

## NOTICE OF RETRACTION OF AN ARTICLE



See also Collins, p. 963; and Regidor et al., p. 1043.

I have decided to retract this article: Antonio Cabrera de León, MD, PhD, Itahisa Marcelino Rodríguez, PhD, Fadoua Gannar, PhD, Arturo J. Pedrero García, MD, Delia Almeida González, PhD, M. del Cristo Rodríguez Pérez, MD, PhD, Buenaventura Brito Díaz, MD, PhD, José Juan Alemán Sánchez, MD, PhD, and Armando Aguirre-Jaime, PhD, “Austerity Policies and Mortality in Spain After the Financial Crisis of 2008,” *American Journal of Public Health* 108, no. 8 (August 1, 2018): 1091–1098, doi: AJPB-201721828R2, because there is clear evidence that the findings are inaccurate and misleading.

After accepting the article in 2018, we invited an editorial by Hernández-Quevedo et al., which suggested that there was a major flaw in the analysis. I then asked Cabrera de León et al. to revise the article on the basis of the editorial. The authors made some changes but did not want to modify their main conclusion: half a million deaths were attributable to the economic crisis and austerity policy of the late 2000s in Spain. The article and the editorial were published in August 2018. I did not retract the article then because it had undergone peer review and I had no evidence of the magnitude of the flaw.

Since then, we have reviewed and accepted an article, published in this July issue, by Regidor et al. (p. 1043) that provides a more accurate analysis and interpretation of the data: overall mortality declined in Spain between 2001 and 2016 even though there was a small uptick during the austerity years that does not have a singular explanation.

Given this indisputable array of evidence that the 2018 article is misleading, I sought the advice of the chairman of the editorial board of the American Public Health Association, who recommended retraction on the basis of the Committee on Publication Ethics guidelines, which state, “Journal editors should consider retracting a publication if they have clear evidence that the findings are unreliable, either as a result of misconduct (e.g. data fabrication) or honest error (e.g. miscalculation or experimental error)” and “Retraction is a mechanism for correcting the literature and alerting readers to publications that contain such seriously flawed or erroneous data that their findings and conclusions cannot be relied upon.”

I regret that I have to take this action, but there is no alternative.

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