



HEALTH PROFESSIONAL MIGRATIONS LA-UE

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHARED DEVELOPMENT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Executive Summary

The case study on the "Migrations of doctors and nurses in the Dominican Republic, 2010: Opportunities for a shared development " made by the Andalusian School of Public Health, was carried out with the purpose to explore and know the state of the dynamics related to the migratory flows of health professionals and some key aspects of the life of the main actors and institutions related to the health sector in the Dominican Republic.

The design of the study involved carrying out a survey based on a not random or probabilistic sample of 75 cases applied in the main public and private health centers of the major Dominican cities (Santo Domingo, Distrito Nacional and Santiago de los Caballeros). Also in depth interviews and focal meetings of discussion were conducted with union leaders and health professionals, such as medical doctors and nurses. The participants were chosen of the main institutions connected with the health sector, such as the Dominican Medical Association (CMD) and the National Association of Graduate Nurses (ANEG).

Nurses and medicine professional specialists that currently perform executive responsibilities in organizations such as the Pan-American Organization of the Health (OPS-WHO), the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance (MSPAS), and of the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo (UASD) were also interviewed. Likewise, interviews were made to students that at the time of this study were seeking to carry out studies of specialization in health areas in Spain or in the United States. Complementary, secondary information was gathered, that permitted to deepen in the results and in the explorations presented along this report (in chapter 1 a more detailed description of these strategies is presented).

As for the migration flows and the existing expectations of shared development in the health sector of the Dominican Republic (see chapter 2), these research strategies allowed to explore and made clear, that approximately 85,3% of the health professionals that were polled and that work in the main Dominican cities, have declare to have studied exclusively in the Dominican Republic. The remaining percentage is distributed among the United States (4.0%), Brazil (2.7%), Mexico (1.3%) and Spain (1.3%).

As to the migratory situation of the doctors that work in these medical plazas, the majority (54.7%) has studied and/or exercised their profession in the country, without having the need to emigrate, followed by a 30,7% that emigrated in search of doing a specialty and/or to exercise their profession and returned to the Dominican Republic, while a small proportion (5.3%) that currently consider themselves as emigrant.

It is important to highlight, that the gathered qualitative information indicates that the migration "boom" of health professionals has being increasing along the last 10 years and with special interest during the last five, which make these figures before mention be a lot greater, if we think about the new generations of health professionals. In keeping with the perceived by the majority of the young students of specialty, one said that, of each 10 senior medicine students, between seven and eight currently aspire to emigrate, of these, some five or six currently aspire to go to Spain and some four or five to the United States, and that the majority usually obtains this objective.

Moreover, the labor reasons that seem to have greater weight in the framework of the migratory decision are referred to the professional exercise itself: the access to continued education was mentioned by the majority of the polled (98.6%), as well as the possibility of personal developing in the context of a health model that is different to the local one (92.2%), and the basic aspiration to have resources for the

professional exercise (85.7%).

One of the main findings of the study come of the application of qualitative techniques of interview and reveals that, the most prominent expulsion factor of health professionals is currently the precarious conditions of the environments of so much, Dominican medical residence, concerning to their physical and technological infrastructures, as well as to their stiffly hierarchical organizational order and their pragmatic teaching, almost exclusively based on the medical practice more than in the current case studies based on specialized literature (see chapter 3).

To face the negative impact of the exile of professionals, the 29,3% of the doctors spoke of the imperative of elevating the quality of the labor system of medicine professionals, specifically improving the working conditions; the 20,0% agreed in the economic subject, upon referring to the imperative of increasing the current salaries. Concomitantly, the 14,7% indicated the possibility that the government increased social expenditure in areas such as health, and the 10,7% thought that currently the most relevant is to promote education, especially what concerns to the quality of the education of doctors.

It is believed that an answer to these demands, would make that the idea of making more flexible the terms of reference of the process of standardization and validation of specialty titles, will allow to create conditions less prone to a type of permanent emigration to other countries and of low impact for the Dominican Republic, but that it would allow to create more stable terms of exchange, in time (See chapter 4 and 6).

The creation of inter-institutional exchange ties in the Dominican Republic is consubstantial to this objective. Although at the moment incipient concrete actions in this sense exist, like the creation of the National Development Strategy, and especially in the section referred to the health sector, it is important to warn the need to give them continuity in time.

In this sense, one of the main institutional objectives that are proposed as a result of this study is that of thinking the lines of work that allow to reorganize and systematize the available information on the subject of migration. This line of thinking is divided into four key aspects, to know:

1. Creating an aggregate and structured database, to cross information of the institutions with greater implication in this theme, to know: a) The dean's Office of Medicine of the Faculty of Medicine and Sciences of the Health of the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo (UASD), b) The Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance (MSPyAS), c) The Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (MESCyT), d) The Dominican Medical Association (CMD), and The Association of Professional Nurses (AEP).
2. Integrating a set of questions addressed to health professionals in the framework of the Demographic and health Survey (ENDESA), carried out not only in the Dominican Republic, but also in other countries of Latin America, for the purpose of building variables and creating information related to the theme of migrations of health professional in the country.
3. Creating an inter-institutional technical commission intended to follow up on the process of creation and production of information and registrations of the health sector.
4. Integrating in the law that creates the National Development Strategy of the Dominican Republic 2030, the necessary dispositions to make of national interest, and in the long term, the articulation of inter-institutional crossed information of the public institutions linked to the subject of health and other vital sectors of civic life as is it also education.



From this perspective, as is seen, two other relevant aspects become important in these lines of thinking: First, the governmental and sectorial inter-institutional articulation, and in second place, the production of aggregated and crossed information and consubstantial registrations to the research and development of social plans and projects especially tied to the health and education sectors of the Dominican Republic (Chapter 6).