



COMITÉ PERMANENT DES MÉDECINS EUROPÉENS  
STANDING COMMITTEE OF EUROPEAN DOCTORS



European Junior Doctors  
Association

20 April 2021

## Recognition of Professional Qualifications

(to whom it may concern),

We are writing regarding the European medical profession's initiative on mutual recognition of professional qualifications (MRPQ) to ensure continuity and legal certainty for both medical professionals, and students in post-Brexit Europe.

Europe's doctors are extremely mobile professionals with many enhancing their clinical skills, and ultimately the health of their patients, by studying, training, practising or teaching medicine in several European countries over the course of their careers. With over 22,000<sup>1</sup> EEA (European Economic Area) qualified doctors licensed to practise in the UK and nearly 3000<sup>2</sup> EEA nationals studying at British medical schools, we want to ensure that such cross-pollination continues.

In the aftermath of the UK's withdrawal from the EU, holders of UK qualifications will no longer be able to benefit from the EU Recognition of Professional Qualifications Directive and as of 1 January 2021 automatic MRPQ between the UK and the EU officially ended. Consequently, we are writing to consider finding common solutions to continue sharing knowledge and expertise enabling professional development through working in different systems across Europe regardless of the political environment.

Currently, students from the EU studying for a medical degree in the UK may find that their qualifications obtained in the UK will not be automatically recognised and that therefore they will not be able to quickly practise in their country of origin, unless the destination country's domestic law is changed to enable this to avoid the 3rd country route for recognising professional qualifications.

We welcomed that during the negotiations stage the UK and the EU shared the same ambition of ensuring mutual recognition of qualifications, with the EU seeking 'ambitious provisions' for MRPQ in their negotiating mandate. However, we feel disappointed the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) does not include a provision, proposed by UK government and supported by the European Medical Organisations, including CPME, UEMO, UEMS and EJD,<sup>3</sup> to enshrine MRPQ directly

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/our-data-about-doctors-with-an-eea-pmq-2019\\_pdf-80536969.pdf](https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/our-data-about-doctors-with-an-eea-pmq-2019_pdf-80536969.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/somep-2020\\_pdf-84684244.pdf?la=en&hash=F68243A899E21859AB1D31866CC54A0119E60291](https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/somep-2020_pdf-84684244.pdf?la=en&hash=F68243A899E21859AB1D31866CC54A0119E60291)

<sup>3</sup> Letter to Michel Barnier:

[https://www.cpme.eu/index.php?downloadunprotected=/uploads/adopted/2020/7/047a\\_MRPQ\\_EU.UK\\_.FTA\\_.EMOs\\_07072020.pdf.pdf](https://www.cpme.eu/index.php?downloadunprotected=/uploads/adopted/2020/7/047a_MRPQ_EU.UK_.FTA_.EMOs_07072020.pdf.pdf)

in the TCA. Such a solution would have applied to every member state on an equal footing and have entered immediately into force upon formal ratification of the TCA.

We note that TCA provides a mechanism to facilitate future mutual recognition agreements<sup>4</sup> between the UK and EU competent authorities but this is a largely untested process, requiring further detailed agreements and procedure, and will likely require time to take shape.

Given that UK government has unilaterally decided to continue to recognise EU/EEA qualifications for up to two years post-transition<sup>5</sup>, as a more immediate solution, the European medical profession would request your regulatory body to consider altering their internal legislation so as to continue automatically recognising UK professional qualifications for a period of time. To date, Ireland<sup>6</sup>, Spain<sup>7</sup> and Switzerland<sup>8</sup> have officially confirmed such changes domestically which allow automatic recognition of qualifications granted in the UK.

We would be most appreciative if you could consider introducing the necessary changes to your national law as this could provide certainty for continued cooperation of the European medical profession.

We look forward to hearing from you and would be delighted to provide further information upon request.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Terry John  
Head of the BMA CPME Delegation



Prof. Dr Frank Ulrich Montgomery  
President, Standing Committee of European Doctors



Prof. Vassilios Papalois  
President, European Union of Medical Specialists



Dr Călin Bumbuț,  
President, European Union of Family Physicians



Mathias Körner  
President, European Junior Doctors Association



Alexandra Archodoulakis  
Vice President, European Medical Students' Association

---

<sup>4</sup> TCA, Article SERVIN.5.13, page 97:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/948119/EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement 24.12.2020.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/948119/EU-UK_Trade_and_Cooperation_Agreement_24.12.2020.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Health care and social care professions: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/recognition-of-professional-qualifications-technical-guidance-for-regulatory-bodies/recognition-of-professional-qualifications-guidance-for-regulatory-bodies>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.medicalcouncil.ie/registration-applications/first-time-applicants/general-registration-non-eu-eea-trained-doctors.html>

<sup>7</sup> Exercise of Health Professions: <https://www.lamoncloa.gob.es/lang/en/brexit/howtoprepare/Paginas/190109socialsecurity.aspx>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cs-switzerland-no52019-ukswitzerland-agreement-on-citizens-rights-following-withdrawal-of-uk-from-the-eu-and-free-movement-of-persons-agreement>