# Latvian Education, Culture, Youth and Civil Society policies

**Education policy**

Latvian legislation regargind education field:

* Law on Education (1998) - a framework law containing definitions of all types and levels of education which defines general principles and determines competences of governing bodies.
* Law on General Education (1999)
* Law on Vocational Education (1999)
* Law on Higher Education Establishments (1995)
* Law on Scientific Activity (2005)

**Governance of the Education System**

The education system is administered at three levels - national, municipal and institutional. The Parliament (Saeima), the Cabinet of Ministers and the Ministry of Education and Science are the main decision-making bodies at national level. The Ministry of Education and Science is the education policy development and implementation institution that oversees the national network of education institutions, sets educational standards and determines teacher training content and procedures.

**Tuition fee**

The tuition fee for pre-school, basic and secondary education in a state or municipality founded educational establishment shall be funded from the national or municipal budget. A private educational institution may set a tuition fee for providing education.

In higher education programmes the state covers tuition fees for a certain number of students’ places, according to the State Procurement in the respective academic year, and the respective students receive state grants. Each higher educational institution may set a tuition fee for the other students’ places.

**Culture policy**

The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia is the state governed institution, which organizes and coordinates state culture policy, social integration policy and media policy. The Ministry of Culture operates pursuant to the regulations of the Ministry of Culture, the declaration of the Cabinet of Ministers and the basic principals of the State culture policy.

The central apparatus of the Ministry of Culture consists of three (3) departments: Cultural Policy Department, Social Integration Department and European Union Funds Department

The Ministry of Culture is responsible for the development and implementation of integration policy in Latvia. The purpose of integration policy is to create circumstances under which people in Latvia can collaborate in achieving common goals and developing society where everyone feels safe, can expand their talents, work and learn. Enhancement of intercultural dialogue, the exchange of experiences and beliefs as well as maintaining strong social bonds are important tasks for achieving a prosperous and democratic society.

**Latvian Youth policy**

According to the Youth Law young people in Latvia are persons from 13 to 25 years of age. The youth policy is the purposeful set of activities in all the fields of state policy to promote the wholesome and versatile development of young people, their inclusion in the society and improvement of life quality. As a result of implementing the youth policy, stakeholders (state and municipality institutions, youth organisations, etc.) promote the initiatives of young people, their participation in the decision-making processes and social life, support youth work and provide children with easier transition to adult status envisaging corresponding activities for personal development of young people. The bases of the youth policy is youth work — planned practical set of activities developed for young people (events, projects, programmes) in order to improve their life quality.

In order to ensure the youth and youth workers, as well as the policy makers on the state and municipality level with the information connected with youth affairs, the Ministry of Education and Science administers the Youth Policy and Youth Opportunities Portal www.jaunatneslietas.lv.

In order to ensure the coordination of youth policy there was founded Youth Advisory Council (YAC), which since 2009 has substituted the Youth Policy Coordination Council.

The tasks of Youth Advisory Council:

* evaluation of the situation in realization of youth policy and counsel the Ministry of Education and Science in the areas of priority in youth policy;
* counsel the state governing authorities in order to provide the most effective implementation of youth policy;
* counsel the municipal authorities in the implementation of youth policy on the level of municipalities.

One of the main youth policy leaders in Latvia is the National Youth Council (LJP) of Latvia. LJP provides information to the public and promotes civic participation of young people, encouraging them to engage themselves in youth organizations, non-formal education activities and shelters the youth organizations.

The National Youth Council of Latvia (LJP) is the umbrella organization of 49 youth organizations in Latvia. Its mission is to improve the living conditions of young people and to represent the interests of youth organizations on national and international level. Youth Council’s member organizations join around 30 000 young people across Latvia.

**Civil Society policy**

In Latvia, just as in other European States, there are a constituent nation determining the national and cultural-historical identity of the State, as well as national minorities and immigrants. The national and cultural-historical identity of a constituent nation determines the national and cultural-historical identity of the State, and is based on a common language, culture and social memory.

The goal of Latvia’s national identity, civil society and integration policy is a strong, cohesive Latvian people: a national and democratic community ensuring the maintenance and enrichment of its unifying foundation – the Latvian language, culture and national identity, European democratic values and the unique cultural space aimed at the balanced development of the democratic Nation State of Latvia.

The policy on the national identity of the Latvian society, civil society and integration emphasizes the principle of identities being complementary, in accordance with which, the various identities do not exclude but rather enrich each other. National minority identities exist and develop alongside the Latvian identity. An individual can simultaneously have a number of identities (that of a national minority, Latvian, European, global).

**Resources:**

* <http://www.izm.gov.lv/en/education/education-system-in-latvia>
* <http://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/jaunatne>
* <http://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/jaunatne/lidzdalibas-mehanismi>
* <http://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/jaunatne/starptautiska-sadarbiba-jaunatnes-joma/eiropas-savienibas-sadarbiba-jaunatnes-joma>
* <http://www.jaunatneslietas.lv/jaunumi/2945-jaunatnes-politikas-istenosanas-plans-2016-2020-gadam>
* <https://www.km.gov.lv/en/ministry/about-the-ministry>