



Report of meeting with European Commission Taskforce 50 ('Brexit')

14 February 2017

On 14 February 2017, CPME, jointly with the BMA, FEMS and UEMS, met with the European Commission's Taskforce 50 which, under the lead of chief negotiator Michel Barnier, will negotiate the terms of withdrawal for the UK's exit from the EU. The meeting was called in follow-up to the European Medical Organisations' [joint letter](#) on 'Brexit' and the European medical profession.

By way of introduction the BMA presented the three main points of their call: the safeguarding of rights of EU nationals working as doctors in the UK and vice versa, the continued cooperation on public health issues, the sustainability of funding of and collaboration on research. The BMA furthermore expressed the hope that the safeguarding of the healthcare system can be lifted above politics.

The Commission gave the following responses:

- Prior to the official notification by the UK government of its intention to withdraw from the EU, as set out in Art. 50 TFEU, the European Commission is merely in 'listening mode', as it cannot undertake any action, nor can it comment on activities.
- The process foresees that once the official Art. 50 notification is received from the UK government, the 27 other Member States will hold a European Council summit to determine negotiation guidelines. On this basis the Commission shall prepare a proposal for a negotiation mandate, which is adopted by the Council in its formation of 27 Member States. This will be supported by Council Negotiating Directives, which instruct the Commission in leading negotiations and can be adjusted as necessary throughout the process.
- The withdrawal process under the Art. 50 negotiations will be completely separate to the negotiations on the future relationship between the UK and the EU, both in timing as well as in legal basis and procedure. These will depend on the outcomes of the Art. 50 negotiations. It is not clear who will carry out the negotiations on the future relationship on behalf of the EU.
- As to the rights of EU national doctors working in the UK, the rights of citizens shall be negotiated on the basis of reciprocity for EU nationals in the UK and UK nationals in the EU. The aim is to achieve legal certainty for all as to equal treatment and the right to reside, as well as contingent issues such as social security rights. The agreement should respect general principles, such as the equal arrangements applying to all EU Member States.
- The Commission took note of the appeals as to the usefulness of continued cooperation on public health, such as on antimicrobial resistance or environmental health, including the role of EU agencies.
- The status of funding for research such as Horizon 2020 will be addressed as part of the financial settlement between the UK and the EU.