

Centre celebrates online conference success

The Centre for Brexit Studies at Birmingham City University are celebrating the success of their third Annual Conference, which took place online due to the ongoing pandemic.

‘Global Birmingham – Beyond Brexit’, which took place on Zoom on Wednesday 23 September, brought together a wide range of keynote speakers and panel members from a variety of industries and backgrounds.

The event focused on the West Midlands beyond Brexit, looking at topics such as the Commonwealth Games, HS2, Manufacturing and the future of the region in a post-Brexit landscape. The online conference also offered the chance for audience members to get involved, as well as the opportunity to find out more about the Centre for Brexit Studies.

Keynote speakers included Julian Beer, Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Birmingham City University, with his speech titled ‘Global Brum?’ and Sir Vince Cable, former leader of the Liberal Democrats and Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills from 2010 to 2015, with his speech titled ‘De-coupling, UK style’.

Later in the day, Anand Menon, Professor of European Politics and Foreign Affairs at King’s College London and Director of UK in a Changing Europe took to the virtual stage for his speech titled ‘Brexit: What Next?’. Fiona Allan, Artistic Director and Chief Executive of Birmingham Hippodrome, President of UK Theatre and board member of Midlands Arts Council and West Midlands Growth Company completed the event with her speech titled ‘The Show Must Go On: UK’s cultural leadership post Brexit’.

The Conference also boasted four panel debates, covering a wide variety of topics.

‘Sport and Regeneration post-Brexit – The Commonwealth Games’ gave audience members the opportunity to debate the upcoming event, taking place in Birmingham in 2022, with Dr Nicholas Wise,

Paul Faulkner, Professor John Harris, Professor Calvin Jones and David Grady.

The panel discussion was followed by 'Manufacturing – The Impact on the Region', where Beverley Nielsen, Professor David Bailey, Ian Henry, Raquel Ortega-Argilés, Jack Dromey MP and Tom Leeson discussed the future of the sector within the West Midlands, and what impact a possible 'No Deal' Brexit could have on the industry.

Later in the day two further panel debates took place, including 'HS2 – On the Right Track?' with Dr Steven McCabe, Vicky Pryce, Rachel Eade MBE, Liam Byrne MP and Dr Leslie Budd before the final debate 'Future of the West Midlands – Entering a New Era' with Dr Shishank Shishank, Jude Thompson, Henrietta Brearley, Professor John Clancy, Amanda Lowe and Lindi Mngaza.

The event, which had to be delayed from April to September due to Covid-19, was a huge success for the Centre. Following on from its success, the Centre for Brexit Studies are looking forward to arranging regular online events to take place in the remaining months of 2020, ahead of the transition period deadline of December 31.

Footage from this year's online Annual Conference will be available to watch soon on the Centre for Brexit Studies [YouTube](#) channel.