



COMITÉ PERMANENT DES MÉDECINS EUROPÉENS  
STANDING COMMITTEE OF EUROPEAN DOCTORS



European Junior Doctors  
Association



Fédération Européenne  
des Médecins Salariés  
European Federation  
of Salaried Doctors



## Brexit and the European Medical Profession

Dear Dr von der Leyen, Dear Mr Sassoli,

We are writing to you on behalf of the European medical profession and, firstly, would like to congratulate you on your respective elections as President-elect of the European Commission and as President of the European Parliament.

You will be aware that Brexit – the UK's impending departure from the EU – and the related uncertainty is already having profound repercussions for the European medical profession and its ongoing ability to provide high quality healthcare to patients across the continent.

Currently, the nearly 22,000<sup>1</sup> EEA (European Economic Area) qualified doctors in the UK can practise there and in other member states due to the mutual recognition of professional medical qualifications (MRPQ) and the principle of free movement. In addition to facilitating such cross-border working, these principles play a crucial role in both doctors' professional development and in meeting various workforce requirements across Europe.

Indeed, research<sup>2</sup> undertaken by our colleagues in the BMA (British Medical Association) indicates that over 1/3 of such EEA qualified doctors in the UK are considering moving abroad, with 18% per cent of those who responded to that question thinking about leaving Europe entirely.

We are also all too aware of the disproportionate impact that related legislative changes will have on our members on both sides of the Irish border and the patients they serve in both jurisdictions.

Thankfully, your institution and many of its members, both former and current, have helped to secure a draft withdrawal agreement that seeks to mitigate Brexit's impact upon the European medical profession.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/our-data-about-doctors-with-eea-pmq-2018\\_pdf-76231983.pdf](https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/our-data-about-doctors-with-eea-pmq-2018_pdf-76231983.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bma.org.uk/collective-voice/influence/europe/brexit/eu-survey-2018>

Likewise, its call – in the parliamentary resolution *The impact of EU cohesion policy on Northern Ireland*<sup>3</sup> – that “EU regional funding should be maintained at an adequate level post-2020” is hugely welcoming given the increasingly vital role that such funding plays in the delivery of cross-border health services in Ireland.

Nevertheless, and being fully cognisant that the UK may depart from the EU without having ratified the draft withdrawal agreement, much more must be done to mitigate Brexit’s impact on the European medical profession and the patients it serves across the continent.

Echoing the points that we have already made to the EU’s Chief Negotiator, we would reaffirm our view, which is shared both the European Council and the UK government that “the future partnership should include ambitious provisions on movement of natural persons...in areas such as (the) recognition of professional qualifications<sup>4</sup>.”

Accordingly, we would urge you to work inter-institutionally to deliver pragmatic solutions that permit such a system of MRPQ to safeguard our members’ ongoing pan-European provision of essential health services to Europe’s patients.

We hope that this information is helpful and would be delighted to meet with you in person to expand upon these views and the other, numerous, Brexit related issues threatening our members and their patients across Europe.

Yours sincerely,



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(European Association  
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José Manuel Martins dos Santos

Dr José Santos,  
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3 [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2018-0323\\_EN.html](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2018-0323_EN.html)

4 <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/33458/23-euco-art50-guidelines.pdf>