

# One more step, and no going back

## Un paso más, y sin retorno

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*"From a certain point onward there is no longer any turning back. That is the point that must be reached".*  
*Franz Kafka.*

In the previous issue of Revista Española de Urgencias y Emergencias, an important milestone for Emergency Medicine in Spain was reported:<sup>1</sup> on March 21<sup>st</sup>, the Plenary of the Human Resources Commission of the Spanish National Health System agreed to request that the Ministry of Health create the specialty of Emergency Medicine (EMUE) in the civil sphere (already existing since 2016 in the military field<sup>2</sup>).

From that moment, the Ministry had a period of 6 months to make a decision after obtaining the required reports from the Ministry of Universities, the General Council of Official Colleges of Physicians, and the National Council of Specialists in Health Sciences, as established by Royal Decree 589/2022.<sup>3</sup> The Ministry of Universities issued its report (the only one of the 3 that is binding) on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, concluding that "after reviewing the abovementioned project, conformity with the proposal is conveyed." The General Council of Official Colleges of Physicians, in its report dated May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023, stated that "after reviewing the abovementioned project, conformity with the proposal is conveyed."

The report from the Standing Committee of the National Council of Specialties in Health Sciences, issued on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, noted as a general comment that the Committee agreed on the need to regulate and standardize training and care in Emergency Medicine, given that it represents a particularly important area of health care within the Spanish National Health System. However, the agreement was not unanimous among the National Commissions of the various officially recognized specialties, due to the well-known objections of some specialty commissions (though not of the rank-and-file specialists in those areas of practice, training, teaching, and research), as well as the usual caveat regarding the "specific training area."

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023—barely three months after receiving the request—the Ministry, through the Directorate General for Professional Regulation, resolved "to approve the request for the creation of the specialist title in Health Sciences of Emergency Medicine." Simultaneously, it resolved "to initiate the procedure for drafting the regulation to create the specialty, as provided in Article 16 of Law 44/2003, of November 21, on the Organization of Health Professions".<sup>4</sup> The first step in this process is the public consultation stage, carried out via email, in which citizens and organizations or associations are invited to participate. The public consultation period ended on Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup>.<sup>5</sup> From now on, it is up to the Ministry to complete the drafting of the Royal Decree establishing the new specialty of Emergency Medicine, for which it has a period of 4 months from the approval of the request<sup>3</sup>.

The Spanish Minister of Health, Hon. Mr. José Manuel Miñones, announced all these developments on June 7<sup>th</sup> in Madrid (Spain), during the inauguration of the 33<sup>rd</sup> National SEMES Congress. For the first time in SEMES history, the highest-ranking health authority in Spain attended our congress in



**Figure 1.** Moment of the announcement by the Spanish Minister of Health, Hon. Mr. José Manuel Miñones, of the initiation of the procedure for the creation of the specialist title in Emergency Medicine, during the opening ceremony of the 33<sup>rd</sup> National SEMES Congress.

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person—a gesture we appreciate both personally and institutionally on behalf of the Government of Spain (Figure 1).<sup>6</sup> We do not yet know whether it will be the current Government or the one emerging from the general elections of July 23<sup>rd</sup> that completes the process, but it is evident that on the path toward the creation of

the specialty of Emergency Medicine, turning back is no longer an option. The only alternative is to move forward. From this moment on, there is no going back. This is the point we have longed to reach, and we celebrate what it represents for patients, professionals, and the entire health care system.

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