

Official Bologna seminar
Employability and its links to the objectives of the Bologna process
Slovenia, Bled, 22 – 23 October 2004

Summary of the general presentation by Dr. Christoph Anz, representative of UNICE, Confederation of German Employers' Associations

The more than 40 European states that participate in the Bologna Process have agreed on the creation of a common **European higher education area** by the year 2010. European employers **welcome this development** and fully support the goals of the Bologna Process:

To turn the Bologna Process into a real success, it is key that the Bologna objectives and priorities are realised through implementation of measures at national and institutional level. In addition it is indispensable that all stakeholders (including employers) are involved in **three major fields**:

- It is necessary to develop a system of **comparable quality requirements**.
- Courses of study need to be conceived with regard to the **employability of graduates** in international labour markets.
- **High quality student and teacher mobility** has to be ensured.

*It must be a common objective to improve the **employability** of graduates and to assure a continuous updating by offering attractive lifelong learning programmes and facilities.*

Dialogue between higher education institutions and business about the relevant labour-market-related competences and qualifications must be intensified.

1. A minimum of three years of training for a **bachelor degree** will have to sufficiently qualify the graduate for a professional or self-employed occupation.
2. A three-year bachelor degree (180 ECTS) should give a student **broad professional basic knowledge** and competencies but probably can not teach highly specified knowledge. With a four-year bachelor degree (240 ECTS) or within a binary system of higher education (such as in the Netherlands, Austria, Finland, Germany, Denmark and others) it is possible to give students a more specific knowledge and the curriculum could give more scientific depth.
3. Master programmes should in principle be **designed in two ways**: further specialisation in a specific field (as continuation of a bachelor programme) or as interdisciplinary study programmes broadening academic qualifications.
4. In the view of the employers, a bachelor will only succeed on the labour market if subject-specific and **cross-disciplinary education goals** are equally followed and reached.
5. The **professional world** needs to be integrated in higher education to the largest possible extent. This does not solely mean the completion of internships as regular parts of study programmes but also the inclusion of teachers with a professional background.
6. In the opinion of employers, the **international orientation** of the courses is indispensable. This includes foreign language segments as well as the widest possible integration of foreign teachers and a high number of foreign students.