

Nature Editorial highlights the CNIO as a successful model for scientific management in Spain

“A new Silver Age?” With this question, the journal Nature reviews Spain’s efforts to boost research. “The Spanish Government”, it notes, “has doubled funding for research in the past four years and the next government could create the legal structures necessary to guarantee that money is invested effectively”.

The journal highlights the recent conversion of the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) into an independent agency, and the government’s objective to boost spending to 2% of the GDP by the year 2011. However, it observes that excessive bureaucracy and rigid selection criteria for new scientists, currently faced by research centres and researchers alike, are the biggest obstacles to maximum efficiency for Spanish science.

In this context it puts the Spanish National Cancer Research Centre (CNIO) forward as an example, whose management structure is completely different from the one established for the other public centres, which allowed it to position itself within the ten years of its existence as one of the world’s most renowned research centres.

“If the CSIC develops appropriately as an agency and an independent granting agency is created, then Spain will be well on its way to European norms. The excellence of its scientists is reflected in the success achieved in obtaining funds recently granted by the European Research Council, to which Spain presented highly competitive projects. All this indicates that Spain is capable of entering a new Silver Age. But only if its government will let it” the article closes.