

REGION UK

BUILDING A POST-BREXIT INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY – WHERE ARE THE LESSONS?

CAN THE GERMAN INDUSTRIAL EXPERIENCE CONTRIBUTE?

PANEL DISCUSSION BIRMINGHAM

On 15 March 2018, the UK Regional Committee of the British Chamber of Commerce in Germany and its sponsoring members, Pinsent Masons and the German-British Forum, welcomed members, friends of the Chamber and guests to a panel discussion titled "Building a post-Brexit industrial strategy – Where are the lessons? Can the German industrial experience contribute?". Held at the office of Pinsent Masons in Birmingham, the discussion featured an outstanding line of panellists with experience in both UK and German industry.

Greg Lowsen, Partner and Head of Office at Pinsent Masons Birmingham, welcomed and hosted the audience and panellists. The panel of illustrious speakers included Clare Francis – Partner at Pinsent Masons LLP, Carl Arntzen – CEO, Bosch Thermo-technology Ltd, and Lord Chris Fox – Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Business, Enterprises and Industrial Strategy.

The discussion was moderated by Bob Bischof, Chairman of the German-British Forum, who began by briefly introducing the three panellists, followed by a quick overview of the topic to be discussed.

By providing insights into their specialised fields from their diverse perspectives, the panellists presented the fundamen-

tal elements of developing an industrial strategy. They shared with the audience their valuable knowledge, opinions and expertise regarding key themes, such as corporate governance, trade bodies, and government investment and financing in UK manufacturing. In doing so, they focussed on the questions of whether the UK's proposed post-Brexit industrial strategy will meet the challenges of new global opportunities, and how lessons drawn from other countries, in particular Germany, will play a part. The panellists entirely agreed that in general the German system has a more rigorous approach with longer decisionmaking processes, while the UK demonstrates more short-term interest in making money, rather than long-term interest in developing a given business. Furthermore, the contributors pointed out the importance of organic growth.

Afterwards, the audience was given the opportunity to join in the lively debate. As Regional Chairman UK, I then closed the discussion by expressing my appreciation to the panellists. The panel discussion was followed by a reception, throughout which the lively conversation amongst panellists and guests continued.

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