



Volume 13 - Issue 1, 2013 - Cover Story: The Job Market for Radiologists

Prospects in Spain



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(May 2018-May 2020)

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Is there a shortage of radiologists in Spain?

There used to be a shortage of radiologists for the last few years. However, lately, and due to the economic crisis, many radiologists are unemployed, even though there are enough vacancies. The situation is not even in Spain. Health competencies are transferred to the regional governments, and the impact of the crisis is uneven too.

Do enough radiologists enter a career in academic radiology in your country?

The presence of radiologists at our universities is increasing, but we consider that it should improve. We think that academic radiology should be reinforced, but it is difficult to fulfill this goal.

Which is stronger in your country: public or private radiology? Are radiologists interested in a career in the public sector?

Public radiology is still stronger. However, we are mindful of important political and organisational changes in some of our communities, where their corresponding governments are reinforcing private practice.

Are Spanish radiologists going to work overseas at all?

They are beginning to consider it. Unemployment was an unknown term in our profession but, unfortunately, it is something we are more and more familiar with.

What has been the impact of the global financial recession on medical imaging in Spain?

We think that the impact of the global financial recession on medical imaging in our country is similar to many other activities: shortage of employment, decrease in salaries and huge decrease in private reimbursement for services. Besides this, no new hospitals are being opened and investment in equipment is close to zero in some regions.

Has the government made any cuts that directly affect the medical imaging workforce, in the face of the financial crisis? For example cutting the number of posts in the public sector or hiring more external contractors?

As noted before, this is the situation in Spain: fewer posts in the public sector; more investment in private practice. However, globally, investment in health has been severely decreased.

Looking to the future, please tell us about your project to measure the competency of radiologists.

The project we are working on can be considered a quite innovative one, as it focuses on the actual abilities and performance of radiologists. Competency models are usually focused on knowledge measurement. What we will implement is a model where radiologists can compare what they do with some 'standards' that we define as 'competency elements'. We have designed a 'map' which includes the different competency elements. The certification will be achieved when a radiologist can prove that he or she is able to perform the corresponding competency elements in the proper way. It is voluntary, and we intend that our model will be important not only for radiologists, but also for managers and educators. For the last months we have been working in competencies in interventional radiology and, if it is as successful as we expect, our aim is to expand the model to other subspecialties.

Published on : Fri, 15 Mar 2013