Brexit fallout: An uncertain future for academic scientists
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On June 23, 2016, the U.K. voted to leave the European Union—and science has not been immune to its effects. The referendum has led to uncertainties in future policies and funding that could hurt the research enterprise and science-related higher education in the U.K., according to an article in Chemical & Engineering News (C&EN), the weekly newsmagazine of the American Chemical Society.

While there are no hard numbers on how many academic researchers have left the U.K., some have already packed their bags, and others are preparing to do so. Uncertainty over future funding and collaborations is a large part of their calculus. Many researchers in the country worry about accessing grant money awarded by the €80 billion Horizon 2020 funding program, which promotes EU science and technology research. In an attempt to reassure scientists, the U.K.'s Department for Exiting the EU has said that it wants to stay involved in EU collaborations. The U.K. has also promised to underwrite any money lost due to the Brexit process, but many researchers are hesitant to trust the government's assurances.

The U.K. could also face the challenge of recruiting new scientific talent under fickle conditions. There are early signs—albeit anecdotal ones—that its academic labs are receiving fewer applications than they did pre-referendum. Even if U.K. science ultimately regains its footing in a couple of decades, the process of transitioning out of the EU poses a significant challenge in the near future, say experts.

More information: "Brexit leaves cloud of uncertainty looming over academic scientists," https://cen.acs.org/articles/9 ... emic-scientists.html

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