

Press release: Investment Minister visits Düsseldorf to promote UK-Germany trade

Investment Minister Graham Stuart will travel to Düsseldorf (Thursday 31st January – Friday 1st February) to meet with key German businesses to discuss future opportunities for UK-Germany trade and investment relations.

The Minister, along with Her Majesty's Trade Commissioner (HMTc) for Europe Andrew Mitchell, will meet senior members of the North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) government, including Minister of Economy Professor Dr Andreas Pinkwart, the Lord Mayor of Düsseldorf as well as businesses including Bayer.

This morning, HMTc for Europe Andrew Mitchell opened the new Consulate-General office alongside representatives from the NRW federal state government. The British Consulate-General in Düsseldorf represents the UK Government in NRW, Rhineland-Palatinate, Hessen and Saarland.

The two Ministers will also announce a Technology Cooperation Dialogue between the UK and the Government of NRW, that will bring together stakeholders from industry, science and innovation, together with policy makers to tackle areas like clean growth, the future of energy and the potential of digital technology.

As the UK's second largest trading partner, total trade between the UK and Germany was worth £132.2bn in the year to end Q3 2018. Latest figures also show that investment from Germany into the UK has also increased, totally £63.3bn in 2017 – a 4.2% rise from 2016.

The Minister will also speak about the UK Government's plans for future engagement with the region to wide range of German companies that invest in the UK or are active in the market, British companies with a presence in NRW, as well as business organisations including the Regional Chambers of Trade and Industry.

Minister for Investment Graham Stuart said:

Germany is a hugely important and longstanding economic partner for the UK, and I hope my visit to North Rhine-Westphalia will further build on our relationships with our key German investors in the UK.

Opening the new Consulate-General office demonstrates the UK's continuing commitment to the region and Germany as a whole. The Consul-General and the wider will work with UK and German businesses and with the NRW Government to take forward our economic, political and cultural relationship.

Bayer AG Board Member & Head of Innovation, Kemal Malik said:

The relationship between the UK and NRW is historic with 71 years of history linking the towns of Dusseldorf and Reading, which is home to our UK Headquarters in the heart of the Thames Valley.

As a Life Sciences company, we are proud to Chair the Thames Valley Life Sciences Partnership which, under the Life Sciences Sector Deal, seeks to strengthen the UK's position as a world leader in research. This will ensure we are at the forefront of new industries in the areas of genomics and AI-driven diagnostics in the future – all of which could dramatically change our healthcare systems and patient outcomes for the better. It is this commitment which demonstrates that the UK remains a fertile investment ground for research and development in the future.

Ties between the UK and NRW are not just economic and political but also cultural. There are hundreds of school exchanges and town-twinning partnerships, including a 71-year-old relationship between the City of Düsseldorf and Reading in the UK.