

Clinical Trials HIGHLIGHTS

News, views and interviews for European Clinical Trials

An agency of the European Union



Welcome to Clinical Trials Highlights



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Welcome to the May 2022 issue of the Clinical Trials Highlights. As of 30 April 2022, 56 clinical trial applications were submitted for evaluation by Member States via CTIS. In addition, four clinical trials have been authorised and are viewable by patients, healthcare professionals and the general public through the [CTIS public search](#).

The public availability of an unprecedented amount of data on individual trials through CTIS empowers patients to find recruiting trials in their country and ensures the highest levels of transparency for clinical trials in Europe.

The Heads of Medicines Agencies (HMA), the European Commission and EMA are working to deliver the ten priority actions of the [Accelerating Clinical Trials in the EU \(ACT EU\)](#) programme. On 20 May 2022, a set of Key Performance Indicators to monitor the European clinical trials environment have been published to coincide with International Clinical Trials Day, a key date to celebrate the progress achieved in the area of clinical trials and all those who make clinical research possible. Further ACT EU information and guidance which supports the transformation of clinical trials in the EU will be delivered throughout 2022 and 2023.

We look forward to collaborating with the clinical trials community in 2022 and beyond to ensure a competitive environment for clinical research in Europe and impactful clinical trials for patients' health.

ACT EU methodologies guidance

The ACT EU priority action 8 focusses on developing and publishing methodologies guidance for clinical trials.

This priority action will provide guidance on innovative tools and methods for clinical trials and aims to strengthen the links between innovation and scientific advice.

As part of the methodologies priority action, ACT EU supports the implementation of the International Council for Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Pharmaceuticals for Human Use's (ICH) addendum to the guideline on statistical principles for clinical trials on estimands and sensitivity analysis E9(R1). The estimands framework helps to link trial objectives to suitable trial design and statistical tools for estimation and hypothesis testing to ensure that trials are designed, conducted and analysed appropriately to meet their objectives.

Another key aspect of the methodology priority is the development of guidance related to complex clinical trials. The European Commission, HMA and EMA will shortly publish a Q&A on complex clinical trials, covering topics such as key considerations for the planning and conduct of clinical trials and for the design and conduct of master protocols. Further stakeholder interaction and guidance on clinical trial methods is expected to be provided in 2022 and 2023.

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KPIs to track the European clinical trials environment

The ACT EU priority action 2 seeks to support the successful and timely implementation of the Clinical Trials Regulation (CTR) and its implementing acts by developing KPIs to track the performance of the European clinical trials environment.

Starting in May 2022, KPIs are published monthly [on the EMA website](#), pulling information from the two EU clinical trials databases, [EudraCT](#) and [CTIS](#).

The KPIs measure the number of clinical trial applications submitted under the Clinical Trial Regulation via CTIS and under the Clinical Trials Directive via EudraCT since the entry into application of the Clinical Trials Regulation on 31 January 2022. They also include data on the number of authorised trials that are mono-national and multi-national, commercial and non-commercial, and the number of trials per trial phase and therapeutic area.

CTAs in CTIS per Status

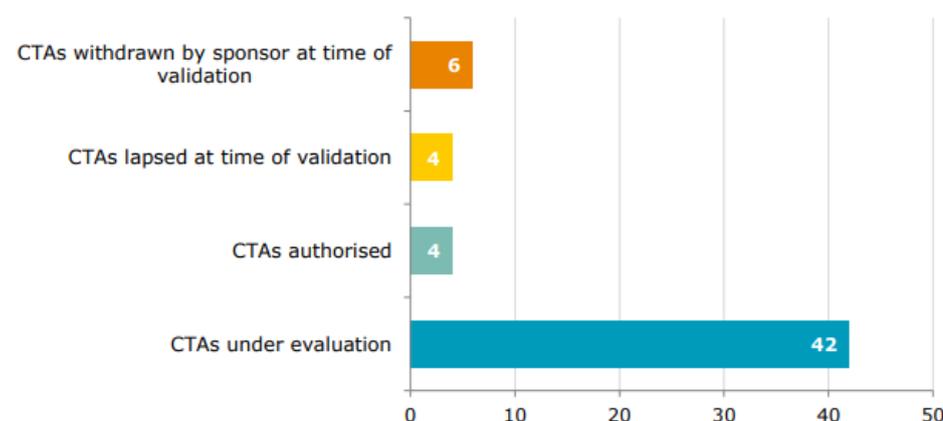


Image 1.
Number of initial clinical trial applications with full dossier, submitted in accordance with Article 5 of CTR, per applicable status at EU level.

Consultation on draft guidance on the protection of personal data and CCI in CTIS

To assist sponsors and authority users in fulfilling the transparency requirements set out in the Clinical Trials Regulation, EMA is preparing a dedicated guidance on the protection of personal data and commercially confidential information (CCI) in CTIS.



EMA has published a draft of the guidance for open consultation to allow for wider stakeholder input and to account for experience gained in working with CTIS. The draft guidance is available on the [EMA open consultations page](#). The consultation on the draft guidance will remain open until **8 September 2022**.

A stakeholder workshop will be held in the coming months, further details will be shared when available.

Image 2.
Personal data and CCI protection in CTIS.

How to respond to requests for information (RFIs) in CTIS

An RFI is a request for additional information that a Member State Concerned (MSC) may address to the sponsor when evaluating a clinical trial application (CTA). An RFI may contain several considerations, which are individual questions or comments.

Sponsors must respond to each RFI consideration separately using the free text field provided, even if no changes to the CTA are required. There is an optional 'Add document' button under each consideration. If the full response to a consideration is provided via an uploaded document, sponsors should indicate this in the free text box. If no text is provided for a consideration response, the user will be prevented from submitting their RFI response.

If an RFI consideration requires a change to the structured data or documents of the CTA, sponsors must make the required changes to the structured data or documents. In this case, sponsor users should not upload the updated clinical trial application documents using the 'Add document' button found under each consideration, but instead should use the respective placeholders found in the clinical trial application, using the 'Update document' functionality.

The screenshot shows a web form titled 'Response to consideration'. At the top, it displays a lock icon, 'Consideration number RFI-CT-2021-500134-26-00-IN-006-01', 'Application section parts Part II', and 'Application section and document Recruitment arrangements'. Below this, it says 'Consideration Assessment Part II - Austria - consideration nr8'. The main part of the form is a large text input field labeled 'Response' with the text 'Free text field (mandatory)'. Below the text field is a section titled 'Documents related to the response' containing a 'Placeholder for supporting document (optional)'. To the right of the placeholder are three buttons: 'Add document', 'Save response', and 'Submit response'.

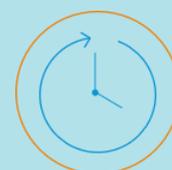
Image 3.
How to respond to RFIs.

If sponsors have updated the structured data or documents of the clinical trial application, they will need to click on the tick box ('Includes application changes') and then on the 'Add documents' button to describe the changes in the application.

Sponsors can view Module 11 - Respond to requests for information received during the evaluation of a clinical trial application, including the [e-learning](#), [step-by-step guide](#) and [FAQs](#) for further information.

Reminder – due dates in CTIS

Users are reminded that due dates in CTIS expire at midnight Central European Time (CET). Due dates are deadlines by which tasks in CTIS must be completed, including responses to RFIs.



CTIS events update

In the summer of 2022, EMA will host a CTIS information event focussing on lessons learned in the first six months from the launch of CTIS. More information will be made available shortly in the [training and information events section on the CTIS training and support page](#).

The sixth edition of the sponsor end user training programme will run from [20 to 23 June 2022](#). The sponsor end user training programme prepares users to submit clinical trial applications and manage the life cycle of clinical trials in CTIS.

Two further CTIS bitesize events will run on [31 May 2022](#) and [23 June 2022](#). In the bitesize talks, CTIS experts demonstrate a dedicated CTIS functionality, and provide an opportunity for sponsor users to ask questions. A video recording of the February bitesize talk on user access and role management is [available here](#) and a video recording of the March talk on the initial clinical trial application [is available here](#). Video recordings of other talks will be made available in due course.

In addition, the CTIS walk-in clinics continue to run on a twice-monthly basis, providing an opportunity for sponsor users to raise questions about any CTIS functionality and receive advice from CTIS experts. Details on upcoming walk-in clinics can be found in the [Training and information events section of the CTIS training and support page](#) on the EMA website. The recording of the first walk-in clinic can be found [on the event page of the EMA website](#).

CTIS training material update

In 2022, EMA is revising the CTIS training materials to create new materials for specific processes and to update existing materials to match the current status of system functionalities.

In May 2022, revised materials have been published for Module 03 – User Access Management. These revised materials include the user access management Quick Guide, the Quick Guide on how to use the organisation management service (OMS) and the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). The revised materials are available on [the CTIS online modular training programme page](#).

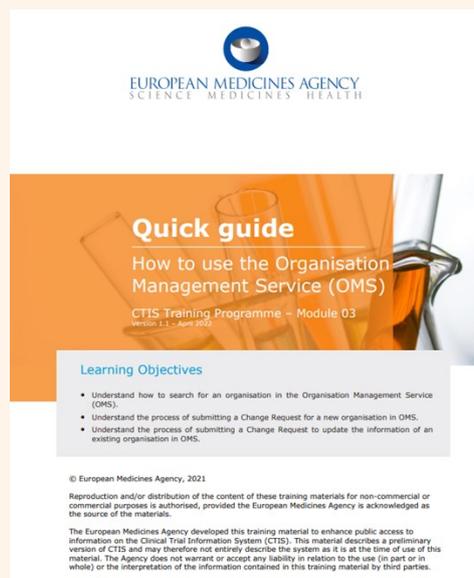


Image 4.
Updated online training material for Module 03.

Prioritisation for further CTIS development

Prioritisation for future CTIS development began at the end February 2022. EMA, together with the Member States and Sponsor Product Owners, have agreed to structure the existing requests ('backlog') in clusters containing issues related to the same functionality for a more holistic review. In addition, high level prioritisation criteria have been identified to define the priority of each cluster. The group is aiming to finalise the exercise by the end of June 2022. The outcome of this activity will be used to plan future releases according to the CTIS Agile development methodology.

EudraVigilance training for clinical trial sponsors: new dates added

EMA offers live, virtual, hands-on training courses on EudraVigilance for clinical trial sponsors, with organisational support from DIA. The courses are designed for clinical trial sponsors who will directly report suspected unexpected serious adverse reactions (SUSARs) to EudraVigilance via EVWEB. Further training dates have been added throughout 2022. The available training dates and registration links can be found on the [EudraVigilance training and support webpage](#).

Organisation Management Service (OMS) training for clinical trial sponsors

EMA is offering dedicated support to clinical trial sponsors to address issues and questions related to registering organisation and/or location data in OMS for use in CTIS clinical trial applications. This activity is a follow-up to the previously published [OMS Industry training webinar](#).

Starting in June 2022, the EMA OMS team plans to provide monthly sessions to clarify outstanding questions reported by sponsors and clinical trial sites. Please be aware that EMA will address questions on a first come, first served basis, and warmly recommend that users submit questions prior to the sessions, otherwise the questions may only be addressed at the following session.

Further information on these sessions will be published via [the EMA events webpage](#) in due course.

For urgent clarifications needed on OMS processes and standards please send your query via the [EMA Service Desk](#).

CTIS release notes and known issues

EMA regularly performs technical updates to CTIS to improve its features and functionality. When significant updates are made to CTIS, EMA publishes release notes that outline what has changed in the system. Updates may include improvements to existing features and functionality, the addition of new features and functionality and technical improvements.

In addition, EMA publishes known issues that sponsor and authority users may encounter when using the CTIS secure workspaces. Where possible, workarounds to apply are proposed.

The latest version of the release notes and known issues documents can be found on the [Website outages and system releases](#) page of euclinicaltrials.eu.

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