



Press release

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The Foundation for Family Businesses: Attending to economic interests during Brexit talks instead of making a political example of them

The Foundation for Family Businesses demands that all the Brexit questions focus on solutions which are viable in real business practice. "The negotiators in London, Brussels and Berlin need to ensure that businesses on both sides of the English Channel are not damaged by Brexit," said Alfons Schneider, a member of the foundation's Executive Board, on the occasion of a delegation visit to London. "Given our common economic interests, both sides should avoid making a political example of Brexit."

The negotiations should aim for pragmatic solutions. Schneider said: "The United Kingdom should seek the status of a member of the European Economic Area in order to safeguard planning security as quickly as possible for both German and British family companies" – a solution in line with what is known as the Norwegian model. If this turns out to be unworkable from a domestic policy standpoint, the Turkish model – that is, a membership in a customs union at the least – would be the next best solution. In any case, generous transition periods are absolutely indispensable from a business point of view.

"Business relationships between Continental Europe and the United Kingdom have grown over decades. It would be immensely damaging to destroy or reverse them through Brexit," said Schneider. In future as well, businesses must be able to send specialist employees to Great Britain rapidly and without bureaucratic hurdles. Moreover, it must be ensured that German companies will not be weakened by exit taxation or generation change.

About 25 owners of large German family businesses are traveling to Great Britain with the Foundation for Family Businesses. As guests of the British Parliament and the German Embassy in London, the delegation will meet with members of both houses as well as with representatives of the British business community. This trip is a return visit following a journey to Berlin in which British Parliamentarians from the House of Commons and House of Lords were guests at the „House of Family Businesses“ in Berlin.

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