

# Latvia

## Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System

**2007**

eKnowVet – Thematic Overviews

**Title:** Latvia. Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System in 2007

**Published on the web:** November 2007 (*all website links were valid at this date*).

**Author:** ReferNet Latvia

**Abstract:**

This is an overview of the VET system in Latvia. Information is presented according to the following themes:

1. General policy context - framework for the knowledge society
2. Policy development - objectives, frameworks, mechanisms, priorities
3. Institutional framework - provision of learning opportunities
4. Initial vocational education and training
5. Continuing vocational education and training for adults
6. Training VET teachers and trainers
7. Skills and competence development and innovative pedagogy
8. Accumulating, transferring and validating learning
9. Guidance and counselling for learning, career and employment
10. Financing - investment in human resources
11. European and international dimensions, towards an open area of lifelong learning

This overview is part of a series produced for each EU Member State (plus Norway and Iceland). Each report is prepared by Cedefop's national network member (ReferNet) and is updated on an annual basis: the reference year of this report is, 2006. Later editions can be viewed from December 2008 onwards at: [http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Information\\_resources/NationalVet/](http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv/Information_resources/NationalVet/) where more detailed thematic information on the VET systems of the EU can be found.

**Keywords:**

training system; training policy, initial training, continuing vocational training, training of trainers, skill development, vocational guidance, recognition of competences, validation of non formal learning; financing of training

**Geographic term:**

Latvia

## THEMATIC OVERVIEWS



### Latvia

#### 01 - GENERAL POLICY CONTEXT - FRAMEWORK FOR THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

##### 0101 - POLITICAL AND SOCIO-CULTURAL/ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Latvia is an independent democratic republic established in 1918. From 1940 to 1991, it was occupied by the Soviet army and was incorporated into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Latvia regained its independence in 1991.

Legislative power sits with the parliament (the *Saeima*), which consists of 100 representatives elected for a period of 4 years. It is elected through proportional representation by citizens aged 18 or older. The 9<sup>th</sup> *Saeima* was elected on in October 2006.

The head of State is the President who is elected by the *Saeima* for 4 years. Executive authority rests with the Prime Minister and the Cabinet of Ministers. The *Saeima*, the Cabinet of Ministers and the Ministry of Education and Science are the main decision-making bodies for VET at national level. The Ministry implements a unified national policy and development strategy in education.

There are 26 districts in Latvia, which consist of 26 counties and 444 civil parishes with elected local governments. Out of 77 Latvian towns, 7 are under state jurisdiction.

##### 0102 - POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Latvia covers 64 589 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of 2.27 million people (2007). Between 1989 and 2002 (2 census years) the population decreased by 12% and continues to fall.

The share of the population below working age is decreasing (20.9% in 1995; 14.3 in 2006). The proportion of the population of schooling age is expected to decrease further until at least 2015.

The proportion of economically active inhabitants in the population has increased due to an increase in the pension age (56.4% in 1995 and 64.5% in 2006). According to demographic forecasts, the economically active part of the population will remain constant till 2010. This will fall between 2010 and 2020 when the general ageing of the population is expected.

Table 1: Population of Latvia by age group at beginning of 2005–2025 (thousand persons)

YEAR	TOTAL	0-19	20-59	60 +
2005	2 305.0 (100%)	526.2 (22.8%)	1 267.4 (55.0%)	511.2 (22.2%)
2010	2 239.6 (100%)	450.0 (20.0%)	1 282.1 (57.2%)	507.2 (22.8%)
2015	2 174.2 (100%)	421.1 (19.3%)	1 243.0 (57.2%)	509.7 (23.5%)

<b>2020</b>	2 115.4 (100%)	440.0 (20.8%)	1 150.0 (54.2%)	525.0 (24.8%)
<b>2025</b>	2 068.0 (100%)	443.6 (21.4%)	1 079.8 (52.3%)	544.2 (26.3%)

Source: Demographics 2005, Riga: CSB, 2005

### 0103 - ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

Since the mid-1990s, the Latvian economy has been growing. From 2001 to 2006 gross domestic product (GDP) increased annually of by 8.8% on average (10.6% in 2005 and 11.9% in 2006 - CBS). GDP per citizen according to purchasing power standards has increased to 52.3% of the EU average in 2006.

Expenditures for education did not play big role in the growth of the General government consolidated budget expenditures.

Table 1: Expenditure directed to education from the state budget, in %

	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>FROM THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT BUDGET</b>	15.1	16.9	17.5	15.0	15.4	14.0
<b>FROM GDP</b>	6.7	6.8	6.1	6.0	5.7	5.9

Source: Report on the economic development of Latvia  
ME, Riga, June 2002; Report on the economic development of Latvia  
ME, Riga, June 2005; Report on the economic development of Latvia - Riga: ME, December 2006.

The long-term economic strategy is to achieve the level of standard of living of developed countries. To meet this aim, Latvia needs to reach the average GDP per capita of EU countries in the next 20-30 years.

The share of the economy of different economic sectors has slightly changed between 2000 and 2005. The number of people working at service industry has gone up faster, particularly in trade and communications, as well as in building sector, while the number of employed people within agriculture and industry has decreased.

Table 2: Economic constitution of the Latvian economy in 2000, 2004, 2005 and 2006 (by %)

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
-------------	-------------	-------------	-------------	-------------

<b>AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY</b>	4.6	4.4	4	3.7
<b>INDUSTRY</b>	17.5	16.6	15.6	14.8
<b>BUILDING</b>	6.1	5.7	6	6.7
<b>SERVICES</b>	71.9	73.3	74.5	74.9

Source: CSB, 2006

According to the Central Statistical Bureau (CSB) of Latvia (*Latvijas Republikas Centrālā statistikas pārvalde*), in 2005 the share of the black economy was 16-17% of GDP, and approximately half is related to unregistered employment. The majority of employed people not officially employed work in building, trade and various services.

On average, 538 500 men and 508 800 women were employed in 2006.

Table 3: Rates of employment in 2006 (according to CBS; distribution by per cent)

<b>RATE OF EMPLOYED POPULATION TO THE TOTAL POPULATION</b>			
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>MALES</b>	<b>FEMALES</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	60.1	65.9	55
<b>AGE (YEARS)</b>			
<b>15 - 19</b>	10.7	13.2	8.2
<b>20 - 24</b>	60.6	71.4	49.4
<b>25 - 29</b>	77.3	85.3	69.1
<b>30 - 34</b>	80.9	83.7	78.1
<b>35 - 39</b>	84.2	87	81.5

<b>40 - 44</b>	85	85.4	84.6
<b>45 - 49</b>	79.5	80.7	78.4
<b>50 - 54</b>	79.6	82.3	77.3
<b>55 - 59</b>	66.4	69.6	64
<b>60 - 64</b>	39.5	48.8	32.9
<b>&gt; = 65</b>	22.7	17.9	13.6

Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2007

An unemployment register has existed since 1992. The unemployment rate reached its highest level in 1998, reaching 9.2% (111.4 thousand inhabitants) but it has been decreasing gradually since 1999, reaching 6.6% at the end of 2006. At the end of 2006, the total number of unemployed people was 68 944 of which 36.7% were persons with vocational education.

The CSB survey shows that the unemployment rate is still higher among men than women (7.4% and 6.7% respectively, in 2006). While women use State Employment Service (*Nodarbinātības valsts dienests*) services slightly more by every year (60.9% in 2006); the rate of men using the services tends to decrease.

Table 4: Registered unemployed by gender (at year end in %)

	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>MALES</b>	41	40.1	39.1
<b>FEMALES</b>	59	59.9	60.9

Source: State Employment Service, 2007

Registered unemployment differs in different areas: it is the highest in Latgale, the eastern part of Latvia: 24.8 % in Ludza district, 23.4% in Rēzekne district, and 19.3% in Balvi district. In Riga there was the lowest registered unemployment rate 3.9%, in October, 2006.

The unemployment rate among young adults is comparatively high (21% in 2000, 13.6% in 2005), and lower than the EU rate 18.5% in 2005 (Eurostat yearbook 2006-07). According to CBS, the proportion of those seeking employment out of the total number of the economically active population aged 15-19 or 20-24 was accordingly 48.3% and 26.1% in 1996, 35.7% and 19.6% in 2000, and 26.3% and 10.3% in 2006.

The proportion of Latvians among the registered unemployed people has slightly decreased in 2004 by 51.4%, whereas the proportion of non-Latvians has decreased since 1995. Nevertheless, in 2004 the proportion of Russians among the registered unemployed (33.7%) was much higher than their proportion in the population in general (28.8%).

In 2006, the unemployment rate was 9.7% among those with higher education (ISCED 5), in comparison to 46.6% among those with completed general upper-secondary education (ISCED 3A), 36.7% among those with vocational or upper-secondary vocational education (ISCED 3B + ISCED 4) and 1.9% among those who have not completed basic education (ISCED 2).

#### 0104 - EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF POPULATION

According to Eurostat data (Eurostat yearbook 2006-07), youth education attainment level in 2000 was 76.8% and in 2005 the attainment level went up by 81.8%. The youth education attainment level in EU was slightly lower 76.3% in 2000 and 76.9% in 2005.

Table 1: Population aged 25 to 64, by highest level of education attained, % (2005)

	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3-4	ISCED 5-6
<b>EU-25</b>	30	46	23
<b>AUSTRIA</b>	20	63	18
<b>BELGIUM</b>	34	35	31
<b>CYPRUS</b>	31	39	30
<b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b>	10	77	13
<b>DENMARK</b>	18	47	35
<b>ESTONIA</b>	12	55	33
<b>FINLAND</b>	21	45	34
<b>FRANCE</b>	33	41	25
<b>GERMANY</b>	16	60	24

<b>GREECE</b>	41	37	21
<b>HUNGARY</b>	22	60	18
<b>IRELAND</b>	33	34	30
<b>ITALY</b>	49	38	13
<b>LATVIA</b>	16	62	21
<b>LITHUANIA</b>	12	61	27
<b>LUXEMBOURG</b>	34	39	27
<b>MALTA</b>	73	15	12
<b>NETHERLANDS</b>	27	42	30
<b>POLAND</b>	14	68	18
<b>PORTUGAL</b>	72	14	13
<b>SLOVAKIA</b>	11	74	14
<b>SLOVENIA</b>	18	60	21
<b>SPAIN</b>	51	21	28
<b>SWEDEN</b>	16	53	30
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>	26	40	29
<b>BULGARIA</b>	25	53	22



<b>ROMANIA</b>	26	62	12
<b>ICELAND</b>	29	38	29
<b>NORWAY</b>	12	56	33

ISCED 0-2: Pre-primary, primary and lower secondary education.

ISCED 3-4: Upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education.

ISCED 5-6: Tertiary education

Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey; on-line database, 2006

In comparison with EU member states where 46% of the population have achieved ISCED level 3-4, 64% have achieved the same level in Latvia. Traditionally, there has been a premium on people obtaining higher level education (65% of graduates from upper secondary school attend higher education). During the Soviet period, secondary school was compulsory, but since 1991 compulsory education is to lower secondary level only.

Table 2: Percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>EU-25</b>	17.3 (e)	17.0 (e)	16.6	16.2 (b)	15.6	15.2	15.1
<b>LATVIA</b>	:	:	19.5	18.1	15.6	11.9	19.0 (p)

(:) Not available

(e) Estimated value

(b) Break in series

(i) See explanatory text

(p) Provisional value

Source: Eurostat, EU Labour Force Survey; on-line database, 2006

## 02 - POLICY DEVELOPMENT - OBJECTIVES, FRAMEWORKS, MECHANISMS, PRIORITIES

### 0201 - OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

Vocational education has gone through four major stages of development since 1990:

**1995/1998:** the main goals for the development of vocational education were defined and determined by the Strategic Programme for the Development of Education 1998/2003 (*Izglitības attīstības stratēģiskā programma*). During this time, Phare projects were of great importance.

**1999/2001:** the Law of Vocational Education (*Profesionālas izglītības likums*), adopted in 1999 formed the juridical basis for vocational education. The Law regulates the forms of vocational education, the level of qualifications to be obtained and their requirements as well as the responsibility of the different VET structures. Phare projects assisted the implementation of the Law.

**2002/2005:** reforms continued linked to the process of joining the EU. The Education development concept for 2002/2005 was adopted, as was the Programme for the development of vocational education for 2003/2005 with much more specific goals (improving quality in, and access to, VET and to promote efficient expenditure). A number of other strategic documents have been adopted promoting lifelong learning and human resource development, including improving VET opportunities, for example, the annual National employment plans. The overarching aim of the Education development concept was to carry out the necessary changes in the education system to enhance the building of a knowledge-based, democratic and socially integrated society that would increase economic competitiveness and simultaneously preserve and develop Latvian cultural values.

**2007/2013:** National Education Development Guidelines worked out by the Ministry of Education and Science underpins current policy approaches. A survey on education development during 2002-05 was carried out to identify improvements and problems, such as lack of pre-school education, poor quality of basic education, the low status of teacher profession, the mismatch of vocational and higher education to labour market demands etc. To solve these problems, more individually centred education policies are being developed. To implement the guidelines in 2007, the Ministry intends to spend EUR 81 103 693. The main priorities of the development plan are:

- to introduce and finance teacher assistant posts to provide support to pupils (Forms 1-6) with learning difficulties;
- to improve social conditions for vocational education students by increasing student scholarships in 2007-2010 to EUR 28 a month with a further increase in 2011-2013 to EUR 57;
- to provide additional support for those with low levels of education and training;
- to prepare a structural model for higher education programmes with additional available places;
- to provide continuous state investment for arranging and modernising education establishments;
- to increase the role of social partners in VET;

The working strategy 2007-2009 of the Ministry of Education and Sciences (*Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija*) is being worked out.

For the longer term, the Ministry prepared the Guidelines for Lifelong Learning Policy 2007-2013 (*Mūžizglītības politikas pamatnostādnes 2007.–2013.gadam*) which outlines the vision for 2013 in terms of the needs of different target groups; mainstream development; policy aims and results indicators; and resources available. The main objectives are:

- to provide availability of lifelong learning to all people;
- to create qualitative education possibilities for adults;
- to harmonise laws and regulations and efficient resource administration;
- to develop a flexible lifelong learning administrative system;
- to develop lifelong learning action programmes for the state and the regions.

Furthermore, the Ministry has started to implement ESF National programme project “Fostering the Implementation of Vocational Guidance Provision and Careers Education in the Educational Sector” to improve the accessibility and quality of vocational guidance provision and careers education at providers.

## MEETING EU POLICY GOALS

In keeping with an appeal at the March 2005 meeting of the European Council, Latvia has prepared the National Lisbon Programme for 2005/2008 (*Latvijas nacionālā Lisabonas programma 2005/2008. gadam*), aimed at promoting national growth and employment. The Programme is a policy planning document which shows how Latvia will reach the Lisbon strategy goals on the basis of the Integrated Guidelines, approved by the European Council in July 2005. It envisages the following main tasks for improvement of education and skills in 2005/2008:

- strengthen co-operation between public administration institutions, education establishments and employers to adjust education and training supply with labour market needs;
- raise cost efficiency in all levels and forms of education;
- improve availability of education and reduce the number of students who do not graduate or do not achieve a professional qualification;
- increase the availability of lifelong learning and the motivation for people to learn;
- raise the overall level of technological skills and natural science knowledge, improve the professional orientation system and ensure the availability of professional orientation services for all the population in the context of lifelong learning.

### 03 - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK - PROVISION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

#### 0301 - LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Law of Vocational Education (*Profesionālās izglītības likums*), 1999 (amended in 2001) sets out the principles for organising, implementing and awarding qualifications. It states the division of tasks and competences and the relationship between employers, teachers and students. For the first time, the Law recognises an active role for social partners in vocational education. It also states the different pathways for pursuing vocational education, the structure of programmes and the funding principles. The 2001 amendments introduced vocational continuing education for adults and provided for a training system which allows people, regardless of age and previous experience or qualifications, to acquire the knowledge and skills relevant to the demands of the labour market.

The enacting of laws is regulated through Regulations issued by the Cabinet of Ministers (*Ministru Kabineta Noteikumi*). The latest document (2007) is the Procedure for Developing Occupational Standards (*Profesiju standartu izstrādes kārtība*), prepared by the Ministry of Education and Science along with other institutions. The regulation outlines the procedure for developing standards and lists the duties of the involved institutions. The Vocational Education Administration (*Profesionālās izglītības administrācija, PIA*) supervises the development of occupational standards for vocational education programme levels 1, 2 and 3 and the ministry is responsible for levels 4 and 5. Standard projects are written by a work group consisting of representatives of a particular interest organisation or trade union. The standards include:

- duties and tasks of a particular profession;
- professional skills, knowledge (mentioning the level), and competences necessary for accomplishing the tasks;
- place of the profession within the structure of the employment description.

The Law of Vocational Education and other laws related to it determine the role of social partners in VET development. Social partners draw up proposals for improving VET policy and planning and organise labour market research in cooperation with state and local government institutions. They are also involved in setting up occupational standards and VET educational programmes.

#### 0302 - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK: IVET

The Law of Vocational Education (*Profesionālās izglītības likums*, 1999) determines the competence of those institutions responsible for the organization of VET.

**The Cabinet of Ministers (*Ministru Kabinets*):**

determines the state's political and strategic areas in VET; it funds VET providers according to criteria established by the Ministry of Education and Science (*Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija*); it sets the framework for issuing state-recognised qualifications and determines the recognition of qualifications obtained in other countries.

**The Ministry of Education and Science (*MoES*):**

develops the framework regulations for VET and accredits providers. It also creates and updates the register of occupational standards and makes proposals about the allocation of funds from the state budget. It organises guidance and counselling services and researches skills demands of the labour market. It employs the heads of VET institutions under its supervision.

**The Department of Vocational and Continuing Education (*Profesionālas izglītības un tālākizglītības departaments*):**

is under the Ministry of Education and Science and it develops state policy and strategy in VET. The department guides, plans and coordinates VET development and supervises VET providers. It collaborates with employer institutions and trade unions and provides technical support for the work of National Tripartite Sub-council for co-operation in VET and employment. It also assures that national policy meets EU demands and takes part in developing transnational agreements.

**Vocational Education Administration (*Profesionālas izglītības administrācija*):**

this is also under the Ministry of Education and Science and it organises the accreditation of VET providers and programmes. It participates in the development of occupational standards as well as the content and methodology for exams. It oversees the functioning of learning and examination centres and organises the professional development of VET teachers.

**TYPES AND STATUS OF INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

VET institutions are classified according to ownership:

- state VET institutions;
- local government VET institutions;
- private VET institutions.

VET is free for full-time students at institutions operated by the state or local governments. Students also receive a grant determined by the Cabinet of Ministers. The number of VET institutions operated by local governments and private parties is rather small, but growing (see Table).

Table 2: Vocational education and training institutions according to their status

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION ACCORDING TO STATUS	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS, SCHOOL YEAR 1999/2000	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS, SCHOOL YEAR 2005/2006
STATE VOCATIONAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS	111 (91.8%)	104 (80.6%)
LOCAL GOVERNMENT	5	5

<b>VOCATIONAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS</b>	(4.1%)	(3.9%)
<b>PRIVATE VOCATIONAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS</b>	5 (4.1%)	20 (15.5%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	121	129

Source: the State Agency for Education Development (*Valsts izglītības attīstības aģentūra, VIAA*)

### 0303 - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK: CVET

The same institutions (see 0302) share the responsibilities for organising CVET.

In 1993, the Latvian Adult Education Association (*Latvijas Pieaugušo izglītības apvienība, LPIA*) was founded to develop adult education and a lifelong learning system and a network of adult educational centres and co-ordinators have been established.

## 04 - INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

### 0401 - BACKGROUND TO THE IVET SYSTEM AND DIAGRAM

#### THE LATVIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Education system comprises pre-school education (*pirmsskolas izglītība*), 9-year basic education (*pamatizglītība*), upper secondary education (*vidējā izglītība*) and higher education (*augstākā izglītība*).

- Pre-school education (ISCED 0) is for children aged 5-7 years and is provided by general education establishments or kindergartens as a part of compulsory basic education.
- Basic (primary and lower secondary) education (ISCED 1 and 2) lasts 9 years and is compulsory for children aged 7 and above. The National Basic Education Standard (*Valsts pamatizglītības standarts*) determines the curriculum and content of national examinations. Those who do not complete basic education by 16 should continue studying to complete the programme by the time they are 18. They can also choose VET programmes that allow them to obtain a first or second level professional qualification and to complete the obligatory basic educational programme.

3-year vocational basic education programmes are provided in vocational schools for students without a certificate of basic education (after completion of at least 7 grades of basic education, but they must be at least 15 years old).

- Upper secondary education (ISCED 3) comprises two types of programmes: general secondary (*vispārējā vidējā izglītība*) and vocational secondary (*profesionālā vidējā izglītība*).

General secondary has 4 study fields: general; humanities and social sciences; mathematics, natural science and technical, and vocational (arts, music, business, and sports). There are a number of obligatory subjects (e.g. Latvian, two foreign languages, maths, computer science, etc.). Every programme includes obligatory and optional subjects relevant to the particular field of studies. To receive the Certificate of Secondary Education (*Atestats par visparejo videjo izglītību*), students should take at least 5 examinations in compulsory (maximum 4 exams) or optional study subjects. Provision is regulated by the state which determines its level, form and target groups. It

also defines the strategic goals and main tasks of each programme; its obligatory content, basic principles and assessment.

- Tertiary education (ISCED 5): while there is a difference between academic and vocational higher education, it is not institutionalised. Universities and other higher education institutions run both academic and vocational programmes. Academic higher education programmes (ISCED 5A) lead to a Bachelor's degree (*Bakalaura*) and Master's degree (*Maģistrs*). The duration of Bachelor's programmes may be 3 or 4 years. A Master's degree is awarded after the second stage of academic education and requires at least 5 years of university studies.
- Postgraduate education (ISCED level 6). A Master's degree or the equivalent is required for admission to doctoral studies (Ph.D.) which last 3-4 full-time years.

#### THE LATVIAN VET SYSTEM

- The Law of Vocational Education (revised in 2001) stipulates that VET programmes are classified as follows:
- vocational basic education programmes lasts for 3 years and are foreseen for students without a certificate of basic education (after completion of at least 7 grades of basic education, but they must be at least 15 years old);
- vocational education programmes last for 2-3 years and graduates receive a Certificate of secondary education and qualification level 3 (see below);
- vocational secondary educational programmes take 4 years and are open to students who have completed compulsory basic education. Graduates receive a diploma and a Level 3 vocational qualification (see below).
- post secondary non-tertiary vocational education (ISCED 4) can be followed after graduating from general secondary schools. They are focused towards mastering purely professional skills and knowledge.
- first level professional higher education (college education) programmes. The Law of Higher Education Institutions (*Augstākās izglītības likums*) and the Law of Vocational Education (*Profesionālās izglītības likums*) stipulate a 2-level vocational higher education – the first level (2-3 years) leading to professional qualification Level 4 (ISCED 5B) and second level (ISCED 5B) leading to qualification level 5 (4-6 years). Having completed a programme, students are awarded with a professional qualification or a vocational Bachelor's degree that can be followed by a further 1-2 years of vocational Master's studies. The Master's degree of higher vocational education is awarded if the total duration of studies is at least 5 years. There can also be short second level vocational higher education study programmes (1-2 years), where the qualification is obtained on the basis of the previously acquired first level vocational higher education or academic Bachelor's degree. In total the duration of professional qualification Level 5 study programmes is not less than 4 years after secondary education and not less than 2 years after college education.
- professional continuing education programmes enables adults with previous education and work experience to obtain professional qualifications;
- professional development educational programmes are for people regardless of their age and previous education or professional qualifications to master systematized professional knowledge and skills.

The Law defines five levels of professional qualifications:

- Level 1 (ISCED 2): theoretical and practical training that prepares students for performing simple tasks in a certain area of practical activity (assistant cook, carpenter etc.);

- Level 2 (ISCED 3): theoretical and practical background that allows the holder to perform qualified work independently (carpenter, hairdresser, cook, welder etc.);
- Level 3 (ISCED 3): advanced theoretical and professional background which enables the holder to fulfil certain tasks, including planning and organising work (various technicians, car mechanics, hotel service specialist etc.);
- Level 4 (ISCED 5): theoretical and practical background that enables the holder to perform complicated tasks as well as to organise and manage others in their work;
- Level 5 (ISCED 5): the highest qualification of a specialist in a field that enables the holder to plan and perform research and scientific work in the field.

Different vocational education programmes are developed and offered for all economic branches. The National Standard of vocational education (Valsts profesionālās izglītības standarts) and the Occupational Standards (Profesiju standarti) determine the curriculum and content of vocational education programmes.

At VET institutions, various educational programmes are offered. The following table shows the type of programme, their duration, previous education and possibilities to enrol at higher education institutions on completion.

Table 1: Types of professional education programmes				
PROGRAMME AND LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION TO BE OBTAINED	PREVIOUS EDUCATION	DURATION OF STUDIES (YEARS)	QUALIFICATION	POSSIBILITY TO ENROL AT HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS
VOCATIONAL SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME- LEVEL 3	9-year basic	4	Diploma of vocational secondary education	Yes
	vocational education	2		Yes
	Secondary	2		Yes
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME- LEVEL 2	9-year basic	3	Certificate on vocational education	No
	9-year basic	2		
	Secondary	2	Certificate of qualification	Yes
	Secondary	1		



<b>VOCATIONAL BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMME- LEVEL 1</b>	9-year basic	1	Certificate of vocational basic education	No
<b>VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME (PEDAGOGICAL CORRECTION PROGRAMME* INCLUDED)- LEVEL 2</b>	8 years	3	Certificate of vocational education and certificate of basic education	No
<b>VOCATIONAL BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMME (PEDAGOGICAL CORRECTION* INCLUDED)- LEVEL 1</b>	8 years	2	Certificate of vocational basic education and certificate of basic education	No

\* pedagogical correction – programme for early school leavers and those with low level of basic knowledge and skills. The main aim of the programme is to integrate youngsters back to education system and help them acquire simple professional skills.

Source: MoES

#### **0402 - IVET AT LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL**

##### **BASIC VOCATIONAL EDUCATION – ISCED 2C**

Students are admitted onto VET programmes without consideration for their previous education but not earlier than in the year in which they turn 15. Those without basic education are admitted to VET programmes which include pedagogical correction (this is targeted at early school leavers and those with a low level of basic education – the aim of the programme is to integrate young people back into the education system).

Programme duration is 1-2 years and leads to a certificate of basic vocational education which certifies that the student has obtained a first level qualification (ISCED 2C). This means that they have the theoretical and practical training to carry out simple tasks in certain fields, for example as a cook's or carpenter's assistant). In the school year 2004/2005, 1 227 students (0.75 % of basic education level students or 2.75% of vocational education students) participated in these programmes.

#### **0403 - IVET AT UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION (SCHOOL-BASED AND ALTERNANCE)**

The Law of Vocational Education stipulates that the duration of vocational training is 2-3 years for people who have completed basic education. Upon graduation a VET certificate is awarded attesting that the qualification corresponds to professional level 2 (theoretical and practical aptitude for carrying out qualified executive work independently, for example as carpenter, hairdresser, cook, seamstress, welder – ISCED 3). Vocational training does not give the right to continue studies at a higher education institution, nevertheless for students who want to continue, a 1-year intermediate course in general secondary education is available.

The content of vocational education study programmes leading to professional qualification level 2 (ISCED 3c) is divided into theory and practice 35:65 respectively



and between general and vocational subjects 60:40. The practical training usually takes place at the schools and enterprises.

In 2005/2006 37 131 students (87% of vocational education students) participated in upper secondary vocational programmes.

Table 1: National classification of education (adopted in 2004)

EDUCATION LEVEL AND TYPE	TYPE OF PROGRAMME	ISCED 97	
		EDUCATION LEVEL	CODE
Secondary vocational education	Vocational education-part of vocational secondary education which does not give the right to continue studies at a higher education level. Duration 2-3 years	Upper secondary	3C
	Vocational secondary education which ensures professional qualification level 3 and give the right to continue studies at a higher education level. Duration 3-4 years.	Upper secondary	3A 3B
	Intermediate programme in general secondary education. Duration 1 year. Previous education—vocational education.	Upper secondary	3A 3B

#### VOCATIONAL SECONDARY EDUCATION - ISCED 3A, 3B

Students who have completed general or vocational basic education (level 1–ISCED 2c) can be admitted to upper-secondary VET programmes which last for 3-4 years. Upon graduation, an upper secondary VET diploma is awarded, as well as a professional qualification level 3 (ISCED 3c). The diploma gives the right to continue studies at a higher education institution. The structure of upper secondary VET programmes combine theory and practical training on a 50:50 basis and general and vocational subjects on a 60:40 basis.

Table 2: Students in upper secondary education by programme orientation, 2004<sup>1</sup>

	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMES %			GENERAL AND PRE-VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMES %		
				TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE

<b>EU-25</b>	<b>24 165 456</b>	11 737 110	12 428 347	<b>55.4</b>	57.1	53.9	<b>44.6</b>	42.9	46.1
<b>LATVIA</b>	<b>106 148</b>	53 637	52 511	<b>36.8</b>	44.6	28.8	<b>63.2</b>	55.4	71.2

<sup>1</sup> ISCED 97, level 3 (excl. ISCED 3c short)

Source: Eurostat, UOE data collection; on-line database, 2006

As shown, the general secondary education pathway is more popular than for vocational secondary education.

#### **0404 - APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING**

An apprenticeship system exists on a small scale mainly in the crafts sector in traditional professions: it is regulated by the Law on Crafts (1993). The main organisation involved is the Chamber of Crafts which is a self-governing organisation.

Through the apprenticeship system it is possible to obtain the journeyman (*Amata zēļa diploms*) and master craft qualification (*Amata meistara diploms*). The journeyman examination comprises two parts: presentation of qualification work and techniques used and theoretical knowledge. The master craftsman qualification is awarded after an examination.

Apprenticeship qualifications do not provide access to regulated professions nor do they give access to continue in the formal education and training system. There are no mechanisms in place for those, who dropped out from apprenticeship before completing training, to continue in another form.

Apprentices are admitted regardless of their previous education but not earlier than the year in which they turn 16 (unless they have permission from parents or tutor). Apprenticeship programmes are drafted by the corresponding craft professional association and approved by the Council of the Chamber of Crafts. The curricula are not approved by the Vocational Education Administration as for IVET programmes, as these programmes are not part of formal IVET.

An apprenticeship is based on the Chamber of Crafts standard template contracts, concluded between apprentice and master. They determine the relative responsibilities of apprentices and their master.

The Chamber of Crafts is planning to introduce several measures to increase interest about apprenticeship, they include: providing more information to VET schools and improving the network of craft masters who would be interested in training apprentices.

Apprenticeship training can be organised in two ways:

- the apprentice works with a crafts master and looks for theoretical training possibilities in vocational schools; or
- an apprentice is a student in a vocational school and during practical placement is working with a crafts master. After graduation, the student must pass the exam of journeyman in the Chamber of Crafts.

Theoretical training for masters and journeyman qualifications are offered also by the Chamber of Crafts.

#### **0405 - OTHER YOUTH PROGRAMMES AND ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS**

There are no other youth programmes as alternative pathways except for the pedagogical correction programme. This is part of IVET system leading to the same education certificate and qualification but its main aim is to re-integrate early school leavers and those with low level of basic knowledge and skills back to the education system and help them acquire simple professional skills.

#### **0406 - VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT POST-SECONDARY (NON TERTIARY) LEVEL**

It is possible to enrol in programmes of vocational training or post-secondary vocational training after completing general upper-secondary education. Target groups of post-secondary non-tertiary IVET are general secondary school graduates at age of 18-20. Programmes last for 1-2 years and their main objective is to prepare their students for entering labour market.

To gain a certificate of qualification, students must fulfil all the requirements of the educational standard, i.e. to receive a grade in all the subjects, practical studies and practical placement and pass a qualification examination. The qualification, which is awarded by education establishments, allows students to enrol in higher education institutions.

In the school year 2005/2006, 9.4% (4 025) of students at VET institutions studied in such programmes.

#### **0407 - VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT TERTIARY LEVEL**

The Law on Vocational Education (1999) provides for higher vocational programmes at two levels: college programmes (professional qualification level 4; ISCED 5) and higher vocational education programmes (professional qualification level 5; ISCED 5). In accordance with Law of Higher Education institutions, it is possible to obtain a mix of academic and vocational qualifications:

- bachelor *bakalaurs* (either academic or vocational);
- master *maģistrs* (either academic or vocational);
- doctor *doktors* (scientific degree).

#### **COLLEGE PROGRAMMES**

In a number of vocational fields, there are college programmes which are the first cycle of vocational higher education. They lead to level 4 professional qualifications (ISCED 5).

First level higher vocational education programmes are available at colleges (former institutions of post-secondary VET) and higher education institutions. Studies last for 2-3 years following completion of general or vocational secondary education. The "Diploma of the first level higher vocational education" (available since June 2000) is equal to level 4 (theoretical and practical training that enables holder to perform complicated tasks as well as to organise and lead the work of other specialists). Programmes are available in engineering, computer science, business administration, nursing and law. Programmes can give credit towards further studies in the second cycle of vocational higher education.

The content of first level higher vocational education comprises study courses (comprising general subjects, humanities, social sciences as well as technical subjects), a practical placement and a thesis. The content of the study course and the practical placement is set out in occupational standards for some professions.

#### **HIGHER VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES**

Second level higher vocational education programmes (ISCED 5A) are provided by universities and other higher education institutions. Studies last 4-5 years after completing general or vocational secondary education. The "Diploma of Higher Vocational Education" is equivalent to level 5 (highest specialist qualification which provides for practical performance as well as abilities to plan and perform research and scientific work). Content comprises (for vocational bachelor programmes, vocational master programmes, higher vocational education programmes), study courses, a practical placement and a qualifying thesis. The content of the study course and the practical placement is set by the respective occupational standards for certain professions.

#### **05 - CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR ADULTS**

Strategies for adult education in Latvia are defined by the Concept of Adult Education of Latvia (*Pieaugušo izglītības koncepcija*), the National Lisbon Programme for 2005/2008. Adult education should satisfy both the need for personal development and

public needs. It should aim to fulfil individual needs and complement existing levels of education and training regardless of age and levels of previous education.

#### **0501 - BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

There is a long tradition of adult continuing education in Latvia usually with evening courses for working adults who had not completed primary or secondary education. The Law on Education (*Izglītības likums* 1998) stipulates that adult education should be individually chosen to encourage personal development and improve labour market competitiveness. Adults have the right to follow programmes throughout their whole life, regardless of formal levels of education. On completion, adults receive a certificate of completion from the provider.

The Law on Vocational education (*Profesionālās izglītības likums* 1999) regulates two formal types of continuing education: vocational continuing education and professional improvement. Vocational continuing education enables adults with previous education and work experience to obtain professional qualifications. They are always concluded by a specific qualification for a specific profession acknowledged by the state. Professional improvement enables people regardless of their age and previous education or professional qualifications to master systematized professional knowledge and skills corresponding to the requirements of the labour market. They lead to a formal qualification.

#### **ADULT CONTINUING EDUCATION MAY BE CLASSIFIED AS FOLLOWS:**

- enterprise staff training;
- training for unemployed people (organised and funded by the State);
- adult education provided in centres of adult education, night schools, etc. supported by local government;
- various training programmes and projects financed by international and local donor institutions and funds, carried out by the state, local government, nongovernmental and other organizations;
- individual continuing education financed by individuals themselves.

#### **CVET PROVISION**

CVET provision is diverse. The most popular courses are in social sciences, entrepreneurial activity, law, services, health and social care, foreign languages, liberal sciences and arts, as well as engineering sciences, production and building, and teacher education. There are a number of organisations involved in CVET and the network of providers includes: ministries; employers' organisations; trade unions; university continuing education departments and their distance learning centres, the school of state administration; local training centres; chambers of commerce, centres of adult education, State Employment Agency and other educational organisations and associations.

#### **STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

The Latvian CVET system has a number of strengths and weaknesses summarised below.

##### **Strengths:**

- there is a network of providers for CVET for all target groups;
- cooperation with social partners is formalised through: the Tripartite Cooperation Subcommittee for Education and Employment as well as Cooperation Committee for Vocational Education;
- teachers have pedagogical education;
- all educational programmes on offer are accredited;
- a central examination system eases comparison of quality across the country;

- providers are involved in international projects;
- the Ministry of Education and Science plans and determines educational policy, as well as controls its implementation;
- Guidelines for Lifelong Learning Policy 2007-2013 (*Mūžizglītības politikas pamatnostādnes 2007.–2013.gadam*) were developed at the beginning of 2007.

**Weaknesses:**

- ongoing territorial reform complicates the provision of adult learning opportunities;
- state funding for adult education is not sufficient and provision is not available to all population groups;
- there is no adequate system of guidance to support training on a lifelong basis;
- there is no system of CVET for teachers and trainers;
- the networking capacity of the different CVET providers and other organisations is not sufficiently developed;
- there is no system in place to accredit informally acquired skills and competences;
- provision of CVET across Latvia is not consistent.

Some of these issues are being addressed in the Guidelines for Lifelong Learning (2007-2013) which outline the vision for 2013 in terms of the needs of different target groups; mainstream development; policy aims and results indicators; and resources available.

**0502 - PUBLICLY PROMOTED CVET FOR ALL**

There are three main types of publicly promoted CVET:

- adult education;
- vocational continuing education programmes (informal training);
- professional improvement programmes (leading to formal qualifications).

All publicly provided CVET programmes must be accredited by the Ministry of Education and Science (*Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija*). Applications must include information about how the programme will be funded, the target audience, the length of the programme, where it will be implemented, etc. Providers must also be certified by the Ministry of Education and Science.

The accreditation system is based on standards determined in the Law on Vocational Education (1999). The principle of accreditation is to ensure that programme content meets the required standards of publicly provided vocational education and occupational standards. It also assists in the transparency of training, thereby assisting the ability to recognise Latvian qualifications in other countries.

**ADULT EDUCATION**

Adult education can be pursued in state owned, local government, private with state investment or private which include enterprise training centres and other educational establishments. There were 6 036 education programmes, in which 290 279 adults participated (2006, CBS).

General education programmes and parts of vocational training can be pursued part-time during the evening.

Most programmes need to be accredited but publicly owned providers can offer informal training programmes without obtaining a license.

**VOCATIONAL CONTINUING EDUCATION**

Programmes are determined by occupational standards and providers are accredited by the Ministry of Education in cooperation with the social partners through the Tripartite Cooperation Subcommittee for Vocational Education and Employment. The accreditation process follows an evaluation of the quality of the provision on offer. Providers can only offer courses in programmes which have been licensed and programmes must meet both educational and occupational standards. The accreditation procedure for both providers and programmes is outlined in the Law on Vocational Education (1999).

Participants completing a programme take a centrally determined examination which are organised by the Ministry of Education and Science. They aim to ensure that all the graduates, obtaining a certain profession, have identical knowledge, competencies and skills. Social partners are also involved in evaluating examination performance.

#### **PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMMES**

At the end of professional improvement programmes, an examination following centralised procedures and methodologies are taken. The list of professional qualifications is determined by the Cabinet Regulations of November 2000 No. 383 "Regulations for Professional Qualifications, which are Subject to Centralized Professional Qualification Examinations" and Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers, March 2002, No. 104 "Regulations on the Contents and Order of the Centralized Examinations". Both determine the content of the examinations. To issue a certificate of professional improvement, the programme must be at least 160 hours long.

#### **0503 - TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE AND OTHERS VULNERABLE TO EXCLUSION IN THE LABOUR MARKET**

Training for unemployed people is organised by the State employment services which procures training from accredited educational institutions. Three types of programme are available:

- vocational continuing education (*see also section 0502*);
- professional improvement programmes (*see also section 0502*);
- adult education programmes (*see also section 0502*);
- other educational programmes.

They are available if the professional qualifications and/or work experience fall short of the requirements of a profession and the person cannot find work. They are also available where somebody has lost their professional skills. To participate in courses, unemployed people must be at least 18. As demand outstrips supply, motivation is also taken into account when choosing participants.

Training programmes for unemployed people are financed from the state budget. They can also be organised according to employer proposals who are seeking employees with certain skills; where this is the case the employer must provide a job for the trained person lasting at least 1 year.

Vocational training for unemployed people is organized by the State Employment Agency (SEA). The SEA does not carry out training: it procures it from licensed education and training providers through a tendering and contractual procedure. In 2005 the number of persons engaged in the activities considerably increased. The module training programmes for acquiring basic skills demanded in labour market had been improved and the number of them went up by 21 (SEA, Report on work results 2005). In 2005, 5.8% of unemployed people involved in SEA activities participated in vocational training or professional development programmes.

The SEA is organised on a regional basis as are their training programmes. Providers are responsible for programme quality. The SEA examines the following in procuring training:

- material and technical requirements for implementing educational programmes;



- teachers comply to the education and professional qualification requirements of the training programmes;
- ability to meet the course and programme schedules and keep appropriate records.

The SEA should follow up on the training provision on a monthly basis and a statement is prepared indicating the performance of individual trainees.

#### **TRAINING FOR OTHERS AT RISK OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION**

There are several groups at risk of social exclusion: young jobseekers aged 15-24; those of pre-retirement age (aged 55-64), those with low skills and a low level of education; disabled people; long-term unemployed (seeking work for more than 12 months); women returners; ex-prisoners and ex-drug addicts.

Young people are an especially important target group given that their rate of unemployment is 22.2% (considerably higher than in other age groups, as well as compared to the EU mean of 15.1%). Special attention is given to young people with low educational achievement, those who have been expelled and young offenders.

Generally, people with low educational achievement are also an important target group (17% of all jobseekers only have basic level education). 26.1% of all jobseekers have also been unemployed for longer than a year.

#### **ESF SPONSORED TRAINING PROVISION**

In 2005, 42 educational institutions provided vocational training for unemployed people. They offered 83 training programmes. Most of this training is funded from the EU Structural Funds through the European Social Fund (ESF) project "Training and Continuing education of the Unemployed" which started in October 2004. The objective is to provide vocational training in skills required on the labour market for both adults and young people who have obtained an educational level necessary to master a profession. In the project in total 7175 unemployed started their training (2005). 80% of participants in 2005 were aged over 25 and 39% had some previous level of vocational training 3.3% had secondary education.

Another ESF project is the "Providing of Training for Social Exclusion Risk Groups, Including Information and Communication Support to Disabled Persons". This promotes the integration of unemployed people at risk of exclusion by improving their professional qualifications and their competitiveness on the labour market. Target groups comprise: unemployed disabled people; long-term unemployed people; young unemployed people (aged 15-25 years) with only basic education or less; labour market returners and ex-prisoners. 645 people participated in 2004, 43% in vocational training, 27% in improving professional skills and 30% in vocational re-qualification.

#### **0504 - CVET AT THE INITIATIVE OF ENTERPRISES OR SOCIAL PARTNERS**

Enterprise provided training can assist employees to adapt to new tasks or to re-qualify to improve their career chances. For enterprises in Latvia participation in training is a voluntary activity and they tend to be more concerned with providing training to ensure their employees can adapt to new workplace demands and provide courses on-site or outside of the enterprise usually at private providers. The number of providers has been increasing, especially in the cities, to meet the training demands of enterprises.

Training is available to learn a completely new skill or to add certain competences (e.g. teamwork skills). Every training provider produces a study programme of different courses. Trainers may be employed by a training provider or may be contracted to provide a certain course. It is usually at the discretion of the provider to design their own training programmes but for certain regulated professions other bodies may be consulted to ensure that any occupational standards are met. The quality of provision is not otherwise monitored.

Enterprise management usually take the decision to provide training for their employees and the human resource and training departments would seek the most appropriate training depending on the size of the enterprise. Training courses would usually be funded by the enterprise although employees may have to contribute.

Enterprises tend to provide training through external or internal courses. Other means such as job rotation within the organisation may also be used. Study groups and participation in conferences can also constitute training provision.

#### REGULATION OF ENTERPRISE TRAINING

While enterprise provision of training is voluntary, some training issues are regulated with a number of Articles of the Labour Code related to training:

- Article 191 stipulates that employers must create the necessary conditions for employees to participate in education and training through combining work and study. This must be included in collective agreements.
- Article 192 stipulates that theoretical studies and practical training, if employees are trained on site, have to be organized during working hours or after working hours in accordance with legislation, collective agreement or labour contract according to the mutual agreement of the contractual parties.
- Article 193 stipulates that upon completion of training, employees are assigned a category or job title which reflects their specialty and qualification in accordance with the terms of the collective agreement or by mutual agreement of the contractual parties.
- Article 201 stipulates the employers must facilitate employee participation in all kinds of education and training.

Employers can grant study leave for employees to pursue studies while at work – this may be paid or unpaid depending on their employment contract or collective agreement. For State examinations, study leave must be granted for a minimum of 20 days for employees with minimum salary. In some regulated professions, training is compulsory.

Decisions on enterprise training are taken with the cooperation of the social partners. In 2000, the Tripartite Cooperation Subcommittee for Education and Employment was organized with representatives from Ministries (Welfare, Economy, Finance, Justice, Agriculture, Education and Science, Regional Development and Local Government Affairs), the Association of Free Trade Unions and the Confederation of Employers. The task of the Subcommittee is to promote dialogue between employers and employees on training and employment issues.

In terms of provision, compared to other enterprises in the EU, Latvian enterprises follow the trend that the larger the enterprise the more likely it is that training will be available.

Table 1: Training enterprises as % of all enterprises, by size class (1999)

	SIZE CLASS (NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES)			
	TOTAL (%)	10 TO 49 (%)	50 TO 249 (%)	250 OR MORE (%)
<b>EU-25</b>	61	56	80	95
<b>AUSTRIA</b>	72	68	91	96



<b>BELGIUM</b>	70	66	93	100
<b>CYPRUS</b>	:	:	:	:
<b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b>	69	62	84	96
<b>DENMARK</b>	96	95	98	100
<b>ESTONIA</b>	63	58	85	96
<b>FINLAND</b>	82	78	97	99
<b>FRANCE</b>	76	70	93	98
<b>GERMANY</b>	75	71	87	98
<b>GREECE</b>	18	11	43	78
<b>HUNGARY</b>	37	32	51	79
<b>ICELAND</b>	:	:	:	:
<b>IRELAND</b>	79	75	98	100
<b>ITALY</b>	24	20	48	81
<b>LATVIA</b>	53	49	70	91
<b>LITHUANIA</b>	43	37	60	80
<b>LUXEMBOURG</b>	71	67	83	99
<b>MALTA</b>	:	:	:	:

<b>NETHERLANDS</b>	88	85	96	98
<b>NORWAY</b>	86	84	97	100
<b>POLAND</b>	39	36	52	63
<b>PORTUGAL</b>	22	17	46	78
<b>SLOVAKIA</b>	:	:	:	:
<b>SLOVENIA</b>	48	35	72	96
<b>SPAIN</b>	36	31	58	86
<b>SWEDEN</b>	91	88	99	99
<b>UNITED KINGDOM</b>	87	85	91	98

Note: "Training enterprises" are enterprises that did provide any type of continuing vocational training to their employees; Cyprus, Malta, Slovakia, Iceland were not covered by CVTS2.

Source: Eurostat, NewCronos, 2<sup>nd</sup> Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS2)

#### **0505 - CVET AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE INDIVIDUAL**

There is little information on the amount of training undertaken at individual initiative in Latvia. Some universities have Continuing Education Departments which provide training for individuals. Other training options include self-education through informal study through TV and radio, audio and video cassettes, as well as computer learning. Libraries and training centres are less popular. These statistics apply irrelevant of age group although for unemployed people self-study methods follow the order of: (1) printed materials; (2) information from the TV and radio broadcasts, audio-video cassettes; (3) computer, use of the Internet. Computers and the internet are more frequently used by working people. In turn, libraries and training centres are visited more frequently by the economically inactive population.

As mentioned in 0504, employers can grant study leave for employees to pursue studies while at work – this may be paid or unpaid depending on their employment contract or collective agreement. For State examinations, study leave must be granted for a minimum of 20 days for employees with minimum salary. In some regulated professions, training is compulsory.

### **06 - TRAINING VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS**

#### **0601 - TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN VET**

The VET system contains vocational education teachers which are both teachers and trainers. They provide a range of programmes: vocational basic education; vocational lower secondary education; vocational upper secondary education; and professional development and continuing education.

## IVET TEACHERS

Vocational lower and upper secondary programmes comprise general subjects, professional subjects, practical training and work placements. Teachers in the VET system are therefore teachers of general subjects or of a vocational subject. Practical training is taught by vocational subject VET teachers.

## CVET TEACHERS

VET teachers for continuing education programmes (CVET) are not specially noted within vocational education terminology. They have the same requirements as VET teachers.

## LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE FOR VET TEACHERS

Since the Law on Vocational Education was implemented in January 2004, all VET teachers are now required to gain a pedagogical qualification. Since 2004, all VET teachers must be in one of the following situations:

- have a vocational qualification and pedagogical training;
- have a vocational qualification and participating in pedagogical training;
- have a higher pedagogical qualification or an academic degree and a pedagogical qualification.

According to the Law on Education, the Ministry of Education and Science is the institution responsible for co-ordinating training and continuing education of teachers. Improving teacher training and professional development system is one of the main action points in the White Paper on the Development of Education in 2002/2005 developed by the Ministry of Education and Science, aimed at ensuring the quality of vocational training according to the needs of society and the economy.

The vocational education development programme 2003/2005 still is the key document for VET development. The programme includes teacher training where the priority to improve the quality of VET includes improving the further education level of vocational school teachers.

Regulations have gone further since 2005, where an Order of VET teacher education and professional development (Cabinet of Ministers, October 2005) covers the different qualifications required by VET teachers who provide basic vocational education, lower and upper secondary vocational education and continuing vocational and professional development programmes.

## 0602 - TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN IVET

The Law identifies only one type of teacher and trainer in all kinds of VET: VET teacher. VET teachers can be categorised according to the level of programme taught: basic vocational and upper secondary vocational, although they can teach both levels if they have the appropriate education. All VET teachers can teach both IVET and CVET at basic and upper secondary level in educational establishments.

Table 1: VET teachers according education obtained

SCHOOL YEARS	NUMBER OF TEACHERS		EDUCATION LEVEL								
			BASIC	SECONDARY				HIGHER			
	TOTAL	WOMEN		TOTAL	INCL. GENERAL SECONDARY	INCL. SECONDARY VOCATIONAL	INCL. THOSE WITH PEDAGOGICAL EDUCATION	TOTAL	INCL. HIGHER PEDAGOGICAL	INCL. OTHER TYPE PEDAGOGICAL (320 H)	PH D

2004/2005	4 775	3 373	-	842	88	754	465	3 933	2 674	1 027	48
2003/2004	5 224	3 658	-	1 034	126	908	381	4 190	2 755	766	60
2002/2003	5 693	3 869	3	1 110	172	938	337	4 580	2 789	712	80
2001/2002	5 582	3 772	2	1 215	203	1 012	292	4 365	2 648	589	99
2000/2001	5 439	3 607	5	1 226	228	998	283	4 208	2 384	584	59

**Source:** Educational Institutions in Latvia at the beginning of the school year 2004/2005. Riga: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2005

The Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 347 (October 2000, amendments 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004) provides "Regulations on the needs for training and vocational qualifications required by teachers". The requirements describe:

- the vocational qualification requirements to be met by VET teachers;
- the training programmes which should be followed to qualify to work as a VET teacher.

Pre-service training for VET teachers is organised in higher education establishments. There are two types of programme depending whether the teacher is training to be a general subject teacher in a VET school or a teacher of a specific vocation. Programmes for general subject teachers are the same whether the teacher will teach in the general education or VET system. Students study a higher pedagogical level education and achieve a pedagogical qualification.

Vocational training programmes are available in different occupational sectors to become a VET teacher. Graduates obtain a professional qualification or scientific degree in the branch. If the graduate would like to work in VET school he/she should continue in a pedagogical education programme (for no less than 320 hours) at a higher education institution, adult continuing education centre or other training institution.

For those without a pedagogical qualification, who would like to work in VET schools as a VET teacher, there is a special programme (Vocational education teachers' professional perfection programme lasting no less than 320 hours) designed according to the occupational standard for VET teachers (2002). To apply, prospective students must have a secondary vocational or a higher professional education level. A combination of secondary education and a master of crafts qualification are also accepted.

#### **IN-SERVICE, CONTINUING TRAINING FOR VET TEACHERS**

All pedagogical staff (VET teachers, school director, deputy directors, methodologists, interest education teachers, social pedagogues, librarian etc.) should participate in further training to improve their professional qualification every third year. Different continuing education programmes, courses, seminars, projects and other pedagogical tools could be used as long as they are not less than 36 contact hours in total. The Law on education states that a teacher is responsible for their professional development. Teachers have the right to use 30 calendar days every third year for professional development as paid training leave. It is the responsibility of the director of a VET school to monitor their staff development.

Various organisations provide continuing training for VET teachers including school boards, municipalities, professional associations, the vocational education centre, the

teaching and examination centres, universities and higher education institutions as well as continuing vocational training centres.

### **0603 - TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN CVET**

There is only one type of occupation regulated by law which is a vocational education teacher. There are no differences between vocational education teachers in the IVET or CVET system and teachers for continuing education programmes (CVET) are not specially noted within vocational education terminology. They have the same requirements as other vocational education teachers (see *section 0602* Types of teacher and trainer in IVET).

VET teachers in VET schools provide both IVET and CVET courses and there is no distinction regarding their education requirements. In enterprises in-company teachers and trainers could be involved in local training, nevertheless, there is no regulation on their education requirements. Those involved in apprenticeship training should have a craftsman qualification.

### **PRE-SERVICE TRAINING FOR CVET TEACHERS**

The pre-service training is the same for all vocational education teachers. Professional training programmes are available in different occupational sectors within the higher education system. Graduates obtain a professional qualification or scientific degree in the branch. If the graduate would like to work in VET school they should continue in a basic pedagogical programme (no less than 320 hours) at a higher education institution, adult continuing education centre or other training institution.

The training content and curricula is the same for all VET teachers: all must follow a higher education study programme in the appropriate field at a higher level (ISCED 5A). The assessment and quality monitoring structure is also the same.

### **IN-SERVICE, CONTINUING TRAINING FOR VET TEACHERS**

All pedagogical staff (VET teachers, school director, deputy directors, methodologists, interest education teachers, social pedagogue, librarian, etc.) should participate in further training to improve their professional qualification every 3 years. Different continuing education programmes, courses, seminars, projects and other pedagogical tools could be used as long as they are not less than 36 contact hours in total. The Law on Education states that a teacher is responsible for their professional development. Teachers have the right to use 30 calendar days every third year for professional development as paid training leave. It is the responsibility of the headmaster of a VET school to monitor their staff development.

Various organisations provide continuing training for VET teachers including school boards, municipalities, professional associations, the vocational education centre, the teaching and examination centres, universities and higher education institutions as well as continuing vocational training centres.

## **07 - SKILLS AND COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGY**

### **0701 - MECHANISMS FOR THE ANTICIPATION OF SKILL NEEDS**

Skills needs are taken into account in vocational qualifications through the definition of occupational standards for different professions. Standards are developed by representatives of educational institutions and social partners through working groups organized by the Ministry of Education and Science. Occupational standards are confirmed by the National Tripartite Sub-council for co-operation in VET and employment and by the Minister of education and science.

Occupational standards comprise a description of specific tasks and employee duties as well as the abilities and skills necessary to carry out those tasks. Standards also determine to which level of professional qualification each specific profession corresponds. When developing educational programmes, educational institutions have to ensure the acquisition of all the abilities, skills and knowledge mentioned in the occupational standards. By May 2007, 408 occupation standards had been drafted and approved.

### **0702 - BRIDGING PATHWAYS AND NEW EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS**

With the adoption of the Law of Vocational Education in 1999, the system of vocational qualifications was created. The qualifications are closely related to general upper-

secondary education and higher education. The introduction of centralized final examinations for vocational upper-secondary graduates ensures that everyone who obtains general upper-secondary education follows the same examinations and opportunities to enrol at higher education institutions.

As VET programmes only include a part of general upper-secondary education, special intermediate programmes are available to VET graduates, so that they can enrol at higher education institutions.

#### **0703 - RENEWAL OF CURRICULA**

VET programme curricula are developed by education establishments (based on guidelines developed by Vocational Education Administration (*Profesionālās izglītības administrācija, PIA*) and based on two different standards:

- National vocational education standards are developed by the Ministry of Education and Science and adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers. Standards determine strategic objectives of education programmes, compulsory contents of education, basic principles and the assessment procedure in accordance with the level of education. The standards determine the relation of theory to practice, the general subjects versus professional ones and the distribution of general subjects.
- Occupational standards determine basic requirements of vocational qualifications, as well as specific demands for performing the tasks in a given profession. The standard is developed based on a common agreement among employers, trade unions and national and local government as well as institutions involved in vocational education and employment.

Vocational education programme curricula define:

- objectives of the VET programme;
- content of the VET programme;
- implementation plan for the VET programme;
- enrolment requirements;
- financial, personnel and material resources necessary for implementing the programme.

Compulsory subjects in VET programmes include Latvian, foreign language, computer science, history, and business foundations. VET programmes are evaluated by the Vocational Education Administration. In 2000/2006 the centre evaluated 1 769 vocational programmes.

### **08 - ACCUMULATING, TRANSFERRING AND VALIDATING LEARNING**

#### **0801 - ACCUMULATING, ACCREDITING AND VALIDATING FORMAL LEARNING**

Validation processes are regulated by an order from the Cabinet of Ministers Nr. 451 from 2005 "Procedure for the issue documents certifying to vocational education and professional qualifications and certifying to the acquisition of part of an accredited programme of vocational education". This stipulates that state-recognized documents certifying vocational qualifications are awarded for the completion of an accredited programme. Qualifications are issued by the training provider.

To gain a qualification, students must fulfil all the requirements of the educational standard, i.e. to receive a grade in all the subjects, practical studies and practical placement and pass a qualification examination with a grade no lower than 5 "satisfactory."

The Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers from 2000 "Regulations on professional qualifications that are acquired by passing centralized professional qualification examinations" stipulate that in the majority of cases, to obtain a third level professional qualification the student has to take centralized professional qualification examinations. The content of exams is developed by the Vocational Education Administration under

the Ministry of Education and Science with the assistance of the social partners who are usually heads of the examination commission. Students usually take the exams at learning and examination centres, thereby ensuring that everyone who obtains a qualification are tested and evaluated using the same methods.

Graduates receiving a state-recognized document certifying a vocational qualification may work in the profession. If the profession is regulated (e.g. as with building workers and people working in medicine), the qualification holder may work only under the supervision of a certified specialist. To obtain independent practice rights, it is necessary to work under supervision of a certified specialist for 2-5 years and then to receive a certificate issued by the relevant competent institution (usually a professional association). The certification exam developed by trade unions usually tests the applicant's capabilities to apply their abilities and skills in practice.

#### **0802 - ACCUMULATING, ACCREDITING AND VALIDATING NON-FORMAL/INFORMAL LEARNING**

There is no legislation regulating the recognition of non-formal education. Each educational institution that provides non-formal educational programmes determines the conditions for issuing certificates. Employers determine whether this document of non-formal education is sufficient to occupy a certain position, or not. Trade unions organizing continuing education of employees choose themselves which non-formal educational programmes are recognized.

Employers can also choose and determine which non-formal educational programmes to recognize. Larger enterprises have staff training plans in which it is stated which non-formal educational programmes the particular specialist has to master.

Non-formal education is not recognized in formal education. Yet the Vocational Education Administration (*Profesionālās izglītības administrācija*), supervised by the Ministry of Education and Science, has arranged a work group which is developing non-formal education recognition and skill evaluation methodology.

#### **0803 - IMPACT OF EU POLICY COOPERATION**

Since 2005 Latvian National Europass Centre, as a part of the Academic Information Centre, has been established to supervise the implementation of Europass programme. In close cooperation with Leonardo da Vinci, Erasmus and Comenius programmes 243 Europass Mobility passes have been handed out in 2006.

Linking the professional qualification system of Latvia to EQF has not started yet and practical steps have not been decided. The plans are to involve all the main stakeholders groups – ministries, employers' representatives, employees' representatives, and representatives of education fields (vocational, higher).

#### **0804 - FACILITATING EU MOBILITY**

The recognition of academic and professional diplomas is the responsibility of the Academic Information Centre (*Akadēmiskās informācijas centrs, AIC*). The AIC evaluates, according to the Education Law, the level of a qualification compared to the Latvian educational system and issues its statement. This statement together with the educational document is submitted to the provider or employer. The AIC's diploma evaluation is free of charge.

The final decision on recognition is made by:

- the Ministry of Education and Science – to continue studies at primary or secondary education level;
- Higher education institution – to continue studies at higher education level;
- employer – to work in the non-regulated professions.

The Academic Information Centre, according to the Law on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications and Cabinet regulation No 337 of August, 2002 which lists the regulated professions in Latvia, recognises foreign qualifications. The recognition of foreign qualifications is necessary to be allowed to work within a profession in Latvia. In 2006 the AIC issued 909 academic and 61 professional recognition statements.



The recognition of qualifications in Latvia is organized in line with Lisbon Convention, ratified in 1999 and EU directives. The Law on Higher Education Establishments, 1995, (article 84; 85) states the recognition of foreign credentials and study periods. Latvia uses the national credit point system where 1 Latvian credit point = 1.5 ECTS. Since 2004 all higher education providers issue diploma supplements for all graduates to provide better transparency of qualifications.

To implement EU directives regarding recognition on professional qualifications, the law "On Regulated Professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications" was adopted on June, 2001. The Law comprises Part A: Regulated professions in the Republic of Latvia (July 2001); and part B: Recognition of professional qualifications of foreign citizens (January 2003).

The Law on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications and the Cabinet regulation No 337 of August, 2002 lists the regulated professions in Latvia. The Law is followed by all necessary amendments and regulations of the Cabinet to be in line with new developments. Changes to the legislation according to new directives will be made within two years.

## **09 - GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING FOR LEARNING, CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT**

### **0901 - STRATEGY AND PROVISION**

The Ministries of Education and Science (*Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija, IZM*), and Welfare (*Labklājības ministrija*) are responsible for career guidance and counselling. The Concept of career guidance in the Republic of Latvia (adopted in November 1994) determines its goals. The Ministry of Welfare's policy is realised by the Professional Career Counselling State Agency (*Profesionālās karjeras izvēles valsts aģentūra, PKIVA*) which is under their supervision and which operates in accordance with the Law on Social Security (adopted in May 1995) and the Law on the Support for the Unemployed and Job Seekers (adopted in May 2002), which states:

"Measures for reducing unemployment include guidance and counselling and consulting services, which are offered to those wishing to pursue education or who are working or wish to participate in remunerated work; the aim is to promote the competitiveness of these people in the labour market and to offer help in the choice of a professional career.

Clients of the *PKIVA* receive the following services:

- individual and group consultations on career and educational choices and professional suitability;
- individual consultations on employment related questions;
- workshops for young people and adults on career development and questions on seeking employment;
- consultations on educational opportunities in Latvia and abroad.

*PKIVA* was created in 1987; in 2006 the agency structure consisted of 5 regional consultation centres and 19 district consultation rooms.

The Law of Education (*Izglītības likums* 1998) stipulates that district local governments ensure the provision of guidance and counselling for children and young adults while the Law of Vocational Education (*Profesionālās izglītības likums* 1999) stipulates that the Ministry of Education and Science (*Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija, IZM*), organizes guidance and counselling for unemployed people and for labour market research. In 2000 the Ministry of Education and Science through the State Agency for Education Development (*Valsts izglītības attīstības aģentūra, VIAA*) created the National Resource Centre for Vocational Guidance (*Profesionālās orientācijas informācijas centrs, POIC*), which provides information on vocational education in Latvia and other EU countries. The Centre is partly financed by the Ministry and partly by the EU Leonardo da Vinci programme. It collaborates with similar organisations in Europe, together forming the Euroguidance Network.



The Ministry of Education has launched a National Programme and project “Fostering the Implementation of Vocational Guidance Provision and Careers Education in the Educational Sector” funded by ESF to improve the accessibility and quality of vocational guidance provision and careers education at providers. This project fosters the implementation of initial and continuing training of guidance practitioners, developing training materials and information resources. The project is implemented by the State Education Development Agency. Main activities include:

- professional upgrading of guidance practitioners, including the development of 4 training modules (72 academic hours): 1 basic and 3 specialised modules (for teachers working with vocational education schools students of Grades 7-9 and Grades 10-12,); the training of 40 teacher trainers and subsequent training of 3700 guidance practitioners/teachers;
- development, testing and piloting methodological and training materials for general education (Grades 7-9, Grades 10-12) and for vocational education schools to be used for careers education purposes (student resource books and facilitator/teacher kits);
- development of information (national data base on learning opportunities) and self-assessment tests for e-guidance;
- development of a national qualification framework and a study programme/curriculum for educating and training guidance counsellors, including the development of detailed content and methodological support materials for the implementation of individual courses.

Concrete project outcomes include the introduction of career counsellor training programmes in 5 higher education institutions from autumn 2007 which will lead to a professional master degree (*maģistra grāds*).

#### **0902 - TARGET GROUPS AND MODES OF DELIVERY**

Professional Career Counselling State Agency (*Profesionālās karjeras izvēles valsts aģentūra, PKIVA*) is a state institution under the Ministry of Welfare. It offers career counselling for all: young people about to choose a career; adults – whether employed, unemployed or returning to the labour market; disabled people; parents; and educators. The PKIVA offers not only individual but group consultations and seminars. The total number of people who used the service in 2006 is 53 463 (*PCCSA 2006 work overview - Riga, 2007*).

Various counselling methods are used including: individual consultation in questions on education, profession choices and career planning; group consultations for determining the optimal vocational field; consultation on educational possibilities; consultation on the content of a profession; determining the professionally important qualities, skills, individual characteristics, etc.; workshops - for young adults “You and your career”; workshops - for job seekers “How to find a job”; consultations in improving methods for job search and CV-writing.

#### **0903 - GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PERSONNEL**

The total number of employees in the Professional Career Counselling State Agency (*Profesionālās karjeras izvēles valsts aģentūra, PKIVA*) in 2006 was 89. The total number of vocational and career guidance consultants was 64. The requirement for working at the PCCSA is higher education in psychology (academic or vocational) but higher pedagogical education is also acceptable.

A project “Fostering the Implementation of Vocational Guidance Provision and Careers Education in the Educational Sector” has been worked out by the Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia (*Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija*), funded by ESF, to improve the accessibility and quality of vocational guidance provision and careers education of providers (see 0901). This project operates within the framework of lifelong learning by fostering the implementation of initial and continuing training of guidance practitioners, developing training materials and information resources.

### **10 - FINANCING - INVESTMENT IN HUMAN RESOURCES**

#### 1001 - BACKGROUND INFORMATION CONCERNING FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING

The Development Plan 2004/2006, adopted by the Cabinet in March, 2003 envisages the following measures in the framework of the priority "Promoting the development of human resources and employment":

- promoting employment (43% of total financing);
- development of education and continuing education (38%);
- reducing social exclusion (19%).

As in many other countries, primary funding aims are to increase cost-effectiveness. The largest share of the funding is intended for higher education. Funding allocated to education increase from year to year, but actual amounts remain insufficient.

Expenditure per student in IVET was EUR 1 262 (2005) and EUR 1 241 (2004) according to Ministry of Education and Science data, which is still lower than the EU average.

#### 1002 - FUNDING FOR INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Initial vocational education and training (IVET) is financed according to the Law of Education (*Izglītības likums*), Law of Vocational Education (*Profesionālās izglītības likums*), and Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers (*Ministru Kabineta Noteikumi*).

Subsidies come from the state general budget, local government and private sources. State subsidies are determined by the Cabinet in conformity with the numbers of students and the related per capita costs. Providers bid for funding every year. Once the state budget is confirmed, schools receive funding and spend it to realise their educational programmes according to legislation.

As the majority of VET schools are state-owned and run, the national budget is the main source of funding. The overall budget for VET was EUR 45 163 784 in 2005 (EUR 43 million in 2000) comprising 88.1% of subsidies from the state general budget (EUR 39 810 368) and 11.9% of their own income (paid services provided by VET institutions, amounting to EUR 5 353 416).

Table 1: Expenses per student for IVET from State budget

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>EXPENSES TOTAL (EUR)</b>	1 025	1 129	1 168	1 242	1 262
<b>SALARIES (EUR) (TEACHERS, SUPERVISORS AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION)</b>	457	521	570	622	682
<b>OTHER ORDINARY EXPENSES (EUR) (MISSIONS, PAYMENTS FOR SERVICES, ENERGY AND WATER, MODERNISATION OF TEACHING AIDS, MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT, STIPEND AND COMPENSATION OF TRANSPORT EXPENSES, MAINTENANCE OF STUDENT HOSTELS, EXPENSES FOR ORPHANS, EXPENSES FOR</b>	396	441	431	451	529

<b>CULTURAL EDUCATION AND SPORT</b>					
<b>CAPITAL INVESTMENTS (EUR) (IMPROVEMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE)</b>	27	30	21	22	51

Source: the Ministry of Education and Science

In 2005, 42% of funds allocated to VET schools were for recurrent costs and just 4% towards capital investment. Staff costs account for the greatest part of the current expenditure (54%).

### 1003 - FUNDING FOR CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, AND ADULT LEARNING

There is no precise data on total investment in CVET. While funding from the state budget can be assessed, other sources are not so easy.

#### PUBLICLY PROVIDED CVET: ADULT EDUCATION

According to data from the Central Statistical Bureau (*Latvijas Republikas Centrālā statistikas parvalde, CSP*), annual state budget expenditure on adult education institutions has decreased. There are several sources of funding for adult education: participant's fees, employer investment, investment of non-governmental organisations, payments from local governments and state budgets. The rise in 2005 is related to an increase in funding for the State Employment Agency due to implementation of structural funds projects.

Table 1: Funding of adult education institutions (including funding for the education and re-qualification of the unemployed and officer training), thousand EUR, %

		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL FUNDING</b>	<b>EUR</b>	15 124.36	18 479.37	15 030.17	16 495.87	21 184.97	34 320.1
<b>OF WHICH:</b>							
<b>FROM THE STATE BUDGET</b>	<b>EUR</b>	7892 47.9%	6778 44.8%	7839 42.4%	4361 29%	5018 30.4%	420019.8%
<b>FROM LOCAL GOVERNMENT BUDGETS</b>	<b>EUR</b>	560 3.4%	592 3.9%	648 3.5%	636 4.5%	416 2.5%	859 4%
<b>PARTICIPANTS' FEE</b>	<b>EUR</b>	3747 22.7%	3784 25%	3270 17.7%	3842 25.5%	4601 27.9%	7777 35.3%

<b>FEES PAID BY ENTERPRISES AND ORGANISATIONS FOR TRAINING THEIR EMPLOYEES</b>	<b>EUR</b>	4037 24.5%	3674 24.3%	3981.5 21.5%	4714 31.3%	5685 34.4%	7581 35.7%
<b>OTHER SOURCES</b>	<b>EUR</b>	228	297	2741	1426	776	1068

Source:  
CSB data, 2005, 2006

State funding for adult education (including some training for unemployed people) has decreased by 28% between 2000 and 2005. Some local governments allocate a fixed percentage from the budget to adult education.

#### CVET IN ENTERPRISES

According to CSB data (2006), in 2005 enterprises allocated EUR 7 581 thousands for training their employees, which is 35.7% of total funding for adult education.

The tax system does not promote employer investment in training. Only approximately 4% of enterprises have a training budget and vocational training is mainly available only in large, stable enterprises. These enterprises usually have enough funds as well as a human resource development strategy, some also have their own training centres.

Table 2: Cost of CVT courses as % of total labour cost (all enterprises), by type of cost (1999)

	<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>DIRECT COSTS</b>	<b>LABOUR COSTS OF PARTICIPANTS</b>
<b>EU-25</b>	2.3	1.4	0.8
<b>BELGIUM</b>	1.6	0.6	0.9
<b>DENMARK</b>	3.0	1.7	1.4
<b>GERMANY</b>	1.5	0.9	0.7

<b>GREECE</b>	0.9	0.4	0.5
<b>SPAIN</b>	1.5	0.5	0.9
<b>FRANCE</b>	2.4	1.0	1.2
<b>IRELAND</b>	2.4	1.5	1.0
<b>ITALY</b>	1.7	1.2	0.6
<b>LUXEMBOURG</b>	1.9	1.0	1.0
<b>NETHERLANDS</b>	2.8	1.7	1.1
<b>AUSTRIA</b>	1.3	0.8	0.5
<b>PORTUGAL</b>	1.2	0.7	0.6
<b>FINLAND</b>	2.4	1.3	1.1
<b>SWEDEN</b>	2.8	1.6	1.3
<b>UK</b>	3.6	2.8	0.8
<b>ICELAND</b>	:	:	:
<b>NORWAY</b>	2.3	1.4	0.9
<b>CYPRUS</b>	:	:	:
<b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b>	1.9	1.2	0.7
<b>ESTONIA</b>	1.8	1.3	0.5

<b>HUNGARY</b>	1.2	0.5	0.4
<b>LITHUANIA</b>	0.8	0.5	0.3
<b>LATVIA</b>	1.1	0.8	0.4
<b>MALTA</b>	:	:	:
<b>POLAND</b>	0.8	0.5	0.3
<b>SLOVAK REPUBLIC</b>	:	:	:
<b>SLOVENIA</b>	1.3	0.8	0.5

Source: Eurostat, Newcronos, 2nd continuing vocational training survey in enterprises (CVTS).

Direct costs: costs of CVT courses.

Total costs: sum of direct costs, staff time costs and balance of contributions to national or regional training funds and receipts from national or other funding arrangements Cyprus, Malta, Slovakia and Iceland are not covered by CVTS.

Smaller enterprises tend not to invest so much in training. They tend to have other priorities in terms of their survival within the market.

#### **1004 - FUNDING FOR TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE AND OTHER GROUPS EXCLUDED FROM THE LABOUR MARKET**

Although education funding constitutes a considerable share of GDP, expenditure on training for unemployed people is low. In 2002 it was 0.0305% of GDP and in 2004 - 0.0162%. Active employment measures are financed from the social insurance budget but they constitute less than 10% of funding.

Table 1: Trends of expenses in CVET for unemployed (EUR)

<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>GDP</b>	8 130 000	9 031 420	10 513 429
<b>EXPENSES IN CVET FOR UNEMPLOYED</b>	2 485 281	1 968 501	1 704 670

<b>OVERALL SPENDING ON CVET FOR UNEMPLOYED AS A PERCENTAGE OF GDP</b>	0.0305%	0.021%	0.0162%
<b>EXPENSES FOR THE TRAINING PER UNEMPLOYED PERSON</b>	437	383	404

Source: CSB data, 2005

The main institution for implementing labour market policy and programmes for unemployed people is the State Employment Agency which is a public corporation under the Ministry of Welfare. It remains a governmental organisation funded by the state but operates independently. It's financed from the State base budget, income from the provision of services, gifts and donations, as well as from other resources in accordance with regulations.

With the new Law to Support Unemployed people and Jobseekers, the range of clients of the State Employment Agency (*Nodarbinātības valsts aģentūra*) has been broadened nevertheless the funding has not been increased. Expenses in CVET for unemployed were EUR 1 704 670 in 2004 and EUR 9 222 005 in 2005, for the latter figure including funds from ESF.

#### **1005 - PERSPECTIVES AND ISSUES: FROM FUNDING TO INVESTING IN HUMAN RESOURCES**

The National Lisbon Programme of Latvia for 2005/2008 (*Latvijas nacionālā Lisabonas programma 2005/2008 gadam*), is geared towards promoting growth and employment. The measures planned to expand and improve investment in human capital (guideline 23) are:

- To improve the ability of the education and training system and students to adapt to changing labour market requirements, through:
- balancing the number of students in general and vocational education programmes taking into account the results of long-term forecasts of the labour market;
- modernise vocational education establishments (2005/2007) with total state and EU funds financing EUR 8 million;
- modernise the practical vocational training system in economic sectors important to regions in the context of the PHARE 2003 National Programme "Economic and social cohesion measures in Latvia" with the state budget financing of EUR 0.57 million and EU financing of EUR 1.85 million;
- To improve availability of education at all levels and to reduce the number of students expelled from educational establishments;
- To increase the availability of higher education and improve its conformity with labour market needs;
- To develop a lifelong learning strategy (2005/2007) with EU funds financing to the amount of EUR 1 million.

Other measures funded within the programme under different guidelines but related to financing include:

- Implementing a procedure to regularly analyse the use of government resources and to assess the volume and results of the resources used (under guideline 24);
- Financing grants for students and staff to participate in mobility programmes (Socrates and Erasmus);

- Investing more in the provision of guidance and counselling services;
- Ensuring easier access to training for socially excluded groups (e.g. through investing more in distance learning provision as well as investing in more rehabilitation programmes).

## 11 - EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS, TOWARDS AN OPEN AREA OF LIFELONG LEARNING

### 1101 - NATIONAL STRATEGIES RELATED TO POLICY PRIORITIES, PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES AT EU LEVEL

Accordingly to the National Lisbon Programme for 2005/2008 (*Latvijas nacionālā Lisabonas programma 2005/2008 gadam*), the system of vocational education must ensure that knowledge and skills acquired in Latvia and abroad are comparable and that graduates of VET in Latvia have the opportunity to continue their education abroad and compete in the international labour market.

The priority tasks for the government include:

- continue improving educational programmes in accordance with labour market needs;
- improve the quality assessment system;
- continue wage reform and increase teaching staff to maintain current levels, as well as to encourage further education opportunities for teachers including in international educational activities;
- increase opportunities for student mobility to improve education and acquisition of particular professions;
- ensure co-operation between science, higher education and business, which would ensure a faster transfer of innovations into production;
- ensure high-quality comprehensive services of vocational guidance and counselling;
- apply services of the State Employment Agency (*Nodarbinātības valsts aģentūra, NVA*) and the Social Integration Centre to various population groups with special educational needs.

A lifelong learning system that would provide opportunities for the population to adapt a changing labour market should be created. Therefore, at the beginning of 2007, the Ministry of Education and Science (*Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija*) prepared the Guidelines for Lifelong Learning Policy 2007-2013 (*Mūžizglītības politikas pamatnostādnes 2007.–2013.gadam*) which outlines the vision for 2013 in terms of the needs of different target groups; mainstream development; policy aims and results indicators; and resources available.

### 1102 - IMPACT OF EUROPEANISATION/INTERNATIONALISATION ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Latvia has taken part in the Leonardo da Vinci programme since 1998.

According to the Public Report of Agency for State Education Development (*Valsts izglītības attīstības aģentūra, 2006*), which supervises the implementation of the Leonardo da Vinci programme, mobility project competition increased by 18% in 2005 comparing to 2004. The projects were developed by state and local government institutions, state and private education establishments, trade unions, non-governmental organisations and enterprises.

92 mobility projects in 2005 were confirmed with a total funding of EUR 984 000; and 149 mobility projects from the previous years were continued. The agency has supervised 241 mobility projects with a total funding EUR 2 323 823. In the mobility projects 550 persons (VET students and teachers, university students and teachers, employees of various enterprises, counselling specialists and other representatives of VET personnel) received grants and participated.



Latvian people can participate in vocational education and training abroad. In 2001 a law "On the recognition of regulated professions and professional qualification" was adopted that determines the procedure for the recognition of vocational qualifications in regulated professions obtained in foreign countries (not only in EU countries).

## **1103 - AUTHORS, SOURCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **110301 - AUTHORS**

Vija Hodireva, expert

Gunta Kinta, expert

Baiba Ramiņa, head of Academic Information Centre

### **110302 - SOURCES, REFERENCES AND WEBSITES**

Annual Report of the Latvian Adult Education Association 2004. Riga: LPIA, 2005

Aspects of lifelong learning in Latvia. Statistical data collection. Riga: CSB, 2004.

Continuing vocational training in Latvia. Riga: Latvian National Observatory, 1999.

Continuing and distance learning in Latvian higher education. Comp.by I.Buligina. EU PHARE Thempus.1999.

The Development Plan 2004-2006, adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers on 18.03.2003

Education Development Concept for 2002-2005. Riga

Educational Institutions in Latvia at the beginning of the school year 2004/2005. Riga: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2005

Eurostat yearbook 2006-07. European Commission; Eurostat, 2007

The professional training of employees in Latvia in 1999 - Riga: CSB, 2002

The Law of Education. Riga, 1991

The Law of Crafts. Riga, 1993

The Law of Higher Education Institutions. Riga, 1995

The Law of Education. Riga, 1998 (The Law of Education was adopted by the government in 1998 and amended in 1999, 2000 and 2001)

The Law of General Education. Riga, 1999

The Law of Vocational Education. Riga, 1999

Lifelong Learning Policy 2007-2013 (*Mūžizglītības politikas pamatnostādnes 2007.–2013.gadam*), 2007

National Education Development Guidelines 2007-2013 (*Izglītības attīstības pamatnostādnes 2007.-2013.gadam*), 2006

National Lisbon Programme of Latvia for 2005-2008, Latvia, 2005. 52p.

National Report on the progress of implementation of the European Commission's programme Education and Training 2010 in Latvia. Riga, 2005. 23 p.

Programme for the Development of Professional Education for 2003-2005. Riga, 2003

Public Report 2004. Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia, 2005, 78 p.

Report on Economic Development of Latvia. Ministry of Economics. Republic of Latvia. Riga, December 2006.

State Employment Agency work overview: 2005. Riga: SEA, 2006.

Statistical Yearbook of Latvia, 2005 – Riga: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2005

[www.izmpic.gov.lv](http://www.izmpic.gov.lv) Vocational Education Administration (*Profesionālās izglītības administrācija*)

[www.aic.lv/portal/lv/](http://www.aic.lv/portal/lv/) Academic Information Centre (*Akadēmiskās informācijas centrs*)

[www.izm.gov.lv](http://www.izm.gov.lv) Ministry of Education and Science (*Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija*)

[www.lm.gov.lv](http://www.lm.gov.lv) Ministry of Welfare (*Labklājības ministrija*)

[www.pkiva.gov.lv](http://www.pkiva.gov.lv) Professional Career Counselling State Agency (*Profesionālās karjeras izvēles valsts aģentūra*)

[www.viaa.gov.lv](http://www.viaa.gov.lv) State Education Development Agency (*Valsts izglītības attīstības aģentūra*)