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EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF SALARIED DOCTORS**

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**Report for FEMS
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Growing support for medical unions

In Spain, we have been immersed in union elections since the end of the past year and the good news is that the results achieved until now, have given to the medical unions more support than ever.

The support given has been such that Metges de Catalunya that represents over 24,000 doctors has become the principal union. For the first time, medical unions have supplanted the large general unions (CCOO and UGT) despite the fact that "all" workers in the sector can vote for them.

Considering that doctors only represent 15 to 17% of the workforce, this represents a significant achievement.

In other regional health services, the CESM has garnered significant support, whereas the support of the Government to the biggest unions has been declined, although the Government tends to treat them in a "special" way. The population and the medical profession accuse the biggest unions of looking out for their own interests with little regard for the economic crisis affecting the country as a whole.

Considering that last year doctor's salaries were cut an average of 7.5% and have been frozen since then, doctors have not forgotten that only the professional unions protested against this discrimination, as the salary cut was greater for them than for the rest of public employees (where the average cut is of 5%).

Our positive results in the union elections, reinforces our prime objective: demand independent negotiations with the public administrations.

Although doctors did not want elections, the regulations do require them, but the results show that doctors prefer to represent themselves through professional unions. The goal is to hold direct negotiations with employers, including, of course, the public administrations.

On the other hand and regarding to our last report, there is little to report other than timid advances in the following issues:

- **Employment stability** through offers of public employment.
- The courts have agreed with our contention that **retirement** at the age of 65 should be voluntary or at least be justified.
- We have managed to re-address a situation in which no less than **45% of candidates** for the latest specialisation test (MIR), were **non-EU doctors**.
- We continue demanding the creation of a **public register of doctors** (which, incredibly, does not yet exist).
- The **union of all medical organisations** (professional, academic and scientific organisations and CESH as the medical union) continues apace thanks to the Medical Profession Forum.