

04 March 2021

The Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER)
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REF: ASPHER-appeal-of-EASP-dissolution

Subject: Request for appeal of the decision requiring the extinction and dissolution by merger and transformation of the Andalusian School of Public Health (EASP) in the Draft Bill of the Andalusian Health Institute.

To the Regional Government of Andalusia,

The Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER) is addressing this appeal to the Regional Government of Andalusia to request reconsideration of the proposal of the Draft Bill of the Creation of the Andalusian Health Institute that requires the extinction and dissolution by merger and transformation of **the Andalusian School of Public Health (EASP), effectively ending its, identity, its activity, the integrity of its functions and knowledge cycle (research, consultancy, training) in Public Health and Health Management.**

The Andalusian School of Public Health (EASP) is an institution of recognized prestige both at National and International levels and is part of the Regional Government of Andalusia (Spain). It has been working since 1985 in **training (more than 20.000 professionals, managers, patients and citizens each year), consultancy, international cooperation, research and creation of collaborative spaces and networks** that facilitate knowledge management, public health and good health systems governance. It is an entity that defends the rights and participation of patients and works actively to establish alliances with scientific and academic organisations, not for profit entities, public centres, social groups and patient associations.

What distinguishes this institution is its capacity to generate and disseminate knowledge in the area of Public Health and Health Management, and its contribution to knowledge transference to health care systems and population health. Specifically, EASP combines academic work with research in these contexts, identifying existing needs, factors that determine people's health, wellbeing and life quality. Furthermore, it focuses on quality and efficiency of health systems, enabling the transfer of knowledge to its consultancy area, which promotes the design and implementation of health models in all public policies.

ASPHER believes it is particularly imprudent to dissolve EASP in the midst of a global pandemic health crisis that has seen Spain and its people bear disproportionate hardships. On the contrary, what has become evident from the Covid-19 pandemic is that there needs to be a reinvestment in public and population health both for the current situation and future health challenges and that we require the work of public health institutions such as EASP more than ever before as we look to exit the current crisis and improve and ready for the future. This is in alignment with [ASPHER's call of 29 march 2020 on Europe's governing bodies, the European Commission and individual countries: to recognize the specific expertise of public health professionals involving them in decision-making to effectively coordinate European and in-country action; to invest adequate funding and resources in health systems, essential public health operations, planning and preparedness; and to include health in all policies.](#)

The "extinction and dissolution" of EASP would mean the loss of:

1. An accredited National and International School of Public Health that would lose milestones and alliances achieved through continuous work of more than 35 years, such as:

- Collaborating Center of the World Health Organization (WHO)
- Member of the main international associations of schools of public health and health management.
- Alliances with national and international institutions and universities (more than 70 collaboration agreements)
- Agreement with the University of Granada since 1988 (14 postgraduate degrees), University of Seville, Jaén, Córdoba and other national and international universities.

2. An institution that works for and for the health and well-being of the population.

- Who defends the participation and rights of patients and has trained more than 25,000 people with chronic diseases throughout Andalusia.

3. A reference institution in Granada.

- That organizes stays and visits of professionals from international institutions, scientific meetings (more than 60 days a year) and courses with thousands of attendees, with the economic and social impact that it has on the city.

4. An institution that combines academic work and knowledge generation with application to the improvement of health services and clinical practice.

5. A School that is guided by values of equity and equality in reaching the health levels of the population.

ASPHER therefore supports that:

- The EASP maintains its identity, without merging, without being transformed or extinguished, and thus guarantee its activity within the framework of a responsible collaboration with the administrative entities proposed by the public powers.

- The EASP continues to fulfill its functions in public health and health management, being a regional, national and international reference in training, research, consulting and international cooperation.
- The EASP maintains its “headquarters” in Granada, from where it has been fulfilling its social and economic commitment for the last 35 years.

The pandemic has shown the need to convert public health knowledge into action at an industrial scale. EASP has the pedigree of getting research into practice. The lessons of the pandemic are that we need to see more investment into teaching, training and preparedness for public health emergencies. We recommend the Regional Government looks to grow, expand and invest in the EASP for the greater protection and improvement of the health of the people of Andalusia in the future.

Sincerely,



John Middleton, President of ASPHER

On Behalf of the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region

The Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER) is the key independent European organisation dedicated to strengthening the role of public health by improving education and training of public health professionals for both practice and research. ASPHER’s Membership is made up of more than 100 Schools and Programmes of Public Health from over 40 countries in the WHO Europe Region.

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