

UK200Group Launches New Campaign for Clarity Ahead of EU Referendum

Submitted by: The UK200Group

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WHAT: ‘Campaign for Clarity’ debate between high-profile politicians – from both ‘In’ and ‘Out’ camps – ahead of the EU Referendum, organised by the UK200Group, the UK’s leading membership association of independent chartered accountancy and law firms.

WHY: To address the need for clarity in the SME community and in UK voters in general. The UK200Group’s members serve a total of over 150,000 SMEs, many of whom are unclear on how a ‘Leave’ or ‘Remain’ vote would affect their business. By presenting the main arguments of both campaigns and exploring how they would affect different industries, the UK200Group is uniquely placed to provide clarification.

WHO: The debate will be chaired by ex-Newsnight presenter and leading futurologist Dr James Bellini. The ‘Remain’ campaign will be represented by Yvette Cooper MP (Labour) and Lucy Thomas (Britain Stronger in Europe). The ‘Leave’ Campaign will be represented by David Davis MP (Conservative) and Douglas Carswell (UKIP).

WHEN: 4.30PM to 6.30PM (debate itself 5.00PM to 6.00PM) on Wednesday 11 May 2016

WHERE: Coventry University London Campus, University House, 109-117 Middlesex St, City of London E1 7JF

As the EU Referendum on 23 June draws closer, many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and their owners are still unclear on how leaving or staying in the EU will affect their businesses.

The UK200Group (<http://www.uk200group.co.uk/>), the UK’s leading membership association of quality-assured independent chartered accountancy and law firms, is seeking to provide unbiased guidance to the SME community – a group whose importance to the UK economy cannot be understated.

Collectively, the UK200Group’s members support over 150,000 SMEs, many of whom are already asking their accountants and lawyers how a ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ vote will affect their businesses.

The UK200Group is in a unique position to educate and inform a large number of business leaders across a wide range of industries, so has launched a campaign to clarify the views of both sides.

Central to the project will be a live-streamed debate between high-profile members of the ‘In’ and ‘Out’ campaigns at Coventry University London Campus (<http://www.coventry.ac.uk/culc/>), University House, 109-117 Middlesex St, London E1 7JF from 4.30PM to 6.30PM (debate itself 5.00PM to 6.00PM) on 11 May.

The debate will be chaired by leading futurologist and author Dr James Bellini (<http://www.jamesbellini.com/>), who spent 25 years in the broadcasting industry presenting programmes such as The Money Programme, Newsnight and Panorama, and as a studio presenter with Financial Times Television and Sky News. James’ experience in using the perspectives of history to explore possible futures will give him unique insight to the Campaign for Clarity debate.

Yvette Cooper MP (<http://www.yvettecooper.com/>) will make the case for remaining in the EU. One of the most respected members of the Labour Party and a former Shadow Home Secretary, Yvette is the Member of Parliament for Normanton, Pontefract and Castleford.

Lucy Thomas, Deputy Director of Britain Stronger in Europe (<http://www.strongerin.co.uk/>), will also be arguing the case for continuing our membership of the EU.

Making the case for exiting the EU will be David Davis MP (<http://www.daviddavismp.com/>), the Member of Parliament for Haltemprice & Howden, and an important and consistent voice at the right wing of the Conservative Party.

Douglas Carswell MP (<http://www.douglascarswell.com/>), Member of Parliament for Clacton, is also arguing the case for Brexit. Douglas was the first elected member of the UK Independence Party, in a by-election triggered by his high-profile defection from the Conservative Party in 2014.

Although the UK200Group remains impartial and unbiased, a poll of its members' views will be taken before and after the debate, giving a unique indication of the success of the speakers' arguments and the views of the UK SME community.

This will officially launch the UK200Group's referendum survey, which will continue to provide real-time analysis of the changing views of SME leaders in the UK. It will continue until the referendum on 23 June.

James Abbott, President of the UK200Group, said, "As a membership association and a mutual organisation, we are committed to providing non-partisan information to our members and their clients.

"We represent two of the most trusted groups of professionals in the world of business: solicitors and accountants. At the moment, many of our members are being quizzed by worried clients about the consequences of a 'Yes' or 'No' outcome.

"The Campaign for Clarity debate, featuring some of the leading proponents of both campaigns, will clarify the key messages of the 'in' and 'out' camps and discuss how SMEs will be affected by either outcome.

"The survey will act as an early barometer of SMEs' feelings towards the referendum, and will be extremely interesting."

The UK200Group, which was established in 1986, represents a group of trusted, quality-assured business advisers – accountants and lawyers – who have over 150,000 SME clients in total. As such, the UK200Group acts as the voice for 1,500 charities, over 10% of all registered academies, more than 3,700 farms, 800 healthcare businesses and over 500 property and construction professionals.

Where: Coventry University London Campus, University House, 109-117 Middlesex St, London E1 7JF

When: 4.30PM to 6.30PM (debate itself 5.00PM to 6.00PM) on 11 May

Useful links:

The UK200Group: <http://www.uk200group.co.uk/>

Coventry University London Campus: <http://www.coventry.ac.uk/culc/>

Dr James Bellini: <http://www.jamesbellini.com/>

David Davis MP: <http://www.daviddavismp.com/>

Yvette Cooper MP: <http://www.yvettecooper.com/>

Douglas Carswell MP: <http://www.douglascarswell.com/about-douglas/>

Britain Stronger in Europe: <http://www.strongerin.co.uk/>

ENDS

The event is by invitation only. Journalists are welcome to attend the event, but must be accredited beforehand.

Media information provided by Famous Publicity. For further information, please contact George Murdoch at george@famouspublicity.com or 03333 442 341 or Tina Fotherby on 07703 409 622 or tina@famouspublicity.com.

About the UK200Group:

The UK200Group was formed in 1986, and is the UK's leading association of independent chartered accountants and law firms, with connections around the world.

The association brings together around 150 member offices in the UK with more than 500 partners who serve roughly 150,000 business clients. Its international links in nearly 70 countries give its members access to expertise across the globe.