Description

The progress of Brexit negotiations between the UK and the EU have captured the attention of the global public. As the deadline for the UK to leave the EU draws near, it appears more likely that the two will fail to strike a deal. At the end of November, Prime Minister Theresa May had reached an agreement with the EU. But in a shocking landslide vote, the UK Parliament rejected the proposal. Prime Minister May survived the subsequent no confidence vote, increasing the prospect of a crash-out Brexit. A no-deal Brexit threatens to disrupt many ongoing scientific collaborations, not to mention the economy. What will happen to the UK's researchers in this case? Let us have a look at what is going on with Brexit and the possible implications for the global research community.

Brexit, a Rejected Proposal, and a No Confidence Vote

Since the UK decided in 2016 to leave the EU, much has been written about what a disaster a no-deal Brexit would be. The British Parliament roundly rejected Theresa May's proposed deal in a historic vote on January 15. This was followed by a no confidence vote, which would have removed Prime Minister May from power had it succeeded. For the research community, this would mean more time to prepare for whatever is coming next. However, Prime Minister May held on and won the no confidence vote. A no-deal Brexit is now looking very likely. The UK is scheduled to leave the EU on March 29, 2019, with or without a deal.

What Does a No-Deal Brexit Mean for UK Scientists?

The impacts of a no-deal Brexit will be devastating to the entire country, and the research community is no exception. Scientific funding, lab resources, data sharing, and other critical aspects of scientific research will all be impacted by a no-deal Brexit. One example of this is Horizon 2020, which has 8 billion euros in funding available for the next six years to fund research on issues including climate change, migration, and public health. A no-deal Brexit will disqualify British researchers from receiving any of this funding.

Universities are also stockpiling lab supplies, as no-deal Brexit threatens to disrupt supply chains and impose tariffs on the import of critical materials. The Francis Crick Institute is preparing for the uncertain future by stocking laboratory equipments for at least one month. The UK Department of Health has promised to charter a plane to fly in radioisotopes essential for medical screening for

conditions such as liver disease and cancer.

A no-deal Brexit would also have an impact on the free movement of scientists between the UK and the EU. The government has promised that EU citizens would still be allowed into the country. Allowances will also be available for those already living in Britain. However, certain universities are hiring as many researchers as possible before March 29 to reduce any potential immigration problems.

What Does this Mean for the Global Scientific Community?

A no-deal Brexit will not only impact EU and British scientists. It will impact the global research community. During the transition period, ongoing collaborations are likely to face difficulty as British institutions adjust. Further, Brexit has already driven an exodus of large companies from the country, meaning non-academic jobs for researchers in the UK are decreasing. The UK will likely become less of a destination for international researchers, which is a loss for the UK and the world alike. Whatever happens, the changes will take some adjusting for everyone.

What do you think of Brexit? Will you be impacted by the changes? Let us know your thoughts in the comments below.

Category

1. Industry News
2. Publishing News

Date Created
2019/01/31
Author
eneditor