

Ms Kristin Clemet  
Minister of Education and Research

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THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Dear Minister,

**UNICE APPLICATION AS CONSULTATIVE MEMBER OF THE BOLOGNA PROCESS**

The Bologna Process is a historic opportunity to realise a European higher education area which is distinguished by high quality standards, attractiveness of study programmes and international competitiveness. Since the launch of the Bologna process, significant progress in the implementation of its goals has been achieved, notably concerning the introduction of a two-tier higher education system with bachelor and master degrees.

Nevertheless, further efforts have to be made to fully implement the goals of the Bologna Process at national and institutional level. The results of the Bergen Conference will be important in this respect.

In UNICE's view, an important prerequisite for successful realisation of the Bologna Process is the inclusion of business, as it will be the future workplace for the majority of graduates. Furthermore it is necessary to communicate the Bologna Process, its targets and the need for this ongoing change to companies, since their acceptance of the new structure, in particular the new degree programmes, is crucial for the success of a European higher education area.

The need for stronger links between higher education and the labour market was recognised by Ministers in the Berlin Communiqué adopted in 2003 which called for the inclusion of all social and economic partners.

UNICE would like to offer its active support to this process and to have the possibility to deliver its messages on the employability of graduates, the quality of education and mobility during the Bergen Conference on 19 May 2005.

UNICE therefore wishes to be a consultative member of the Bologna process. You will find at annex a short note demonstrating that UNICE satisfies to the criteria for new consultative members established by the BFUG in March 2005.

I very much hope that you will support UNICE's initiative and enable our active participation during the Bergen Conference.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Philippe de Buck', with a long, sweeping underline.

Philippe de Buck

Enclosure:

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