REVIEWS OF NATIONAL POLICIES FOR EDUCATION: EDUCATION IN LATVIA

PROGRESS, CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Director for Education and Skills, OECD
Participation in ECEC is high and starts early in Latvia.
Significant improvements in student performance

Latvian students’ performance on PISA

Mathematics performance (2003-2012)

Reading performance (2000-2012)

Science performance (2006-2012)
Upper secondary education attainment is high across generations

- Difference between the 25-34 and 55-64 year-old population with upper secondary education (right axis)
- Proportion of the 25-34 year-old population with upper secondary education (left axis)
- Proportion of the 55-64 year-old population with upper secondary education (left axis)

Proportion of the 25-34 year-old population

Proportion of the 55-64 year-old population

%
Early leavers from education and training, age group 18-24

Good progress in reducing early school leavers
Many students continue into tertiary education.
“Remarkable achievements” considering the socio-economic challenges

Estimated changes in population between 2012 and 2020 by age groups

Expenditure on primary to tertiary education institutions as a percentage of GDP (2012)
The kind of things that are easy to teach are now easy to automate, digitize or outsource
>1m km,

one minor accident,

occasional human intervention
Augmented Reality
A lot more to come

• 3D printing
• Synthetic biology
• Brain enhancements
• Nanomaterials
• Etc.
Changes in the demand for skills
Trends in different tasks in occupations (United States)

Mean task input in percentiles of 1960 task distribution

- Routine manual
- Nonroutine manual
- Routine cognitive
- Nonroutine analytic
- Nonroutine interpersonal

Formal childcare by duration - % over the population of 0-2 year-olds (2014)

Participation of the youngest children is still relatively low.
Participation in ECEC is unequal across Latvia

- Institutions in urban areas (left axis)
- Institutions in rural areas (left axis)
- Enrolment in urban areas, thsd (right axis)
- Enrolment in rural areas, thsd (right axis)
Barriers to developing a high-quality and motivated ECEC profession

Age distribution of ECEC teachers

- 50 years or over
- 40 to 49
- 30 to 39
- less than 30

Norway, Belgium, United Kingdom, Austria, Poland, Slovenia, Luxembourg, France, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Latvia, Netherlands, Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania
Differences in mathematics performance, by attendance at pre-primary school

Score-point difference between students who attended pre-primary school for more than one year and those who had not attended

Before accounting for socio-economic status

After accounting for socio-economic status

Differences in mathematics performance, by attendance at pre-primary school

Need for strengthen data collection, monitoring and use of research
Governance and financing hamper equal access to quality ECEC
Recommendations for ECEC

• Continue expanding ECEC services, in particular in rural areas and for the youngest children
• Take a strategic approach to improving the quality and motivation of ECEC staff
• Strengthen data collection, monitoring and use of research
• Review the governance and financing arrangements of ECEC
Challenges and recommendations

- Early childhood education and care
- Primary and lower secondary education
- Upper secondary general and vocational education
- Tertiary education
Students and teacher supply

- Number of students, Grades 1-9 (left axis)
- Number of teachers, Grades 1-9 (right axis)
Disparities in equity across the Latvian school system

PISA 2012 mathematics performance and school location in Latvia

Gap equivalent to more than one year of schooling
At-risk-of-poverty rate for children under age 6

Disparities in equity across the Latvian school system.
Underdeveloped assessment and evaluation arrangements

Priority setting

Steering

Policy Design
Implementation

Accountability

Knowledge use

Knowledge production
Low remuneration and low status of the education profession.

Lower secondary teachers' salaries (after 15 years of experience/minimum training) relative to per capita GDP.
Contribution of various factors to upper secondary teacher compensation costs, per student as a percentage of GDP per capita

Percentage points

Difference with OECD average
**Policy levers to teacher professionalism**

- **Autonomy:** Teachers’ decision-making power over their work (teaching content, course offerings, discipline practices)
- **Knowledge base for teaching:** (initial education and incentives for professional development)
- **Peer networks:** Opportunities for exchange and support needed to maintain high standards of teaching (participation in induction, mentoring, networks, feedback from direct observations)
Teacher professionalism

Knowledge base for teaching
(initial education and incentives for professional development)

Peer networks: Opportunities for exchange and support needed to maintain high standards of teaching (participation in induction, mentoring, networks, feedback from direct observations)

Autonomy: Teachers’ decision-making power over their work (teaching content, course offerings, discipline practices)
Mean mathematics performance, by school location, after accounting for socio-economic status

Fig II.3.3

TALIS Teacher professionalism index

Networks
Autonomy
Knowledge

Spain
Japan
France
Brazil
Finland
Flanders
Norway
Alberta (Canada)
Australia
Denmark
Israel
Korea
United States
Czech Republic
Shanghai (China)
Latvia
Netherlands
Poland
England
New Zealand
Singapore
Estonia
Discuss individual students
Team teaching
Collaborative PD
Joint activities
Classroom observations

Collaborate for common standards
Team conferences
Share resources
Discuss individual students

Exchange and co-ordination
Percentage of teachers

Percentage of lower secondary teachers who report doing the following activities at least once per month.
Mean mathematics performance, by school location, after accounting for socio-economic status.

Teachers Self-Efficacy and Professional Collaboration

- **Teacher self-efficacy (level)**
  - Teach jointly as a team in the same class
  - Observe other teachers’ classes and provide feedback
  - Engage in joint activities across different classes
  - Take part in collaborative professional learning

Less frequently

- Never
- Once a year or less
- 2-4 times a year
- 5-10 times a year

More frequently

- 1-3 times a month
- Once a week or more
- Once a week or more
Teacher professionalism index and teacher outcomes

- Perceptions of teachers’ status
- Satisfaction with the profession
- Satisfaction with the work environment
- Teachers’ self-efficacy

Predicted percentile

Low professionalism
High professionalism
Recommendations for primary and lower secondary education

- Establish the conditions for a high-quality teaching and leadership profession
- Promote equity and excellence in education, with a focus on rural schools
- Develop a coherent assessment and evaluation framework for informing policy and educational practice
Challenges and recommendations

Early childhood education and care
Primary and lower secondary education
Upper secondary general and vocational education
Tertiary education
Lack of quality and relevance of vocational education

Perceived quality and image of vocational education

Image of VET (% of 'positive' responses) vs. VET offers high quality learning (% of 'agree' responses)
Stark divide between upper secondary general and vocational pathways
Participation of adults in formal and non-formal learning, 2014

Lifelong learning underdeveloped
Recommendations for upper secondary general and vocational education

- Continue improving the quality and relevance of vocational education
- Narrow the divide between general and vocational upper secondary education
- Increase efforts to raise participation in lifelong learning
Challenges and recommendations

Early childhood education and care

Primary and lower secondary education

Upper secondary general and vocational education

Tertiary education
System capacity not aligned with demographic decline, fiscal reality and labour market needs

Number of tertiary education institutions and students

- Number of institutions (left axis)
- Number of students (right axis)
System capacity not aligned with demographic decline, fiscal reality and labour market needs

Percentage of graduates by field of study

- Services
- Health and welfare
- Agriculture
- Engineering, manufacturing and construction
- Natural sciences, mathematics and information technologies
- Social sciences, business and law
- Humanities and art
- Education

2004
2009
2014
Inadequate tertiary education funding
### Proposed tertiary education financing model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pillar 1: basic funding</th>
<th>Pillar 2: performance-oriented funding</th>
<th>Pillar 3: innovation-oriented funding</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- number of study places (per field)</td>
<td>- number of graduates</td>
<td>profile-oriented target agreements teaching + research + third mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- cost-oriented weight</td>
<td>- number of incoming and outgoing students</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Research</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- number of professors/academic staff (per field)</td>
<td>- bibliometric indicator</td>
<td>Funding of centres of excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- cost-oriented weight</td>
<td>- third party funds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- number of PhDs</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Institutional indicators**
Concerns about the quality of tertiary education and science

European Innovation Scoreboards: Summary Innovation Index 2014

- Switzerland
- Sweden
- Denmark
- Finland
- Germany
- Netherlands
- Luxembourg
- United Kingdom
- Ireland
- Iceland
- Belgium
- France
- Austria
- EU
- Slovenia
- Estonia
- Norway
- Czech Republic
- Italy
- Portugal
- Spain
- Hungary
- Greece
- Slovakia
- Poland
- Lithuania
- Latvia
- Turkey
Recommendations for tertiary education

- Move forward with the implementation of the three-pillar financing model
- Continue improving the quality of tertiary education and science
- Continue efforts to realign system capacity with demographic decline, fiscal reality and labour market needs
- Strengthen the capacity for strategic leadership and management
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shared vision</strong></td>
<td>Clear and consistent priorities (across governments and across time), ambition and urgency, and the capacity to learn rapidly.</td>
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<td><strong>Performance management</strong></td>
<td>Appropriate targets, real-time data, monitoring, incentives aligned to targets, accountability, and the capacity to intervene where necessary.</td>
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<td><strong>Frontline capacity</strong></td>
<td>Building professional capabilities, sharing best practice and innovation, flexible management, and frontline ethos aligned with system objectives.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Delivery architecture</strong></td>
<td>Strong leadership at every level, including teacher leadership, adequate process design and consistency of focus across agencies.</td>
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Successful reform implementation

- Acknowledge divergent views and interests
- Communicate, communicate, communicate
  - Feedback reduces the likelihood of strong opposition
  - Involvement of stakeholders cultivates a sense of joint ownership over policies, and hence helps build consensus over both the need and the relevance of reforms
- Mechanisms of regular and institutionalised consultation contribute to the development of trust among parties, and help them reach consensus
  - Regular interactions raise awareness of the concerns of others, thus fostering a climate of compromise
- External pressures can build a compelling case for change.

Strive for consensus about the aims without compromising the drive for improvement

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Successful reform implementation

- Regular involvement by teachers in policy design helps to build capacity and shared ideas over time.
- Several countries have established teaching councils that provide teachers with both a forum for policy development and, critically, a mechanism for profession-led standard setting and quality assurance in teacher education, teacher induction, teacher performance and career development.
- Policy can encourage the formation of such communities.
Successful reform implementation

- Currently only one in ten educational reforms is evaluated.
- Policy experimentation can help build consensus on implementation and can prove powerful in testing out policy initiatives and—by virtue of their temporary nature and limited scope—overcoming fears and resistance by specific groups of stakeholders.

Use and evaluate pilot projects before full implementation.

- Engagement of stakeholders
- Careful piloting
- Sustainable resources
- Partnership with the profession
- Resilience to political change
- Careful timing
Successful reform implementation

- Resilience to political change
- Engage stakeholders
- Careful piloting
- Sustainable resources
- Careful timing
- Partnership with the profession

- The benefits for ‘winners’ are often insufficient to mobilise support, the costs for ‘losers’ are concentrated
- Need for consistent, co-ordinated efforts to persuade those affected of the need for change and, in particular, to communicate the costs of inaction
All political players and stakeholders need to develop realistic expectations about the pace and nature of reforms to improve outcomes.

Certain reform measures are best introduced before others, particularly because of the substantial gap between the time at which the initial cost of reform is incurred, and the time when the intended benefits of reforms materialise.

Time is needed to learn about and understand impact, to build trust and develop capacity for the next stage.
Successful reform implementation

- Putting the teaching profession at the heart of education reform requires a fruitful dialogue between governments and unions.
- Teachers should not just be part of the implementation of reforms but also part of their design.
- Conflict isn’t best addressed by weak unions but by strong social partnership.
## Lessons from high performers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The old bureaucratic system</th>
<th>The modern enabling system</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Some</strong> students learn at high levels</td>
<td><strong>All</strong> students need to learn at high levels</td>
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<td><strong>Curriculum, instruction and assessment</strong></td>
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<td>Routine cognitive skills</td>
<td>Conceptual understanding, complex ways of thinking, ways of working</td>
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<td><strong>Teacher quality</strong></td>
<td><strong>Standardisation and compliance</strong></td>
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<td>High-level professional knowledge workers</td>
<td><strong>Work organisation</strong></td>
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<td>Flat, collegial</td>
<td><strong>Accountability</strong></td>
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<td>Primarily to peers and stakeholders</td>
<td>Primarily to authorities</td>
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### What it all means

- The old bureaucratic system
- The modern enabling system

**What it all means**

- The old bureaucratic system
  - Routine cognitive skills: Primarily to authorities
  - Teacher quality: Flat, collegial
  - Accountability: High-level professional knowledge workers

- The modern enabling system
  - Student inclusion: All students need to learn at high levels
  - Curriculum, instruction and assessment: Conceptual understanding, complex ways of thinking, ways of working
  - Teacher quality: Flat, collegial
  - Accountability: Primarily to peers and stakeholders

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**Lessons from high performers**
Thank you

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