

**Statement on "Curriculum reform/diplomas/quality assurance":**

by **Prof.Dr. Gerhard Riemer**, BUSINESSEUROPE Head of Delegation

- 1) European employers represented by BUSINESSEUROPE are highly committed to the objectives and visions of the Bologna Process which include efforts to achieve better mobility among students, better comparability of course contents and recognition of diplomas, elements which they regard as indispensable for greater cohesion in Europe. They also believe that the implementation process – which has been the subject of justified criticism – is on the right track even if some adjustments are needed.
- 2) It is good to see that curriculum reform is well advanced. This must now be followed by a restructuring of the contents of courses, which can only be successfully carried out in interaction between universities, businesses and students. This debate should be forward-looking and not dominated by an attachment to old and familiar contents.
- 3) An important criterion for the success of the Bologna Process is securing and strengthening the employability of qualified students at all levels. This is in the interest of students, universities and business alike. Employability does not mean only that a person can perform a job directly but that his or her qualification mix is a package of knowledge and skills which enables a bachelor to enter the world of work, and diploma holders of the second and third cycles to develop their vocational capabilities and prepare them for management tasks. Successful incorporation of the goal of employability will be mirrored in the success of qualified students on the labour market. For that reason, this aspect must in future be assigned greater weight in an assessment of the Bologna Process.
- 4) Employability can only be ensured if quality assurance is informed by practical experience. This is a decisive and central condition for comprehensive quality assurance of curricula across the entire European University Area, not least also for acceptance of the results by business.
- 5) BUSINESSEUROPE's objective is productive cooperation between universities and business on the basis of mutual trust, in the general interest as well as in the interest of students. This vision is not at all incompatible with the necessary and justified autonomy of universities but is a sign of their openness and responsibility vis-à-vis their stakeholders.