

Mr Cristian-Silviu Buşoi MEP
ASP 11E116
Parlement européen
60, rue Wiertz
B-1047 Bruxelles

2nd December 2019

Brexit and the European Medical Profession

Dear Mr Cristian-Silviu Buşoi MEP,

I am writing to you on behalf of the British medical profession and, firstly, would like to congratulate you on your recent election as Chair of the EP's (European Parliament) Committee on Industry, Research and Energy.

As a trained physician yourself, you will be all too aware that Brexit – the UK's (United Kingdom) impending departure from the EU (European Union) – and the related uncertainty will have profound repercussions for the medical profession and its ongoing ability to provide high quality healthcare to patients across Europe. Likewise, it will severely impact the medical profession's ability to train the next generations of doctors and their subsequent development of future drugs, devices and techniques through collaborative research and clinical trials.

According to Universities UK¹ 17% (33,735) of academic staff at UK universities are from other EU countries. They can work here and in other member states due to the mutual recognition of professional medical qualifications (MRPQ) and the principle of free movement.

Their work in STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) subjects plays a vital role in the fostering and development of medical research in the UK, across Europe, and, indeed globally, as well as in the teaching and training future doctors and researchers.

With over 1/3² of EEA qualified doctors in the UK considering moving abroad as a result of Brexit, and 18% per cent of that number thinking about leaving Europe entirely, we are extremely concerned that the UK's decision to leave the EU could not only imperil high quality medical research and medical education in our own country but also in the EU as a whole.

¹ <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/news/Pages/Top-European-researchers-need-certainty-about-their-futures-in-the-UK.aspx>

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



Thankfully, your institution and many of its members, both former and current, have sought to mitigate Brexit's impact upon the European medical profession. Nonetheless, I am aware of the risk that the UK may depart from the EU without a withdrawal agreement. Much more must be done, therefore, to limit the damage Brexit is likely to have on European medical research and the intrinsic pan-European nature of this work on behalf of patients.

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 qualifications³."

Likewise, and given the vital role that EU research programmes like Horizon 2020 have played in the fostering and development of European medical research, we believe that the future partnership must facilitate an innovation agreement between the EU and UK. Such an agreement would include:

- A commitment by the UK and the members of the European Union to work together to make the European Research Area a world leader in science
- Full researcher mobility between the UK and the rest of Europe for all levels and career stages
- Continued participation in Erasmus and similar schemes giving students and staff opportunities to study in other EU countries and the UK
- A commitment to collaboration, including UK associate membership of Horizon Europe;
- Continued participation in the European Investment Bank (which has played a vital role in the development of the academic estate across the EU) so that the rest of the EU retains ongoing access to the intellectual property and service, business and trade opportunities generated by the investments
- Co-operation on and mutual recognition of regulations that support science

Accordingly, and as your committee will play a lead role within the EP's consideration of such matters, we would urge you to help deliver such pragmatic solutions that facilitate ongoing high quality medical research across Europe.

I hope that this information is helpful and can advise that our EU Public Affairs Manager, Paul Laffin – who will be in touch separately, would be delighted to meet with you in person to expand upon these views.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Chand Nagpal CBE, Chair of BMA UK Council

³ <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/33458/23-euco-art50-guidelines.pdf>