



#ECR2019: "Brexit means Brexit" - Radiologists without borders



Staff Editor Rebecca Smith

Staff Editor

*****@**mindbyte.eu

Staff Editor -
HealthManagement

A morning seminar was held on Thursday 28th February at the ECR, chaired by Miraude Adriaensen and titled Imaging professionals in EU: Radiologists without borders.

A number of speakers participated in the discussion but one in particular stood out, Vassilios Papalois spoke passionately about a very current situation that is causing a huge amount of uncertainty for just about everyone living in Europe and beyond, BREXIT!

The name Brexit, (British and Exit) is a play on words and derived from the impending withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union. It follows the referendum that took place on 23 June 2016. Due to the result of that referendum, the UK is scheduled to leave the EU at 1pm (GMT) on Friday, 29th March 2019.

Vassilios Papalois, passionately put the case forward as to why he thinks Brexit is a huge mistake for Britain to follow through with. He reinforced his point by describing the effects it will have on the Medical Profession alone as an example. Mr. Papalois made it very clear that he felt the coming together of the European Union which was established when the Maastricht treaty came into force in 1993, had been very progressive, innovative and beneficial for everyone in it. He warned that Brexit, combined with a very challenging and at times hostile political environment was going to cause huge negative consequences worldwide in the forthcoming years.

The European Union (EU) was primarily set up due to the devastation that the Second World War had caused and is both a political and an economic union. The EU consists of 28 member states and works with over 40 countries National Medical Associations known as The European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS), which is a non-governmental organization representing national associations of medical specialists within the European Union and its associated countries. It has a current membership of over forty countries and brings together over sixty specialist sections and approximately 1,600,000 medical specialists in Europe.

In a nutshell, some of the aims of working with the UEMS are to “enhance European medical policy through the collaboration of medical professions in order to ensure the highest standards of training, quality control, patient care and mutual recognition of professional qualifications. Additionally, the Association is responsible for the implementation of measures which protect patient safety, ongoing access to EU research programs, research funding, and membership of Euratom. Lastly it enables freedom of movement across borders for the benefit of both patients and health professionals. This has all been made possible because of the collaboration of the European union as equal partners with open borders.

If the British government follow through on Brexit, not only could it have a huge negative effect on the current collaboration between all countries concerned, it will also restrict movement of travel, patients and medical care. This also does not factor in the unique and considerable impact Brexit may have on Northern Ireland's health service.

To conclude, Dr. Papalois, stated that he believed that the reintroduction of European borders will fail because of the realities and necessities that dictate what happens in life; Currently Europe has freedom of movement which is essential for all matters of health care, education and the sharing of facilities and skills. Funding provided by the EU is essential for all countries within it. Once you group and examine all of the above as a package it becomes obvious why a collaboration of every country working together with open borders is necessary and beneficial for us all.

Source: HealthManagement.org live coverage

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