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Education Minister Misir Mardanov warmly greeted the guests and expressed his pleasure with their visit to Azerbaijan.

President of the European Youth Card Association (EYCA) Jarkko Lehtikainen thanked the Minister for the warm reception and highlighted that he made his first visit as President of EYCA to Azerbaijan. He gave information on EYCA saying that in 1985, in two countries – France and Scotland were begun to apply the single youth card offering discounts to young people, which initiated cooperation in various fields. In 1986, six countries (Belgium, France, Netherlands, Portugal, Scotland and Spain) joined to this process. The EYCA Office is based in Bratislava, Slovakia. He added that, the number of participated organizations and cardholders have been rapidly increased since then. Benefits for young people for study, transport, accommodation, and other fields have expanded.

According to J. Lehtikainen in 1991, EYCA signed an agreement on the Youth Card with the Council of Europe and since 1995, EYCA also enjoys the support of the European Commission. Moreover, about 40 European countries have joined to the Youth Card process, overall, more than 4 million young people up to the age of 30 are cardholders.

J. Lehtikainen also noted that the Youth Card is the financial support for youth, and cardholders benefit from nearly 80,000 discounts in various fields. According to him, smart card reflected information on cardholders, and its main goal is to bring young people together. He also noted that there were held serious discussions at the Youth and Sport Ministry of Azerbaijan on application of Youth Card in Azerbaijan. He asked Minister Mardanov to contribute to the application of these cards at universities of Azerbaijan.

Education Minister thanked the guest for choosing Azerbaijan as a first country to visit and expressed his support for the application of European Youth Card in Azerbaijan. Moreover, he expressed his readiness to render a necessary help to provide students with cards. He highlighted the importance to hold further discussions on upcoming works to take concrete steps on the use of EYCA. Noting the integration of Azerbaijan into the European Education Area, the Minister underlined the importance to join to this process supported by the Council of Europe and European Commission.

Next, there were expressed views and suggestions on the application of European Youth Card at universities of Azerbaijan, as well as on upcoming works in this direction.