number of employees in the incubator ecosystem in Argentina is 400.



# Access to incubation programs: Recruiting

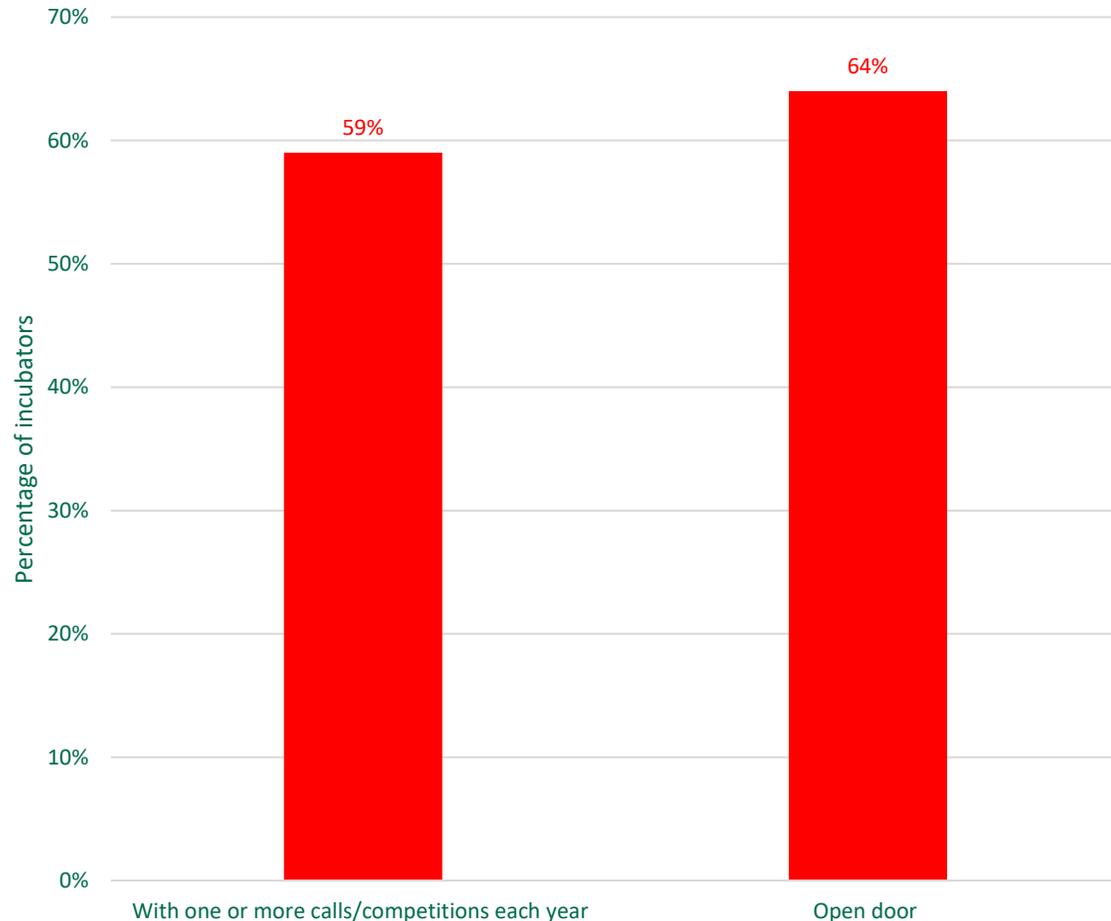
Incubators may recruit organizations and entrepreneurial teams in their incubation/acceleration programs through different channels:

- With one or more calls/competitions each year (candidates can apply for a limited period of time)
- Open door (candidates can apply at every time)

The answer to this question is multifaceted, as the options are not mutually exclusive. Incubators may utilize both channels to recruit organizations and entrepreneurial teams for their incubation/acceleration programs. Consequently, in the next slide, the total percentage of responses may exceed 100%.



# Access to incubation programs: Recruiting



It appears that incubators in Argentina slightly prefer the open door (candidates can apply at every time) channel to recruit organizations and entrepreneurial teams for their incubation/acceleration programs. However, the difference in percentage between the two channels is minimal (5%), highlighting the availability of diverse entry pathways for aspiring entrepreneurs.

The total is not 100% because incubators may use both channels to recruit organizations and entrepreneurial teams for their incubation/acceleration programs.

Nsample = 44



# Access to incubation programs: Fees & Equity

Incubators may monetize access to their incubation/acceleration programs through two channels:

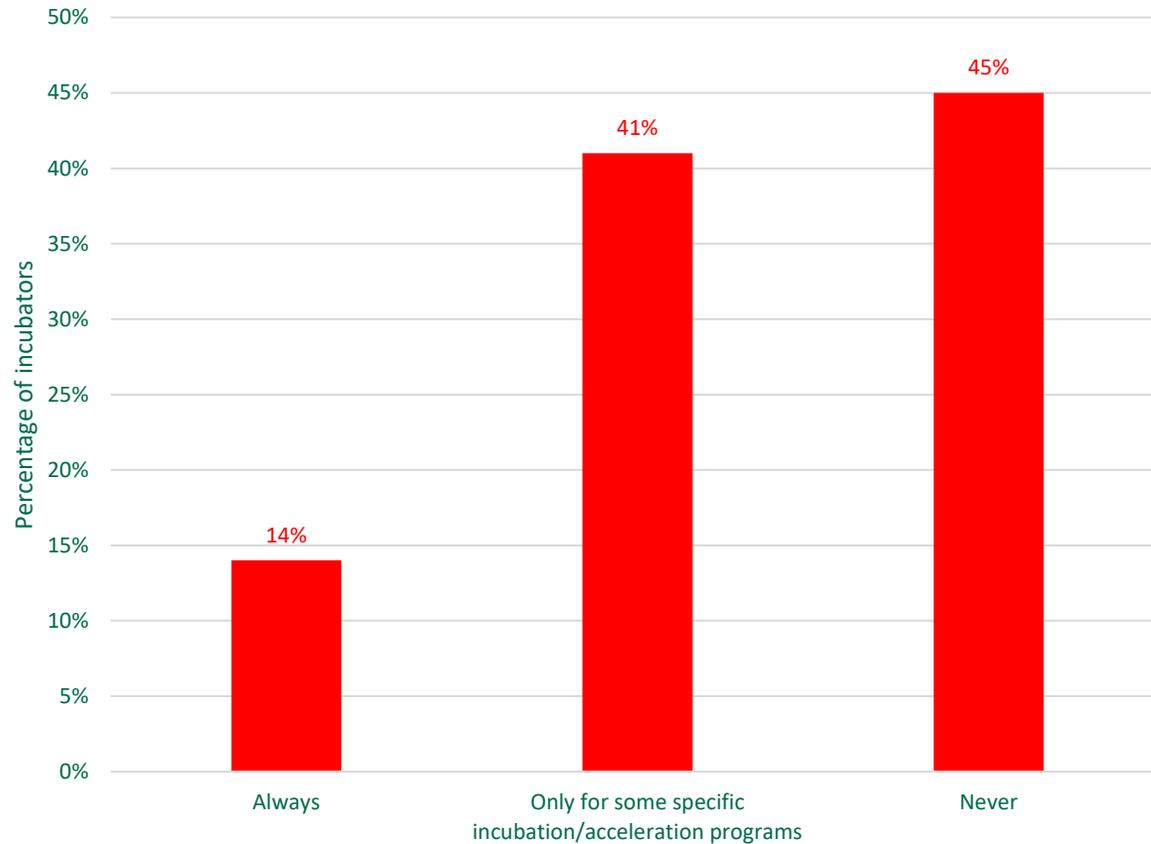
- In exchange of a fee
- In exchange of a stake of equity in the organisation

The two channels are not mutually exclusive. Moreover, incubators may require fees/equity for certain incubation/acceleration programs but not for all of them.

More information regarding all the possible main sources of incubators' revenues is presented on slide 36.



# Access to incubation programs: Fees

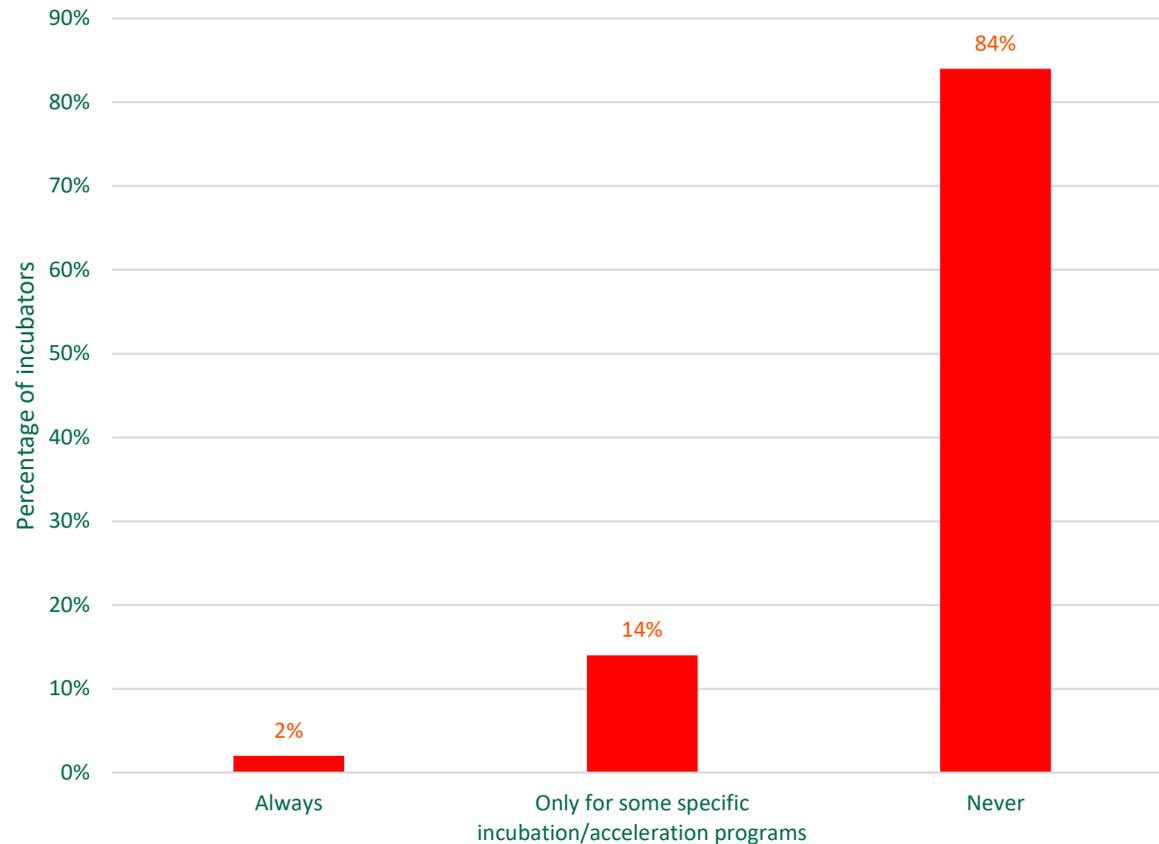


A bit more than half of the incubators in Argentina ask for a fee for their incubation/acceleration programs. Specifically, 55% (14% always and 41% only for specific programs) require a fee. However, only 14% of incubators always charge a fee to participate in their incubation/acceleration programs

Nsample = 44



# Access to incubation programs: Equity



Requiring stakes of equity in exchange of participation into the incubation/acceleration programs is more rare.

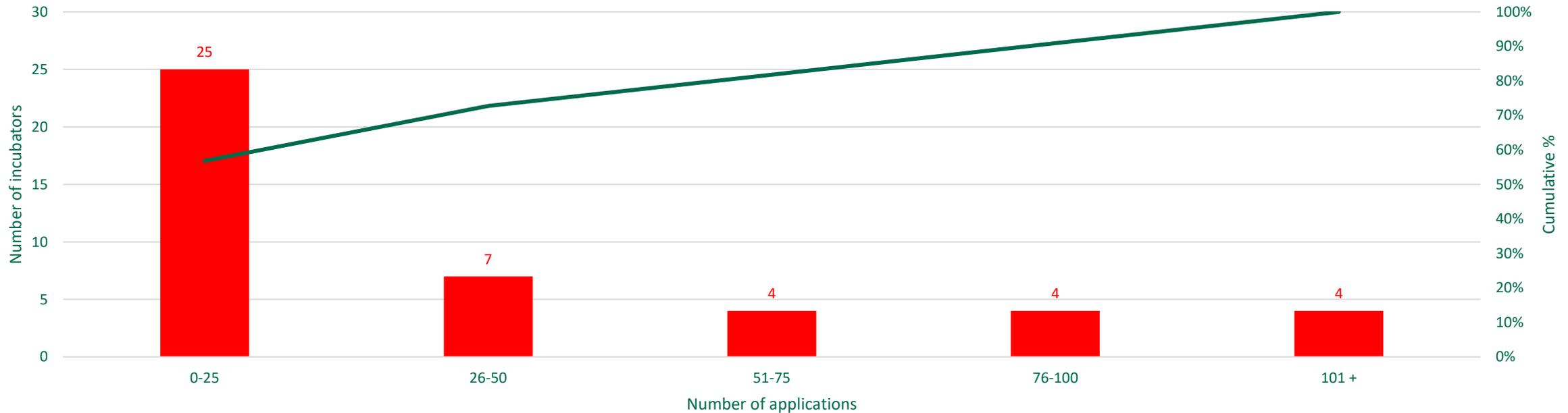
In fact, 84% of all incubators never require the incubated organisations to provide equity to the incubator to access the programs.

Only 2% of the incubators in the sampled always require equity.

Nsample = 44



# Number of applications for incubation received



57% of the respondents (25 incubators) has received less than 26 requests. The mean value is altered by a very small group of respondents (9%) which have received more than 100 applications in 2021.

Mean = 54,25

Median = 21

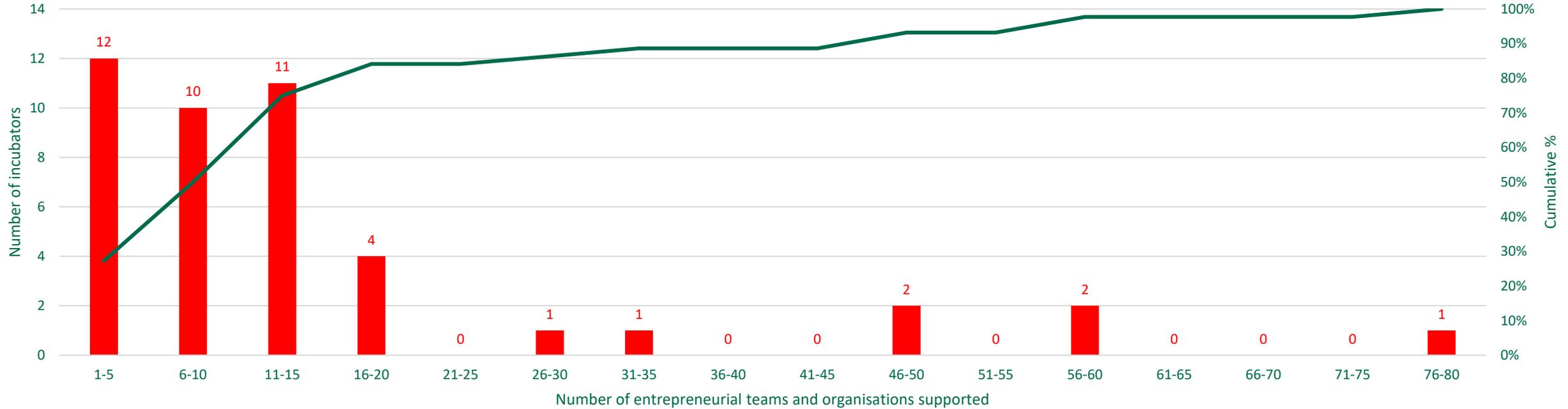
Total employees (in sample) = 2387

Nsample = 44





# Number of entrepreneurial teams and organisations supported



The answers include both all the already existing entrepreneurial teams and organisations which the incubator kept supporting in 2021 and the new entrances of 2021.

Mean = 16,36

Median = 10

Total entrepreneurial teams and organisations supported (in sample) = 720

Nsample = 44





# 3.3

## Analysis of services provided and structure of incubators/accelerators

REPORT ON INCUBATORS/  
ACCELERATORS IN ARGENTINA



# Services provided by incubators

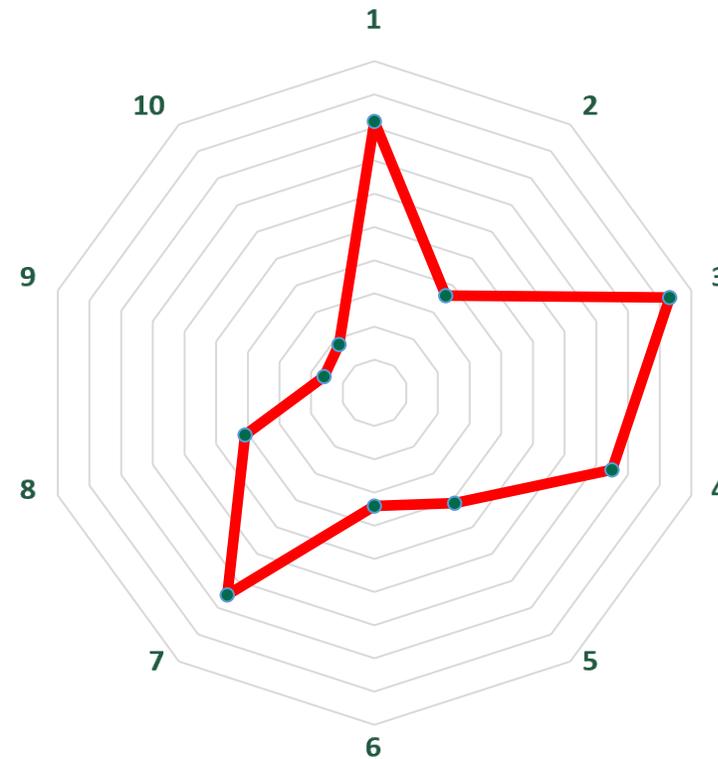
1. Managerial support (e.g. business plan drafting, company incorporation, business model development, mentoring, marketing)
2. Business spaces (shared services included)
3. Entrepreneurial and managerial teaching and mentoring
4. Support in getting funding (including dialogue with investors)
5. Administrative and legal services
6. Support to intellectual property management
7. Support to relationship management – networking (e.g. research centres, universities, public entities, enterprises and other incubated organizations)
8. Support to technology development and scouting
9. Social/environmental impact measurement services
10. Teaching/consultancy about Business ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

This classification of services provided by incubators has been developed in accordance with the academic literature on incubators and accelerators (Vanderstraeten and Matthyssens, 2012; Sansone et al., 2020).

# Services provided by incubators



1. Managerial support (e.g. business plan drafting, company incorporation, business model development, mentoring, marketing)
2. Business spaces (shared services included)
3. Entrepreneurial and managerial teaching and mentoring
4. Support in getting funding (including dialogue with investors)
5. Administrative and legal services
6. Support to intellectual property management
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8. Support to technology development and scouting
9. Social/environmental impact measurement services
10. Teaching/consultancy about Business ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)



According to our analysis, incubators consider these services as the most important:

- Entrepreneurial and managerial teaching and mentoring (3)
- Managerial support (1)
- Support to relationship management – networking (7)
- Support in getting funding (4)

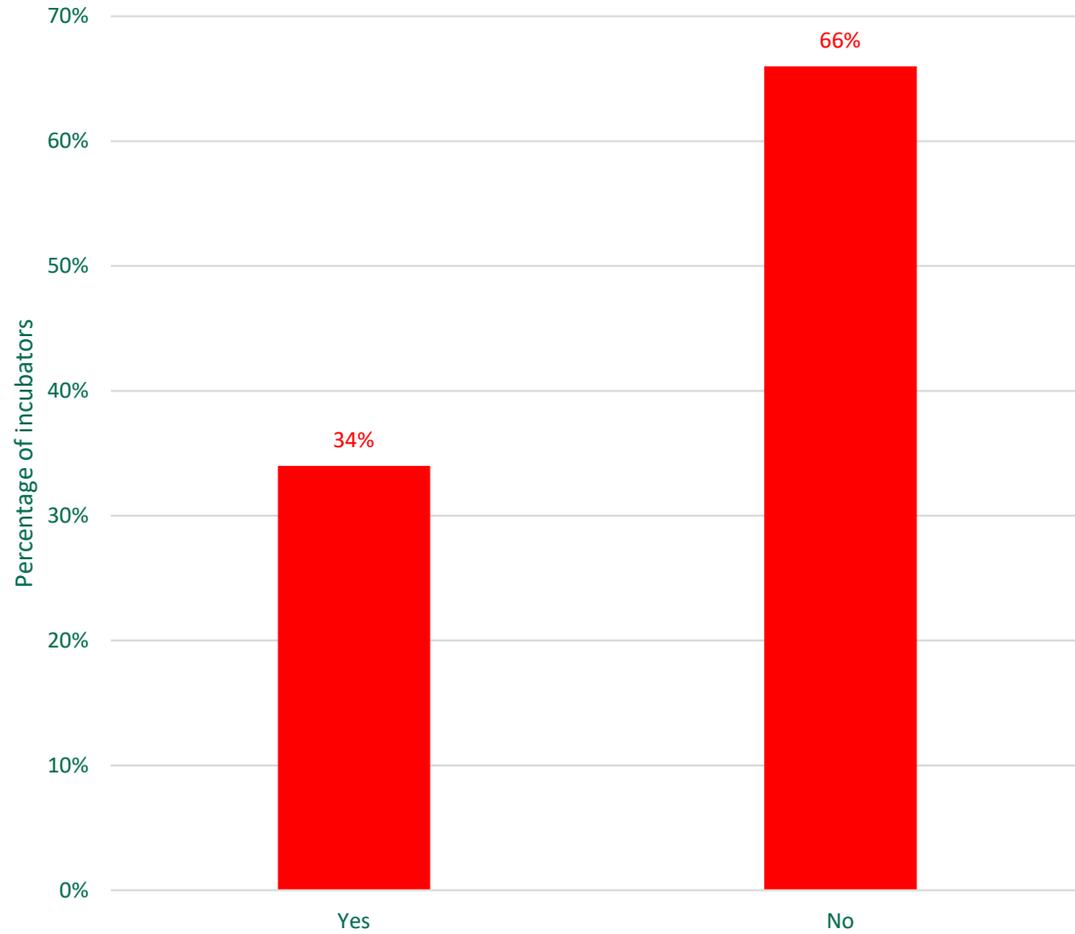
Incubators consider of little importance offering the following service:

- Social/environmental impact measurement services (9)
- Teaching/consultancy about Business ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (10)

Nsample = 44



# Sector Specialization

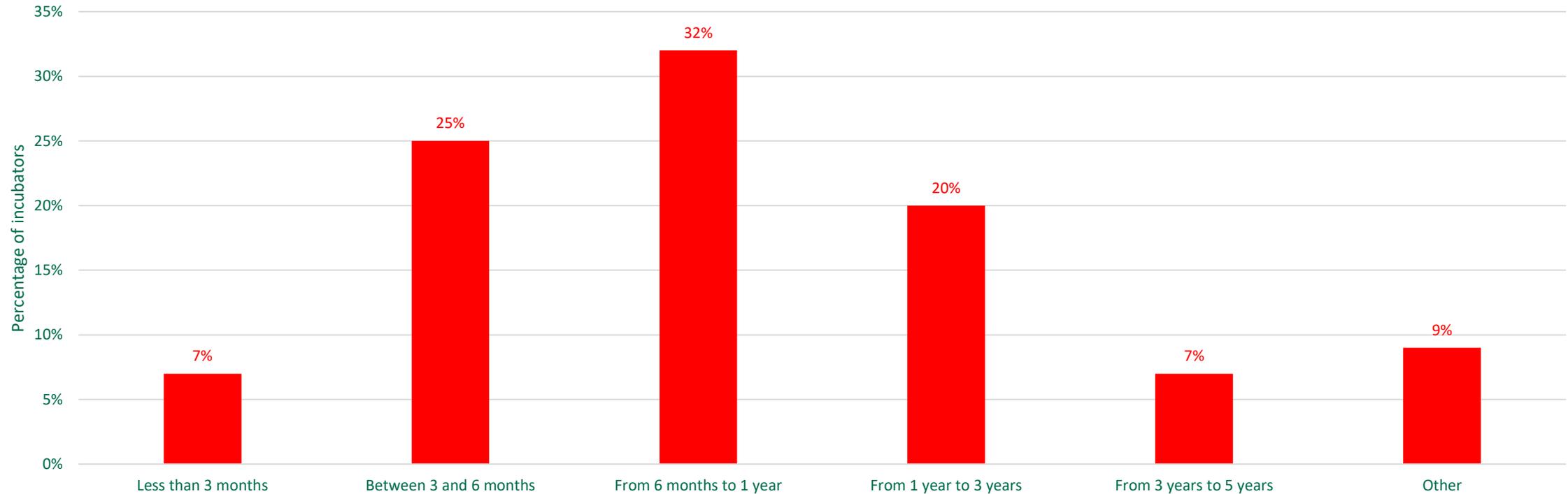


A significant majority (66%) of incubators in Argentina do not specialize in a particular sector, meaning they accept tenants from a wide range of industries.

Nsample = 44



# Average time of incubation



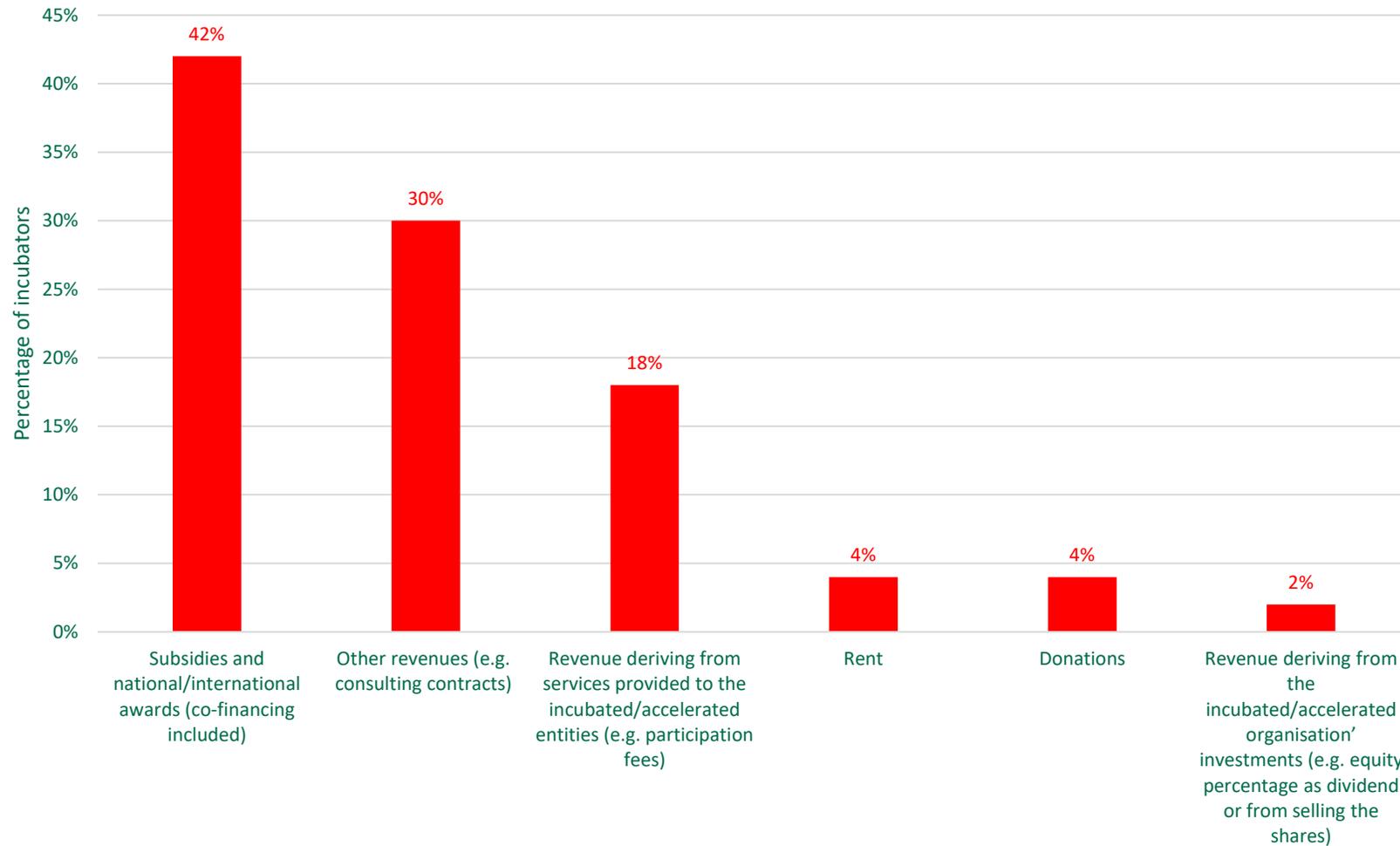
The average duration of incubation/acceleration varies, with 32% lasting between 6 months to 1 year, followed by 25% operating for 3 to 6 months, and 20% for 1 to 3 years, while fewer operate for less than 3 months (7%) or 3 to 5 years (7%).

9% of the incubators in the sample have variable incubation/acceleration times (“Other”), meaning they provide a range of programs with different durations.

Nsample = 44



# Breakdown of incubators' revenues



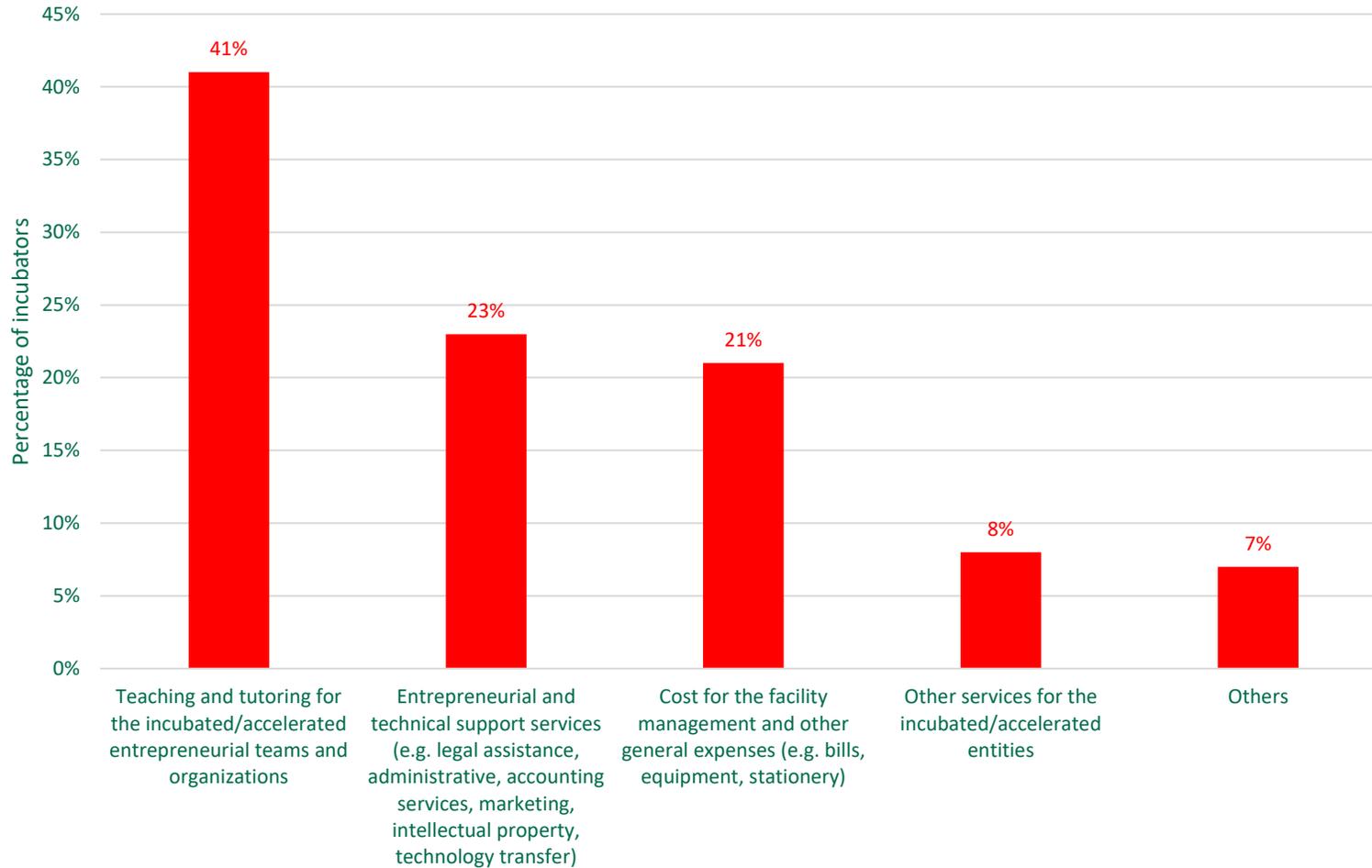
Other revenues may derive from consulting contracts, entrepreneurial schooling, scouting, or open innovation.

The main source of income (42%) for incubators derives from subsidies and national/international awards (co-financing included).

Nsample = 44



# Breakdown of incubators' operating costs



The most relevant cost item for incubators is that of teaching and tutoring for the incubated/accelerated entrepreneurial teams and organizations (41%).

The "Other" costs may include expenses such as paid training for third parties (non-incubated or non-accelerated).

Nsample = 44



# 4

# Team and bibliography

REPORT ON INCUBATORS/  
ACCELERATORS IN ARGENTINA



# TEAM



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