The future of Swiss-UK financial services relations begins now

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At a glance

Switzerland and the United Kingdom are currently negotiating one of the most comprehensive financial services agreements in the world. At a meeting today in Zurich, the Swiss and British financial industry discussed the status of the negotiations with representatives of both governments. They explored the potential for further cooperation that can be tapped thanks to the pending agreements and deeper bilateral relations established.

Switzerland's bilateral relations with the United Kingdom can be described as highly dynamic for some time now. This is also evident in the financial services sector: intensive negotiations are currently underway on a bilateral financial services agreements. The focus is on mutual recognition of the respective national regulations in the sectors concerned to the greatest possible extent. In contrast to the EU regime, the focus is primarily on the equivalence of regulatory outcomes rather than on concrete legal texts.

Financial services agreement is only the beginning

The Swiss and British financial industries have actively followed the negotiations from the beginning and have jointly voiced their interests at an early stage. At a joint meeting on 23 June 2022 in Zurich, the leading working groups of the umbrella organisations economiesuisse and TheCityUK, exchanged their assessment on the status of the negotiations. Discussions with representatives of the authorities also included an overall view of the bilateral work currently underway.

The numerous representatives from the banking/investment, insurance, asset management and financial market infrastructure sectors agreed that the financial services agreement, which is expected to be concluded this year, should not mark the end, but rather the beginning of an even more extensive cooperation. The conference offered the opportunity for initial joint reflections. In particular, new technological trends and regulatory developments in the financial sector were discussed - and the opportunities that could result for two of the world's most important financial centres.

Relationships with a model function

The importance of the current negotiation activities, as well as the intensive exchange between the economic sectors concerned, has implications beyond the bilateral relationship between Switzerland and the UK. This is especially true at a time of increased global geopolitical tensions, growing protectionism, and nationalistic tendencies. Together, the UK and Switzerland give a strong signal that open markets, a liberal economic order and mutual trust continues to be the essential basis for deepening relations and sustainable economic development.

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