

Papers on

- **Innovative approaches to promotion, marketing and outreach in adult learning**
- **New trends in widening participation**

LAEA

The Development of Life - Long Learning Approaches and the Work of the Latvian Adult education Association, 2001 - 2002

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Introduction

It is not an easy task to give a full picture of development of life- long learning during the last years in Latvia on a few pages. The aim of this material is just to give a brief impression on main trends of development of life-long learning approaches in Latvia during years 2000-2002 and participation of the Latvian Adult Education Association in this process.

What is the LAEA?

The Latvian Adult Education Association (in Latvian – Latvijas Pieaugušo izglītības apvienība), LAEA, is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation, unifying providers of adult education in Latvia – both individuals and organizations.

The LAEA was founded on December 14, 1993 with support from Latvia Ministry of Education and Science and Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association.

The highest decision making body of the LAEA is the General Meeting of its members. The General Meeting elects the Board, chair of the Association, who is also in charge of duties of chairing the Board, and Audit Committee, for a two-year term. The Board manages activities of the Association between general meetings.

The LAEA has been a member organisation of the **European Adult Education Association (EAEA)** since 1995, joining the European Prison Education Association and European Adult Education Research Association (ESREA) in 1997.

The aim of the LAEA – to promote development of non- formal adult education systems and to participate in the creation of a life-long learning policy, thereby promoting development of civic, democratic and open society in Latvia.

Since its establishment the LAEA has gained valuable experience in organising various activities on local and national levels. The LAEA has created a co-operative network of adult education providers from all towns and districts of Latvia, prepared trainers, elaborated and approved training programmes, training and methodological materials.

At present the LAEA do not received any permanent financial support from governmental bodies on rent of premises and salaries. All budget of the LAEA is fully project-based.

From year to year the year the number of the LAEA members is continuing to grow and at the end of year 2001 there was 71 organization and institution, unified by the LAEA.

More information on the LAEA in English is available on our web site <http://laea.from.lv/>

Legal background and lobbying of adult education policy

Until the year 2001 no formal legislative acts and other regulations related to non-formal AE field were adopted. The adult educational policy in years 2001. in Latvia has faced essential changes and improvements, positive tendencies can be noticed.

During the second half of year 2002 a certain progress was achieved related to legislative aspects of adult education. Although a separate law on adult education was not adopted, as a result of successful cooperation of the LAEA with the Ministry of Education and Science, on 20th July the Educational Law of Latvia was supplemented with **article** (Article 46. "Adult

Education Programs") **on non-formal adult education, describing definition, implementation, licensing and legal sources of financing of non-formal adult education programmes.**

We consider this as important achievement in setting of legal framework of adult education development in Latvia. At present the LAEA, the Latvia Ministry of Education and science (Department of Educational policy) and the Latvia Union of Local and Regional Governments created joint work group in order to prepare detailed regulations on licensing of AE programmes, quality issues of non-formal adult education e.t.c. The work group is continuing its work and it will be finished until end of 2002.

In order to the strengthen the cooperation the leadership of the LAEA (chairman, executive director) has regular meetings with minister of education and other senior officials of the ministry of Education as well as other ministries and governmental bodies, related to life-long learning issues (Ministry of Welfare, Ministry of Regional development, State Employment service).

At present there is not also a special department or branch in the ministry of Education with direct responsibility on adult education and life long learning. These issues are under responsibility of departments of Vocational Training and Continuing Education, General education and Educational policy. Frequent changes of ministers are usually connected with changes among the senior officials in ministry, thereby making cooperation even more complicated.

Discussion on Life Long Learning Memorandum in Latvia

During first half of the year 2001 discussion on the EU "Life Long Learning Memorandum" took place. The discussion was organised in collaboration among the LAEA (the LAEA made the translation of the document into Latvian) and the Ministry of Education. The LAEA widespread the document both in paper and electronic forms to its members, partner organizations in Latvia as well as during all meetings and seminars, which took place during the first 6 months of the year 2001. The results of discussion were evaluated in evaluation conference, organized by the ministry of Education on 20th - 21st June, 2001. The LAEA during 2nd half of year 2002 disseminated the evaluation materials of the Memorandum, worked out during the conference.

The LAEA also continued with informing of minister, state secretary, chairpersons of departments and other officials of ministry of Education and Science as well as of other ministries and state institutions about development tendencies of adult education in Latvia and abroad as well as to turning their attention to such issues as necessity of AE policy, effective state support and administration for this field.

LPIA also gave its contribution in the discussion on Memorandum by involving in its seminars representatives of European Adult Education Association and Nordic countries.

In 2002 the LAEA published Memorand and discussion materials in Latvia in a printed publication.

On 28th - 30th June 2001 in Riga conference of ministers of education of EU and applicant countries "Life-long learning in the age of information technologies" took place. During the conference the officials of Latvia government, including the minister of Education expressed direction of Latvia education policy towards life-long learning ideas. Materials, related to adult education, human resources development, basic skills education, vocational training of adults and other aspects of life-long learning are more and more common in Latvia national and regional newspapers and other media.

Strengthening common efforts with municipalities, NGO's and other social partners - promoting sustainable local development

In order to encourage and enhance appropriate coordination of development of adult education among various institutions, it is necessary to make them all work in a single network to provide support and resources in adult education--e.g., information centres at 7local municipalities, professional and career development advisory services

The LAEA was successful in strengthening networking of its members and other AE providers, social partners (Confederation of Employees, Latvia Confederation of Free Trade Unions), Union of Local and Regional Governments, State Employment service, different ministries, state institutions and NGO's. Cooperation with mentioned institutions especially was strengthened by practical joint work during implementation of several big projects, supported by the EU "Socrates" programme, EC Delegation in Latvia, Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education Association, the Nordic Council of Ministers, related to development of AE strategy planning and human resources development in regional and local municipalities.

In year 2001 Latvia Adult Education Association mutually integrated several projects, which were united by a common theme – **local and regional development – human resources – life-long learning**. As the result of that cooperation in period from 2000 - 2001 regional strategies of human resources and adult education development in **12 Latvia districts (out of 26) and in 41 local municipality (out of approx. 500) were prepared.**

Cooperation with UNESCO - programme "Education for All"

Last year cooperation between the **LAEA** and **UNESCO Latvia National Commission** was extended. Members of LPIA Board, association members and executive director took part in preparation and process of the international conference "Creating the Civic Culture in Central and Eastern Europe Countries" (Riga, November 19 – 21, 2001.) Chairman of the LAEA Toms Urdze and Executive director Inga Galvane participated in the UNESCO European Regional Conference (Sofia, 5 – 10 November 2002) "Lifelong Learning in the Pursuit of EFA Goals and CONFINTEA V Agenda".

Conclusions

The new government of Latvia, formed after the parliament elections in October stated as their priority *formation of the knowledge-based society - education quality, accessibility and suitability for the labour market facilitates competitiveness of each individual in Latvia and of the country on the whole on the world market.*

The LAEA will continue its work in order to assist in fulfillment of that.

Education of population of Latvia

According to the data obtained in the 2000 census in Latvia:

Total No. of people living in Latvia of the age of 7 and above	2, 231, 956	100.0%
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According to the type of education they have obtained:

• higher (university degree)	243, 522	10.9%
• vocational	354, 060	15.9%
• secondary	540, 781	24.2%
• primary	466, 090	20.9%
• elementary	229, 809	10.3%
• less than 4 years	147, 566	6.6%
• no formal education	17, 271	0.7%
• illiterate	5, 642	0.3%
• did not reply	227, 215	10.2%

National Statistics Board, 2001

From the Latvia Education Law

Article 46, Adult Education Programmes.

(1) Formal and non-formal education programmes can be offered for the adult education.

(2) Arrangement of implementation of the adults formal education programme is set by this law, Vocational Education Law, Higher Educational Institutions Law and other standard acts.

(3) The adult non-formal education programmes set a content of this education and their compliance with interests of the government and employer, as well as personal development, and adults are empowered to acquire these programmes long life irrespective of their previous education.

(4) Programmes of the adult non-formal education and training courses are worked out and realised by the educational establishments and other legal or physical entities independently or in cooperation with customers.

(5) Educational establishments, which are found by the government or local governments, are empowered to implement programmes of the adult non-formal education without receiving licences, but other legal or physical entities have to receive licence from the local government.

(6) Adult education can be financed from:

- 1) the government or local government budget;
- 2) employers' resources;
- 3) learners' resources;
- 4) donations and grants;
- 5) by other sources.

Latvia

Latvia is situated in the north-east part of Europe on the shore of the Baltic sea and borders with the two other Baltic states – Estonia and Lithuania as well as Russia and Belarus.

The territory covers 64 689 km², the length of its border on land is 1 862 km and its sea boarder is 494 km long.

Latvia's capital city is Riga where about one third of the country's inhabitants reside. The total number of inhabitants is 2,356 million. 70% are urban and 30% are rural residents.

Latvia has four administrative regions – Kurzeme, Zemgale, Vidzeme and Latgale. It has 26 rural districts (496 local municipalities parish), 7 state-importance cities (Riga, Daugavpils, Liepaja, Jelgava, Jurmala, Ventspils, Rezekne). There are in total 77 cities and towns and 23 of those have over 10 000 inhabitants.

The three biggest ports are in Ventspils, Riga and Liepaja.

State language: Latvian language which belongs to the Baltic languages and stems from the Indo-Europeans language group.

National currency: Lat (Ls / LVL) = 100 santimes; 1 USD = ca 0,606 LVL

Ethnic composition:

Titular nations: Latvians (56,5%) and Livonians (0,008% - 199 persons);

Other ethnic groups: Russians (30,4%), Belarussians, Ukrainians, Poles (9,7%), other groups (3,4%)

Economically active inhabitants: **1 193 000**, 7,6% of those – unemployed.

Religions: lutheran, roman catholic, orthodox

International country ID: LV

Republic of Latvia is and independent democratic republic, which was proclaimed on 18 November 1918. The soviet army occupied Latvia on 17 June 1940. On 5 August 1940 Latvia was incorporated in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Latvia regained its independence on 21 August 1991 in the result of so called "singing revolution".

Legislator is the Saeima (the parliament) which consists of 100 representatives which are elected for a period of 4 years. The Saeima is elected in general, equal, direct, closed and proportional elections. The right to vote applies to those Latvia's citizens whose rights have not been limited and who are 18 years old on the day of elections. The 7th Saeima was elected on 3 October 1998.

The head of the state is the State President who is elected by the Saeima for a period of 4 years. Since 17 June 1999 the President of Latvia is Mrs. Vaira Vike-Freiberga.

The executive authority belongs to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet of Ministers. The Cabinet of Ministers is created by a person invited by the State President. The Prime Minister and the ministers get authority for work from the Saeima by a confidence vote. Since 5 May 2000 the Prime Minister is Mr. Andris Berzins, since 5th Noember 2002 - Einars Repše.