



Independent national experts network in the area of adult education/adult skills

Full Country Report - Latvia

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**Independent national experts network in the area
of adult education/adult skills**

Full country report - Latvia

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1.0 COUNTRY OVERVIEW (STATISTICAL ELEMENT TO BE INSERTED BY ECORYS FROM UPDATED COUNTRY OVERVIEW)

1.1 Trends for the entire population

1.1.1 Employment rate – entire population

Table 1.1: Evolution of employment rate - national average (2010-2016) compared to EU data

	Years									Targets	
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	EU 2020	National 2020
EU-28 average	:	67.9	68.6	68.6	68.4	68.4	69.2	70	71	75% of the 20-64 year-olds in employment	73
Member State	63.4	69.1	64.3	66.3	68.1	69.7	70.7	72.5	73.2		

Source: Employment rates by age and educational attainment level (%) Eurostat code *lfsa_ergaed*, last updated 25 April 2017.

Explanatory note: This table compares the average employment rate of the population (ISCED all levels) aged 20 to 64 in a given Member State over the period 2000-2016 to EU targets and average, including the EU2020 target, national 2020 targets and the average EU employment rate for 2016.

-Comparison to EU2020 target

The average employment rate of the population (ISCED all levels) aged 20 to 64 in Latvia has increased over recent years to stand at 73.2% in 2016, and as such it is slightly below the EU 2020 target of 75%.

-Comparison to National 2020 target

The 2016 employment rate of the population (ISCED all levels) aged 20 to 64 in Latvia (73.2%) has already exceeded the National 2020 target by 0.2 percentage points

-Comparison between 2016 national data and the EU-28 average for 2016

The 2016 employment rate of the population (ISCED all levels) aged 20 to 64 in Latvia was under the EU-28 average by 1.8 percentage points

-Evolution over time

From 2000 to 2005 the employment rate of the population (ISCED all levels) aged 20 to 64 in Latvia had made notable progress by 5.7 percentage points. After this point, the employment rate dropped (64.3% in 2010) and then gradually increased to stand at 73.2% in 2016.

The slow recovery between 2011 and 2016, saw increases by around 1.0 percentage points each year, growing from 64.3% in 2010 to reach 73.2% in 2016, which is 2.2 percentage points over the EU average for 2016 and 0.2 percentage points over the National target for 2020. The average employment rate of the population aged 20 to 64 in Latvia grew over the period 2000-2016 increasing by 10.2%, meeting the national but not the EU-2020 targets.

1.1.2 Participation rate – entire population

Table 1.2: Evolution of participation rate in education and training - national average (2010-2016) compared to EU data

	Years									Targets	
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	EU 2020	National 2020
EU-28 average	:	9.6	9.3	9.1	9.2	10.7	10.8	10.7	10.8		
Member State	:	7.8	5.4	5.4	7.2	6.8	5.6	5.7	7.3	15% of adults in lifelong learning (LLL)	

Source: Participation rate in education and training by sex and age (%), Eurostat code trng_lfse_01, last updated 25 April 2017.

Explanatory note: This table compares the participation rate in lifelong learning of adults aged 25-64 to EU data over the period 2000-2016.

-Comparison to EU2020 target

The 2016 participation rate (7.3%) in lifelong learning in Latvia was 7.7 percentage points lower than the EU-2020 target. As such, it is not anticipated that the participation rate in Latvia will achieve the EU-2020 target. No national target has been set in this area.

-Comparison between 2016 national data and the EU-28 average for 2016

Compared to EU average (10.8%) for 2016, the 2016 participation rate in lifelong learning in Latvia (7.3%) was 3.5% lower. The best progress in the participation rate in lifelong learning in Latvia was reached in 2005 (7.8%) where the differences between the EU average (9.6%) and national participation rate (7.8%) was 1.8 percentage points only.

-Evolution over time

The national participation rate in Latvia has fluctuated between 2005 and 2016. Over the whole period there has been a trend of decreasing participation by 0.5 percentage points (7.8% and 7.3% respectively).

In comparison to the previous years, the participation rate in Latvia grew in 2016 compared to 2014-2015 by 1.7% and 1.6% respectively. Good progress was made between 2015 and 2016 by a margin of 1.6% (7.3% in 2016) compared to 2015. However, the participation rate in Latvia was still lower than the EU-28 average over time by around 3.5 percentage places.

1.2 Trends for low qualified adults

1.2.1 Share of low qualified adults

Table 1.3: Share of low-qualified adults (ISCED 0-2) – national data (2010-2016) compared to EU-28 average 2016

Geographical area	Years								
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
EU-28 average	:	30.6	27.3	26.6	25.8	24.8	24.1	23.5	23
Member State	16.8	15.6	11.4	12.1	10.9	10.6	10.5	9.9	9.3

Source: Population by educational attainment level, sex and age (%), Eurostat edat_ifse_03, last updated 25 April 2017.

Explanatory note: this table compares the percentage of the population with low qualifications (ISCED levels 0-2) in 2016 to the EU-28 average for 2016 and the period 2000-2016.

-Comparison to EU-28 average

The share of low qualified adults in 2016 (9.3%) in Latvia was less than the EU-28 average of 23% by a large portion. There was a 13.7 percentage point difference between the national and EU levels in 2016, and a consistent gap between the national and EU-28 average over time.

-Evolution over time

Data for the share of low qualified adults in Latvia shows an overall trend of reduction in the population with low qualifications (ISCED levels 0-2) over time. Between 2000 and 2016, this level consistently decreased from 16.8% in 2000 to 9.3% in 2016.

Whilst the rate has consistently been lower than the EU-28 rate, the latter has also seen a consistent drop over time, albeit from a higher base level.

1.2.2 Employment rate of low skilled adults

Table 1.4: Employment rates of low skilled adults (ISCED 0-2) – national data (2010-2016) compared to EU-28 average 2016

Geographical area	Years								
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
EU-28 average	:	55.7	53.8	53.4	52.7	52	52.6	53.2	54.3
Member State	40.5	50.3	47.1	48.5	51.8	50.9	51.3	53.2	56.7

Source: Employment rates by age and educational attainment level (%) Eurostat code *lfsa_ergaed*, last updated 25 April 2017.

Explanatory note: This table compares the employment rates of those with low qualifications (ISCED levels 0-2) to the EU average over the period 2010-2016.

-Comparison to EU-28 average

The employment rate of low skilled adults (ISCED 0-2) in 2016 in Latvia reached 56.7% compared to the EU-28 average for 2016 (54.3%). This was above the EU-28 average by 2.4 percentage points in 2016. There are some prospects that this gap might therefore narrow in the near future.

-Evolution over time

The employment rates of low skilled adults (ISCED 0-2) in Latvia has continuously evolved each year and shows a positive overall rate of growth between 40.5% in 2000 and 56.7% in 2016.

By comparison, the EU-28 rate has consistently been higher, though falling in all years except 2015. Overall, the national picture shows a greater degree of change over 11 years, as the EU-28 average employment rate only changed overall by 1.4% over this time.

1.2.3 Participation rate of low skilled adults

Table 1.5: Participation rate of low skilled adults – EU average in comparison to national average

Geographical area	Years								
	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
EU-28 average	:	3.7	3.9	4	3.9	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.2
Member State	:	1.6	:	1.9	2.9	2.7	2.2	2.4	3

Source: Participation rate in education and training by sex and educational attainment (%), Eurostat code and *trng_lfse_03*, last updated 25 April 2017.

Explanatory note: This table compares the participation rate in lifelong learning of adults aged 25-64 with low qualification levels (ISCED levels 0-2) to EU data and over the period 2000-2016.

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-Comparison to EU-28 average

Latvia's participation rate of low qualified adults was 3% in 2016, compared to 4.3% at EU-28 average.

-Evolution over time

Whilst some Eurostat data for Latvia's participation of low qualified adults is not available, it is clear that the rate has increased over time from 1.6% in 2005 to 3% in 2016, an increase of 1.4 percentage points over the period. The EU-28 average rate has actually seen a slower rate of change albeit from a higher base rate.

2.0 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF ADULT LEARNING SYSTEM

2.1 Main features and a concise summary of historic development

The adult education system in Latvia was first developed during the 1920s and 1930s. It was conceived as a formal second chance education for adults who, for different reasons (social, economic, health, etc.), were not able to attain the compulsory primary and lower secondary levels of education. In order to provide opportunities for formal second chance education, supplementary schools for adults and folk schools and higher education institutions were established by local governments. At the same time the Adult Education Association (AEA) was founded. As the main key actor of education for adults, the AEA participated actively in developing the "Law on Adult Education" in 1932, which took into account the needs of young people and created a legal framework for adult education. The law required mandatory opening of adult schools in towns and populated centres with State or local government financing, to ensure compulsory education for all citizens of Latvia. A draft law on schools for adults was also prepared and introduced during the educational reform of 1932.

During the Soviet period (1946-1988), schools for workers and peasants were established. These schools were later called "Evening schools for all adults", and they still exist. Higher education was also seen as a form of adult education, and the "Research Institute of adult general education"¹ existed. After the restoration of the independence of Latvia (post 1992), non-formal education for adults started to develop, in parallel to the existing second chance education.

The Latvian Adult Education Association (LAEA) was founded in 1993. Adult pedagogy as a branch of pedagogy was recognised in Latvia in 1996, and it had a wide impact on adult education policy, including the development of adult education programmes in the academic sector, doctoral studies and, later on, Masters sub-programmes in the field of adult education.² A State 'Programme on Lifelong Learning 2008-2010' was adopted during this period. It guaranteed the financing and coordination of adult education from state budget, and increased opportunities for adults to access non-formal education. Several regional adult education centres were created with financial support from the State and municipalities. There was also support for non-governmental organisations that offered new possibilities for non-formal education. However, between 2008 and 2011, the adult education system stagnated due to cuts in public funding during the economic crisis. This resulted in the closing of adult education centres and evening schools, and stimulated the opening of evening classes on the premises of general schools. Second chance education for low-skilled adults is still available in the evening at schools and gymnasias, but their number differ in the five regions of the country, and they are unevenly

¹EduMAP, (2017). *Report: Broad Research on Adult Education in the EU*. Retrieved from <https://blogs.uta.fi/edumap/2017/08/21/edumap-report-broad-research-on-adult-education-in-the-eu/> [assessed at 15.09.2017]

² Koke, T. (1999). *Pieaugušo mācīšanās sociāli pedagoģiskie pamati : habilitācijas darbu un kopsavilkumu kopa [Socio-pedagogical background of Adult learning : Habilitation]*. Rīga: LU.
Koke, T. (2005). *Pētījumi pieaugušo pedagoģijā [Adult pedagogical Research]*. Rīga : LU,

distributed³. The adult education system became fragmented because of the absence of coordination. Currently, steps are being taken to overcome the fragmentation and overall inefficiency of the adult learning system in Latvia. An Adult Education Governance Model Implementation Plan for 2016-2020 was adopted by the government on 3 May 2016. The Governance Model aims to develop and implement an improved LLL strategy for the country.

The share of 15-29 year-olds who are NEET (13%) in the population is slightly below the OECD average (14.6%). However, the gap in unemployment rates between high and low-qualified adults in Latvia in 2015 is one of the largest among OECD countries. 19.6% of adults with qualifications below secondary education are unemployed, compared to 10.7% of adults with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education as their highest level of attainment. 4.5% of adults with tertiary education are unemployed (compared to the OECD averages of 12.4% for adults with qualifications below secondary education, 7.3% for adults with upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education and 4.9% for adults with tertiary education.

Compared to other OECD countries, the share of Latvian students attending vocational education training remains low. In 2014 (the latest figures available), only 27% of students were expected to graduate from vocational upper secondary programmes (compared to the OECD average of 46% for that year). In 2014, 38% of 20-24 year-olds who were enrolled at upper secondary level followed a vocational education programme (below the OECD average of 66%). In 2015, 40% of 25-34 year-olds had attained tertiary education (close to the OECD average of 42%). These findings, suggest that there is a strong emphasis on initial formal education and training for the younger age group compared to the older ones⁴.

The latest figures from Eurostat on participation of young adults in formal education and training are in Table 2.1 below. The figures provide a breakdown by educational level.

³ State Education Development Agency; Maslo, Irina; Fernandez González, Manuel J. (2015). Supporting the Engagement and Reintegration of 18-24-Year-Old Early School-Leavers in Lifelong Learning: Evidences for Targeted Compensatory and Preventive Strategy in Education. Report, 31 March 2015. ESF project "Support to Education Research" (sub-activity 1.2.2.3.2.). Study on Identification and analysis of new challenges and solutions that have influence on engagement and reintegration of early school-leavers (18-24 aged) in lifelong learning. Riga: University of Latvia, Faculty of Education, Psychology and Art, Scientific Institute of Pedagogy.

⁴ OECD. (2016). Education at a Glance 2016 Education Indicators. Paris. OECD.

Table 2.1 Number of participants in formal education and training by level of education and age

	Age 20-24	Age 25+	Total
Level of education (i.e. basic, vocational, higher)			
Primary	74	18	92
Lower secondary	452	484	936
Upper secondary	6,450	5,058	11,508
Post-secondary non-tertiary education		1,573	
Short-cycle tertiary education		8,215	
Bachelor's or equivalent level		14,222	
Master's or equivalent level		9,057	
Doctoral or equivalent level		2,130	
Total			

Source: Eurostat, Eurostat database table "Pupils and students enrolled by education level, sex and age (educ_uae_enra02)", accessed 2017.08.21

2.2 Provision

The provision of adult learning as a part of LLL in Latvia is extremely decentralized. Formal adult education is provided by general and evening schools (ISCED 1-2), vocational schools (ISCED 1-3) and colleges (ISCED 4-5). Formal and non-formal education is provided also by adult education centres, non-formal education centres, by public and private companies, professional associations and organisations, including work-based learning, and by adult education departments and/or LLL centres of higher education institutions (HEI). Validation of prior learning at workplaces is provided by 18 competence centres and by Higher Education Institutes (HEI) (30% of all HE programmes ISCED 6-7). In addition, different types of provision are available at the International Youth Agency, Social Integration Foundation and Education Development Agency.

The actual sourcing (commissioning) of adult non-formal education provision from training providers is the responsibility of the local education authorities (a branch of municipalities) and regional departments of the National Employment Agency. The municipalities are also responsible for promoting non-formal adult learning opportunities for target groups. External learning offer is open for compulsory education level (ISCED 1-3) at secondary schools (including evening schools) and learning centres. (Reference provided in Annex 2).

2.2.1 *Adult education that helps adults improve their Basic Skills*

Evening (adult) schools are the main providers⁵ of education that improve adults' basic skills, i.e. literacy and/or numeracy. A small proportion of non-formal programmes in Latvia are dedicated to basic literacy and numeracy (0.04%). ICT non-formal programmes are more popular, and are provided by private companies or supported by ESF and other international funding sources. Foreign languages (79.2%), digital skills (6.8%) and Latvian language (5.3%) constitute a large part of the adult education offer.⁶ Latvian language and other languages are taught at all levels of literacy, with courses provided by Latvian Language Agency and a number of languages centres, mostly private. New programmes to improve financial literacy are currently a priority (reference to evidence provided in Annex 2).

2.2.2 *Adult education that helps adults achieve a Recognised Qualification*

Adults in Latvia have a legal entitlement to complete publicly financed formal education at basic education level (ISCED 1 and 2) and secondary education level (ISCED 3). Young people and adults who have not finished school and want to continue their education after having dropped out from the formal education system, can access second chance education in adult schools (evening/ shift schools) and classes offering integrated general education programmes. Such programmes are public but their provision is not a priority in Latvia. At the beginning of the school year 2014/2015 there were two such schools, in 2016/2017 there were 19 and in 2017/2018 18 general education evening schools in Latvia providing second-chance education for all age groups.

Vocational education is offered to young people and adults in vocational schools, vocational secondary schools and colleges. For those who have no basic education certificate and older than 15, there is an opportunity to enter vocational schools and acquire either a vocational qualification or a basic general education. Eighteen vocational education competence centers that validate professional competences acquired in non-formal and/or informal learning at work places have been established since 2014/2015. Vocational education is public, and is a policy priority in Latvia (reference to evidence provided in Annex 2).

2.2.3 *Adult education that helps adults develop other knowledge and skills, not for vocational purposes*

There are very broad opportunities in Latvia for the personal fulfilment of adults provided by Non-formal Education Centres⁷ and non-formal education providers, such as Regional

⁷ OECD, (2015). Investing in Youth Latvia Retrieve from <http://www.oecd.org/latvia/investing-in-youth-latvia-9789264240407-en.htm> [assessed at 15.09.2017]

Adult education centres, private companies etc. (reference to evidence provided in Annex 2).

2.2.4 *Provision that facilitates Transition to the Labour Market for unemployed people or those at risk of unemployment (ALMPs)*

Special (ESF-supported) VET programmes for unemployed youth were implemented in 2014-2017 in state or municipal educational institutions (actions completed by 2016 - references provided in Annex 2):

- Since 2014, young people out of employment have been able to access career guidance, receive information on available vacancies in Latvia, obtain new skills and their first work experience, as well as receive support for entrepreneurship. There are in total 10 measures available to youth, and participation in those is determined by profiling results, including prior experience in the labour market, the education obtained, as well as the level of skills and competences;
- Since 2016, within the ESF project "Know and Do!", vocational education programmes for NEETs are implemented in cooperation with 34 vocational education institutions and colleges, targeting 17 to 29 year-olds, and helping them to obtain a professional qualification within a year or 18 months in one of 68 professions;
- Non-governmental organisations and youth centres have also delegated mentors to support NEETs (aged 17-29), and 90 programme leaders were trained (reference to evidence provided in Annex 2).

2.2.5 *Provision that opens up Higher Education to adults*

Part-time and distance learning or e-learning facilities are offered to students in most universities (e.g. University of Latvia, Latvian University of Agriculture, Riga Technical University) who provide a large variety of non-formal and formal education programmes for adult learners, as well as language learning activities (reference to evidence provided in Annex 2).

2.2.6 *Provision that enables adult employees to develop their work-related skills*

Non-formal work-related training for those in employment (targeted at individual and /or company level) is provided privately. It includes work-based training provided by both public and private companies, or by learning providers to individuals. Sometimes employees are legally obliged to attend training (e.g. legal obligatory training in health and safety; professional obligation to undertake certain training every year) related to professional standards. This is often organised by the employer, but an employee can also attend in-service training related to occupational standards at an HEI.

Adult education also covers vocational and in-service training for business or sectoral needs. Large state-owned and private companies have training centres (e.g., The National Bank, Latvian Mobile Telephone, Lattelcom, The Latvian Railway, The Latvian Postal Service, large trade centres etc.). These centres have regular education programmes for their employees. The specific needs and requirements of employees are taken care of by a network of private and non-governmental educational institutions and undertakings that are run on private funding and some of them are profit-oriented (reference to evidence provided in Annex 2).

2.2.7 *Other (if any)*

New measures aimed at youth who are neither in education, employment nor training (NEET) have been available through the Youth Guarantee programme since 2016. See in table 3.1.

3.0 ADULT LEARNING POLICIES

3.1 Context

3.1.1 Distribution of responsibilities regarding adult learning

The Adult Education Governance Model Implementation plan 2016 - 2020 describes the responsibilities and roles of government agencies, municipalities and social partners involved in policy implementation in this area.

The plan stipulates a leading role for a new body that is responsible for the strategic coordination of the adult learning sector – the Governing Council for Adult Education. This includes representatives of eight ministries, two major employer organisations, three national-level trade union organisations and representatives of the planning regions. The role of the secretariat for this council is assigned to the National Education Development Agency. According to the plan, the Ministry of Education and Science, and the National Education Development Agency, are responsible for supporting the provision of adult learning to employed adults. The Ministry of Welfare and the National Employment Agency are jointly responsible for supporting the provision of adult learning to the unemployed and jobseekers. The Ministry of Economy and the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia, in cooperation with industry associations and employers' organisations, is responsible for supporting training activities for adults organised by employers.

Local Educational experts represent the regions in the Governing Council for Adult Education.

3.1.2 Major national socio-economic strategies governing the provision of Adult Learning

Key policy documents on national socio-economic strategies governing the provision of Adult learning include:

- The Latvian Growth Model: People First;
- Latvian Sustainable Development Strategy 2030;
- Latvian National Development Plan 2014 - 2020;
- Inclusive Employment Guidelines 2015.-2020;
- Regional policy guidelines for 2013 to 2019;
- United Nations Convention on Persons with Disabilities implementation guidelines 2014 - 2020; and
- The Information Society Development Guidelines for 2014 - 2020.

At the planning level, adult education policy has been integrated into the national development strategy, and interlinked with education, public health, economy and employment policy reforms. The Latvian National Reform Programme "Europe 2020" strategy (NAP) and the Operational Programme "Growth and Jobs" define the overall strategy for implementation at the government level.

3.2 Adult learning policy framework

3.2.1 *A summary of major developments/ changes since 2010*

Latvia has made an enormous effort in the last few years to avoid the inconsistencies, gaps and misalignment in legislation mentioned in the national study on adult education 2014⁸. Currently, a substantially developed legislative framework exists (see in Annex 1 with provided links), covering adult formal, non-formal and informal learning, including legal acts, implementation acts and implementation programmes, these are listed below.

The Action Plan for implementation of the governance model for adult education 2016 - 2020 was adopted in May 2016, in order to create a policy framework to reach the goals and targets for adult learning set out in the Education Development Guidelines 2014-2020.

3.2.2 *Main legislative act(s) governing the provision of adult learning*

Latvian legal acts, particularly the Education Law, General education Law, Law on Vocational Education and Law on Higher education institutions define the rights for general and vocational education. The policy implementation acts provide the legal basis for the implementation of the LLL strategy, including for specific adult target groups.

3.2.3 *Main strategy(-ies)*

The Lifelong Learning Policy Guidelines for 2007-2013 (Lifelong Learning Strategy) states its long-term goal as being 'to ensure lifelong education according to the residents' interests, ability and the socioeconomic development needs in the regions'. The sub-goals include ensuring access to LLL for residents, irrespective of their age, gender, and educational background, place of residence, income level, ethnicity or functional disability. It also includes creating a quality education offer for adults that provides sustainable competencies for work, civic engagement, personal growth, and promotes the development of the knowledge economy and democratic society in Latvia; and creating a comprehensive policy framework and effective management of resources"⁹.

The guiding principles for future development of the adult learning sector were set out in the Education Development Guidelines 2014-2020. According to these guidelines (specifically the section on "adult participation in educational activities"), for Latvia to achieve the target of 15% participation in adult education by 2020, the adult learning programmes offer should be expanded, effective management of resources (including financial) should be ensured, and more effective use of existing facilities, e.g. libraries,

⁸ LR, IZM [MES], ESF, (2014). *Mūžizglītības un pieaugušo izglītības sistēma, Ziņojums* [Lifelong learning and adult education system. Fernāte, A., Birziņa, R. Kurlovičs, G.]. Retrieved from http://www.muzizqlitiba.lv/sites/default/files/07_zinojums_PI_sistema.pdf [accessed at 9.09.2017]

⁹ EC. Eurydice (2016) Latvia: Lifelong Learning Strategy. Retrieved from https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Latvia:Lifelong_Learning_Strategy [accessed 12.10.2016.]

museums, cultural centres and other institutions providing adult learning, including informal learning opportunities, should be encouraged¹⁰.

3.2.4 *Main implementing act(s)*

The National Development Plan 2014–2020 (NDP 2020) is hierarchically the highest national-level medium-term planning document. NDP 2020 is closely related to the Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030, and the National Reform Programme for the Implementation of the EU2020 Strategy. The goal of NDP2020 is to agree on the most important medium-term action priorities, areas of action, objectives and the indicators of their implementation¹¹.

The Programme for the implementation of the Lifelong Learning Policy Guidelines 2014 - 2020 (Lifelong Learning Strategy) defines the goals to achieve quality and inclusive education for personal development, human welfare and the sustainable development of the country, through development of an education environment conducive to the development of individual competences and efficient governance.

The measures of the Education Development Guidelines focus on the introduction of a lifelong learning principle. One of the policy actions envisages expanding education opportunities for adults (for example, expanding second chance education opportunities, providing support for employers in educating employees, as well as developing the qualifications of employees based on employers' requirements, etc.)¹². These actions will cover the following areas in all regions:

- Provide adult education offer that meets enables individuals to develop competences that will enable them to integrate in the labour market;
- Provide the offer needed for adults to develop competences for integration in the civil society; and
- Provide adult education offer necessary for adults' personal fulfilment.

The Adult Education Governance Model Implementation Plan 2016 - 2020¹³ aims to ensure that there is more efficient management of resources to reduce the current fragmentation of adult education¹⁴. The plan refers to the need for:

¹⁰ Legislation, Cabinet of Ministers, (2015). *Izglītības attīstības pamatnostādņu 2014. –2020.gadam īstenošanas plāns 2015. –2017.gadam* [Education Development Guidelines for 2014- 2020 Implementation Plan 2015-2017], §10. Retrieved from <https://www.vestnesis.lv/op/2015/126.9> [accessed at 9.09.2016]

¹¹ Legislation, (2012). National Development Plan of Latvia 2014-2020. Retrieved from <https://rio.jrc.ec.europa.eu/en/library/national-development-plan-latvia-2014-2020>

¹² NRP, (2017). National Reform program of Latvia for implementation of the Europa 2020 strategy: Progress report. Retrieved from <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/2017-european-semester-national-reform-programme-latvia-en.pdf> [assessed at 16.09.2017]

¹³ CM Regulation No.287 of 5 May 2016 On Adult Education Management Model Implementation Plan 2016 – 2020

¹⁴ Legislation, Cabinet of Ministers, (2016). *Pieaugušo izglītības modeļa ieviešanas plāns 2016. - 2020. gadam* [Adult education model implementation plan 2016 - 2020]. Retrieved from <http://likumi.lv/ta/id/281992-par-pieauguso-izglitibas-parvaldibas-modeļa-ieviesanas-planu-2016-2020-gadam> [accessed at 9.09.2016]

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- A database of adult learning records to be developed, to track individual learners and to avoid overlaps in the learning offer provided to the same people using public funds.
- Eligibility for public-funded adult learning to be controlled through access to the databases of the State Revenue Service.

To link it to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) by reflecting the corresponding EQF level in the certificates on formal education, the relevant amendments in legislative were made in 2014-2015.

According to the Implementation plan, the content of adult education will be aligned to labour market needs, and this will be a key role for government ministries responsible for coordinating and supporting the provision of adult learning opportunities. The National Education Development Agency has a role in developing the adult learning offer jointly with adult learning providers linked to an annual plan.

Table 3 provides a summary of main activities, actions, budget, and targets guiding the implementation of national adult learning policy and implementation dates.

Table 3 Initial plan of Governing of the implementation of Adult Learning 2015-2020¹⁵

Policy action	Direction: 2.4. Extend the educational opportunities for adults			
Activities	Deadlines	Responsible institutions	Involved institutions	Funding
1. Improvement of the regulatory framework for the provision of adult education (incl. Support for employers in the provision of adult education).	the second half of the year 2015	MES	ME, MW, SEA, LEC	Public, not defined
2. Provision of adult education to improve the professional competence and qualification of the employed persons in order to reduce labor market qualification mismatch with labor market demand,	the second half of the year 2015	MES	Planning regions, Branch Ministries LEC, LCCI	Total: 27,03 Million EUR, including ESF - 22,98 Million EUR Public - 4,05 Million EUR

¹⁵ See in footnote 42

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promote the competitiveness of workers and increase labor productivity in accordance with labor market requirements.				
3. Support for employers for the provision of formal and informal education for employees.	First half of 2015. to second half of 2020.	MES	Planning regions LEC, LCCI	Total: public 25,61 Million EUR (extra co-financing needed)
4. Strengthening the capacity of vocational education institutions in adult education, envisaging improvement of cooperation with employers, improvement of the competence of administrative and pedagogical staff in the context of training organization, methodological issues and technological development, incl. mobility measures for the transfer of good practice for the development of adult education, as well as for the implementation of assessment of competences acquired outside formal education (including the preparation of evaluation experts) in the context of the labor migration processes, informative activities involving sectoral professional organizations.	the second half of 2020	MES, ECC	Branch organizations companies, educational institutions Collaboration partners MC	Operational program. targets 1. 2. 2. and 3 (improvement of pedagogical competence of both teachers and practitioners involved in vocational education and professional education institutions in adult education. Total funding for action line 1.2. 2 and 3, the direction of action 2.4. paragraph 4 and the direction of action 3.1. To achieve the objective given in clause 6, it is indicated in the direction of action 1.2. paragraph 3

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<p>5. To increase the availability of information on the evaluation of professional competences acquired outside the formal education system.</p>	<p>the second half of 2020</p>	<p>MES</p>	<p>EQSS ECC</p>	<p>Total: 0,069 Million EUR, t.sk., ESF 2007.-2013. - 0,009 Million. EUR (ESF: 0,007 Million EUR and public funding: 0,002 Million EUR); Public - 0,06 Million EUR (co-funding need of 0,01 Million EUR pro year in 2015- 2020</p>
<p>6. Support the development of work-based learning and practice-based training in vocational education through the development of modular vocational and continuing education programs, as well as supporting the provision of lifelong learning and - professional competence programs in each modular vocational education program.</p>	<p>the second half of 2020</p>	<p>MES</p>	<p>ECC Collaboration partners: MC</p>	<p>Action line 1.1. Clause 6 includes the development of work environment-based learning and practice-based training in vocational education, therefore total funding is indicated in Action line 1.4. paragraph 6.</p>
<p>7. Improving the levels of Latvian as a second language as a foreign language and developing and maintaining an international test based on EU language policy based on EU language policy for adult learning as a foreign language as a foreign language; the establishment / maintenance of a professional</p>	<p>the second half of 2020</p>	<p>MES</p>	<p>MES, LLA</p>	<p>Total public: 14,23 Million EUR (extra -co-funding needed)</p>

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development system for adult educators; Supports the establishment of a system for promoting the acquisition of the Latvian language as a foreign language for foreign students, entrepreneurs, and interested persons (separate from the higher education institutions); creation / maintenance of a distance learning system.				
8. Promoting transnational cooperation between adult educators (institutions and organizations) in both formal and non-formal adult education in the context of the objectives of the EU's growth strategy for Europe 2020.	the second half of 2020	SEDA	Adult education institutions and organizations	EU programmes Erasmus + (2014-2020) Public (not defined)

3.3 National quantitative policy targets

The targets are defined in the Programme for the implementation of the Lifelong Learning Policy Guidelines 2014-2020 (Lifelong Learning Strategy), the main target being to reach 15% participation of 24-64 year old low qualified adults in LLL by 2020, as defined in EU2020, so as in the national Youth Guarantee Implementation Plan 2014-2018 (YGIP) and in Adult Education Governance Model Implementation Plan 2016 - 2020.

Table 3.1 outlines the national level targets that apply in Latvia that link to Adult Learning.

Table 3.1 Targets linked to Adult Learning in broader economic policies/LLL strategies/framework or implementing act

General information		Progress toward target		
Target (target figure and date to be achieved by)	Adoption date (e.g. 31/03/2018)	Initial value (at date of adoption) 2016	Current value	Summary of progress against target
GDP	3,5%	2,0%	3,2%	Latvia's economic growth in 2016 (2.0%) suffered from a drop in investment but is expected to exceed 3% over the forecast horizon due to the upturn in the EU financing cycle and an increase in household purchasing power. Despite some tightening, the labour market should benefit from this pick-up and unemployment should inch down. Combined with energy price pressures, the surge in domestic demand is set to fuel inflation. Government borrowing is set to increase from a balanced position in 2016 to a deficit of 1.7% of GDP in 2018 through higher capital spending and tax cutting measures ¹⁶ .
Unemployment	8,7%	9,6%	9,2%	Unemployment is expected to decline to 8.7% by 2018, somewhat faster than in recent years but in line with economic activity. In 2016, the unemployment rate edged down from 9.9% to 9.6%. Net emigration is expected to fade out only gradually, which means that demographic trends will continue to weigh on the labour market

¹⁶ EC, (2017). Economic forecast for Latvia: Spring 2017. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-performance-and-forecasts/economic-performance-country/latvia/economic-forecast-latvia_en [accessed at 23.09.2017]

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NEET young people aged 15-29 years (5262; 31.12.2018)¹⁷	started in September 2014, since 02.11.2015 ESF supported	3,75% ¹⁸	3,53%	In Latvia there are on average 344 000 young people aged 15-29, of which 59% or 202 000 aged 15-24 years. In the last 20 years, the number of young people aged 15-29 has decreased by 33% ¹⁹ . So then, the progress against the target do not make sure it is visible.
15-24 age old job seekers, not in AE (3%; 2020)	22.05.2014	7,1% (2012)	6% (2017)	In 2015, support for regional mobility was provided to 452 youths and 97 persons received support for regional mobility (inside of Latvia) within employment measures. In 2016, support for regional mobility was provided to 990 youths and 2435 persons received support for regional mobility within employment measures.
20-24 age old (not defined)				In 2017, implementation of ESF project Improving the Professional Competence of Employees was launched. Within this project, persons (at least 25 years old) upon their request received support
25+ age old (25639 employees reskilling; 31.12.2022) ²⁰	22.05.2016			
25+ age old low skilled employees reskilling (12934; 31.12.2022) ²¹	22.05.2016			for improvement of their professional qualifications and competences, including provision of career consultant services. In cooperation with the municipalities, a basis for joint and sustainable adult education support system will be created. The project will extend to more than 38 000 persons, primarily

¹⁷ Youth Guarantee

¹⁸ OECD, (2017). Youth not in employment, education or training (NEET). Retrieved from <https://data.oecd.org/youthinac/youth-not-in-employment-education-or-training-neet.htm> [assessed at 15.09.2017]

¹⁹ FinanceNet, (2016). Ziņojums: vidēji 47 000 jauniešu nestrādā, nemācās un neapgūst arodu. [News: apmēroj 47000 young peoples are unemployment and are not in vocational education]. Retrieved from http://www.tvnet.lv/financenet/finansu_zinas/605057-zinojums_vidēji_47_000_jauniesu_nestrada_nemacas_un_neapgust_rodu [assessed at 15.09.2017]

²⁰ [Adult education governance model implementation plan 2016 - 2020](#)

²¹ [Adult education governance model implementation plan 2016 - 2020](#)

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				providing support to employed persons from social risk groups.
25-64 age old participation in AE (15% 2020)	22.05.2014	6.9% (2012)	9,5% (2017)	In 2016, the share of population participating in adult education increased by 1.6 percentage points compared to 2015.
Qualified youth ²² (40%; 2022)	22.05.2014	30% (2012)	35% (2017)	The project is expected to involve 9700 unemployed young people who will be educated at educational institutions and through the training in prisons, and 2206 employed young people, which will be initial educated at educational institutions. it is proposed that by 2018 6500 unemployed young people and 1496 employed young people will get second or third level professional qualifications in the sectors needed for the national economy, and 500 persons will be involved in training in prisons.
Validation of informal learning at qualification level 3-4 (+20% or 480 adults; 2022)	22.05.2014	400 (2012)	+10% (440 adults)	From 2011 until the end of 2016, close to 4000 professional qualification certificates (including 11000 certificates in 2016 alone) were issued as a result of evaluation of professional competence that had been obtained outside the formal education system.

3.4 Quality assurance

Quality assurance of formal and non-formal programmes in adult education and education overall is provided via licensing and accreditation, and validation of informal education at all levels of adult learning, excluding the licencing and accreditation of HE programmes and institutions, is conducted by the State Educational Quality Service (SEQS). The SEQS is the main policy developer of regulation of quality assurance in Latvia.

²² Youth guarantee

The full package of normative regulations was developed over the last years. These regulations are transparent and open for access at the webpage of the SEQS. The SEQS is involved in EQAVET, cooperating with CEDEFOP. Policy recommendations for quality assurance in vocational education and training were developed in 2016- 2017²³. The quality criteria for non-formal education and suitability of its licencing as such has been subject of some debate recently.

3.5 Future policy developments

According the National Reform Progress Report 2017 (NRP) the main directives and measures of the policy action 2014-2020 related to adult learning will be continued, and these are as follows:

- Promoting cooperation and ensuring coordination among the partners involved in adult education (responsible institution – the Ministry of Education and Science (MES)) to provide a single and well-coordinated adult education system management.
- Developing national qualifications framework and ensuring compatibility the European qualifications framework (responsible institution – the MES). Introducing the national Qualifications Framework of Latvia (LQF), thus fostering a transition to education based on learning outcomes.
- Ensuring assessment of knowledge, skills and professional competences obtained outside formal education (responsible institution – the MES) in compliance with the legislative framework, to ensure access for population to receiving recognition of professional qualifications.
- Supporting upgrading of employee qualifications (responsible institutions – the MES, the Ministry of Welfare (MW)) to provide employees with an opportunity to improve their professional competence by training for professional improvement, continuing education or non-formal education curricula.
- Efficient reintegration of the long-term unemployed and social assistance recipients into the labor market and supporting regional mobility (responsible institution – the MW) to activate the economically inactive population groups, especially social assistance recipients, by providing more efficient and targeted support to long-term unemployed and by promoting geographical labor mobility.

The challenges and opportunities of improving of adult education policies were discussed at the international projects of coordinators of adult learning International Scientific Conference “Challenges for high quality of adult education” organized by the MES of Latvia in May 2017. This was part of the “National Coordinators for the Implementation of the Europe an Agenda for Adult Learning” and “EPALE National Support Services” activities. In three panel discussions rounds and workshop-sessions the Adult Education policy to improve quality; development of fundamental skills as a precondition for the quality of adult education, methods and solutions to enhance quality of AE; Governance and Quality of non-formal AE; support system for adult learning; experiences and challenges of the

²³ State Educational Quality centre, (2017). [Policy recommendations for working for quality assurance in vocational education and training. Riga: State Educational Quality Centre.](#)

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European virtual platform for improvement of adult education, so as educator's diverse roles in adult non-formal education and quality of the non - formal adult education in the context of supply and demand were argument.

4.0 INVESTMENT IN ADULT LEARNING SYSTEMS

4.1 Total investment in adult learning and change over time

Overall, public financing of education in Latvia is considerable: according to the Education and Training Monitor, the share of GDP allocated to education in government expenditure is 5.7%²⁴. However, according to OECD, the total expenditure on primary to tertiary level education was 4.5% in 2013, which was below the OECD average²⁵.

Adult learning is largely financed by EU funds and a large part of this funding goes through municipalities, companies (employers) and government agencies which provide continuing education or re-training within the framework of employment policies. No data is available on the total volume of funding for adult learning.

4.2 Public national investment

4.2.1 *Table 5.1 outlines the breakdown of public national investment in Adult learning in Latvia.*

Table 5.1 Breakdown of public national investment

Title of public investment source	Source of funding	Amount of funding	Targeted number of participants	Targeted level of provision	Start/end date
State budget	MES	Foreseen budget funds	Developing policy and legal framework of AL	Government	the first half of the 2015 – the second half of 2015
State budget	National budget	4,05 Million EUR	Provision of adult education to improve the professional competences and qualification of the employed persons	Planning regions Government Social partners	the first half of the 2015 – the second half of 2015

²⁴ EC, (2015). Education and Training Monitor 2015. Retrieved from http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/library/publications/monitor15_en.pdf [accessed at 14.09.2016]

²⁵ OECD, (2016). Education at a glance. Latvia. Retrieved from http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/education/education-at-a-glance-2016/latvia_eag-2016-67-en [accessed at 8.09.2017]

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State budget	National budget	25, 61 Million	Support for employers for the provision of formal and informal education for employees.	Planning regions Social partners	the first half of the 2020 – the second half of 2020
State budget	National budget	0, 75 Million	Strengthening the capacity of vocational education institutions in adult education	Branch organizations Companies, Educational institutions Social partners Government	the second half of the year 2015
State budget	National budget	0,06 Million	Increasing the availability of information on the evaluation of professional competences acquired outside the formal education system	Government	the second half of the year 2015 – the second half of the year 2020
State budget		1.38 Million	Development of work-based learning and practice-based training in vocational education	Government Social partners	the second half of the year 2015 – the second half of the year 2020
State budget	National budget	14,32 Million	Improving the levels of Latvian as a second language		the second half of the year

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			as a foreign language	Government	2015 - the second half of the year 2020
State budget	National budget	Will be defined later	Promoting transnational cooperation between adult educators (institutions and organizations) in both formal and non-formal adult education	Adult education institutions and organizations	the second half of the year 2015 - the second half of the year 2020

The costs of adult' upper-secondary second chance compulsory education, are covered by state and municipalities' budgets, in accordance with the Law on Budget and Financial Management²⁶. State funding for municipalities is calculated and awarded each year²⁷. Private education institutions are financed by their founders, although the state and municipalities provide funding if the school provides accredited basic and general secondary education programmes.

Adult education is financed jointly by the state/municipalities and learners, excluding those programmes that are offered to adults for free, for instance, Latvian language training for some groups according to the State Language Law. An assessment of the share of funding provided by individuals and entrepreneurs/ employers is not possible due to a lack of information²⁸.

4.3 EU support via structural funds (primarily ESF)

EU support via structural funds (primary ESF) is has been the main funding source for adult learning from 2010 to 2017. In 2016, EU investments in the field of education were focused on preventing early school leaving, as well as providing funding for employers to support young people in employment²⁹.

²⁶ Legislation, (2003). *Likums par budžetu un finanšu vadību* [Law on Budget and Financial Management]. Retrieved from <http://likumi.lv/doc.php?id=58057> [accessed at 25.09.2016]

²⁷ EC, Eurydice, (2016). Funding in Education. Retrieved from https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Latvia:Funding_in_Education [accessed at 28.08.2016]

²⁸ EC, Eurostat, (2016). Smarter, greener, more inclusive? INDICATORS TO SUPPORT THE EUROPE 2020 STRATEGY, STATISTICAL BOOKS, Edition 2016, p.136. Retrieved from <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3217494/7566774/KS-EZ-16-001-EN-N.pdf/ac04885c-cfff-4f9c-9f30-c9337ba929aa> [accessed at 28.08.2016]

²⁹ EU, (2016). *Informatīvais ziņojums par ES struktūrfondu un Kohēzijas fonda, Eiropas Ekonomikas zonas finanšu instrumenta, Norvēģijas finanšu instrumenta un Latvijas un Šveices sadarbības programmas investīciju*

4.3.1 *Structural fund support planned as part of 2014-2020 financial framework*

Table 4.3.1 outlines the structural fund support planned as part of 2014-2020 financial framework related to adult learning.

Table 4.3.1 Structural fund support planned as part of 2014-2020 financial framework in 2016

Priority directions	EU funding (EUR)	Support aims
Employment and labour mobility	135.4 million	Support for the unemployed people at risk of unemployment, including young people, increasing the competitiveness of the labour market
Social inclusion and combating poverty	418.5 million/ the funding for adult learners has to be seen as a part of this funding	Support for activation of disadvantaged groups and reduction of barriers to involvement in the labour market and society
Education, skills and lifelong learning	516 million/ the funding for adult learners accounts for just a part of this funding	Support for high-quality and inclusive education for personal development at all levels of education
Total	10699 million/ the funding for adult learners has to be seen as a part of this funding	

progresu līdz 2016.gada 30. jūnijam [Informative report on the EU's Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund, the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism, Norwegian Financial Mechanism and Latvian and Swiss cooperation program investment progress to 30 June 2016]. Retrieved from http://www.esfondi.lv/upload/fmzino_240816_es_fondi.pdf [accessed at 16.09.2016]

Table 4.3.2 Structural fund support for implementation of further training and reforms received as part of 2014-2020 financial framework in 2016- 2017 related to adult learning

Policy reforms	Policy actions	Projects	Funding
National Reforms in Vocational Education and Training and Adult Learning ³⁰	Improve the professional competence of employees (including validation) ³²	1. Development of professional competence of employed persons (including validation)	Total: 25 353 413.00. ESF: 21 550 401.00. National public funding: 3 803 012.00 ³⁵
Adult learning for vocational purposes (sometimes referred to as continuing vocational education or training: CVET) ³¹	Improve access to career support for students in general and vocational education ³³ Increase the number of students qualified in vocational education which participate in the work-based training and who have practical experience in enterprises ³⁴	2. Career support for education and training institutions a) EU programme "Youth Guarantee" (closed at 30.06.2018)	Total: 21 645 410.00. ESF: 18 398 598.00. Nacional public funding: 3 246 812.00 ³⁶ Total: 20 572 986.00. ESF: 17 487 038.00. National public funding: 3 085 948.00 ³⁷

³⁰ Eurydice, (2016). National Reforms in Vocational Education, and Training and Adult Learning (*Nacionālās reformas arodizglītībā un apmācībā, un pieaugušo mācīšanās*). URL: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Latvia:National_Reforms_in_Vocational_Education_and_Training_and_Adult_Learning#Increasing_the_number_of_modernised_vocational_training_institution_s.C2.A0. last modified on 30 November 2016

³¹ In note: the systematic of the policy reform directions (see in cursive) is provided by expert

³² ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=8.4.1.0%2F16%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

³³ ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=8.3.5.0%2F16%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

³⁴ ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=8.5.1.0%2F16%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

³⁵ ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=8.4.1.0%2F16%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

³⁶ ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=8.3.4.0%2F16%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

³⁷ ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=8.5.1.0%2F16%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

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		b) "Grants for IVET students"	
		3. Work-based learning and practicum in enterprises for professional education of students	
National Reforms on Transversal Skills and Employability ³⁸	Increasing in employment, education or training of NEETs in the framework of the "Youth Guarantee" programme ³⁹	1. Support for learners' individual competence development	Total: 10 596 211.00; ESF: 9 006 779.00.
Adult learning for social inclusion	Prolonging older employees ability to work and the preservation of employment ⁴⁰	2. "Know-how and do"	National public funding: 1 589 432.00 ⁴³
Adult learning for personal fulfilment	Increasing the integration of people at risk of the discrimination into the labour market and society ⁴¹	3. Support to reduce early school leaving	Total: 36 776 965 euro, t. sk. ESF: 31 260 420 EUR and State budget: 5 516 545 EUR ⁴⁴
	Increasing the inclusion of disadvantaged unemployed people into the labour market ⁴²	4. Competence approach to curriculum	Total: 6 813 045.00. ESF: 5 791 088.00. National public

³⁸ Eurydice, (2016). National Reforms related to Transversal Skills and Employability [*Nacionālās reformas saistībā ar transversālām prasmēm un nodarbinātību*] URL: https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Latvia:National_Reforms_related_to_Transversal_Skills_and_Employability [accessed at 5.09.2016]

³⁹ ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=8.3.2.2%2F16%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

⁴⁰ ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=7.3.2.0%2F16%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

⁴¹ ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=9.1.4.1%2F16%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

⁴² ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=9.1.1.2%2F15%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

⁴³ ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=7.3.2.0%2F16%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

⁴⁴ ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=8.3.4.0%2F16%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

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Adult learning for basic literacy and numeracy	Increase the support for learners' individual competencies and development in general education institutions (eg. evening schools)	1.Supporting longer working lives	funding: 1 021 957.00 ⁴⁵
	Developing of the competence-based curriculum in general education.	2.People with disabilities or mental disabilities integration into employment and society	Total: 1 252 127.00. ESF: 1 064 308.00. National public funding :187 819.00 ⁴⁶
		3.Promoting diversity	Total: 27 809 804.23. ESF: 23 638 326.64. National public funding: 2 499 948.59.
	1. Increase Adult learning for basic literacy and numeracy	N/A	Total: 36 776 965 euro, t. sk. ESF: 31 260 420 EUR and State budget: 5516545 EUR ⁴⁷
	2. Developing skills training to promote the unregistered NEETs' involvement in education	1.Support for long-term unemployed	Total: 6 813 045.00.ESF: 5 791 088.00. National public funding: 1 021 957.00 ⁴⁸
	3. Reduce early school leaving by implementing preventive and intervention measures	2.Subsidized workplaces for the unemployed	N/A
			Total: 1 252 127.00. ESF: 1 064 308.00. National public

⁴⁵ ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=9.1.4.4%2F16%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

⁴⁶ ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=9.1.4.1%2F16%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

⁴⁷ ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=8.3.4.0%2F16%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

⁴⁸ ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=9.1.4.4%2F16%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

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			funding :187 819.00 ⁴⁹
			Total: 27 809 804.23. ESF: 23 638 326.64. National public funding: 2 499 948.5

4.3.2 *EU support via structural funds (primarily ESF) provided as part of 2007-2013 financial framework*

Data on financial support during the period of 2014-2020 (from July 2016) include financial support from the European Union (primary ESF) for funding priority 10.3 - enhancing access to LLL (the priority most directly relevant to adult learning) of EUR 22.9 million.

4.4 **Effectiveness of investment**

In 2015, EUR 26 million was spent on active labour market policies, EUR 17 million of which was ESF co-funding. Approximately 47% of the funding was used for measures aimed at raising and improving the qualifications of the unemployed; slightly over 15% was spent on the arrangement of paid temporary public works; approximately 13% for supported employment; approximately 23% for the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, and 2% for other measures.

A total of 69,000 unemployed people found a job in 2015, and 20,000 or 29.6% of them found a job after completing an active measure (this does not include information days for the measures to increase competitiveness)⁵⁰. Overall, employment policy interventions are considered to have been fairly effective, possibly due also to favourable external circumstances (increase in labour demand).

The relative effectiveness of adult learning policy interventions is difficult to measure because of a lack of comprehensive evaluations. However, the key indicator – participation in lifelong learning – still remains low (see section 1.1.2).

⁴⁹ ESF, (2017). *Izglītība, prasmes, mūžizglītība* (Education, skills and Lifelong learning). URL: <http://www.esfondi.lv/es-fondu-projektu-mekletajs/project?number=9.1.4.1%2F16%2FI%2F001> [accessed at 5.09.2017]

⁵⁰ NRP, (2016). National reform programme of Latvia for the implementation of the “Europe 2020” strategy: Progress Report on Implementation of Latvia’s NRP, 2016, p .47. Retrieved from: http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2016/nrp2016_latvia_en.pdf [accessed at 5.09.2016]

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As it is stated in the National audit report "Contribution of the Structural Funds to the Europe 2020 Strategy in the Area of Education"⁵¹, the Operational Programme on reducing early school leaving has been amended twice since its approval". Clarifications have been made in terms of content, financing and redistribution within the framework of investment policy priority of adult learning for basic literacy and numeracy. Overall, the intended approach seeks to reduce early school-leaving and promote equal access to good-quality pre-school, primary and secondary education of adults' who participate in adult learning programmes provided by regular primary and secondary schools.

Approximately EUR 6,762,578 (including ESF EUR5,748,191 and State budget EUR 1,014,387) has been used to increase the employment of young people who are NEET, to facilitate their participation in education. This falls within the framework of "Youth Guarantee" managed by the Ministry of Welfare. In an auditors' opinion, there is a risk that "planned financial, output and result indicators will not be achieved in the interim assessment period of ESF in 2018" (p.42). Comparison with the assessment provided in the country briefing issued last year approval". Clarifications have been made with regard to content, financing and redistribution within the framework of investment policy priority of adult learning for basic literacy and numeracy⁵².

Compared to the 2007-2013 period, the ESF investment in adult education 2014-2020 increased over time and opened more pathways to adult learning. Funding emphasis shifted from predominantly covering administrative and employers' costs to needs-based allocations linked to the planning of adult learning pathways in long-term perspective in 2017 offering the first round of application for the EU funds major project in adult education for 2018-2022⁵³

⁵¹ Valsts Kontrole" (State Audit Office of the Republic of Latvia), (2016). National Audit Report of Republic of Latvia. Parallel regulatory and performance audit on "Contribution of the Structural Funds to the Europe 2020 Strategy in the Area of Education", 28.12.2016. "Rīgā": State Audit Office of the Republic of Latvia. Retrieved from http://www.lrvk.gov.lv/uploads/Majaslapa%20ENG/Audit%20report/2016/2.4.1-14_2016/country-report-template_latvia_en_final_17012017.pdf, p.33. [accessed at 5.09.2016]

⁵² Conceptual Statement "On the Development of Policy Alternatives for Solving the Early School Leaving Problem to Ensure the Implementation of Specific Objective 8.3.4 'To Reduce Early School Leaving by Implementing Preventive and Intervention Measures'" (approved by Cabinet Order No.286 of 5 May 2016 "On the Conceptual Statement 'On the Development of Policy Alternatives for Solving the Early School Leaving Problem to Ensure the Implementation of Specific Objective 8.3.4 'To Reduce Early School Leaving by Implementing Preventive and Intervention Measures'"

⁵³ VIAA, (2017). *Atklāta pirmā pieteikšanās kārta vērienīgā ES fondu pieaugušo izglītības projektā* [The first round of application for the EU funds major project in adult education]. Retrieved from http://viaa.gov.lv/lat/pieauguso_izglitiba/jaunumi/?text_id=39684 [assessed at 05. 09.2017]

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING POLICY

This section addresses the key question on what extent is the present adult learning structure in Latvia sufficient or not to meet the needs related to adult learning, and what are its strengths and weaknesses. The assessment is done through the lens of the six key success factors for effective adult learning policy that have been identified in a recent study.⁵⁴ The evidence on success of existing policy actions assessed is provided in Annex 2.

5.1 Develop learners' interest in learning

There is scope to step up policy action to improve adult learning, such as raising the awareness of the benefits of learning, and ensuring good initial learning experiences (intervention 1.4). However, current policy action is focused on providing targeted guidance for learners about learning options and engaging social partners in the planning, promotion of recruitment of learners to adult learning.

There is no evidence that the adult policy actions have had a significant impact in increasing participation in adult education in Latvia. Adult participation in education and training is relatively low, but comparable to other countries in the region. Despite the evidence of good practice on all four effective policy actions (see references in Annex 2, interventions 1.1 - 1.4) these don't cover the support of all targets groups.

Attention has to be paid to raising the awareness of adult learning through provision of information, guidance and counselling, e.g. "one-stop-shop" centres, and providing integrated information on adult education opportunities in a clear, easy to find and transparent way that is accessible to adults with low literacy.

5.2 Increase employers' investment in learning

Latvian policy actions focus on providing funding to assist employers to up-skill and retrain their workforce, promoting the use of externally accredited qualifications by employers and promoting the provision of work-based learning. However it does not focus on increasing employers' investment in adult learning outside of own companies. Current policies have a strong focus on this priority, including two types of tax reduction for those who paid for training, provision of loans and training leave (see evidence in section 5.2. of this report and references in Annex 2 interventions 2.1 -2 .3).

5.3 Improve equity of access for all

Latvian policy actions focus on funding learning for disadvantaged and difficult-to-engage groups including the inactive and unemployed. There are targeted guidance, support

⁵⁴ Key success factors, indicating the strength of evidence (available in all languages): <https://epale.ec.europa.eu/en/policy-tool/key-success-factors>; Study "An in-depth analysis of adult learning policies and their effectiveness in Europe" by EC (2015): <https://epale.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/final-report-20150817-en.pdf>

services and promotion of programmes to learners in under-represented groups. There are schemes to recognise prior learning (informal and non-formal or community-based learning in planning regions and its municipalities) for low qualified, and they are generally accessible. In 2017, legislative acts to promote the validation of learning have been approved, and a growing number of cases of validation is visible (see evidence in sections 3.5. and 4.3.2 of this report and in Annex 1 and references in Annex 2 interventions 3.1 - 3.5).

Adult learning to support social inclusion is a notable development/ reform in Latvia in recent years, aimed at reaching the main vulnerable target-groups such as NEET, older people etc. However, most projects proposed for improving the situation of 20-64-year olds and elderly low skilled adults and their social inclusion have been launched recently, and cannot be assessed.

5.4 Deliver learning that is relevant

Adult learning for vocational purposes (sometimes referred to as continuing vocational education or training: CVET) still takes a central place in Latvian ongoing reforms. The policy change aims to develop a more targeted policy direction in supporting unemployed youth (NEET), rather than prioritising employed adults till 2016. This was flagged as a positive change in the national audit report, which also focused on the need to support the 16-35 year olds acquire qualifications. At the same time, the priority of upskilling in Latvia is still given to the 45-55 age old target-group, and not the most difficult group to access (36-44 age olds). Since 2017, the focus has been on developing new upskilling pathways for adults in accordance to the Commission recommendations.

Guidelines on learning options are provided for the youth, and the adult policy action on the engaging of social partners has been promoted. Focus on understanding and identifying needs and motivations of learners through identifying current and future skills needs of employees (through skills forecasting), so as to align provision with these is possible through promoting innovation and flexibility in the delivery of formal, non-formal and informal learning progression pathways for learners across the improved national qualifications framework in the future. This will make possible the validation not only of work-related learning but also prior learning for personal fulfilment (transversal or transferable competences).

Adult learning for personal fulfilment has been receiving more attention. New projects are just in being developed and cannot be assessed at present. However, these new improvements would hopefully bring important changes in policy direction, to support more adults to move into education and training (see evidence in sections 3.5. and 4.3.2 of this report and in Annex 1 and references in Annex 2 interventions 4.1 -4.5).

5.5 Deliver learning that is of high quality

Latvian policy actions are slowly focussing on establishing a quality assurance framework for monitoring and evaluation of adult learning programmes, and for developing a skilled

adult education workforce through initial teacher training and continuous professional development of adult trainers. In 2016-2017, the policy recommendation for quality assurance in vocational education and training were developed to ensure coherent policy monitoring actions in the future (see evidence in section 3.4 of this report and references in Annex 2 interventions 5.1 – 5.2).

5.6 Ensure coherent policy

In the short and medium term perspective, the Latvian policy actions are not focused on coordinating adult learning policy with other national policies for improving knowledge, skills and competences of adults establishing mechanisms for policy alignment at local and regional levels; and building a knowledge base concerning what works in adult learning in a transparent and systematically way (see in sections 3 - 5 of this report and in Annex 2 interventions 6.1- 6.3). There is evidence on progress since 2017.

6.0 STRENGTH AND WEAKNESSES OF THE ADULT EDUCATION SYSTEM

6.1 Strengths

Improve equality of access for all. Latvian policy actions focus on funding learning for disadvantaged and difficult-to-engage groups, including the inactive and unemployed. There is targeted guidance, support services and promotion of programmes to learners in under-represented groups. The schemes to recognise prior learning (informal and non-formal)/community-based for the low qualified are weak⁵⁵, but the improvements are evident.

Increase employer investment in learning. Latvian policy actions are focused on providing funding to assist employers to up-skill and retrain their workforce, promoting the use of externally accredited qualifications by employers and the provision of work-based learning.

Deliver learning that is relevant. Latvian policy actions are focused on increasing awareness of the benefits of learning, as well as providing targeted guidance for learners about learning options and engaging social partners in the planning, promotion of recruitment of learners to adult learning. Latvian policy actions are focused on understanding and identifying the current and future skills needs of employers (through skills forecasting), on understanding and identifying the current and future adult learning needs and motivations, and on aligning provision to promote innovation and flexibility in developing pathways of adult learning to support progression across the improved national qualifications framework. However, the legislation does not include mandatory financial support for non-formal/community learning, and second chance secondary education.

6.2 Weaknesses

Delivery learning that is of high quality. Latvian policy actions are currently not focused on establishing a quality control framework to facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of adult learning programmes for developing a skilled adult education workforce, through initial teacher training and continuous professional development of adult trainers, which would be expected to impact on the quality of adult learning.

Coherent policy. Latvian policy actions in the short and medium term have recently become more focused on coordinating adult learning policy. Other national policies for improving skills and competences of adults are establishing mechanisms for policy alignment at local and regional levels; and building a knowledge base concerning what works in adult learning. But the top-down government model of distributing responsibilities and funding is evident. According to current legislation, MES has responsibility for developing the legislative and normative acts for adult education policy, which includes

⁵⁵ EC, 2016. An in-depth analysis of adult learning policies and their effectiveness in Europe. European Commission, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, p 142. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/epale/sites/epale/files/all_in-depth_analysis_of_adult_learning_policies_and_their_effectiveness_in_europe_12.11.2015_pdf.pdf [accessed at 28.08.2016]

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responsibility for defining the financing mechanism and resources, but not for the quality of policy actions nor for the provision of a holistic system of formal, non- formal and informal adult learning. The weakness of the Adult Education governance plan is in its emphasis on government-driven planning of the content of adult learning and control of learners, rather than use of positive incentives to improve the quality of the offer and to attract more adults to LLL. As can be seen from the distribution of responsibilities described in section 3.2, this model of governance is still rather fragmented but is improving since 2017.

7.0 FURTHER POLICY REFORMS AND ORIENTATIONS NEEDED

Further policy reforms and orientations are needed, taking account of the European Commission recommendation that AL as a part of LLL should not be implemented only for work or career purposes, but for the purpose of reaching four main targets (see Table 3.1). The AL policy should be aimed at achieving key social and economic benefits for learners themselves, for employers and for the wider community. The same can be said of the effective policy actions orientated objectives of AL policy which should reflect the six key factors which have been found to be associated with successful adult learning policies key factors (see in Annex 2). The follow challenges have to be addressed in new development opportunities:

Key challenge 1: The lifelong learning policy framework for adult learning is in need of improvement. There has been some development and rethinking in terms of continued career-orientated AL, and setting the foundations for an adult learning system (ALS). The conference on adult education policy 2017 and the new operational programme related to adult learning show the notable developments in this area. More targeted AL policy aimed at promoting the key social and economic benefits of adult learning for learners themselves, for employers and for the wider community is evident through the new operational programme related to adult learning. However, its objectives remain only partly defined, and closely reflect the six key factors for successful adult learning policies:

- Increasing employers' investment in learning is only partly evident.
- Improving equity of access for all - development is evident but need the improvement in the future to build a support system for all vulnerable groups country wide.
- The short-term labour market orientation is evident: delivering learning that meets the needs of employers' not employees in the long-term perspective.
- Dispute the establishment of the regional education expert and local adult education coordinators bodies, the co-ordinating responsibility still remains top-down.

Key challenge 2: Still nevertheless, there needs to be improvements in the implementation of ALS as a holistic package of formal (including second chance), non-formal/ community-based and informal learning, with a system of validation of prior-learning outcomes (obtained in different formal, non-formal/community-based and informal learning pathways) continuingly using the definitions in the European Adult learning Glossary⁵⁶. This needs to be in the context of the establishment of learning cultures in families, schools and workplaces, local and regional communities, and in society as a whole:

⁵⁶ Brooks, G. and Burton, M. (2008). Study on European Terminology in Adult Learning for a common language and common understanding and monitoring of the sector, National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy (NRDC) at the Institute of Education, DG Education and Culture. https://ec.europa.eu/epale/sites/epale/files/adultglossary1_en.pdf [assessed at 20.09.2017]

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- A culture of support (including financial) transformational learning opportunities for adults has to be seen as key to achieving the kind of learning where learning outcomes are reached.

Key challenge 3: An AL Governance Council has been newly established. The regional adult education coordinators bodies have been nominated. There is a notable emphasis on encouraging the individual initiative of learners (subsidised workplace learning opportunities and IVET grants). New steps are currently being taken to change the governance model for the adult education sector in the hope of improving its effectiveness and decreasing fragmentation: However, the top-down coordination of AL does not demonstrate any delegation of decisions to regions and local communities of AL providers.

What key additional future policy reforms and orientations could be needed:

- More efficient distribution of responsibilities between national government, Latvian regional planning regions and local municipalities recently started in 2017. This has to be revised to provide more "play room" for local communities, and delegate more responsibilities to educational experts of planning regions who have currently the responsibility to represent the interests of own regions and its municipalities in EU structural funds monitoring committees of State Operational programme "Education, skills and lifelong learning and in 2016 new established Adult Education Government Council. The responsibilities of adult learning providers (vocational colleges, universities, evening/shift schools, adult learning centres etc.) and other adult education stakeholders should be set out in the government model for adult learning.
- Furthermore, the functions of the government with regard to adult education should be more and more delegated to adult formal and non-formal education stakeholders, and funding should be divided between networks formed of all formal and non-formal adult education institutions, not only those which are selected. In the Latvian context, these are the evening/shift schools as second chance formal education providers, vocational institutions, colleges, HE institutions and adult education regional centres. They, as open and flexible providers of education for adults, should form networks to ensure complementarity with each other. Mutual cooperation between adult education providers will help to better promote adult learning.
- Quality assurance in adult education should have a formative character in order to facilitate targeted learning benefits for adult learners. It should not be oriented to the verification of the acquisition of the contents of a concrete formal educational program (the planned licencing of non-formal programmes provokes great concern, confusion and frustration among the non-formal as community-based, non-institutional AL stakeholders). Instead of spending money on licencing unified community based programmes, which can limit the ability of stakeholders to respond to changing adult learning needs, funding should be allocated to the responsible networks promoting adult learning to ensure that they respond adequately to the rapid changes in the labour market and to the new adult learning needs.
- All vocational schools and colleges, adult secondary education schools and universities should be open to meeting the diverse range of adult learning needs

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(this ability should not be limited to vocational institutions selected to create competence centres), providing flexible pathways and opportunities to combine work and family with studies. The development and implementation of this kind of formal education programme offer for adults has to be considered as part of the reform of funding for schools, vocational and higher education.

- Universities should also be open to adult/ mature learners' needs, including flexibility to combine work and family with studies. The development and implementation of this kind of formal education programmes for adults has to be considered as part of reforming and funding of HE.
- The process of validation of formal, non-formal/community based and informal learning should be focused on validation of adult competences, not on the acquisition of programme contents. A possible solution could be a revision of the National Qualification Framework defining the profiles of basic, general, transversal and workplace specific competences for the different working areas, and adopting the good practice of the Ministries of Education in Spain, Germany, Estonia and other countries where such competences profiles exist.

The long-term vision on governance quality of adult learning system in Latvia is seen as the one of the specific priorities of the European Education and Training 2020 strategy. To develop an effective Adult Learning System, the governance of AL has to ensure the coherence of adult learning with other policy areas, improving coordination, effectiveness and relevance to the needs of society, the economy and the environment; increasing, where appropriate, both private and public investment.

Taking account of the European Commission recommendations,

- An effective AL has to be implemented not only for work or career purposes, but for the purpose of reaching four main targets (see Column 1 at the left side of the table). It has to contribute to both human and social capital, enable innovation and stimulate economic growth. It has also to be expected to affect people's attitudes to work, learning and the community they live in and in turn their behaviour (see Column at the left side of the table).
- An effective ALS has to be implemented as a holistic package (State AL programme) of formal(including adult gymnasiums), non-formal and informal learning, with a integrated sub-system of validation of prior-learning outcomes (obtained in different formal, non-formal and informal learning pathways), and where the value of adult learning in creating learning cultures in families, schools and workplaces, local and regional communities, and in society as a whole takes central- stage (see AL targeted State programme in the right part of the table) in AL policies government priorities.
- A high-quality AL policy has to be aimed at achieving key social and economic benefits for learners themselves, for employers and for the wider community (see social and economic benefit in the bellow Row of the table). A culture of support (including financial) for transformational learning opportunities for adults has to be seen as key, to achieving the kind of learning where learning outcomes are reached. This means that an effective adult learning system is of interest to a wide range of government interests and policies.

8.0 SUMMARY

Summary of country statistical performance

Latvia's employment rate increased between 2011 and 2017, partly due to the economic recovery and resulting increased demand for labour, but partly also due to employment policy interventions, many of which have included an adult learning component. However, some issues remain:

- In comparison to previous years, the participation rate in adult education in Latvia grew in 2016 compared to 2014-2015 by 1.7% and 1.6% respectively. Good progress was made between 2015 and 2016 by a margin of 1.6% (7.3% in 2016) compared to 2015. However, the participation rate in Latvia was still lower than the EU-28 average over time by around 3.5 percentage places.
- To reach the national participation rate target, attention has to be paid to removing the obstacles to participation in LLL for 25-34-year-old adults, who are often employed but do not participate in any kind of formal education or validation of the learning outcomes of non-formal and informal learning. This is, in part, due to the low prestige of vocational education, difficulties in reaching vocational and second chance education institutions (expensive public transport, lack of an individualised approach, low reliance of learning providers on digital technologies and lack of workplace learning).
- The lack of monitoring of adult skill levels is a major problem.

Summary of policy reforms in CSR/NRP

In 2016, Latvia has implemented policy actions stimulated by EC Recommendations (2016 CSR 1-2) related to adult education/skills which are relevant and appropriate to the needs of the country. Furthermore, the Government has continued implementation of such actions in 2017.

Summary of key challenges & further policy reforms

According to stakeholders, researchers and practitioners in country, the lifelong learning policy framework for adult learning is in need of improvement⁵⁷. Latvia faces a number of challenges in addressing needs relating to adult learning and development of skills/competencies.

Rethinking continued career-orientated AL and setting the foundations for an adult learning system (ALS). Adult learning can contribute to both human and social capital, enable innovation and stimulate economic growth. It can also be expected to affect people's attitudes to work, learning and the community they live in and in turn their

⁵⁷ ESF, (2014). *Projekts "Eiropas programmas īstenošana pieaugušo izglītības jomā"* [European project "Implementation of European programme in adult education"]. Retrieved in 2014 from <http://www.muzizglitiba.lv/izglitibas-politika/154> [accessed at 7.08.2016]

behaviours. This means that adult learning is of interest to a wide range of government interests and policies.

- AL policy should be aimed at promoting the key social and economic benefits of adult learning for learners themselves, for employers and for the wider community⁵⁸. The objectives of AL policy should be defined to closely reflect the six key factors for successful adult learning policies: improving learners' disposition towards learning; increasing employers' investment in learning; improving equity of access for all; delivering learning that meets the needs of employers and learners; delivering high quality adult learning and co-ordinating an effective lifelong learning policy⁵⁹.
- The ALS has to be implemented as a holistic package of formal (including second chance), non-formal and informal learning, with a system of validation of prior learning outcomes (obtained in different formal, non-formal and informal learning pathways), and where the value of adult learning in creating learning cultures in families, schools and workplaces, local and regional communities, and in society as a whole takes centre-stage. A culture of support (including financial) for transformational learning opportunities for adults has to be seen as key, to achieving the kind of learning where learning outcomes are reached.
- Steps are currently being taken to change the governance model for the adult education sector in the hope of improving its effectiveness and decreasing fragmentation. However, the new governance model remains rather fragmented, and is driven solely by the needs of employers, industries and labour market forecasts (which are hardly reliable in the longer term). There is little emphasis on encouraging the individual initiative of learners (e.g. vouchers), and many decisions are still delegated to municipalities, without any financial backing. However, in Latvia the municipalities tend to think in terms of short and medium term economic needs, rather than the long term, and not from the perspective of maximising the benefits for individual citizens.

⁵⁸ EC, 2016. An in-depth analysis of adult learning policies and their effectiveness in Europe. European Commission, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, p. 154. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/epale/sites/epale/files/all_in-depth_analysis_of_adult_learning_policies_and_their_effectiveness_in_europe_12.11.2015_pdf.pdf [accessed at 28.08.2016]

⁵⁹ EC, 2016. An in-depth analysis of adult learning policies and their effectiveness in Europe. European Commission, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, p. 150. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/epale/sites/epale/files/all_in-depth_analysis_of_adult_learning_policies_and_their_effectiveness_in_europe_12.11.2015_pdf.pdf [accessed at 28.08.2016]

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of adopted legal acts, strategies, laws

Name	Date of adoption	Short description of content
Law on Institutions of Higher Education	02.11.1995	<p>(1) This Law shall apply to all existing institutions of higher education and colleges in the Republic of Latvia irrespective of the procedures for the founding and financing and the specialisation thereof. It shall regulate the legal grounds for the activities of institutions of higher education and colleges, and determine and protect the autonomy of institutions of higher education.</p> <p>(2) This Law shall regulate the co-operation of institutions of higher education and State authorities in order to co-ordinate the autonomy of institutions of higher education with the interests of society and the State.</p> <p>(3) The Ministry of Education and Science shall supervise compliance with this Law in institutions of higher education and colleges, as well as shall be responsible for State policy in the field of higher education. The Minister for Education and Science shall represent the interests of institutions of higher education and colleges in the Saeima and the Cabinet.</p> <p>[2 March 2006]</p>
Education Law	29.10.1998, last amendments 2013	<p>The purpose of this Law is to ensure that every resident of Latvia has the opportunity to develop his or her mental and physical potential, in order to become an independent and a fully developed individual, a member of the democratic State and society of Latvia. Corresponding to the age and needs of an educate, he or she shall be ensured an opportunity to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) acquire knowledge and skills in the field of humanities, social, natural and technical sciences; 2) acquire knowledge, skills and experience in relationships, in order to participate in the life of the State and society; 3) For moral, aesthetic, intellectual and physical development, by promoting the development of a knowledgeable, skilful and socialised individual.
General Education Law	10.06.1999	<p>The purpose of this Law is to regulate the activities of persons in State and local government educational institutions and other persons involved in the process of implementation of general education, to specify their rights and duties, to create an environment for the development of a creative and comprehensively educated individual, as well as to create an environment for the uninterrupted continuation of the education of students, for the acquisition of a profession, and</p>

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		for an independent orientation in public and State life.
Vocational education Law	10.06.1999	<p>(1) The purpose of this Law is to implement the State vocational education policy and the operation, management and development of the vocational education system.</p> <p>(2) The tasks of the Law are the following:</p> <p>1) to ensure the possibility to obtain general knowledge and skill, as well as a vocational qualification;</p> <p>2) to determine the levels of vocational education, levels of vocational qualifications and education necessary for the acquisition of a relevant vocational qualification;</p> <p>3) to determine the competence of the persons involved in vocational education and the awarding of vocational qualifications; and</p> <p>4) To provide comparability of the vocational education and vocational qualifications of Latvia with the vocational education and vocational qualifications obtainable in foreign states, providing the possibility for students to continue education in foreign states and compete in the international labour market.</p>
Law on Higher education institutions	17.11.1995	<p>(1) This Law shall apply to all existing institutions of higher education and colleges in the Republic of Latvia irrespective of the procedures for the founding and financing and the specialisation thereof. It shall regulate the legal grounds for the activities of institutions of higher education and colleges, and determine and protect the autonomy of institutions of higher education.</p> <p>(2) This Law shall regulate the co-operation of institutions of higher education and State authorities in order to co-ordinate the autonomy of institutions of higher education with the interests of society and the State.</p> <p>(3) The Ministry of Education and Science shall supervise compliance with this Law in institutions of higher education and colleges, as well as shall be responsible for State policy in the field of higher education. The Minister for Education and Science shall represent the interests of institutions of higher education and colleges in the Saeima and the Cabinet.</p>
Latvian National Reform Programme "Europe 2020" strategy, (NAP)	Annual	The programmes detail the specific policies Latvia will implement to boost jobs and growth and prevent/correct imbalances, and their concrete plans to comply with the EU's country-specific recommendations and general fiscal rules.
On the Regulated Professions and the	17.08.2008.	<p>(1) The purpose of this Law is:</p> <p>1) to ensure the conformity of professional activities with specific quality requirements and criteria, if these activities are related to the</p>

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Recognition of Professional Qualifications		<p>protection of public interests, the safety and the protection of health thereof;</p> <p>2) to protect individual socially important professions from the involvement of unqualified persons therein, determining higher requirements for these professions;</p> <p>3) to ensure the opportunity for professional qualifications obtained in the Republic of Latvia to be recognised in foreign states and the professional qualifications obtained in foreign states to be recognised in the Republic of Latvia; and</p> <p>4) To promote free movement of persons in the European Union Member States and the member states of the European Free Trade Association.</p> <p>(2) The Law determines the regulated professions, as well as the basic requirements to be observed for the recognition of the qualifications obtained in these professions in the Republic of Latvia and in foreign states.</p>
Law On Craftsmanship	24.02.2008	The law sets out the organizational framework for craft, the basic rules for artistic education and the procedure for determining the craftsman's qualifications.
Education Development Guidelines 2014-2020	22.05.2014	<p>Several targets for lifelong learning, including adult education, are defined by the Guidelines for Education Development 2015 – 2020 passed by the Cabinet of Ministers (2014):</p> <p>To ensure accessibility of adult education to all people in Latvia regardless of their age, sex, previous education, ethnicity, social background;</p> <p>To create qualitative education offer for adults providing sustainable competences necessary for work, civic participation and personal growth.</p>
Development of adult education provision and its governance model	05.05.2016	By 2020 participation rate in adult education should increase to 15% from 7% in 2012 as planned in the Action Plan for 2016 – 2020 Development of adult education provision and its governance model supported by finances from European Structural Foundation. Vocational education will become a strategic priority in the provision of adult education.
Procedure for the Evaluation of Vocational Competence Acquired Outside Formal Education System	22.02.2011.	According to the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers Procedure for the Evaluation of Vocational Competence Acquired Outside Formal Education System (2011), assessment of vocational competencies acquired outside formal education system is coordinated by the State Education Quality Service. Vocational competencies are assessed through vocational qualification examinations.
On the procedure of the assessment of professional	22.02.2011	Regulations No. 146 passed by the Cabinet of Ministers 22 February 2011 On the procedure of the assessment of professional competences gained outside formal education stipulate the order for granting professional qualification to a person

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competences gained outside formal		who has acquired professional competences corresponding to the National Qualification Framework levels from one to three outside formal education.
On the recognition of study results obtained in prior learning or professional experience	10.01.2012	Regulations No 36 passed by the Cabinet of Ministers 10 January 2012 On the recognition of study results obtained in prior learning or professional experience which stipulate the possibility for a higher educational institution to assess a person's study results obtained in prior learning or through experience, if they correspond to the requirements set for the study programme granting the respective credit points for the achievement.
Guidelines for Education Development 2014	22.05.2014	The new governance model for adult education was incorporated in the Guidelines for Education Development 2014 - 2020 and provides for liaison of national ministries involved in adult education policy-making. The new governance model allows bringing together different stakeholders of adult learning policy and taking care of the specific needs of local governments by activating their role in matching supply and demand of adult learning.
Latvian Sustainable Development Strategy 2030	01.06.2010	A group of experts led by associate professor Roberts's Kīlis, in accordance with the task of the Ministry of Regional Development and Local Government, has developed the draft sustainable development strategy of Latvia "Latvija2030". Persons representing different age groups and professions from around Latvia also took active part in the creation thereof, so we would like to express our deepest gratitude to everyone who participated in discussions and forums that took place within the framework of the project "Latvia 2030. Your Choice" and expressed their opinion regarding strategic choices and potential solutions for the development of Latvia. The task of the strategy is to outline the state development guidelines and spatial perspective for the time period until 2030. "Latvija2030" emerged in the result of extensive discussions in different places of Latvia, on the Internet and other media and not in offices or among limited number of experts. Thus, although the development of this document was commissioned by the public administration, the society of Latvia is the true owner of this strategy.

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Annex 2: Inventory of policy interventions

Name of intervention	Source (with hyperlink)	Budget	Outputs	Which of the 6 building blocks for successful adult learning policies does it target? (tick all relevant)						Further details/description (purpose, duration, responsible entity etc.)
				Fosters learners' interest in learning	Employers' investment in learning	Improve equity of access for all	Learning that is relevant	High quality learning	Coherent policy	
1.1. Raise awareness of benefits of learning	Project "KNOW and DO"	Total: 36 776 965 euro, include ESF: 31 260 420 EUR and State budget: 5 516 545 EUR	The project is expected to involve 9700 unemployed young people who will be educated at educational institutions and through the training in prisons, and 2206 employed young people, which will be initial educated at educational	*						The Agency for International Programs for Youth is the beneficiary of funding and the project is being implemented in collaboration with all 119 Latvia's local municipalities. Local municipalities will create strategic partnerships, for example, with national

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			institutions. It is proposed that by 2018 and 6500 unemployed young people and 1496 employed young people will get second or third level professional qualifications in the sectors needed for the national economy, and 500 persons will be involved in training in prisons.							and local institutions, NGO's, youth centres, social partners and other institutions that are engaged in the youth work within the goal to reach the target group, motivate and activate them in the project.
1.2. Provide guidelines on learning options	Improve approach to career support for students in general and vocational education	Total: 21 645 410.00. ESF: 18 398 598.00. Nacional public funding: 3 246 812.00	EU programme "Youth Guarantee" (closed at 30.06.2018) Grants for IVET students	**				"		Career support for education and training institutions
1.3. Engage social partners	Promoting transnational cooperation between adult educators (institutions and			**						

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	organization s) in both formal and non-formal adult education									
1.4. Ensure good initial learning experience s	Preparing teacher to initial education	Info N/A	The researchers found that, while there is a growing tendency in some countries, including Latvia to recognise the benefits that cultural, linguistic, religious and social diversity can bring to schools and to society, diversity is still seen as a deficit in many countries.	*						A supportive culture needs to be developed at all levels. Whilst there are clear areas for improvement, the study highlights the variety of initiatives and policies to increase ITE systems’ sensitivity to diversity and to incorporate more diversity content in Europe. It exemplifies this with 15 detailed case studies as examples of good practices in countries across Europe.
2.1. Financial incentives for employers	Financing adult learning	Info N/A			***					
2.2. Promote accredited qualificatio ns	Improve the professional competence of persons employed (including validation)	Total: 25 353 413.00. ESF: 21 550 401.00. National public	Development of professional competence of employed persons (including validation)		*** *					(responsible: SEDA)

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		funding: 3 803 012.00								
2.3. Promote work-based learning	Increase the number of students qualified in vocational education which participate in the work-based training and who have practical experience in enterprises	Total: 20 572 986.00. ESF: 17 487 038.00. National public funding: 3 085 948.00	Work-based learning and practicum in enterprises for professional education of students		**					(responsible: MES)
3.1. Found learning for disadvantaged groups	Increasing in employment , education or training not involved young people employment and education in Guarantee framework of the "Young Prolonging older employees	1. Total: 10 596 211.00; ESF: 9 006 779.00. National public funding: 1 589 432.00 2. Total: 36 776 965 euro: ESF: 31 260 420 EUR and	1. Support for learners' individual competence development "Know-how and do" 2. Support to reduce early school leaving 3. Competence approach to curriculum			***				

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	<p>ability to work and the preservation of employment 3.Increasing the integration of peoples at risk of the discrimination into the labour market and society Increasing the inclusion of disadvantaged unemployed people into the labour market "youth" programme</p>	<p>State budget: 5 516 545 EUR 3. Total: 6 813 045.00.ESF: 5 791 088.00. National public funding: 1 021 957.00 4. Total: 1 252 127.00. ESF: 1 064 308.00. National public funding :187 819.00</p>								
<p>Provide targeted guidelines and support</p>	<p>Increase the support for learners' individual competences and development in general</p>	<p>1. Total: 27 809 804.23. ESF: 23 638 326.64. National</p>				<p>**</p>				<p>(responsible: MES)</p>

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	<p>education institutions (eg. evening schools) Developing of the competence-based approach to the content of the general education</p>	<p>public funding: 2 499 948.59. Total: 36 776 965 euro, t. sk. ESF: 31 260 420 EUR and State budget: 5516545 EUR</p>							
3.3. Recognise prior learning	<p>Validation of the outside the formal education system acquired professional competence</p> <p>Ensuring assessment of knowledge, skills and professional competence s obtained outside formal education</p>		<p>Since December 2011, any 25+ old employees have the opportunity to validated the outside the formal education system acquired professional competence at level 1-3.</p> <p>The service costs are co-financed (90%-100%) by EU funds and national budget. In 2016, 24 education institutions were delegated to evaluate professional competence</p>			**			<p>Entering the new 2018 - 2020 adult education project there will be the opportunity provided to obtain the vocational qualifications in four currently in the labour market priority sectors: information and communication technology for electronic and optical equipment, manufacturing, construction industry, metal working and mechanical engineering. Vocational training institutions provide free advice on the requirements of the</p>

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			obtained outside the formal education system. From 2011 until the end of 2016, close to 4000 professional qualification certificates (including 11 000 certificates in 2016 alone) were issued as a result of evaluation of professional competence that had been obtained outside the formal education.							standard of the profession and the professional qualifying examination for the duration of the course. Important notice: only at educational institutions, which have concluded a delegation contract with the Education Quality national service (IKVD) for the examination for certain occupations.
3.4. Outreach via a range of organization						**				
3.5. Develop basic skills	Increase Adult learning for basic literacy and numeracy	Total: 1 252 ESF: 1 064 National public funding :187 819.00				**				
4.1. Understan							*			

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d learners needs										(responsible: municipalities)
4.2. Forecasts the employers' skills needs							*			(responsible: ME)
4.3. Promote innovation and flexibility							*			
4.4. Provide progression pathways							*			
5.1. Monitor and evaluate								*		(responsible: State Services on Educational Quality)
5.2. Develop skilled adult education workforce	Key competences in VET Skills panorama Skills panorama Latvia The first round of application for the EU funds major project in	The total eligible project funding is 25 353 413 euros	Persons aged 25 or over who work in the project will be supported by continuing education programs, vocational education and training programs and non-formal the acquisition of more than 36 thousand employees.					***		EU funded project "Employed professional competence improvement" from 1 January 2017 until 31 December 2022. (responsible SEDA)

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	adult education Employed professional competence improvement									
6.1. Coordinate with other policies									*	(responsible: MES)
6.2. Align policy at local level	Adult education coordinators		64 Latvian municipalities that are partners in the project, will operate adult education as coordinators, at which the						*	Adults have the opportunity to turn for support of consultation, compliance with the target audience, the proposed training available as well as the application procedures. (responsible SEDA)
6.3. Build knowledge base	EPALE SEDA								*	(responsible: MES)

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