A close-up photograph of an orca's head and back as it breaches the surface of the ocean. The water is a deep blue with white foam from the splash. The orca's black skin is wet and glistening, with a prominent white patch on its forehead.

*Law & Human Rights*

VOLUNTARY  
TERMINATION OF  
PREGNANCY IS LAW  
IN ARGENTINA

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*Integration*

ARGENTINA  
ASSUMES THE PRO  
TEMPORE  
PRESIDENCY OF  
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*Business & Investment*

BUENOS AIRES AS AN  
INNOVATION HUB:  
INTERVIEW WITH  
CLARA MENDIBERRI,  
MANAGING  
DIRECTOR AT J.P.  
MORGAN

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EMBASSY OF ARGENTINA, WASHINGTON, D.C.

# ARGENTINA IN FOCUS

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DECEMBER 2020 // NEWSLETTER





Photo Credit: Agencia télam

## VOLUNTARY TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY IS LAW IN ARGENTINA

Almost on the eve of a new year, the Argentine Senate approved the Voluntary Termination of Pregnancy Law, whose purpose, explicitly set out in its first article, is to regulate access to the voluntary termination of pregnancy and post-abortion care, in compliance with the Argentine State's commitments to public health and the human rights of women and people with other gender identities able to gestate, thereby contributing to reduce preventable morbidity and mortality.

With the passage of this law, women and people with other gender identities able to bear children will now have the right to decide and terminate their pregnancy up to the fourteenth week of gestation.

Besides the historic demand for the legalization and decriminalization of abortion, this law includes the application of the Comprehensive Sex Education Law and post-abortion care for women and pregnant persons throughout Argentina.



Once again, I share with you the latest edition of our Embassy Newsletter but this time, after a challenging year, I want to take the opportunity to wish you and your family Happy Holidays and a healthy 2021. This edition includes an article on the recent approval of the Voluntary Termination of Pregnancy Law.

This issue also includes an article about MERCOSUR and its challenges marked by the difficulties derived from the pandemic and the global economic crisis.

Finally, an interview with Clara Mendiberri, Managing Director at J.P. Morgan, who explains how digital talent contributes to the positioning of Argentina as a leader in the provision of knowledge services at a global level

Jorge Argüello  
Ambassador to the United States

## THE NATIONAL CONGRESS' VOTE IN FAVOR ADDS ARGENTINA TO THE COUNTRIES THAT RECOGNIZE AND GUARANTEE THAT PREGNANT WOMEN AND GESTATING PERSONS CAN FULLY EXERCISE THEIR SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

The Senate's vote in favor adds Argentina to the countries that recognize and guarantee that pregnant women and people can fully exercise their sexual and reproductive rights within the framework of the human rights treaties ratified by the Republic of Argentina. In particular: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the American Convention on Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol, as well as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women "Convention of Belém do Pará", the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

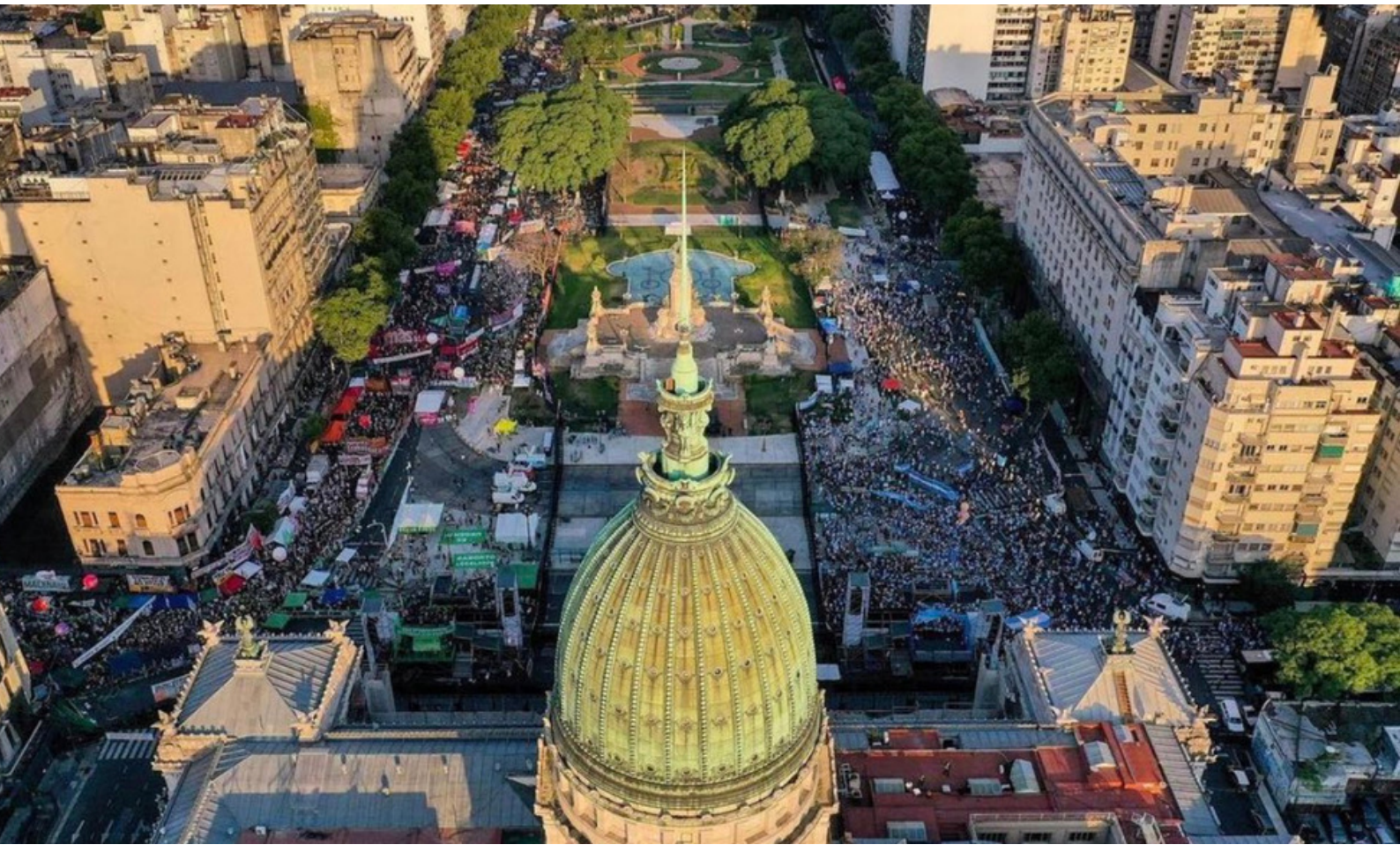
The law passed on December 30 reflects the regional and international leadership of Argentina and, in turn represents huge progress in the fight for gender equality and is the result of years of joint efforts throughout the country.

The struggle of Argentine women for the right to legal, safe, and free abortion has been ongoing for several decades, but was strengthened with the recovery of democracy in 1983 and, in recent years years, with the launch in 2005 of the National Campaign for the Right to Legal, Safe and Free Abortion. The strength of this campaign, which coordinates and reinforces previous efforts, is due to its federal character and is representative of the different stakeholders and its ability to design and implement action strategies whose results have been strongly visible in recent years. At present, the campaign is led by over 300 groups, organizations and personalities linked to human rights organizations, academic and scientific spheres, health workers, unions and diverse social and cultural movements, student groups and journalists, among others.

The key demand is reflected in its founding motto: "Sex education to decide. Contraception to avoid abortion. Legal abortion to not die". These objectives were embodied in 2006 in the Draft Law on Voluntary Interruption of Pregnancy prepared by this group and submitted to the Chamber of Deputies several times since 2007. On the other hand, in March 2018 the debate on the bill was historic and involved all representatives in Congress. The hearings had a wide participation from civil society and an unprecedented debate took place for months at the family table, in the newspapers, radio and television. At that time, the bill was approved by the Chamber of Deputies in June but rejected by Senators in August of that year.

Today things are different. With the government and the commitment of President Alberto Fernández, this issue became a part of the government's agenda. When he took office on





December 10, 2019, the president emphatically declared that he would *"make every effort to bring women's rights to the fore."* Shortly after, in Congress, he stated that that he would send *"a Bill for the Voluntary Interruption of Pregnancy Law to legalize abortion in early pregnancy and allow women to have access to the health system when they decide to have an abortion."* This bill that has now become law, ends the historical debt the Argentine State had with half of its population. ■



## ARGENTINA ASSUMES THE PRO TEMPORE PRESIDENCY OF MERCOSUR

On March 21, 1991, Argentina, together with Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay, signed the Treaty of Asunción, the essential pillar on which the historic integration project of the South American region would be based, which mainly sought the creation of a common scheme that transcended economics or simple competitive integration.

After 30 years, Mercosur has experienced several advances and setbacks; however, it undoubtedly found its own identity, by reaffirming its inescapable commitment to promoting economic development with social inclusion, and the defense and strengthening of democratic institutions, as well as the full implementation of the rule of law and the defense of human rights.

In early 2021, Argentina will assume the Pro Tempore Presidency (PPTA) of Mercosur, following the traditional semi-annual rotation of State Parties, in a context of challenges marked by the difficulties derived from the pandemic and the crisis. As President Alberto Fernández mentioned on the occasion of the LVII Summit of Mercosur Presidents, held by videoconference on December 16, *"...at this time, the tenets that gave rise to Mercosur must remain in force, to keep us united, try to work together, look for what our heroes always looked for, which is a common destiny as the great country that we are."*

This need for unity is even more important in a global economic crisis caused by a sharp downturn of the world's economy, which according to the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Felipe Solá, Presidente Alberto Fernández and the Chief of the Cabinet of Ministers, Santiago Cafiero (from L to R).



IT IS VITAL TO MAKE  
MERCOSUR MORE DYNAMIC BY  
STRENGTHENING THE  
INTEGRATION PROCESS IN  
DIFFERENT AREAS: ECONOMIC,  
COMMERCIAL, SOCIAL,  
EDUCATIONAL, CULTURAL,  
AMONG OTHERS.

World Bank's forecasts, equals 5.2% in 2020. It is the worst recession since World War II, and the first time since 1870 that so many economies are experiencing a decline in their per capita output.

This juncture is not only a call for unity in our cooperation and integration efforts, but also for leadership. In this regard, in his speech at the last Summit, President Alberto Fernández stated that *"Latin America is, by origin and destination, called upon to be a unique region, absolutely integrated, and the differences that may arise ideologically, conceptually, or of whatever kind, are put on the back burner...we are obliged to seek a common destiny because it is our peoples that demand this. The common destiny has to do with a cultural logic that links us, and we are called to be a great country; Latin America was the idea of Artigas, Bolívar, San Martín, O'Higgins, the great men who achieved Latin American independence."*

That ideology of a common homeland like Latin America, which our country takes up in the face of this new presidency that it assumes in a context of global crisis, demands that new debates be held about what the next world will be like, both within the Mercosur, with our associated States, as well as with our extra-regional partners.

Argentina as a country and in the Pro Tempore Presidency defines Mercosur as "our common home", and as such it will seek ways to reduce existing inequalities and asymmetries. And this is the biggest challenge. This is why it is vital to make Mercosur more dynamic by strengthening the integration process in different areas: economic, commercial, social, educational, cultural, among others.

Within the framework of strengthening and expanding Mercosur, the PPTA will make efforts to achieve the incorporation of the Plurinational State of Bolivia as a full member of Mercosur, and its active participation in the decision-making bodies and technical forums that will contribute to its adhesion to the bloc.

Likewise, and on the basis of the invaluable work accumulated throughout the 30 years of the bloc's life, the PPTA will work on an agenda of sustainable development, technological innovation and social inclusion that allows us to consolidate our common space not in the face of the demands of the but in light of the demands of our own peoples. ■



## BUENOS AIRES AS AN INNOVATION HUB: INTERVIEW WITH CLARA MENDIBERRI, MANAGING DIRECTOR AT J.P. MORGAN

Driven by the political decision of the Argentine State to develop a knowledge-based economy, the country has made progress in exporting digital services to the United States, the most dynamic market in the world, as the main destination.

Likewise, U.S. investment in our country, aimed at local development and sales to other countries, is significant and increasing.

In this edition of Argentina in Focus, we refer to the J.P. Morgan Service Center, which started operating in 2014 and currently employs 2,000 professionals from areas as diverse as technology, administration, finance, operations, credit, and legal. Even in the midst of the pandemic, confidence in Argentine talent was ratified; in

November, JP Morgan announced that in the first 10 months of this year, 417 people joined the software engineering, finance, infrastructure, operations, and legal areas of its Service Center. In addition, she reported that there were still another 180 open positions.

The J.P. Morgan Service Center is a powerful talent pool and is part of ARGENCON, the first non-profit entity in Argentina that brings together service providers from all verticals of the knowledge economy. The J.P. Morgan service center has an active role in the entity for the promotion of digital talent, which contributes to the positioning of Argentina as a leader in the provision of knowledge services at a global level.



IN THE FIRST 10 MONTHS OF THIS YEAR, 417 PEOPLE JOINED THE SOFTWARE ENGINEERING, FINANCE, INFRASTRUCTURE, OPERATIONS, AND LEGAL AREAS.

In this regard, Clara Mendiberri, Managing Director of J.P. Morgan's Argentine Hub, stated the following: "We have highly resilient talent, capable of challenging the status quo, eager to learn and face new challenges."

Argentina in Focus spoke with Mendiberri to learn more about the strategic development of the hub, in light of JP's operations worldwide, and to find out what unique elements they discovered in Argentine talent and about the future scenarios.

***Argentina in Focus: How many strategic hubs does J.P. Morgan throughout the world, and in Latin America?***

**Clara Mendiberri:** Buenos Aires is the only hub in Latin America, and we are one of the over 20 hubs that JPM has worldwide.

***AIF: What services does J.P. Morgan provide from Argentina?***

**C.M.:** From Buenos Aires we provide services to other J.P. Morgan offices. We have diverse groups, and the main ones are: Operations, Technology (both development and infrastructure), Finance, Credit, Legal, Compliance, Audit, and Controls, among others.

***AIF: How complex are the tasks carried out by these groups?***

**C.M.:** We perform added value tasks, and the greatest growth we have achieved in relation to expectations comes from the improvements implemented on the tasks and processes that we handle from Buenos Aires

***AIF: What markets are you targeting?***

**C.M.:** The geographies we cover are those with which we are most aligned as regards time zones: mainly the United States, Europe, and Latin America.

***AIF: Why did you choose Argentina to provide global services?***

**C.M.:** The variable that had the most weight is the availability of talent, and who also speak English. The number of graduates, students, location of universities, for example, were not the only factors we took into account. We also understand that we have highly resilient talent, capable of challenging the status quo, eager to learn and face new challenges.

***AIF: How many people work for the hub in Argentina?***

**C.M.:** We currently employ approximately 2,200 people.

***AIF: What reasons led you to expand your activities and hire more people?***

**C.M.:** The positive results we attained led to an increased interest in developing more tasks from Buenos Aires. We had originally planned to build a hub of 500, and we already have more than 2000..



***AIF: Do you plan more expansion in the country?***

**C.M.:** We continue to grow and hope to exceed 2,500 employees.

***AIF: In what time frame do you plan to reach that number of 2,500 employees?***

**C.M.:** By the end of 2021.

