

Recommendations

COM/LAIR/REC/002/FINAL

**Seventh Meeting
Astana, 1 March 2019**

***“PROBLEMS OF EQUIVALENCE PROCESSES IN HIGHER EDUCATION
IN TURKPA MEMBER COUNTRIES”***

The Parliamentary Assembly:

Recognizing that higher education plays a vital role in promoting peace, mutual understanding and tolerance, and in creating mutual confidence among citizens of TURKPA member states;

Positively assessing the current status of higher education in TURKPA member states both in qualitative and quantitative terms;

Emphasizing that TURKPA member countries have always encouraged academic mobility as a means for better understanding of the various cultures and languages;

Considering that studying or working in a foreign country is likely to contribute to an individual's cultural and academic enrichment;

Underlining the importance of the ideas and principles set forth at the article of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev titled "Seven Facets of the Great Steppe";

Welcoming the establishment of the Turkic Universities Union within the framework of the Turkic Council as a convenient framework to realize cooperation in the field of higher education between the TURKPA member countries;

Acknowledging that the recognition of studies, certificates, diplomas and degrees obtained in another country of the TURKPA member states represent an important measure for promoting academic and professional mobility;

Convinced that the development and improved recognition of qualifications will entail important benefits for individuals as well as for the Turkic World as a whole;

Commending the well-functioning equivalence processes in TURKPA member countries with strong legal frameworks and highly specialized institutions;

Drawing attention to the need to further enhance the functioning of the equivalence processes by the establishment of joint mechanisms and practices in a mutually beneficial, harmonious and effective manner;

Conscious of the need to improve current recognition practice and to make it more transparent and better adapted to the current situation of higher education in TURKPA member states;

Reaffirming the commitment to find common solutions to practical problems among TURKPA member states in higher education in general and equivalence processes in particular;

Recommends the Parliaments and the Governments of the Member States:

1. to establish or strengthen the functional capacity of the equivalence offices within the related governmental mechanisms;
2. to establish communication channels and to determine contact persons in order to strengthen communication between equivalence offices and to ensure compliance and continuity in operation;
3. to ensure, in order to facilitate the recognition of qualifications, that adequate and clear information on education systems is provided;
4. to encourage all education institutions to comply with any reasonable request for information for the purpose of assessing qualifications;
5. to ensure that decisions on recognition be made within a reasonable time limit specified beforehand by the competent recognition authority;
6. to ensure that procedures and criteria for the assessment of foreign qualifications should be transparent, coherent and reliable, and they should periodically be reviewed with a view to increasing transparency, taking account of developments in the education field and eliminating requirements leading to undue complications in the procedure;

7. to increase the consistency of the procedures and use of criteria for the assessment of foreign qualifications, thus assuring that similar recognition cases will be considered in reasonably similar ways by all TURKPA member states;
8. to take relevant steps in order to facilitate the recognition of vocational certificates issued by TURKPA member countries throughout the region;
9. to establish an electronic database like YÖKSİS of Turkey, which is open to mutual access (information entry, inquiry, etc.) with information kept on students and graduates of citizens in the higher education institutions of other TURKPA member countries;
10. to take into account the existing structure and functioning of the ‘Recognition and Accreditation Office’ of the Higher Education Council in Turkey in terms of legislative framework, administrative and technical structure and terms of operation and utilize the institutional support that can be given by Turkey;
11. to comply with the principles enshrined at the İstanbul Directive on the establishment of Higher Education Area among the member universities of Turkic Universities Union of the Turkic Council;
12. to participate and utilize the opportunities offered by the exchange programs developed within national and regional frameworks as an effective mechanism to facilitate the mobility of students and academic staff such as the Orhun Exchange Program of the Turkic Universities Union and Mevlana Exchange Program in Turkey.