

Friendship and Bilateral Cooperation Treaty: Showcasing DE-UK regional cooperation

Why it matters: Links between Germany and the UK are forged on many levels. Our bilateral relationship thrives from a broad range of local and regional initiatives that bring people together and foster joint engagement. There are, for example, more than 400 German-British twinning partnerships, there are links between schools and universities, and there are the many citizens who spend some time in the UK or Germany to study or learn each other's language.

Länder and regions have a crucial role in filling our relationship with life. The list is long, here are a few examples:

- 1) **Lower Saxony - Scotland Research and Innovation Scheme** – the Lower Saxony Ministry of Science and Culture (MWK), together with the Volkswagen Foundation, and the Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) join forces to support research projects open to all topics, with a particular focus on energy, life sciences, educational sciences, mobility and its transformation, as well as security policy (based on the Memorandum of Understanding signed in February 2025).
- 2) **Berlin - Oxford Research Partnership** - The University of Oxford, the Berlin University Alliance and the consortium Berlin Research 50 have teamed up to explore a series of research focus areas that address the global challenges, and technological and social changes of our time, including democratic resilience and AI technology and ethics. In addition to top-level research collaboration, the partnership fosters student mobility, research and lecture visits, and staff exchanges to deepen relations between the two research and innovation ecosystems.
- 3) **Baden-Württemberg - UK Economic Partnership Initiative** – aims to create cooperation opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and serves to promote close cooperation at the level of chambers and associations. One outcome of this initiative is the UK Tech – Accelerator, which supports British companies with high internationalisation potential in their first steps abroad. For an initial period of five months (September 2024 - January 2025), selected British companies were based in Stuttgart, working together with leading Baden-Württemberg industry on products and future technologies. The programme is set to continue in autumn 2025.
- 4) **NRW - London train link** – to support the introduction of more direct train links between Germany and the UK, the state government of North Rhine-Westphalia intends to carry out a study on the socio-economic effects of such a rail link between North Rhine-Westphalia and London for the region and beyond.
- 5) **Stuttgart - Cardiff town twinning** – Stuttgart and Cardiff are already celebrating the 70th anniversary of their town twinning in 2025 and focus on the topic of “social cohesion”. There are 400 other town twinning partnerships linking communities in the UK and Germany.
- 6) **European Capital of Culture Chemnitz 2025 with the partner city Manchester:** Project and exhibition “Tales of Transformation”, on display from 25 April - 16 November 2025 in the Chemnitz Industrial Museum or in the project “Truth Marks”, a cross-generational storytelling project in Manchester and Chemnitz as well as other projects (artist-in-residence program etc.).

- 7) **TU Dresden and King's College London transCampus:** The transCampus is a transnational strategic partnership between two high-ranking universities with joint deans, professors and administrative support. The partnership focuses on excellent research, training young academics and technology transfer.
- 8) **Rhineland-Palatinate - Scotland Educational Trainees across Borders:** this initiative was set up in 2011 to offer internships and short-term opportunities for young people in education. While German Educational Trainees (GETs) would support the teaching of German in schools in Scotland, Scottish Educational Trainees (SETs) would work in Rhineland- Palatinate in schools, nurseries or communities. The GET across Borders initiative supports region-to-region and youth exchange, with more than 300 students from Rhineland- Palatinate having spent up to 6 months in Scotland, and with about 50 students each year coming from Scotland to work in Rhineland- Palatinate communities each year.
- 9) **Baden-Württemberg - Scotland** - joint engagement in climate protection alliance and on renewable energy) and **- Wales** (focus on education, youth, culture and civil society).
- 10) **Lower Saxony - Kent** - The "Neuconnect" project aims to connect the British and German electricity grid between the Isle of Grain in Kent, and Wilhelmshaven.