



World TVET Database Latvia

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Abbreviations

CoM	Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia (<i>Latvijas Republikas Ministru kabinets</i>)
CP	Credit Points (<i>kredītpunkti</i>)
EQAVET	European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
LQF	Latvian Qualifications Framework (<i>Latvijas kvalifikāciju ietvarstruktūra</i>)
MoES	Ministry of Education and Science (<i>Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija</i>)
MoW	Ministry of Welfare (<i>Labklājības ministrija</i>)
NQF	National Qualifications Framework (<i>Nacionālā kvalifikāciju ietvarstruktūra</i>)
SEA	State Employment Agency (<i>Nodarbinātības valsts aģentūra</i>)
SEDA	State Education Development Agency (<i>Valsts izglītības attīstības aģentūra</i>)

TVETipedia Glossary

Below are listed TVET terms mentioned in this report. Click on a term to read its definitions on the UNESCO-UNEVOC TVETipedia glossary.

Accreditation	Low prestige/Attractiveness of vocational education and training
Assessment	National Qualifications Framework
Basic Education	Non-formal education
Certificate	Occupational standard
Competence/y	Professional/Vocational qualification
Continuing education and training	Qualification
Curriculum	Quality
Diploma	Quality Assurance
Employment	Skills
Flexibility	Social Partners
General Education	Standard
General/Generic skills	Teacher
Higher Education	Teacher In Vet
Informal Learning	Tertiary Education
In-service training	Trainer
Job	TVET
Knowledge	TVET institution
Labour market	Upper secondary education
Labour market	Work experience
Learning Outcomes	

Latvia

Population:	1,971,000 (2015)
Youth population ¹ :	205,000 (2015)
Median population age:	42.9 (2015)
Annual population growth (2010–2015) ² :	-1.18%



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1. TVET mission, strategy and legislation

TVET mission

According to The Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) the TVET mission is to ensure practical and theoretical preparation for work, allow obtaining professional qualification and ensure further professional development.

TVET strategy

The Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia (CoM) seeks to ensure the conformity of TVET to the demand of labour market and further collaboration among TVET institutions and employers. In 2009, the government adopted a concept paper on raising the attractiveness of TVET and the engagement of social partners. The strategic objectives of this concept paper have been:

- to improve the TVET programmes;
- to implement the sectoral qualifications frameworks; and
- to promote the participation of social partners in developing and implementing TVET policy, in particular quality assurance policies.

TVET legislation

- The Vocational Education Law 1999 (*Profesionālās izglītības likums*) ensures the legal basis for vocational education. It defines the three levels of vocational education: (1) vocational basic education; (2) vocational secondary education; and (3) professional higher education including the first level professional higher education (college education) and the second level professional higher education. It also regulates the two formal types of continuous vocational education: vocational continuing education and professional improvement. The Cabinet of Ministers Order of August 2012 requests the MoES to elaborate and submit to the Cabinet a new Vocational Education Law project by 1st January 2014.

¹ Population aged 14–25

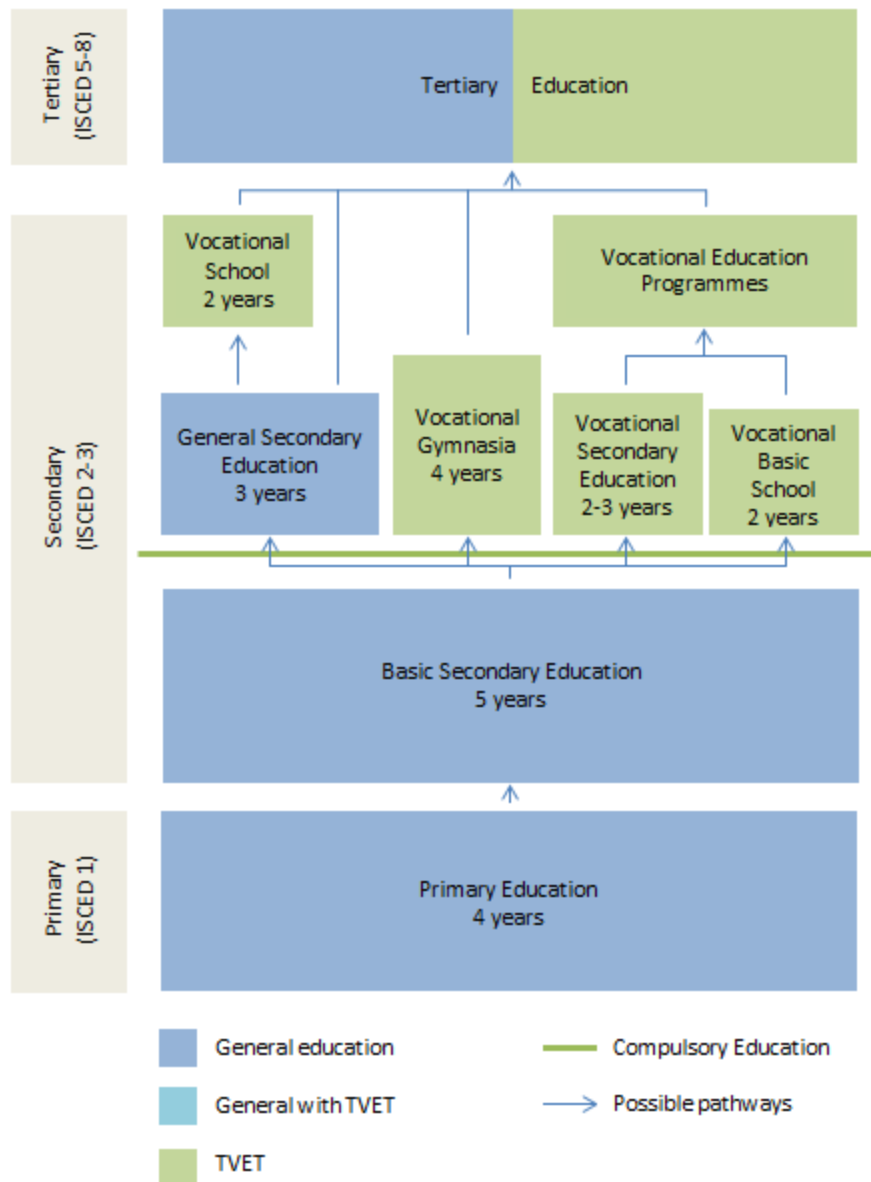
² All statistics compiled from the United Nation's Population Division's *World Population Prospects, the 2015 Revision* (<http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/DVD/>)

- The Education Law (1991, 1998) (*Izglītības likums*) regulates all types and stages of education, defines rights and functions of involved institutions, as well as levels and types of education establishments.
- The Law on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) (1995) (*Augstskolu likums*) states the cooperation between HEIs and state institutions to harmonise autonomy of HEIs with interests of society and state; regulates legal basis of HEIs and colleges, sets and protects the autonomy of HEIs.
- The National Education Development Guidelines for 2007–2013 (2006) (*Izglītības attīstības pamatnostādnes 2007–2013. gadam*) defines current education policy priorities.
- The Guidelines for Lifelong Learning Policy for 2007–2013 (2007) (*Mūžizglītības politikas pamatnostādnes 2007–2013. gadam*) guides the main policy planning and relevant implementation programmes prepared by the MoES.

Sources:

- Academic Information Centre (AIC) (2012). Referencing of the Latvian Education System to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning and the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area. Self-Assessment Report Second Version. Riga: AIC http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/eqf/latvia_en.pdf.
- CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Latvia VET in Europe Country Report. Thessaloniki: CEDEFOP
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2. TVET formal, non-formal and informal systems



Scheme compiled by UNESCO-UNEVOC from Latvian Academic Information Centre & Latvian National Observatory Akademiskās Informācijas Centrs (AIC).

Formal TVET system

At the Second Stage of Basic School Level

TVET programmes provided at basic education aim to integrate young people back into the education system and mainly target early school leavers and those who have a low level of basic knowledge and skills. Pupils are enrolled on programmes without consideration of their previous

education with the condition that they are at least 15-year old. Those who have not completed the basic education programme and/or have difficulties in acquiring general education subjects are offered pedagogic correction programmes.

At the Upper Secondary Level

There are two main categories:

- Vocational education programmes; and
- Vocational secondary education programmes

Students who have graduated from basic school may be admitted to these programmes. Vocational education programmes are shorter and do not give the right to directly continue studies at higher education level. For students who want to continue their studies, a 1-year intermediate programme in general secondary education is offered. Vocational secondary education programmes are longer, include centralised examinations in general subjects and give the rights to directly continue studies at higher education level.

At the Post-Secondary (non-tertiary) Level

Programmes at this level lie between the upper secondary and tertiary levels of education. They are designed for general secondary school graduates aged 18-20 years and are more oriented towards acquisition of vocational knowledge and skills. The duration of these programmes is shorter than programmes at the tertiary level.

At Higher Education Level

Programmes are divided into academic (leading to a degree) and professional (leading to a degree and professional qualification).

TVET programmes' descriptions

The following table shows TVET programmes in Latvia against requirements of admission, the average duration of studies and the accessibility for other pathways:

NAME OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME	REQUIREMENTS OF ADMISSION	AVERAGE DURATION OF STUDIES	ACCESS TO (HORIZONTAL/ VERTICAL) TO OTHER PATHWAYS
vocational basic education programme (including pedagogical correction programme)	1)basic education 2)without basic education, but not younger than 15 year old	1-2 (or 3 years with pedagogical correction programme)	Vocational secondary education programmes

vocational education programme	general or vocational basic education	2-3 years	vocational secondary education, intermediate general education programmes
vocational secondary education programme	general or vocational basic education	3-4 years, 2 years after vocational programme	higher education programmes
intermediate programme in general secondary education	vocational education programme	1 year	higher education programmes
vocational education programme	general secondary education	1 year	Labour market
first level higher professional education programmes (college programmes)	secondary education	2-3 years	
second level higher professional education programmes (university programmes)	secondary education or (academic) bachelor's degree	4-5 years not shorter than 4 years after secondary education and not shorter than 2 years after college education	
short cycle study programmes	first level professional higher education or academic bachelor's degree	1-2 years Total duration of HE studies – at least 4 years	
professional bachelor's studies or professional higher education	secondary education	Minimal 4 years	

programmes			
professional master's studies	bachelor's degree	1-2 years Total duration of HE studies - at least 5 years	

Table extracted from CEDEFOP ReferNet Publication. Latvia VET in Europe Country Report 2012.

Continuing Vocational Education

There are two formal types of continuing education:

- Vocational continuing education: enables adults with previous education and work experience to obtain professional qualifications. Programmes are always concluded by a specific qualification for a specific profession acknowledged by the state; and
- Professional improvement: enables people regardless of their age and previous education or professional qualifications to master systematised professional knowledge and skills based on the requirements of the labour market.

Non-formal and informal TVET systems

The government has established a system for validating skills and competences acquired through non-formal and informal education. The procedure on validating professional competences obtained outside the formal education includes the following steps:

- individual's application for assessment of their professional competence;
- professional qualification exam; and
- awarding the document that certifies a professional qualification.

Local governments support and provide funding or co-funding for education establishments in their territory. Accordingly in 2010, the number of education establishments offering adult non-formal learning programmes has increased.

Sources:

Academic Information Centre (AIC) (2012). Referencing of the Latvian Education System to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning and the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area. Self-Assessment Report Second Version. Riga: AIC http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/eqf/latvia_en.pdf.

CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Latvia VET in Europe Country Report. Thessaloniki: CEDEFOP Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) (2013). The Education System in Latvia. Riga: MoES <http://izm.izm.gov.lv/education/education-system.html>. Accessed: 07.10.2013.

State Education Development Agency (2007). Latvia System of Education: Riga: Euro Guidance http://www.viaa.gov.lv/files/news/1808/educ_in_latvia.pdf. Accessed: 07.10.2013.

UNESCO-IBE (2011). World Data on Education. Latvia VII Ed. 2010/11. Geneva: UNESCO-IBE.

3. Governance and financing

Governance

- The Cabinet of Ministers (CoM) (Ministru kabinets) determines the state's political and strategic areas in TVET, sets the framework for issuing state recognised qualifications and determines the recognition of foreign qualifications.
- The Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) (Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija) develops the framework regulations for TVET and accredits providers, creates and updates the register of occupational standards and makes proposals about the allocation of funds from the state budget.
- The National Centre for Education (Valsts izglītības satura centrs) is under the direction of the MoES. With regard to TVET, the Centre carries out functions such as: developing curricula; providing procedures for state centralised examinations; coordinating the development of TVET standards; and implementing programmes for improving TVET teachers.
- The State Education Quality Service (Izglītības kvalitātes valsts dienests) is also under the direction of the MoES. The Service licenses TVET programmes and evaluates the quality of TVET programmes.
- The State Employment Agency (SEA) (Nodarbinātības valsts aģentūra) is under the supervision of the Ministry of Welfare (MoW) (Labklājības ministrija). The agency implements labour market policies and programmes for the unemployed. The MoW and its Labour Department are responsible for managing active and passive labour market policy as well.
- The State Education Development Agency (SEDA) cooperates with TVET establishments to implement different TVET programmes in collaboration with the sectoral organisations and the National Tripartite Sub-Council for Cooperation in Vocational Education and Employment.
- The National Tripartite Sub-Council for Cooperation in Vocational Education and Employment (Profesionālās izglītības un nodarbinātības trīspusējās sadarbības apakšpadome) was founded in 2000 by different actors: ministries (Welfare, Economy, Finance, Justice, Agriculture, MoES, Regional Development and Local Government Affairs); the Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia; and the Employers' Confederation of Latvia. The Sub-Council reviews drafts of state development plans; evaluates proposals and submits suggestions to state and non-government organisations.
- The 12 Sectoral Expert Councils (Nozaru ekspertu padomes) were established in 2011. The councils aim to engage collective representatives from MoES, the Ministry of Economics, Employers' Confederation of Latvia, Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia and, on a voluntary basis, representatives from the Ministry of Welfare (MoF) and the State Employment Agency (SEA). The councils elaborate sectoral qualifications

frameworks and demands for occupational standards, attract sectoral experts for quality assurance (qualification exams, accreditation of TVET schools and programs), review students' enrolment plans, and provide support to educational establishments in ensuring students' practical learning in enterprises.

Financing

The majority of TVET schools are owned by the state; accordingly the national budget is the main source of funding. Also, subsidies for TVET come from the local governments and private sources according to the ownership of TVET institutions. TVET institutions may receive additional funding in the form of donations, provision of paid services and other incomes, which have to be used for institutional development. Important sources of funding include the EU, and the Swiss and Norwegian financial assistance instruments. Another source is students' fees. The following chart demonstrates the main TVET sources of funding:

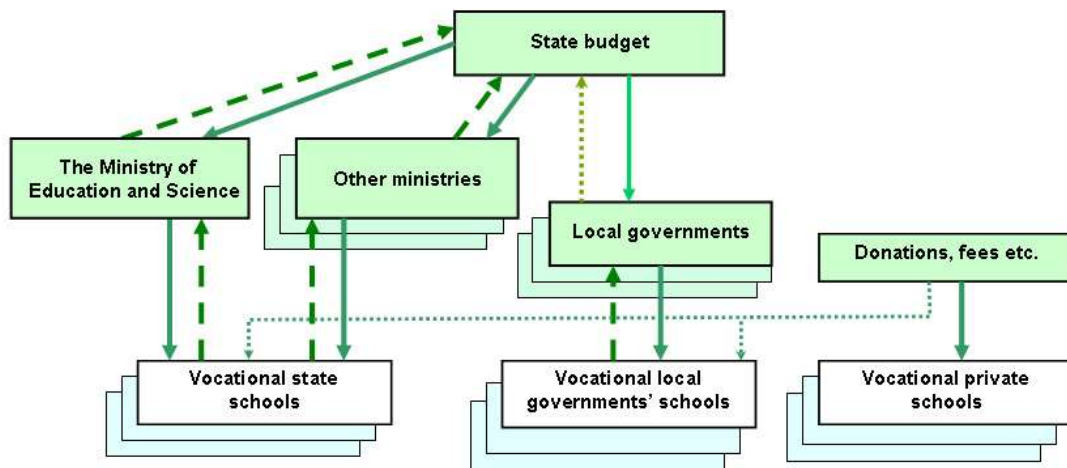


Chart extracted from CEDEFOP ReferNet Publication. Latvia VET in Europe Country Report 2012.

The government aims to change the funding system fundamentally. For example, it is planned to introduce a funding system that provides for a common financing principle "money follows the student" with the aim to motivate local governments to perform a financial planning based on the performance of education establishments. The change also aims to include enterprises that are interested in supporting TVET to co-finance the optimisation of TVET school network.

Sources:

Academic Information Centre (AIC) (2012). Referencing of the Latvian Education System to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning and the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area. Self-Assessment Report Second Version. Riga: AIC http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/eqf/latvia_en.pdf.

CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Latvia VET in Europe Country Report. Thessaloniki: CEDEFOP.

State Education Development Agency (2013). Sectoral Experts Councils. Riga: State Education Development Agency http://www.viaa.gov.lv/lat/strukturfondi/12111/?tl_id=12561&tls_id=533. Accessed: 17.01.2014.

UNESCO-IBE (2011). World Data on Education. Latvia VII Ed. 2010/11. Geneva: UNESCO-IBE.

4. TVET teachers and trainers

Basic TVET teachers have vocational upper-secondary education or master crafts and pedagogical education. Secondary TVET teachers have professional higher education or higher education corresponding to the subject taught and higher professional pedagogical education. Also, those who have vocational upper-secondary education or master crafts and professional pedagogical education are eligible to teach in TVET secondary schools.

In September 2010, the government amended regulations on necessary education requirements for TVET teachers; accordingly TVET teachers without a pedagogical qualification are requested to join a 72-hour programme on pedagogy from a higher education institution.

In June 2011, the government determined procedures on how to improve teachers' professional qualifications. Teachers are requested to complete a minimum number of hours of in-service training. In addition, the government, from the Structural Funds for 2007 -2014, targets to train 5000 TVET teachers in their speciality and in the fields of Information Technology (IT), pedagogy, foreign languages, entrepreneurship, occupational health and safety Teachers also are offered traineeships in enterprises in Latvia or abroad.

Sources:

CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Latvia VET in Europe Country Report. Thessaloniki: CEDEFOP.
UNESCO-IBE (2011). World Data on Education. Latvia VII Ed. 2010/11. Geneva: UNESCO-IBE.

5. Qualifications and Qualifications Frameworks

Secondary vocational education

Basic vocational education programmes lead to a certificate of basic vocational education (*apliecība par profesionālo pamatizglītību*) and the Latvian professional qualification level 1. While upper secondary vocational education programmes lead to: a certificate of vocational education (*atestāts par arodizglītību*) and Latvian professional qualification level 2; or a diploma of vocational secondary education (*diploms par profesionālo vidējo izglītību*) and Latvian professional qualification level 3. To acquire a professional qualification, students have to take a state qualification exam at the end of the education programme.

National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

The Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF) was established in 2010. The LQF consists of eight levels in which descriptors are expressed in terms of learning outcomes in three dimensions (following the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)):

- knowledge (knowledge and comprehension);
- skills (ability to apply knowledge, communication, general skills); and
- competence (analysis, synthesis and assessment).

Qualifications on the eight LQF levels are illustrated in the following table.

LQF/EQF	LATVIAN EDUCATION DOCUMENTS (QUALIFICATIONS)
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level	
1	Certificate of general basic education (for students in special educational programmes for students with severe mental development disorders or several severe development disorders)
2	Certificate of general basic education (for students in special educational programmes for students with mental development disorders)
3	Certificate of general basic education & Certificate of vocational basic education
4	Certificate of general secondary education & Certificate of vocational education (without rights to enter higher education) & Diploma of vocational secondary education (with rights to enter higher education)
5	Diploma of first level professional higher education (first level professional higher college education in which the length of full-time studies is 2-3 years)
6	Bachelor's diploma & Professional Bachelor's diploma & Diploma of professional higher education & Diploma of higher professional qualification (second level professional higher education in which the length of full-time studies is at least 4 years)
7	Master's diploma & Professional Master's diploma & Diploma of professional higher education & Diploma of higher education & Diploma of higher professional qualification (second level professional higher education in which the total length of full-time studies is at least 5 years)
8	Doctor's diploma

Quality assurance

The State Education Quality Service (*Izglītības kvalitātes valsts dienests*) organises licensing and accreditation of TVET programmes. It also organises accreditation of TVET institutions and examination centres regardless of their ownership (state, local government and private). Only accredited TVET establishments may apply for state funding. Since 2010, the State Education Quality Service has joined the working group of the European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET) and in 2013 it was nominated as EQAVET coordinator in Latvia.

A diverse set of experts are gathered under the State Education Quality Service in order to license or accredit TVET programmes. This set of experts includes: experts from the State Education Quality Service; representatives of the sectoral associations and societies; and employers' representatives delegated by the Latvian Chamber of Crafts. They evaluate the correspondence of programmes to: the state education standards; occupational standards; the Classification of Occupations; and legal requirements. They also ensure that the content of programmes provides students with the necessary knowledge, skills and competences.

The Higher Education Council (*Augstākās izglītības padome*) was until recently responsible for quality assurance of higher education institutions (HEIs). The licensing and accreditation of institutions and programmes were coordinated by the Higher Education Quality Evaluation Centre (*Augstākās izglītības kvalitātes novērtēšanas centrs*) in line with the Law on Higher Education Institutions (Augstskolu likums, 1995). In September 2012, CoM adopted new regulations on the accreditation of HEIs. As result, MoES is responsible for the evaluation of HEIs or will select by open competition institution to evaluate HEIs.

Sources:

- Academic Information Centre (AIC) (2012). Referencing of the Latvian Education System to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning and the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area. Self-Assessment Report Second Version. Riga: AIC http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc/eqf/latvia_en.pdf.
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6. Current reforms, major projects and challenges

Current reforms and major projects

Lately, a substantial reform is performed focusing on the following:

- developing flexible and responsive TVET programmes to labour market's demands;
- restructuring TVET programmes into modules;
- introducing Credit Point (CP) system (*kreditpunkti*);
- aligning the Latvian Qualifications Framework levels with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF); and
- recognising knowledge and skills acquired outside the formal TVET system.

A register of occupational standards has been developed to serve as guidance for TVET programmes. In 2007, CoM adopted new procedures for the development of occupational standards. The standards include knowledge, skills, professional competence and responsibility in certain work situations. Occupational standards were included in the Classification of Occupations. The development of the register is an ongoing process and the standards are updated regularly and at least every five years. When the standards are altered, TVET programmes have to be adapted accordingly. In 2010, CoM regulated the occupational standards by adopting:

- the Classification of Occupations according ISCO-08;
- basic tasks and required qualifications for each occupation; and
- procedures for using and updating of the classification.

Challenges

In 2009, concept "Raising attractiveness of vocational education and involvement of social partners within vocational education quality assurance" developed by the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES). The Concept lists the major issues in vocational education, e.g. the low prestige of vocational education, and insufficient capacity and cooperation between policy making institutions and employers, and provides possible solutions involving reforms on rather large scale.

As a reaction to the negative demographic indicators, which result in decrease of the number of students, and to the limited financial resources, CoM approved the "Guidelines for optimisation of vocational education establishments' network for 2010-2015" (*Profesionālās izglītības iestāžu tīkla optimizācijas pamatnostādnes 2010.-2015.gadam*). The Guidelines are aimed at reforming the structure of TVET system through:

- optimising the number of TVET schools and their geographical coverage;
- differentiating TVET schools based on their functions and management;
- improving the infrastructure and modernising the material and technical equipment; and
- facilitating a more efficient use of resources.

Sources:

CEDEFOP ReferNet (2012). Latvia VET in Europe Country Report. Thessaloniki: CEDEFOP.

Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) (2013). Vocational Education. Riga: MoES
<http://izm.izm.gov.lv/education/vocational-education.html>. Accessed: 07.10.2013.

7. Links to UNEVOC centres and TVET institutions

UNEVOC Centres

- [<http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/go.php?q=UNEVOC+Network++Centre&tid=473> Latvian Academic Information Centre / Latvian National Observatory Akademiskās Informācijas Centrs (AIC)]

TVET Institutions

- [<http://izm.izm.gov.lv/58.html> The Ministry of Education and Science (MoES)]
- [<http://visc.gov.lv/en/> The National Centre for Education (*Valsts izglītības saturs centrs*)]
- [<http://www.ikvd.gov.lv/> The State Education Quality Service (*Izglītības kvalitātes valsts dienests*)]
- [<http://www.viaa.gov.lv/eng/> The State Education Development Agency (SEDA) (*Valsts izglītības attīstības aģentūra*)]
- [<http://www.nva.gov.lv/> The State Employment Agency (SEA) (*Nodarbinātības valsts aģentūra*)]
- [<http://www.lak.lv/pub/index.php?lang=eng> Latvian Chamber of Crafts (*Latvijas Amatniecības kamera*)]
- Employers' Confederation of Latvia (Latvijas Darba devēju konfederācija)
- [<http://www.lizda.lv/en> Education and Science Workers Trade Union (*Latvijas Izglītības un zinātnes darbinieku arodbiedrība*)]
- [<http://www.siva.gov.lv/history.html> The Social Integration State Agency (SIVA) (*Sociālās integrācijas valsts aģentūra*)]
- [<http://www.lm.gov.lv/> The Ministry of Welfare (*Labklājības ministrija*)]
- [<https://www.em.gov.lv/> Ministry of Economics (Ekonomikas ministrija)]

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