# AstraZeneca CEO signals potential shift of company listing to US amid UK innovation concerns



Three years after receiving a knighthood for his leadership in UK life sciences and the global Covid-19 response, AstraZeneca CEO Sir Pascal Soriot is reportedly contemplating a dramatic shift—moving the company’s primary stock market listing, and potentially its corporate domicile, from London to the United States. This development has sent shockwaves through Britain’s scientific community and financial markets, exposing the government’s failure to create an environment conducive to national innovation and threatening the London Stock Exchange’s reputation as a global financial hub.

Soriot's tenure has seen AstraZeneca grow into Britain’s most valuable company, yet his recent hints at relocating reflect a stark reality: UK institutions are increasingly unattractive for top-tier companies. Despite fending off a Pfizer takeover in 2014 and pioneering Covid vaccine development, AstraZeneca’s future in the UK appears increasingly uncertain due to the government’s poor handling of the pharmaceutical sector. The company’s investments—over £1 billion in Cambridge and a recent $3.5 billion in Massachusetts—highlight a clear preference for the US’s more business-friendly environment. Meanwhile, Britain’s regulatory policies and drug pricing models are viewed as barriers to innovation, with policy decisions often driven by short-term political expediency rather than fostering long-term scientific growth.

AstraZeneca’s difficulties are emblematic of broader systemic failures. For example, its breast cancer drug Enhertu remains unapproved for NHS use in England and Wales, despite being available in Scotland and Europe, at discounted prices. Additionally, AstraZeneca’s plan to expand vaccine production near Liverpool was abandoned after the government failed to provide adequate support—underscoring how Britain’s regulatory climate and political indecisiveness are hampering investment. Industry leaders, including Soriot, argue that the UK’s approach stifles innovation compared to the US, which employs a system with a unified list price and income-linked discounts, thus encouraging investment and research. Meanwhile, the UK dedicates a mere 7% of healthcare costs to new medicines, lagging behind European and US standards, which often allocate 10-15%.

Soriot has been explicit in his concerns: companies seek environments where innovation is rewarded, market access is simplified, and tax policies are favourable. The lengthy approval times for clinical trials and regulatory bottlenecks in the UK intensify this dissatisfaction. Despite outwardly reaffirming AstraZeneca’s commitment to Britain, the CEO has made it clear that without significant reforms, advanced manufacturing and high-tech jobs could drift abroad—a move that would deal a blow to the UK’s reputation as a leader in innovation.

The possibility of AstraZeneca’s delisting and relocation has unnerved investors and government officials alike. Although the company’s share price has temporarily risen on reports of a potential move, industry analysts warn that losing Britain’s most valuable company could be a fatal blow to London’s status as a financial centre. The London Stock Exchange has already seen a string of major departures, and the loss of AstraZeneca would be catastrophic, signaling that Britain’s once-competitive financial markets are increasingly losing their edge in a fiercely globalised economy.

For a government that claims to champion industry and innovation, these developments reveal a stark reality: economic policies are failing to protect the industries that should be Britain’s future. Negotiations over drug pricing reforms have stalled, further delaying vital strategies that could bolster the sector. As the upcoming Mansion House speech by Chancellor Rachel Reeves approaches, it remains uncertain whether the government can deliver a credible plan to stem the tide of corporate departures and restore confidence in Britain’s economic prospects. Meanwhile, AstraZeneca’s possible move underscores a fundamental failure of political leadership—one that prioritises short-term appearances over sustained growth and innovation.

The current trajectory threatens to turn Britain into a nation of scientific has-beens, with key industries already considering their options elsewhere. AstraZeneca’s potential departure is a stark reminder that unless new policies are introduced—focused on deregulation, competitive taxation, and investing in domestic innovation—the UK risks falling irrevocably behind in the global economic race. It’s time for policymakers to wake up and take decisive action before the damage becomes irreversible.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2025/jul/02/if-astrazeneca-goes-to-the-us-it-will-be-a-major-blow-for-london-and-labour> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.cambridgesciencepark.co.uk/news/astrazenecas-pascal-soriot-awarded-british-knighthood-for-services-to-uk-life-sciences-and-leadership-in-the-global-response-to-the-covid-pandemic-1432/> - In June 2022, Pascal Soriot, CEO of AstraZeneca, was awarded a British knighthood for his contributions to UK life sciences and leadership during the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The recognition highlights his dedication to advancing patient care and establishing AstraZeneca as a leading scientific company. Leif Johansson, AstraZeneca's Chair, praised Soriot's commitment to innovation and the development of the company's workforce, deeming the honour well-deserved amidst the celebrations of Her Majesty's historic jubilee.
3. <https://www.ft.com/content/683a0c27-7cf7-403d-9f31-c65290c50fc8> - AstraZeneca is reportedly considering moving its primary stock market listing from London to New York, raising concerns among investors and UK financial leaders. Fund managers fear that the departure of the largest FTSE-listed company could undermine the UK's equity market and broader economy. CEO Sir Pascal Soriot has expressed dissatisfaction with the UK business environment, including regulatory challenges and drug pricing disputes. A New York listing could potentially boost the company's valuation and align executive compensation with U.S. norms.
4. <https://www.cnbc.com/2025/07/02/astrazeneca-listing-move-would-be-memorable-loss-to-london-market.html> - The potential move of AstraZeneca's stock listing from London to New York is viewed as a significant loss for the London Stock Exchange. Experts attribute this to underperforming capital markets, regulatory constraints, and misaligned incentives that hinder scaling and rewarding innovation domestically. The departure of such a major company underscores the UK's diminishing appeal for world-class, scale-driven businesses, highlighting a broader trend of companies seeking better support and more ambitious investor bases in the U.S.
5. <https://www.business-standard.com/markets/news/astrazeneca-considers-moving-its-stock-market-listing-to-us-report-125070101526_1.html> - AstraZeneca is reportedly considering moving its stock market listing from London to the United States, a move that would significantly impact the UK stock market, which has seen a series of delistings and missed major initial public offerings in recent months. CEO Pascal Soriot has privately expressed a preference for this shift and has also discussed relocating the company's domicile. Such a move could appeal to U.S. President Donald Trump's efforts to attract investment to the U.S., despite trade policy uncertainties.
6. <https://www.investing.com/news/stock-market-news/astrazeneca-stock-rises-amid-reports-ceo-favors-us-listing-move-4119641> - AstraZeneca's stock rose by 2.2% following reports that CEO Sir Pascal Soriot is considering moving the company's stock market listing to the United States. Soriot has privately expressed interest in this move and has discussed relocating AstraZeneca's domicile. However, such a shift may face resistance from some board members and the British government, which has not been informed of these discussions. Soriot has publicly voiced concerns about Europe's lag in developing innovative medicines compared to the U.S. and China.
7. <https://www.statnews.com/pharmalot/2025/07/02/springer-nature-science-ireland-doctors-conflicts-novo-wegovy-ozempic-spain-weight-obesity-astrazeneca-stock-vertex-europe-cystic-fibrosis/> - AstraZeneca CEO Pascal Soriot is reportedly considering moving the company's stock market listing to the U.S., a move that could face resistance from parts of the board and the U.K. government. Soriot has expressed concerns about Europe's lag in developing innovative medicines compared to the U.S. and China. Such a move would be a significant blow to the London stock market and the U.K. life sciences sector, which the Labour government has prioritised in its industrial strategy.