

Debate on the global knowledge economy launches ‘A Pact for Knowledge and Innovation’ within Europe

High level public and private representatives gather at the European Parliament to discuss ways in which Europe can become a global leader in innovation and the knowledge economy

Brussels – 8 April 2008: A major debate held in the European Parliament today launches a new strategic approach to Europe’s promotion of innovation and participation in the knowledge economy – to bring real benefit to Europe and its citizens. The event, organised by the Knowledge4Innovation initiative, aims to develop a European-wide ‘Pact for Knowledge and Innovation’ that brings together public and private sector stakeholders to explore the opportunities and challenges of a new competitive environment. A joint declaration will be issued following the debate to act as a framework for future discussions.

Around 200 participants, including more than 20 MEPs, will hear keynote speakers including: Angelika Niebler, Chairwoman of the European Parliament’s Committee on Industry, Research and Energy; Mojca Kucler Dolinar, Slovenian Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology; Janez Potocnik, European Commissioner for Science and Research; and Odile Quintin, Director General of Education and Culture at the European Commission.

“Europe’s future depends increasingly on its ability to both generate and manage knowledge and innovation,” said Roland Strauss of the Knowledge4Innovation organising committee. “To ensure that it is ready to take advantage of – and lead – the global knowledge economy, Europe must consider its strategic agenda, the positioning of the EU institutions, allocation of budgets and formulate relevant policies and projects. Today’s event is designed to help ensure that Europe is best placed to exploit the opportunities open to it.”

The debate will discuss major themes, hosted by members of the European Parliament, exploring both the underlying building blocks of the knowledge economy and the drivers within the most innovative sectors. Themes will include:

- Human Capital
- Innovation
- Intellectual Property Rights
- An inclusive knowledge-based society

...as well as major drivers/sectors

- Information and Communication Technologies
- Energy and Environment
- Healthcare and Pharmacy
- Automotive, Aerospace & Defence
- Food and Agriculture

The event Declaration – presented by David Nordfors, Program Director, Innovation Journalism, Stanford University – will be delivered in two parts: the first, underpinning and substantiating ‘A Pact for Knowledge and Innovation’ before the debate, and the second following the outcome of discussions.

“The themes to be discussed today are vitally important to Europe and its citizens, and the Knowledge4Innovation initiative is inviting the respective EU Presidency to consider a specific event dedicated to the knowledge and innovation economy during their mandate,” added Strauss. “The outcomes of today’s debate will feed into the drafting of a Declaration that will serve as a basis for regular Forum dialogue meetings. This will help in building a coalition of public and private stakeholders in support of Europe’s positioning as a major player in the knowledge era.”

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

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FURTHER INFORMATION

The ‘Pact for Knowledge and Innovation’ debate will take place between 19.45 and 22.30 on Tuesday 8 April 2008 at the Salon Des Membres within the European Parliament. Registration is now closed. To register interest in future ‘K4I’ activities or to find out more, please visit:

www.knowledge4innovation.eu