

Prof. Dr Frank Ulrich Montgomery
President of the CPME (Standing Committee of European Doctors)
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B-1040 Brussels,
Belgium

14 May 2020

Securing the future of the medical profession beyond the transition period

Dear President

Firstly, please allow me to echo your own comments and note the BMA's continued solidarity with those brave and committed doctors who continue to battle the Covid-19 pandemic, often at great personal risk, across Europe.

Whilst our energies are obviously focused on tackling the pandemic, we regrettably must also engage with the negotiations taking place to determine the nature of the UK's future relationship with the EU.

Despite Covid-19, our government has insisted that the negotiations continue (by video conference) and that the transition period will end on 31 December 2020.

We understand that certain strands of the negotiations are progressing more quickly than others and that these encompass both risks and opportunities for our respective members. We would like to ask for support on the following priorities:

1. Mutual recognition of professional qualifications

On the positive side, it has been suggested that "there is agreement that there can be agreement" regarding the recognition of professional qualifications. However, the exact nature of such recognition seems to be the issue at hand with significant differences existing between the UK and EU's proposals.

The EU is seeking a "[CETA](#)" type arrangement which would permit regulatory bodies or professional associations, in essence CPME's membership, to undertake the development of MRAs (Mutual Recognition Agreements) The UK proposals have not been published. However, we understand that our government is pushing for a bespoke "pathway" to also facilitate the swift recognition of professional qualifications.



2. Research cooperation

Equally worrying are the suggestions that negotiations on the nature of the UK's ongoing participation, albeit as a 3rd country, in the EU's research networks and programmes - like Horizon Europe - will be extremely difficult to resolve in a mutually beneficial manner. Indeed, it has even been suggested that agreement may not be reached and that the UK may ultimately refocus its research plans beyond Europe. With 2 of the top 3 globally rankedⁱ universities in the UK (LMU Munich is the highest-ranking EU university at #32), and given the vital role that EEA nationals (17% of the UK's total academic staff) play in the development of innovative treatments for our patients, it is clear that such an outcome should be avoided.

We are confident, however, that, with the ongoing support of CPME and its constituent members, both sets of negotiators can be persuaded to adopt the pragmatic solutions necessary to ensure that the future relationship reflects our shared interests. As we jointly demonstrated during the first phase of negotiations, when helping to secure the ongoing mutual recognition of our professional qualifications until the end of the transition period, the use of qualitative case-study style data is invaluable when engaging with decision makers from both camps.

As such, we would be grateful if you could circulate the following message amongst your membership with the request that they in turn disseminate it within their national networks:

Re: Securing the future of the medical profession in a post-Brexit Europe

As part of our ongoing efforts to ensure that, post-Brexit, Europe's doctors can continue to train, work, undertake research and teach in both the EEA and UK, we're looking to speak with doctors who are currently, or have previously been, working/training/teaching or undertaking research in the UK.

If you fit this profile and would be interested in assisting our work in this area, or have a colleague who would also be keen, please email the BMA's (British Medical Association) EU Public Affairs Manager, [Paul Laffin](#)

Yours sincerely,



Dr Terry John, Chair of the BMA's International Committee

ⁱ https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2020/world-ranking#!/page/0/length/25/sort_by/rank/sort_order/asc/cols/stats