




Analysis Report Summary

Country: Latvia



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Upskilling Pathways Implementation

The Partner UP project in Latvia was implemented by the Latvian Adult Education Association (LAEA) and State Education Development Agency (VIAA).

As stated in the National Development Plan of Latvia for 2021-2027, Latvia's future vision is clearly linked with skills development and ensuring opportunities for Lifelong Learning. The Constitution of Latvia and the Law on Education provide learning rights for every resident of Latvia. Local governments play an important role in the implementation of these rights, as in accordance with the current legislation one of the essential duties of local governments is to ensure the education of the population, including adult education. The adult education and skills development policy in Latvia is a significant component within the main policy planning implementation documents - the Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia "Latvia 2030 and the National Development Plan of Latvia 2021 - 2027. The national policy planning and implementation documents are developed via broad involvement of national stakeholders and taking into consideration EU policy documents and recommendations of the EU, UNESCO, OECD and CEDEFOP.

Key stakeholders involved in adult education in Latvia include the Ministry of Education and Science and the State Education Development Agency under the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Economics, the Ministry of Welfare and State Employment Agency under the Ministry of Welfare, other ministries, the Employers' Confederation and the Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia. The collaboration mechanisms are implemented via various organisational forms and structures – the main to be mentioned is Adult Education Governance Board (since 2024 - Joint Adult Education Coordination Commission), involving representatives from the State Chancellery, the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia, the State Education Development Agency, the State Employment Agency, the State Education Content Center and the State of Education Quality service, as well as representatives of social partners from the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Confederation of Latvian Employers and the Union of Latvia Municipalities.





Challenges in Implementation

Both as the result of desk analyses and focus group discussions, the following main challenges could be reported:

1. As the main national level challenge in the stakeholder cooperation and overall adult education governance, as stated in the study, developed upon request by Latvia Parliament "Digital, technological and language skills of adults: opportunities and challenges for their development in Latvia " the arrangement of the adult education governance system has been included as a priority in the national development planning documents since 2006, however, there are still significant deficiencies in the governance of this area. It was highlighted in the report that the cooperation of the parties involved is still insufficient, the training offer for the employed and the unemployed is not optimally coordinated, and the involvement of local governments in providing adult education is not sufficient.
2. The governance structure for adult education policies is multilayered with many stakeholders involved. Thereof, a more consolidated approach to implementing adult education policies would be needed. (This challenge is aimed to be addressed by creation of the Joint Adult Education Coordination Commission in 2024).
3. Information services about the learning opportunities not always provided in line with the specific needs of the target groups
4. Insufficient motivation of stakeholders to engage adults with low basic skills in education and learning.
5. Transparent cooperation mechanism among national, regional and local players is adult education to respond to specific local needs is not sufficient. Educational needs identified at the local level quite often lack implementation opportunities,
6. Adult education coordinators in municipalities often work par-time only, have a wide range of responsibilities apart from adult education and lack skills in implementing adult education policies.





Stakeholder Cooperation in UP

Stakeholders participating in WP2 – Stakeholder Analysis, identified both successful cooperation mechanisms as well as several gaps and challenges in implementing the UP and overall development of adult learning in Latvia, in relation to provision of relevant learning offer for learners with low qualifications and skills.

In Latvia the national level, the Adult Education Governance Board (since 2024 - Joint Adult Education Coordination Commission) includes the three main Ministries (Economy, Education and Science, and Welfare) and other ministries involved in adult education, like the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Health; social partners such as the Employers' Confederation of Latvia (LDDK) and the Free Trade Union Confederation of Latvia; municipalities; and organisations involved in adult education, such as the Cross Sectoral Co-ordination Centre, the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Latvian Association of Local and Regional Governments, and the Association of Planning Regions.

On June 2023 a strategical coordination body was established - Human Capital Development Council, consisting of three ministers - Economy, Education and Science, and Welfare. The Council is expected to determine the strategic goals of human capital development in collaboration with social partners and other non-governmental organizations, to provide national level evaluations on the labour market development scenarios and forecasts at the national and municipal levels, market, including the unemployment situation and its impact on the competitiveness of various population groups, to evaluate the tasks of the subordinate institutions of the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Welfare and the Ministry of Education and Science in the field of lifelong learning.

As the overall approach it should be mentioned that Ministry of Education and Science deals with the support for learning opportunities for the employed adults, the Ministry of Welfare provides support for the unemployed and jobseekers, while the Ministry of Economics provides support for adult learning upon the request of employers.





At a **regional level**, the bodies, responsible on implementation of goals and priorities of the region's long-term development are the Development Councils of the planning regions. However planning regions do not have a direct educational function, therefore the decision-making related to adult education initiatives is diverse and depend on many aspects in the planning regions. A unified coordination system among the planning regions in relation to AE development is not currently provided.

At a **local level**, municipalities share the responsibility for adult education, since they implement adult education policies at the local level and issue licences for non-formal education programmes. Some municipalities also provide adult education through public adult education institutions, which can be adult education centres, cultural clubs, associations, or others. However, similar to the regional disparity issues, the functioning and capacity of local adult education centres depend on the resources of the municipalities. Municipalities with more resources can provide better services than municipalities with fewer resources, which highlights the need for strong governance structures to ensure equity in adult learning across Latvia.

Lessons Learnt

The analysis process, in particular, the focus group discussions, including the preparatory and follow-up activities, had a considerable impact on the commitment and contribution of the stakeholders involved. The stakeholders' participation level in the analyses process could be considered as high, both responsive and pro-active, with significant components of mutual interaction among the stakeholders involved. The participants shared the good practices, created mutual contacts, aimed to share lessons learned from successful implementation of public awareness events, dissemination and use of developed learning materials and programmes, etc. One of special emphasis during the mutual discussions were about effective approaches of involvement of low skilled adults in learning process. The focus group discussions and implemented preparatory and follow-up measures positively contributed to strengthening relationships with stakeholders, based on mutual respect and trust. The participants openly expressed their opinions, both highlighting achievements and good practices as well as critical assessments of existing shortcomings in overall adult education provision and management as well as highlighted the challenges to be solved.





The key conclusions and findings of the analyses implemented are used by VIAA senior officials for contribution to the development of related lifelong learning policy planning and implementation documents, proposals for elaboration of existing cooperation mechanisms and implementation of public awareness-increasing events. LPIA is using the network of its member organisations and partners to contribute to the interaction of the NGO sector to lifelong learning policy development and its implementation.

One of the **main challenges** recognised during the analysis process was difficulties in gathering information about the involvement of low-skilled adults, as there are various interpretations and understanding of adults with “low skills” (for example, uncompleted primary education, low-skilled professions - 8th, 9th basic group according to the Classifier of Occupations, low basic skills, low digital skills etc.) It should be highlighted that low-skilled adults are a pretty diverse group with different social situations and various learning needs. There is a correlation to age groups, income level, and places of residence – cities or rural areas, etc., should be considered. The issues and challenges related to the involvement of low-skilled learners should be specified during the further phases of the project implementation.

Several samples of good practices should be mentioned during both desk analyses and focus group discussions. On national level -

Sectoral Expert Councils should be mentioned. Founded in 2010 and coordinated by the Employers Confederation of Latvia, they aim to improve the effectiveness and quality of VET in the respective industry by promoting cooperation between the government, employers, and trade unions. Currently, 13 councils cover all main sectors of industry. Another sample of good practice is that a network of adult education coordinators has been established in all municipalities, a competency development program for adult education coordinators has been developed, numerous trainings and seminars have been developed, and program piloting.

As a sample of good local cooperation practice a Limbazi Foundation, operating on the territory of Limbazi municipality of Latvia, should be mentioned. Operational since 2009, it aims to improve the quality of life by raising funding to support non-governmental organisations, informal groups of society and private initiatives. The foundation organised support to socially disadvantaged locals to improve their living space by organizing practical lessons for these families on renovating an apartment with limited resources, materials were donated for the repair, thereby increasing their self-confidence and involving them in local social life and learning opportunities.





Priorities for Development Groups

According to the Stakeholders Analysis in Latvia, the following directions should be set as priorities for the Development Groups:

1. Promotion of good practice, information exchange, communication and publicity for greater involvement of low-skilled adults

Goal: to achieve wider opportunities and formation of closer partner cooperation for greater involvement of low-skilled adults by increasing the exchange of information between the parties involved at all levels, the publicity of their activities and active promotion of good practice examples.

2. Contribution to digitization strategy for the development of adult education

Goal: to contribute to the development of adult education by wide dissemination of effective digital innovations in learning content, and provision of information with an emphasis on the involvement of adults with low digital skills.

3. Support for local adult engagement initiatives

Goal: to create conditions for the active cooperation of institutions, associations, entrepreneurs and education providers at the municipal level for the development of initiatives for the development of adult involvement and learning opportunities with an emphasis on the motivation, involvement, guidance and support of low-skilled adults.

4. Involvement opportunities of planning regions in promotion of adult education development

Goal: to discuss and highlight the opportunities of effective contribution of planning regions in coordination of adult education development on a regional level.

