Switzerland as a research hub

As a country poor in raw materials, Switzerland has always relied on having a good environment for research, innovation, and knowledge transfer. Medical innovations do not occur in isolation; they require a strong ecosystem made up of universities, hospitals, researchers and industry. If this interplay works, scientific findings become medical advances: new therapies are developed, used in clinical trials and ultimately benefit patients.

CHF 9 bn

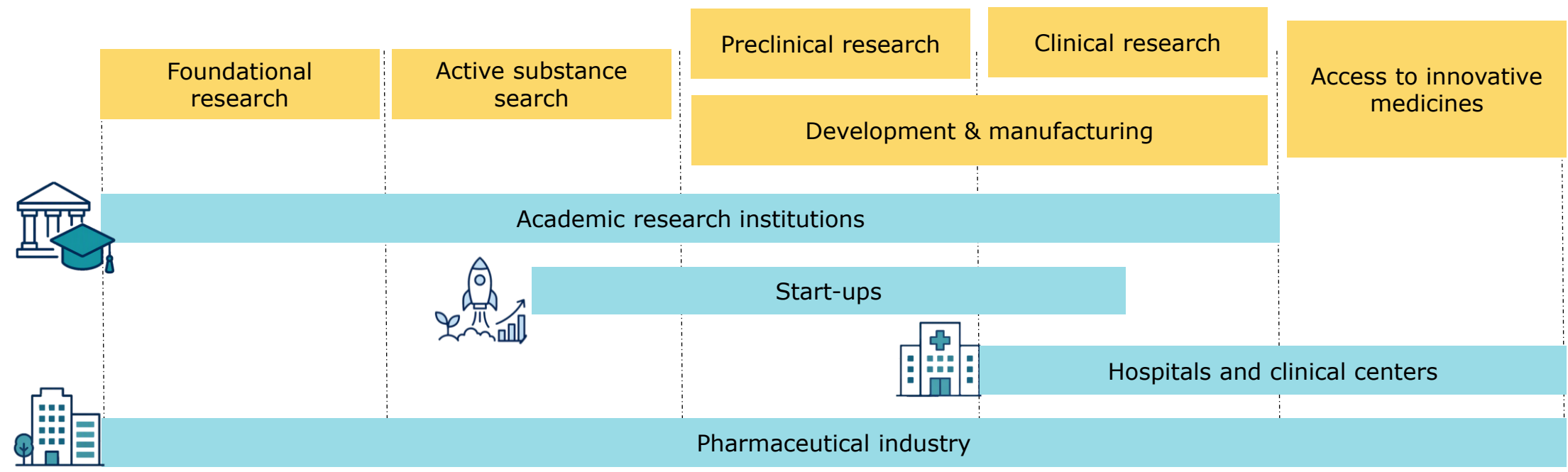
was invested in research and development in Switzerland by the pharmaceutical industry in 2025.

31% is the pharmaceutical industry's share of private research expenditure

This makes the pharmaceutical industry by far the most important private sector investor.

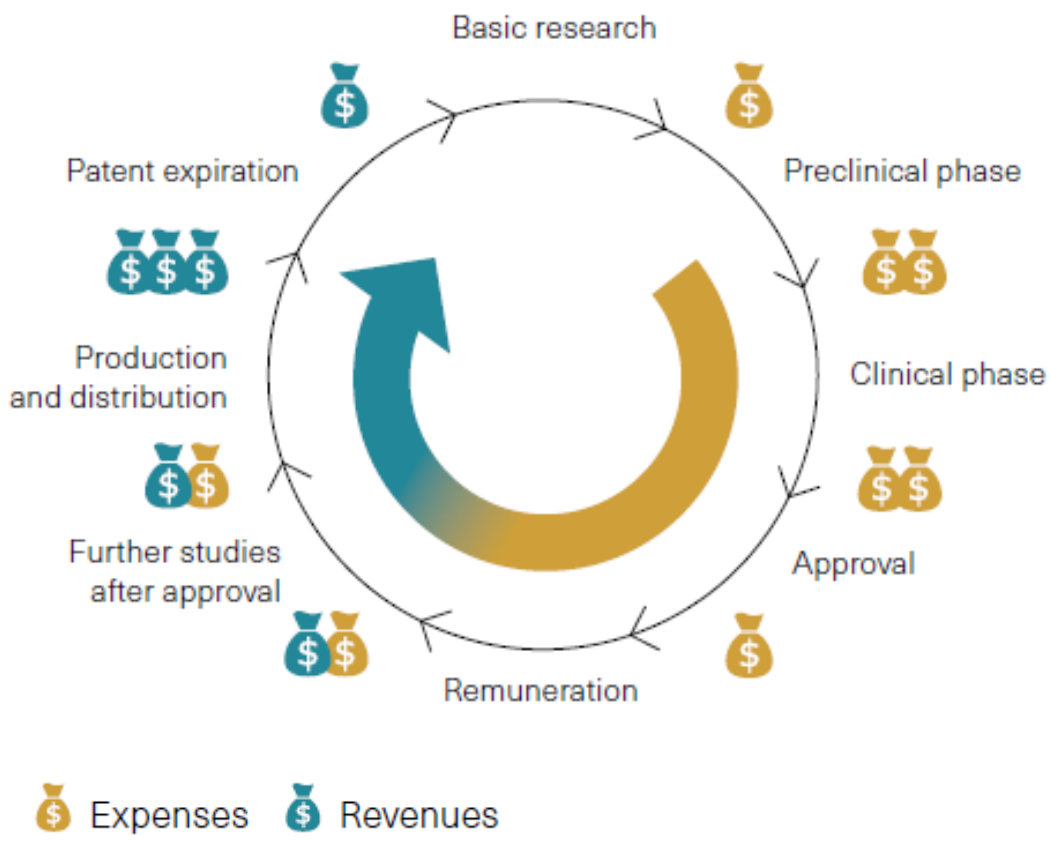
Source: Federal Statistical Office (2025), Research and Development in Switzerland 2023; Interpharma (2025)

A research ecosystem that translates knowledge into innovation



Patent protection enables reinvestment in innovative medicines

- Developing a new medicine takes an average of twelve years and costs an average of USD 2.6 billion.
- Since patents are registered at an early stage of the development process, there is only a limited period of time after market launch to recoup the costs of new medicines.
- Only reimbursed medicines generate income that can be reinvested in research into new, innovative medicines.

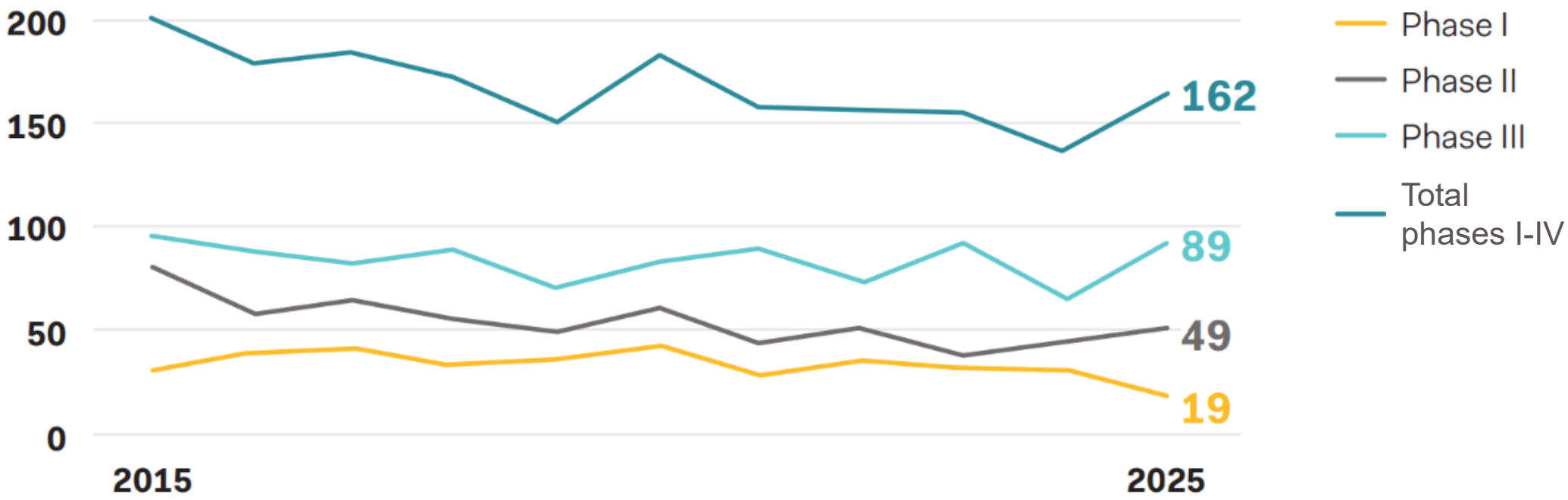


Sources: Illustrative illustration, Interpharma (2026).

Read more about clinical research as a factor for success.

Interpharma | Petersgraben 35 | P.O. Box| CH 4009 Basel | +41 61 264 34 00 | info@interpharma.ch | www.interpharma.ch | Association of Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies in Switzerland

Switzerland is losing ground in clinical research



Clinical trials with drugs definitively approved by Swissmedic for conduct. Source: Swissmedic (2026).

- In 2025, Swissmedic approved 162 clinical trials in Switzerland. Although this represents a slight improvement on the previous year, it is still significantly below the level of 10 years ago.
- Due to the lower number of studies, the Swiss healthcare system is losing its innovation capacity and reputation for excellence and attractiveness for researchers, healthcare professionals and investors.
- This development is hampering patient access to innovative therapies and poses a long-term threat to Switzerland's position as a hub for research and innovation.

What's important now



Strengthening clinical research

Modernization of the Human Research Act: introduction of a national ethics committee, establishment of fast-track procedures and efficient patient recruitment.



Protecting Switzerland's position as a research hub

Incentives for clinical trials for the authorization of medicines, including shorter authorization times, reduced authorization fees and extended document protection.



Digitalizing healthcare

Establishment of a national health data space, transition to the electronic health record, introduction of the opt-out solution and legal certainty for data-driven research.

Laying the groundwork for the future

Research and development cannot be taken for granted. They need an environment that enables long-term investment, promotes innovation in healthcare, and ensures medical progress for patients.

Interpharma | Petersgraben 35 | P.O. Box| CH 4009 Basel | +41 61 264 34 00 | info@interpharma.ch | www.interpharma.ch | Association of Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies in Switzerland