



NEW YEAR'S CONFERENCE AND RECEPTION

At our 14th annual New Year's Conference in Berlin, over 100 participants, members and friends of the BCCG discussed the topic: "Political and technological transition is (also) a chance!"

Revolutionary political and technological changes are challenging the UK and Germany in similar ways. Brexit has created a lot of uncertainty, and digitisation is demanding quick and innovative answers. Meanwhile, there are growing security risks connected to digitisation. Data security is a direct feature of all trade, financial services, and R&D activities. With Brexit, data-related risks are destined to grow. Unless a treaty that governs every detail of data security is reached, cross-border data sharing will no longer be possible.

Despite all its challenges and risks, digitisation presents an opportunity for Europe, even in the face of Brexit. In the future, services and trade will grow rapidly, 3D technology will revolutionise industry, and innovation will occur even more quickly. At the same time, digitised efficiency will achieve a more sustainable use of resources.

These topics must be addressed in the current Brexit negotiations between the EU and the UK. Pragmatic solutions need to be found to develop digitisation without barriers. Our conference speakers, Dr Marcus Chromik, Member of the Board of Commerzbank AG, and Stephan Mayer, Member of the German Bundestag, highlighted the challenges ahead. During the panel discussion – moderated by Uwe Westphal of WESTPHAL Ltd, and including Nicole Boehler of Squire Patton Boggs, Stefan Hienzsch of BMW Group, Michael Schmidt, President BCCG, Dr. rer. nat. Dirk Stenkamp of TÜV NORD AG, and Marcus A. Wassenberg of Rolls-Royce Power Systems AG – the question remained open as to whether the EU and the UK will be able to come up with compromises in time that satisfy both needs while minimising economic and security damage.

The event was followed by the annual New Year's Reception at the British Embassy, where welcoming remarks were made by H.E. Sir Sebastian Wood KCMG, British Ambassador, Walter J. Lindner, State Secretary of the Federal Foreign Office, and Michael Schmidt, President of the BCCG.

