



Charles V Palace in Alhambra

Andalusia, Spain

General overview

The region of Andalusia, which covers an area of 87.5 km² in the south of Spain, has a population of 8.4 million (18% of the total population of the country) (1). Life expectancy in the region is 81.9 years (79.2 for males and 84.6 for females) (1). The Andalusian Regional Ministry of Health is responsible for public health, health policy, planning and regulation, and the provision and management of health care in the region. It also provides leadership of the Andalusian Public Health System (APHS). As stated in the *Andalusian Health Act* (1998) and the *Andalusian Public Health Act* (2011), APHS's driving principles are based on equity, guaranteed rights related to health care, territorial homogeneity, accessibility, transparency and participation.

APHS is responsible for the provision of universal health care in the region, also to undocumented migrants. It comprises a wide network based on accessible, high-quality, patient-centred care. There are two levels of care: (i) primary health care, which forms the backbone of the system and is provided in 1500 centres grouped in health districts (the managerial unit for this level of care) throughout the region; and (ii) specialized care of varying complexity, which is available in 49 public hospitals. There are other dependent entities that

foster research and innovation in the field of public health and health care in the region, such as the Biobank Network, a specific public enterprise for emergency care, the Andalusian School of Public Health, and the Progress and Health Foundation.

As part of the Spanish health system, APHS is funded by taxes and operates predominantly in the public sector. Health care is provided free of charge at the point of care; medication is covered in part. There are 96 500 health-care professionals working in the public-health-care system in the region.

The overarching goals of the region's health policy are stated in the Andalusian Health Plan, which is passed by the Regional Government. The Plan defines the action to be taken by the different departments, using the Health-in-All Policies (HiAP) approach (2), as well as the funding each department shall allocate to this end. It specifies objectives for each of the eight provinces in connection with which local health-related action plans are drawn up in each municipality. Health impact assessment (HIA) (3) is compulsory for all sectoral plans and programmes passed by the Regional Government that could have an impact on health, general urban planning, and activities related to environmental control.

To further develop the action lines included in the Andalusian Health Plan, several transversal plans have been designed to tackle the most relevant health-related issues. Examples of these are the Plan on Comprehensive Health Care for Patients with Chronic Diseases and the Andalusian Comprehensive Care Strategy.



Strengths

The strengths of the Andalusia region are:

- ✓ the *Andalusia Public Health Act*, which is based on HiAP principles (2);
- ✓ the Andalusia Regional Health Plan, including commitments from all departments, passed by the Regional Government;
- ✓ the obligation to include HIA (3) in regional initiatives;
- ✓ the continuity of political will for, and commitment to, the development of the Public Health Strategy;
- ✓ the coordination of the activities of the Andalusian Health Care System and other sectors, particularly those related to health protection and promotion.



Aspirations

The region is aiming to further develop:

- ✓ successful public health programmes and activities at the local level, using the HiAP approach (2);
- ✓ regional policies on the reduction of health inequities;
- ✓ HIA (3), particularly of government plans, industrial projects and urban planning.



Challenges

These are:

- ✓ budgetary restrictions;
- ✓ finding ways of increasing equity across the whole region.

Potential areas of collaboration

Andalusia is interested in working with other regions on the:

- ✓ inclusion of a health-assets approach, according to the HiAP strategy (2,3);
- ✓ further development of HIA (4);
- ✓ development of a public health research programme oriented to decision-makers' needs;
- ✓ development and implementation of public health programmes and activities at the local level;
- ✓ identification and implementation of efficient regional policies to reduce historical health inequities.

Working groups

Andalusia is interested in participating in working groups on:

- ✓ environment;
- ✓ women's/men's health;
- ✓ participatory approaches/resilience;
- ✓ the all-of-government approach/intersectoral action.

People working in the Regions for Health Network (RHN)

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