



Launch of the European Academy of Business in Society

Europe's leading companies team up with business schools and universities to launch largest-ever research & teaching project on the business case for CSR

5-6 July 2002, Fontainebleau, France – Business leaders and academics are teaming up in a groundbreaking attempt to prove to the European business community that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) makes good business sense. Their joint research project - the European Academy of Business in Society - represents a unique and pioneering alliance between Europe's leading business schools and more than a dozen major multinational companies (including Shell, Johnson & Johnson, Levi's, Danone and Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations).

The **Academy's mission** is to be a world-class reference point to drive CSR into the mainstream of business practice, theory and education, and to enhance models for sustainable business success.

The Academy sets itself three objectives:

- Education for Tomorrow's Managers - Engage Europe's top 250 universities, business schools, and schools of government to integrate the changing role of business in society into the core of business education.
- Interdisciplinary Research - Build Europe's largest network of excellence to deliver interdisciplinary research on CSR and create a global research bank on the role of business in society.
- Training for Today's Managers - Become Europe's training gateway to "best-in-class" training practices and learning resources for businesses and corporate academies.

The European Academy of Business in Society is an integral part of the wider European Business Campaign on Corporate Social Responsibility, which aims to mobilise over half a million businesspeople and other stakeholders on the topic of corporate social responsibility over the next three years.

By 2005, the Campaign - created in response to the appeal from Heads of State and Government on CSR (Lisbon Summit, 2000) - will be presented to the European Union with its main outcomes and recommendations as a key contribution to the achievement of Europe's Strategic Goal 2010.

The European Academy welcomes the strong commitment of the European Union to promote "initiatives aimed at building corporate social responsibility into the training of executives and workers, so that they will be better able to integrate such new issues and criteria into strategic business planning and everyday business operations".

"One way to achieve this is to make research on corporate social responsibility a priority within the 6th Framework Programme on Research", said European Commissioner Philippe Busquin.

"We need to move from a time of awareness-raising – which led us to give more notoriety to CSR – to a time of stronger justification – which will provide us with the necessary credibility for CSR", said Viscount Etienne Davignon (Chair of CSR Europe and Vice-Chair Société Générale de Belgique).



“The greatest critique of MBA training at the moment is that it is out of date. If teaching on CSR doesn’t come in a fairly short time, businesses will lose interest – not in the topic but in the business schools.”

Mads Ovlisen (Chair of TCC and Novo Nordisk) added: *“Businesses are not asking why anymore, they are now asking how.”*

“We are aiming for embeddedness of CSR – not just PR. Research has to deliver integrated performance measurement and management”, said Gilbert Lenssen (Professor, Universities of London & Leiden & College of Europe, Bruges/ Warsaw).