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Good governance and enhanced quality in education

Reply to Recommendation[1]: Recommendation 2054 (2014)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has taken note of Assembly Recommendation 2054 (2014) on "Good governance and enhanced quality in education". It has brought it to the attention of the member States governments and sent it to the Steering Committee for Educational Policy and Practice (CDPPE) for comments.

2. The Committee of Ministers thanks the Assembly for its interest in the proceedings of the Council of Europe Standing Conference of Ministers of Education, held in Helsinki in April 2013, and stresses that the conclusions of that conference, and also the guidelines set out in Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)13 on ensuring quality education, have been taken into account in the 2014-2015 Programme and Budget.

3. The Assembly recommends "encouraging the development of national policies coherent with the findings of international quality assurance programmes and […] supporting member States in their implementation". In this connection, the Committee of Ministers points out that quality assurance is an important component of several bilateral and regional activities in the Council of Europe's higher education programme, which include the fourth informal regional conference of Education Ministers on the implementation of the European Higher Education Area, organised in Baku in October 2014.

4. It should be noted, in this respect, that the extent to which quality assurance schemes are developed and placed on a formal footing varies greatly from one sector of the education system to another. As regards higher education, there have been standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area since 2005. The competent ministers are to consider a revised version of those standards when they meet in Yerevan in May 2015.

5. The Committee of Ministers has taken due note of the Assembly's recommendation to begin work to analyse the relevance and impact of the existing national and international quality assessment instruments in the field of education. In this respect, Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)13 stipulates that member States should "evaluate the implementation of the provisions of this recommendation in their policies, and inform the Steering Committee for Education Policy and Practice (CDPPE) of the measures undertaken and progress achieved". Furthermore, the Committee of Ministers wishes to inform the Assembly that the CDPPE has included, in its programme for the two-year period of 2014-2015, the creation of a select informal assembly of experts in the field of higher education to advise on its policy in this sphere. It is however not envisaged, at this stage, as the Assembly recommends, to set up a permanent committee of experts on higher education. Nevertheless, the Committee of Ministers could bear these proposals in mind in its discussions on the future programmes and budgets.

1. Adopted at the 1226th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (28-29 April 2015).