



European Centre for the
Development of Vocational Training



DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN LATVIA

THEMATIC OVERVIEW

THIRD ISSUE

REFERNET EKNOWVET DATABASE

RIGA 2007

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 9th *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 km² and has a population of 2 276.2 thousands (2007). Between 1989 and 2002 (2 census years) the population decreased by 12% and fell further in 2007 to 2 276.2 thousands.

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 prognoses, the economically active part of the population will remain constant till 2010. The number of economically active population will decrease between 2010 and 2020 when the general ageing of the population is expected.

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%)
2020	2 115.4 (100%)	440.0 (20.8%)	1 150.0 (54.2%)	525.0 (24.8%)
2025	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.

	15.1	16.9	17.5	15.0	15.4	14.0
	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.

YEAR	2000	2004	2005	2006
AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY	4.6	4.4	4	3.7
INDUSTRY	17.5	16.6	15.6	14.8
BUILDING	6.1	5.7	6	6.7
SERVICES	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.

RATE OF EMPLOYED POPULATION TO THE TOTAL POPULATION			
	TOTAL	MALES	FEMALES
TOTAL	60.1	65.9	55
AGE (YEARS)			
15 - 19	10.7	13.2	8.2
20 - 24	60.6	71.4	49.4
25 - 29	77.3	85.3	69.1
30 - 34	80.9	83.7	78.1
35 - 39	84.2	87	81.5
40 - 44	85	85.4	84.6
45 - 49	79.5	80.7	78.4
50 - 54	79.6	82.3	77.3
55 - 59	66.4	69.6	64

60 - 64	39.5	48.8	32.9
>= 65	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.

	2004	2005	2006
MALES	41	40.1	39.1
FEMALES	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 Rezekne 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.

	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3-4	ISCED 5-6
EU-25	30	46	23
Austria	20	63	18

Belgium	34	35	31
Cyprus	31	39	30
Czech Republic	10	77	13
Denmark	18	47	35
Estonia	12	55	33
Finland	21	45	34
France	33	41	25
Germany	16	60	24
Greece	41	37	21
Hungary	22	60	18
Ireland	33	34	30
Italy	49	38	13
Latvia	16	62	21
Lithuania	12	61	27
Luxembourg	34	39	27
Malta	73	15	12
Netherlands	27	42	30
Poland	14	68	18
Portugal	72	14	13
Slovakia	11	74	14
Slovenia	18	60	21
Spain	51	21	28
Sweden	16	53	30
United Kingdom	26	40	29
Bulgaria	25	53	22
Romania	26	62	12
Iceland	29	38	29
Norway	12	56	33

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

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.

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

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

- (:) Not available
- (e) Estimated value
- (b) Break in series
- (i) See explanatory text
- (p) Provisional value

(u) Unreliable or uncertain data

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 (*Izglitibas attistibas strategiska programma*). During this time, Phare projects were of great importance.

1999/2001: the Law of Vocational Education (*Profesionalas izglitibas 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. 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. The survey on education development during the previous period 2002/2005 was carried out in order 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. For to solve these problems, a human is named to be in the centre of education development, thereby, having possibilities to acquire lifelong education. To implement the plan in 2007, the Ministry has intended to spend EUR 81,103,693. The main priorities of the development plan are:

- to introduce and finance teacher assistant post for providing support to pupils (Forms 1-6) with learning difficulties;
- to improve social conditions of vocational education students by increasing scholarships in 2007-2010 up to EUR 28 a month, in 2011-2013 – up to EUR 57;
- to prepare a structural model for education programme division according to needs of agriculture, and to provide its implementation in higher education (fostering development of doctoral by providing new places at master and doctoral programmers; particularly at natural sciences, engineering, medicine and environment studies);
- to provide continuous state investment for arranging and modernising education establishments.

In order to implement the Guidelines, the working strategy 2007-2009 of the Ministry of Education and Sciences is being worked out.

The Vocational education development programme 2003/2005 was approved in 2003: it was drafted in accordance with Education Development Concept, National employment plan 2002, National development plan and other strategic documents on EU integration. Its main goals are to develop the VET system to meet the demands of the market economy, encourage employability, meet EU human resource development statements, and promote an EU competitive labour force. There are three sub-programmes focusing on quality in VET (to improve VET teacher training and to ensure VET meets labour market demands), access (to provide VET for those with incomplete basic education and those with special needs) and improving management and effectiveness of expenditure (to ensure a unified VET system with an efficient use of financial and material resources).

2005 to date: 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 the 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.

2007/2013: 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. The main objectives are:

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

The research carried out prior to compose National Education Development Guidelines 2007-2013 displays that the activities on professional guidance and consultation are being organised in schools. Gradually vocational education programmes with pedagogical correction are being introduced. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education and Sciences 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. Territorially the numbers of vocational students correspond to the numbers of basic education graduates.

According to National Education Development Guidelines 2007-2013, the ministry of Education and Science plans to increase the role of social partners in order to foster their engagement in the state orders within vocational education regarding territorial demand. Vocational education programmes with pedagogical correction are to be implemented for students with a low preliminary knowledge level.

03 - INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK - PROVISION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

0301 - LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Latvian Parliament decides on the main priorities and principles of educational policy and prepares new legislation. The Ministry of Education and Science (*Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija, IZM*) is responsible for implementing educational policy. State and local governments share responsibility for financing education.

Education is regulated by the following laws:

- The Latvian Constitution (*Satversme*): (dated 1922 and renewed in 1991) stipulates that everyone has the right to basic education (and the obligation to attend) and that the state provides opportunities to obtain basic and upper-secondary education free of charge.
- Law of Education (*Izglītības likums*), 1991 sets the principles of the educational system including for VET (both IVET and CVET). The law stipulates that studies are obligatory until the age of 15, or until lower secondary school completion (in the Soviet system upper-secondary education was obligatory).
- Law of Crafts (*Likums par amatniecību*), 1993 contains the basic principles and the framework for awarding crafts qualifications.
- Law of Higher Education Institutions (*Augstākās izglītības likums*), 1995 (amended in 1996, 1999 and 2000) determines the principles for organising and implementing higher education.
- Law of Education (*Izglītības likums*), 1998; (amended in 1999, 2000 and 2001) stipulates that primary school for children aged 5 and 6 is obligatory, and that basic education or studying until the age of 18 is obligatory. The law regulates the entire system of education, determines the rights and duties of the state, local governments, public organisations, professional associations, individuals, educational institutions, parents and students, as well as the levels and types of education and types of educational institutions.
- Law of General Education (*Vispārējās izglītības likums*), 1999.
- Law of Vocational Education (*Profesionālās izglītības likums*), 1999 (amended in 2001) sets out the principles of organisation and implementation, as well as the principles for awarding qualifications. It also states the division of tasks and competences and the relationship between employers, teachers and students. This was the first time that social partners have been expected to take an active role in professional education. The Law 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 to achieve a professional qualification. The amendments see professional development as specific type of vocational education that 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 by Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers (*Ministru Kabineta Noteikumi*). The latest document, passed out at the beginning of 2007, is the Procedure of Developing Occupational Standards (*Profesiju standartu izstrādes kārtība*), which has been worked out by the Ministry of Education and Science along with other institutions. The document outlines the procedure how the standards are to be developed and lists the duties of the involved institutions. Vocational Education Administration

(Profesionālās izglītības administrācija, PIA) supervises the developing occupational standards for vocational education programme levels 1, 2 and 3; while the ministry – for the levels 4 and 5. Standard projects are to be written by a work group consisting of representatives of particular sphere organisation or trade union. The standards include:

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

The Law of Vocational Education and other laws related to it have so far determined the role of social partners in VET development. Social partners draw up proposals for improving VET policy and planning and to 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 talakizglītības 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).

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 VOCATIONAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS	5 (4.1%)	5 (3.9%)
PRIVATE VOCATIONAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS	5 (4.1%)	20 (15.5%)
TOTAL	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

See the below the Diagram of the Latvian education and training system

[The Education System in Latvia](#)

The Latvian system of VET is based on the Law of Education (*Izglītības likums*) from 1991. VET providers are rooted in the network of educational institutions founded during the Soviet occupation. The network of VET providers covers all districts and many providers are small in terms of student numbers.

The change from a totalitarian system to a free market economy changed the demand for VET. Current concerns focus on preparing students for a competitive labour market and to continue their lifelong professional development.

THE LATVIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The components of the educational system are 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 part of compulsory

basic education. The objective is to foster general development of children and their readiness to enter the primary stage of basic education.

Basic education (ISCED 1 and 2) comprises primary and lower secondary education and lasts for 9 years. It is compulsory for all children aged 7 and above. The National Basic Education Standard (*Valsts pamatizglītības standarts*) determines the curriculum and the content of national examinations. Those who do not complete basic education by 16 should, according to Law, 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 programme: general secondary (*vispārējā vidējā izglītība*) and vocational secondary (*profesionālā vidējā izglītība*).

In general secondary, there are 4 study fields: general; humanities and social sciences; mathematics, natural science and technical, and vocational (arts, music, business, and sports). The following subjects are obligatory for all programmes: Latvian; first foreign language; second foreign language (in minority population schools - the minority language); mathematics, history; sports; business foundations and computer science. Every programme includes obligatory and optional subjects relevant to the particular field of studies. To receive the Certificate of the secondary education (*Atestats par visparejo videjo izglītību*), students should take not less than 5 examinations in compulsory or optional study subjects and no more than 4 tests in compulsory 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.

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.

4-year vocational secondary education programmes are offered to students who have successfully completed compulsory basic education. Graduates receive a diploma of vocational secondary education and a Level 3 vocational qualification.

2-3 year vocational education programmes lead to a Certificate of secondary education and qualification level 3.

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.

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.

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.

Bachelor and Master degrees exist both in academic and vocational higher education. Bachelors of both categories have the right to enrol in master's studies, masters of both categories (including also degrees in medicine and dentistry - 6 and 5 years of study respectively) - in doctoral 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. They include advanced studies of the subject in a relevant study programme (or an equivalent amount of independent research while working at a university, research institution, etc.) and a scientific research towards doctoral thesis.

THE LATVIAN VET SYSTEM

The Law of Professional Education (revised in 2001) stipulates that VET programmes are classified as follows:

- vocational basic education programmes;
- vocational education programmes;
- vocational secondary educational programmes;
- first level professional higher education (college education) programmes;
- professional continuing education programmes;
- professional development educational programmes.

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.

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

Source: MoES

* 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.

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 and who have made this choice. Upon graduation a VET certificate is awarded. It certifies that the qualification corresponds to professional qualification 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.

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-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

One of the objectives of the National classification of education is comparability with ISCED 97. In the school year 2005/2006 37 131 students (87% of vocational education students) were involved in upper secondary vocational programmes.

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.

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, 2004¹

	TOTAL	Male	Female	VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMES %			GENERAL AND PRE-VOCATIONAL PROGRAMMES %		
				Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female

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

Source: Eurostat, UOE data collection; on-line database, 2006
¹ ISCED 97, level 3 (excl. ISCED 3c short)

As it can be seen in this table, 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. The Law on Crafts (1993) regulates the organisation of craft education and issuing qualifications. The main organisation involved is the Chamber of Crafts which is a self-governing organisation for developing crafts and craftsmanship in Latvia.

Through the apprenticeship system it is possible to obtain the journeyman (*Amata zēja 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).

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 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 Centre as for IVET programmes, as these programmes are not part of formal IVET.

Apprenticeship training can be organised in two ways:

- the apprentice works together 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's is offered also by 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. Programmes last for 1-2 years.

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).

HIGHER VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Higher vocational education is subject to the Law of Education (*Augstākās izglītības likums, 1991, 1998*), Law on higher education institutions (*Augstākās izglītības likums, 1995*) and Law of Vocational Education (*Profesionālās izglītības likums, 1999*). In accordance with Law of Higher Education institutions, it is possible to obtain a mix of academic and vocational qualifications:

- academic education and following degrees:
 - bachelor *bakalaura* (academic degree);
 - master *maģistrs* (academic degree);
 - doctor *doktors* (scientific degree).
- 4 and 5 level professional qualification and following degrees:
 - bachelor *bakalaura*(vocational degree);
 - master *maģistrs*(vocational degree).

COLLEGE PROGRAMMES

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

Since 2000, vocational bachelor and master degrees have been available.

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 the 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.

Second level higher vocational education programmes (ISCED 5A) are provided by universities and other higher education institutions. Studies last 4-5 years, following completion of 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 evening courses for working adults who had not completed their primary or secondary education. The Law on Education (*Izglītības likums 1998*) stipulates that adult education should be individually chosen to encourage personal development and improved labour market competitiveness. Adults have the right to follow programmes throughout their whole life, regardless of their 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 which can be summarised as:

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 makes for easier 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*) have been 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: Guidelines for Lifelong Learning 2007-2013 has been worked out (2007) by the Ministry of Education and Science (*Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija*), 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.

0502 - PUBLICLY PROMOTED CVET FOR ALL

Following the typology of CVET given in section 0501, 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. This also applies to the vocational continuing education programmes and professional improvement programmes. Both must also be provided by Ministry of Education and Science certified providers.

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 also 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.

As mentioned, 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 Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of 7th 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 (%)
EU-25	61	56	80	95
AUSTRIA	72	68	91	96
BELGIUM	70	66	93	100
CYPRUS	:	:	:	:
CZECH REPUBLIC	69	62	84	96
DENMARK	96	95	98	100
ESTONIA	63	58	85	96
FINLAND	82	78	97	99
FRANCE	76	70	93	98
GERMANY	75	71	87	98
GREECE	18	11	43	78
HUNGARY	37	32	51	79
ICELAND	:	:	:	:
IRELAND	79	75	98	100
ITALY	24	20	48	81
LATVIA	53	49	70	91
LITHUANIA	43	37	60	80
LUXEMBOURG	71	67	83	99
MALTA	:	:	:	:
NETHERLANDS	88	85	96	98
NORWAY	86	84	97	100
POLAND	39	36	52	63
PORTUGAL	22	17	46	78

SLOVAKIA	:	:	:	:
SLOVENIA	48	35	72	96
SPAIN	36	31	58	86
SWEDEN	91	88	99	99
UNITED KINGDOM	87	85	91	98

Source: Eurostat, NewCronos, 2nd Continuing Vocational Training Survey (CVTS2)

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.

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.

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			PH D	
	TOTAL	WOMEN		TOTAL	INCL. GENERAL SECONDARY	INCL. SECONDARY VOCATIONAL	INCL. THOSE WITH PEDAGOGICAL EDUCATION	TOTAL	INCL. HIGHER PEDAGOGICAL		INCL. OTHER TYPE PEDAGOGICAL (320 H)
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 pedagogue, 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

Only in a couple of fields have descriptions of employees' ability and skill requirements been determined, for example in the information technology and building sectors. For jobs in other sectors, occupational standards have been defined for different professions.

Occupational standards are developed by representatives of both 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. The standard also determines 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.

Since professional training is based on whole programmes, the possibilities to change mid-course are limited.

With the framework of National Programme project "Ministry of Welfare Researches" 13 researches of the labour market are being carried out, including such themes as workforce professional mobility, professions of vocational education graduates, vocational education programme correspondence to the labour market demands, and gender equality within the labour market. The data collected in the researches will be used for developing further action guidelines.

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*). AIC evaluates, according to the Education Law, a level of the qualification compared to Latvian educational system and issues its statement. This statement together with educational document should be submitted to the educational

establishment or employer. Academic information centre'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 the profession in Latvia. In 2006 AIC has issued 909 academic and 61 professional recognition statements.

Recognition of qualifications in Latvia is organized in line with Lisbon Convention, ratified in 1999 and EU directives. Law on Higher Education Establishments, 1995, (article 84; 85) states the recognition of foreign credentials and study periods. Law complies with principles of Lisbon convention. Latvia is using national credit point system; Latvian credit point system is compatible with ECTS: 1 Latvian CP=1.5 ECTS. From 2004 all higher education is issuing diploma supplement 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. Law comprises Part "A" of law - Regulated professions in the Republic of Latvia - came into force in July, 2001; part "B" - Recognition of professional qualifications of foreign citizens –January, 2003. The EU special and general recognition directives for regulated professions are implemented in this law. Law on Regulated Professions and Recognition of Foreign Qualifications and Cabinet regulation No 337 of August, 2002 lists the regulated professions in Latvia. Law is followed by all necessary amendments and regulations of Cabinet of Ministers to be in line with new developments on recognition field. The necessary changes in legislation according new directive will follow within two year period.

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 on 15.11.1994) determines the goals of guidance and counselling. The Ministry of Welfare's policy is realized 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 on 09.05.1995) and the Law on the Support for the Unemployed and Job Seekers (adopted on 09.05.2002), 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 do 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.

The clients of the Professional Career Counselling State Agency (*Profesionālās karjeras izvēles valsts aģentūra, 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.

The Professional Career Counselling State Agency (*Profesionālās karjeras izvēles valsts aģentūra, 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*) adopted on 17.11.1998 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*) adopted on 30.06.1999 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 organizations in Europe, together forming the "Euroguidance Network."

The Ministry of Education and Science of Latvia (*Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija*) 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 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. The project is implemented by the State Education Development Agency. The main activities include:

- professional upgrading of guidance practitioners, including the development of 4 training modules (72 academic hours): 1 basic and 3 specialized 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.

The results of the project should encourage the choice of appropriate education, professional preparedness and personal career development of students and should facilitate their employability and their motivation to participate in lifelong learning (*mūžizglītība*). Concrete 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 supervision of the Ministry of Welfare. It offers career counselling for all: young people about to choose a career; adults – whether currently employed, unemployed or returning to the labour market; disabled people; parents; and educators. The PCCSA 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:

- 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 of Ministers (*Ministru Kabinets, MK*) 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 the total financing of priorities is allocated to this priority);
- The development of education and continuing education (38%);
- Reducing social exclusion (19%).

As in many other countries, the primary aims with respect to financing training are to increase its 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.

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

1002 - FUNDING FOR INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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

Subsidies come from the state general budget, local government and private sources. Amount of state subsidies determine Cabinet of Ministers in conformity with number of educated persons and minimal educational cost per one educated person. Education establishments make an inquiry for fund every year. After the state budget confirmation school receive funding and spent it to realise their educational programmes accordingly the 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 €45,163,784 in 2005. (LVL 30.2 million or € 43 million in 2000) comprised 88.1% of subsidies from the state general budget (€39,810,368) and by 11.9% of their own income (paid services provided by VET institutions, amounting € 5,353,416).

Table 1: Expenses per student for IVET from State budget

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Expenses total (EUR)	1,025	1,129	1,168	1,242	1,262
Salaries (EUR) (salary of teachers, supervisor of qualification practice, school administration)	457	521	570	622	682
Other ordinary expenses (EUR) (missions, payments on services, energy resources and water, modernisation of teaching aids, materials, equipment, stipend and compensation of transport expenses, maintenance of student hostels, expenses for orphans, expenses for cultural education and sport)	396	441	431	451	529
Capital investments (EUR) (improvement of VET school infrastructure –roofs, windows etc.)	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 in Latvia. While funding from the state budget can be assessed, other sources are not so easy.

PUBLICLY PROVIDED CVET: ADULT EDUCATION

According to data available from the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia (*Latvijas Republikas Centraļā statistikas parvalde, CSP*), annual state budget expenditure on adult education institutions have decreased. There are several sources of funding for adult education: participant's fees, employer investment,

investment of non-governmental organizations, payments from local governments and state budgets. The important increase in 2005 is related to increased funding in State Employment Agency due to implementation of structural funds projects.

		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
TOTAL ANNUAL FUNDING	€	15 124.36	18 479.37	15 030.17	16 495.87	21 184.97	34320.1
OF WHICH:							
FROM THE STATE BUDGET	€	7892 47.9%	6778 44.8%	7839 42.4%	4361 29%	5018 30.4%	4200 19.8%
FROM THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS' BUDGET	€	560 3.4%	592 3.9%	648 3.5%	636 4.5%	416 2.5%	859 4%
PARTICIPANTS' FEE	€	3747 22.7%	3784 25%	3270 17.7%	3842 25.5%	4601 27.9%	7777 35.3%
FEES PAID BY ENTERPRISES AND ORGANISATIONS FOR THE TRAINING OF THEIR EMPLOYEES	€	4037 24.5%	3674 24.3%	3981.5 21.5%	4714 31.3%	5685 34.4%	7581 35.7%
OTHER SOURCES	€	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 years 2000 and 2005. Some local governments allocate a concrete percentage from the budget to adult education.

CVET IN ENTERPRISES

According to CSB data (2006), in 2005 enterprises allocated €7,581 thousands for the training of 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 and economically stable enterprises. These enterprises usually have enough funds as well as a human resource development strategy, some also have their own training centres.

	TOTAL COSTS	DIRECT COSTS	LABOUR COSTS OF PARTICIPANTS
EU-25	2.3	1.4	0.8
BELGIUM	1.6	0.6	0.9
DENMARK	3.0	1.7	1.4
GERMANY	1.5	0.9	0.7
GREECE	0.9	0.4	0.5
SPAIN	1.5	0.5	0.9

FRANCE	2.4	1.0	1.2
IRELAND	2.4	1.5	1.0
ITALY	1.7	1.2	0.6
LUXEMBOURG	1.9	1.0	1.0
NETHERLANDS	2.8	1.7	1.1
AUSTRIA	1.3	0.8	0.5
PORTUGAL	1.2	0.7	0.6
FINLAND	2.4	1.3	1.1
SWEDEN	2.8	1.6	1.3
UK	3.6	2.8	0.8
ICELAND	:	:	:
NORWAY	2.3	1.4	0.9
CYPRUS	:	:	:
CZECH REPUBLIC	1.9	1.2	0.7
ESTONIA	1.8	1.3	0.5
HUNGARY	1.2	0.5	0.4
LITHUANIA	0.8	0.5	0.3
LATVIA	1.1	0.8	0.4
MALTA	:	:	:
POLAND	0.8	0.5	0.3
SLOVAK REPUBLIC	:	:	:
SLOVENIA	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 this is partly due to their primary aim to survive in the market whereby investment in human resources takes a lower priority.

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 remains low. In 2002 it was 0.0305% of the GDP and in 2004 - 0.0162%. Active employment measures are financed from the basic state budget (labour market administration which also funds the State Employment Service as well as the mechanisms for labour protection and the implementation of labour law and the special employment budget. A special budget for social security comprises obligatory payments. In 1999 a new law was adopted "On insurance for cases of unemployment" which stipulates that unemployment insurance services are financed from the State social insurance special budget. From 2002 the funds from the social insurance budget are used for financing active employment measures but no more than by 10% from the annual total budget.

Expenses	2002	2003	2004
GDP	8 130 000	9 031 420	10 513 429
Expenses in CVET for unemployed	2 485 281	1 968 501	1 704 670
Overall spending on CVET	0.0305%	0.021%	0.0162%

for unemployed as a percentage of GDP			
Expenses for the training per unemployed person	437	383	404

Source: CSB data, 2005

The main institution for implementing labour market policy and programmes for unemployed people is the State Employment Service, formed in 1991. The service was reorganised in 1999 into a public corporation under the Ministry of Welfare and became the State Employment Agency in 2003. It remains a governmental organisation funded by the state but operates independently.

The State Employment Agency is financed from the State base budget, income from the provision of services, gifts and donations, as well as from other resources in accordance with regulatory enactments.

Since 2002, a specialised employment budget is used for financing active employment measures. 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 €1,704,670 in 2004 and €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 €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 €0.57 million and EU financing of €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 €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).

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www.aic.lv/portal/lv/ Academic Information Centre (Akadēmiskās informācijas centrs)

www.izm.gov.lv Ministry of Education and Science (Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija)

www.lm.gov.lv Ministry of Welfare (Labklājības ministrija)

www.pkiva.gov.lv Professional Career Counselling State Agency (Profesionālās karjeras izvēles valsts aģentūra)

www.viaa.gov.lv State Education Development Agency (Valsts izglītības attīstības aģentūra)