



ESSA-SPORT

Improving the Supply of Skills to the Sector

NATIONAL REPORT

**Analysis of labour market
realities and challenges in
the sport and physical
activity sector**



Latvia

September 2019

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This national report has been produced by the *Latvian Academy of Sport Education (LSPA)* who are a full partner and national coordinator in the ESSA-Sport project, using the methodology and structure provided by the coordinator EOSE.



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THE ESSA-SPORT PROJECT AND BACKGROUND TO THE NATIONAL REPORT

1. THE ESSA-SPORT PROJECT AND BACKGROUND TO THE NATIONAL REPORT

a) The ESSA-Sport Project

The aim of the ESSA-Sport project, funded by the European Commission under the Erasmus+ programme, was to establish a European Sector Skills Alliance covering the full breadth of the sport and physical activity sector across the European Union. The project was a direct response to the identified needs and challenges of the sport and physical activity sector.

The 3-year project, which began in October 2016, aimed to create a knowledge base and plan for action within the sector on the key issues of skills and workforce development which are central to helping the sector grow, to equip those working or volunteering with the right skills and to enable the sector to fulfil its potential as a social, health and economic driver. The overall ambition was to create an evidential basis for change and improvement, to create a major consultation on skills and to build a lasting consultation network at national and European level to take forward the conclusions and recommendations made in national and European Reports.




The project has identified skill needs and future priorities based on national and European level research and consultation activities.

The consortium, composed of 20 national coordinators and 5 European networks, is proud to have generated new knowledge and data as well as consultation activities at all levels to support policy and priority actions in the sport and physical activity sector.

a) The National Report

This National Report presents the main findings collated and analysed through the ESSA-Sport project at the national level.

Each nation in Europe has its own specificities, realities and challenges in terms of employment and skills in sport and the aims of the national report are:

-  to describe the national sport and education systems
-  to present new knowledge gathered for the sector in terms of employment and skills
-  to propose concrete conclusions and recommendations/ priority actions for implementation at the national level.

b) The sport and education system

The first step of the overall process was for all national coordinators to conduct a series of desk research activities using a common methodology.

Firstly, in Section 2 of this report, there is a presentation of key political, geographical, economic and population factors and characteristics of the national labour market.

Section 3 presents the characteristics, evolution and future perspective of the national sport and physical activity sector/system.

The overall national education and training system is presented in Section 5 whereas the way it is specifically organised in the sport and physical activity sector is presented in Section 6.

c) Sport Labour Market Statistics

Section 4 of the national report focuses on the work carried out by national coordinators and main findings obtained in an attempt to collate available data and statistics on the sport and physical activity labour market in all EU Member States.

Indeed, to make an impact on the sector and allow it to unlock its potential to improve people's lives, it is necessary to have a precise idea of the size and characteristics of the current labour market, and information about changes and tendencies. This information has been missing for many years since the last (partial) attempt to get a European map of employment for the sector took place in 2004 (Vocasport project, EOSE 2004).

The aim of the current initiative was to fill a knowledge gap by undertaking wide research activities at both European and national levels to identify the scale and scope of employment in the emerging and growing sport and physical activity sector.

NACE is the statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community, while ISCO is the International Standard Classification of Occupations. The ESSA-Sport consortium has been successful in collecting the most relevant NACE and ISCO data related to the sport sector, gathered from National Statistics Offices and the European body Eurostat. This data on the size and characteristics of the sport labour market at the national level is presented in section 4.

d) European Employer Skills Survey

Following the desk research and collection of available statistics for the sport labour market, the focus was then to design and launch the first ever European Employer Skills Survey for the sport and physical activity sector. The objective was to consult the widest variety of employers from the sector and collate data on the labour market, skills needs, gaps and shortages, future tendencies/perspectives, realities and difficulties to recruit and retain staff and volunteers.

In the context of a dynamic and complex labour market, gathering information on current and future skill needs can support better matching of education, training and employment.

In recent years, better understanding of labour market needs and skills matching have featured prominently on the policy agenda of many countries, driven by both rapid technological advances and global competition. Skills matching can also help reduce unemployment, particularly among young people. It helps to build a better life for individuals by improving employability, social mobility and inclusion.

The ambition through the design and launch of the first ever European Employer Skills Survey for the sport and physical activity sector was to identify and analyse the growing and changing labour market, to build an up to date picture of employment, and to identify the skill needs and future priorities based on national and EU level research – building a skills map for the sector.

The main results and key information from the European Employer Skills Survey at the national level are presented in Section 7 of this report.

e) Consultations and conclusions

Once all of the employment and skills data had been gathered from sources of labour market statistics and the Employer Skills Survey conducted, the aim in each country was then to discuss and consult on the data with relevant national stakeholders, through meetings, round-tables, one-to-one discussions etc. A summary report on consultation activities implemented at the national level is presented in Section 8.

Finally, it was the aim of the ESSA-Sport project to implement a bottom-up approach and present national findings and conclusions from the entire project and all activities including desk research, data collection and consultation.

The development of recommendations and actions for the sector to tackle the identified challenges will ensure the legacy of the ESSA-Sport project as the sector builds on the data collected for sustained reforms to improve skills of paid staff and volunteers and meet the potential of the sport and physical activity sector. National conclusions and recommendations are presented in Sections 9 and 10 of this report.



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NATIONAL KEY FACTS AND OVERALL LABOUR MARKET

2. NATIONAL KEY FACTS AND OVERALL DATA ON THE LABOUR MARKET

a) National key facts and data

Republic of Latvia / Latvijas Republika

1) Geography

Latvia is the central country of the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) and is located in North-eastern Europe on the east coast of the Baltic Sea. Its geographic coordinates are 57°00'N latitude and 25°00'E longitude. It consists of fertile lowland plains and moderate hills, with most of its territory less than 100 metres above sea level. It has an extensive network of rivers, thousands of lakes and hundreds of kilometres of undeveloped seashore lined by pine forests, dunes, and continuous white sand beaches.



2) Capital city:

Riga (Rīga) - the Capital City of Latvia

Latvia's political, economic and culture centre is in Rīga, where more than one third of Latvia's population (644 thousand) lives and works. Rīga's elegant Old Town and distinctive Art Nouveau architecture serve as a stimulating setting for a vibrant modern business and cultural life. Founded in 1201, this former Hanseatic League member is one of the oldest medieval cities in Europe and has been listed by UNESCO as one of the world's most important cultural and natural sites. As one of the new stars of the dynamic Baltic Sea region, Rīga has hosted a NATO summit, world hockey championship, the Eurovision Song Contest and many other large-scale international events. Rīga's International Airport is one of the fastest growing travel hubs in Europe.

3) Neighbouring countries:

Latvia is bordered by Estonia to the north, Russia to the east, Belarus to the southeast, Lithuania to the south and the Baltic Sea to the west. Its strategic location has made it an international crossroad for trade, commerce and cultural exchange since ancient times. Vikings followed the 'Amber Road' through Latvian territory along the Daugava River to reach Byzantium and the Mediterranean Sea.

Population (use the tables from guidelines part 1: total population, by age, by gender, total active population, number of unemployed persons, by age, by gender, evolutions and tendencies etc):

Latvians are the indigenous people of Latvia, and the Finno-Ugric Lives (or Livonians) are the only indigenous minority. Latvia's present ethnic mix is largely a result of massive post-war immigration, which resulted in a decline in the share of ethnic Latvians from 77% in 1935 to 52% in 1989.

Population in 2018: 1,935,489 inhabitants. 69.7 % of the population is urban (1,345,602 people in 2018).

Table 1) Total population per gender and categories of age

	TOTAL POPULATION	BY GENDER (%)		BY AGE (%)				
		Female	Male	0-14	15-24	25-54	55-64	65+
2016	1 968 957	54.07%	45.93%	15.25%	10.14%	41.48%	13.50%	19.63%
2015	1 986 096	54.12%	45.88%	14.99%	10.69%	41.69%	13.24%	19.39%
2014	2 001 468	54.18%	45.82%	14.71%	11.29%	41.86%	13.07%	19.07%
2013	2 023 825	54.22%	45.78%	14.44%	12.02%	41.98%	12.79%	18.77%
2012	2 044 813	54.28%	45.72%	14.29%	12.71%	41.94%	12.50%	18.56%
2011	2 074 605	54.31%	45.69%	14.20%	13.40%	41.89%	12.14%	18.37%
2010	2 120 504	54.21%	45.79%	14.16%	14.13%	41.92%	11.67%	18.12%
<i>Please indicate the source</i>								
Central Statistical Bureau, ww.csb.gov.lv								

Table 2) Total active population and data on unemployment and employment

	TOTAL ACTIVE POPULATION ¹	TOTAL UNEMPLOYED PERSONS	NUMBER OF PERSONS IN EMPLOYMENT ²						
			TOTAL EMPLOYED PERSONS	BY GENDER (%)		BY AGE (%)			
				Female	Male	15-24	25-54	55-64	65+
2016	988.6	95.3	893.3	64.6	72.2				
2015	992.3	98.2	896.1	63.2	72.4				
2014	992.3	107.6	884.6	62.1	71.2				
2013	1 014.2	120.4	893.9	62.2	70.4				
2012	1 030.7	155.1	875.6	62.2	70.6				
2011	1 028.2	166.6	861.6	60.4	69.1				
2010	1 056.5	205.8	850.7	61.1	68.7				
<i>Please indicate the source</i>									
Central Statistical Bureau, ww.csb.gov.lv									

4) Population density

Population density (people per sq. km) in Latvia was reported at 31.53 sq. Km in 2016, according to the World Bank collection of development indicators, compiled from officially recognized sources.

5) Economic situation

Gross Domestic Product of Latvia grew 4.5% in 2017 compared to last year. This rate is 24 -tenths of one percent higher than the figure of 2.1% published in 2016. The GDP figure in 2017 was \$27,689 million, Latvia

¹ The Active Population also called Labour Force, is the population employed or unemployed

² Employment is defined as the number of people engaged in productive activities in an economy. The concept includes employees, self-employees and family workers.

is number 95 in the ranking of GDP of the 195 countries that we publish. The absolute value of GDP in Latvia rose \$649 million with respect to 2016. The GDP per capita of Latvia in 2017 was \$14,063, \$449 higher than in 2016, it was \$13,614. To view the evolution of the GDP per capita, it is interesting to look back a few years and compare these data with those of 2007 when the GDP per capita in Latvia was \$9,635.

The inflation rate of Latvia. Latvia's consumer prices increased by 1.8 percent year-on-year in February 2018, easing from a 2 percent gain in the previous month. It was the lowest inflation rate since November 2016, as prices rose at a slower pace for: food and non-alcoholic beverages (1.2 percent vs 1.9 percent in January); housing and utilities (2.4 percent vs 3.2 percent); and alcoholic beverages and tobacco products (0.3 percent vs 1 percent). Meanwhile, inflation picked up for both transport (2.5 percent vs 1.9 percent), and recreation and culture (1.9 percent vs 1.4 percent). On a monthly basis, consumer prices rose by 0.2 percent after showing no growth in January. Inflation Rate in Latvia averaged 3.69 percent from 1998 until 2018, reaching an all time high of 17.70 percent in May of 2008 and a record low of -4.30 percent in February of 2010.

The unemployment rate of Latvia. Latvia's jobless rate decreased to 8.1 percent in the fourth quarter of 2017 from 8.5 percent in the previous period. It remains the lowest unemployment rate since the third quarter of 2008, as the number of unemployed declined by 4.4 thousand to 79.7 thousand while the number of employed dropped by 0.7 thousand to 902.2 thousand. Still, Latvian jobless rate was the highest among the Baltic States (5.3 percent in Estonia and 6.7 percent in Lithuania). Considering full 2017, the unemployment rate was 8.7 percent. Unemployment Rate in Latvia averaged 11.63 percent from 2002 until 2017, reaching an all time high of 21.30 percent in the first quarter of 2010 and a record low of 5.30 percent in the fourth quarter of 2007.

6) Official EU language(s)

Latvian is a Baltic language spoken in the Baltic region. It is the language of Latvians and the official language of Latvia as well as one of the official languages of the European Union.

7) Political system

According to the Constitution (Satversme), Latvia is a parliamentary republic in which the sovereign power belongs to the people, who are represented by a unicameral parliament (Saeima), with 100 members elected in general, equal, direct, secret and proportional elections for a four-year period.

The Saeima, and also the people, have the right to legislate, in accordance with the procedures, and to the extent, provided for by the Constitution.

Draft laws may be submitted to the Saeima by the President, the Cabinet or committees of the Saeima, by not less than five members of the Saeima, or, in accordance with the procedures and in the cases provided for in the Constitution, by one-tenth of the electorate.

8) Date of independence

Latvian Independence Day commemorates declaration of independence of the Republic of Latvia from German and Russian occupation on **November 18, 1918** after the end of the First World War.

The country remained an independent state until the Second World War, when forces from the Soviet Union occupied the country on 17 June 1940. Like the other Baltic republics, full independence from Soviet Russia occurred on 21 August 1991. The restoration of Independence of the Republic of Latvia was proclaimed on 4 May 1990.

9) EU member

Latvia is EU member country since 1 May 2004

10) Seats in the European Parliament

There are 8 members of the European Parliament from Latvia.

11) Currency

Currency: euro. Euro area member since 1 January 2014

12) Schengen area member

Schengen area member since 21 December 2007.

b) Characteristics of the overall labour market

According to ISCO-08 there are divided 10 major groups of jobs:

- 1 - Managers
- 2 - Professionals
- 3 - Technicians and associate professionals

34 Legal, Social, Cultural and Related Associate professionals (main heading)

342 Sport and Fitness Workers (3 digits)

3421 - Athletes and Sports Players (4 digits)

3422 - Sports Coaches, Instructors and Officials

3423 - Fitness and Recreation Instructors and Programme Leaders

- 4 - Clerical support workers
- 5 - Service and sales workers
- 6 - Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers
- 7 - Craft and related trades workers
- 8 - Plant and machine operators, and assemblers
- 9 - Elementary occupations
- 0 - Armed forces occupations

In Latvia, in the context of the labour market in sport sector, as components are considered: sports teachers, coaches, sports doctors, heads of sports facilities, managers (in state institutions, municipal institutions, state capital companies, enterprises and non-governmental sports organizations).

The Ministry of Education and Science, which is responsible for sports management in Latvia, in cooperation with the Central Statistical Bureau collects statistics only on sports teachers, coaches and sports organizers. For example, in 2017 there were 1920 sports coaches in Latvia, 1720 sports teachers and 872 sports organizers, as well as it is possible to obtain information on how many women and men are working, but to obtain more detailed information – e.g., how many full-time or part-time workers there are, or is this job

the only one for these persons, and about the education of these people - is impossible, because such information is not collected.

Possibly, information about these professions is collected due to two reasons: first, the sports teacher and trainer are professions, the requirements for which are determined in legal acts; secondly, it is easy to get information about these positions.

Analyzing the statistics of the Ministry of Education and Science on these positions, it can be concluded that these figures tend to increase insignificantly in the last four years. At the same time, it should be noted that there is a shortage of sports teachers and coaches in the country.



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THE NATIONAL SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SECTOR



3. THE NATIONAL SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SECTOR

In Latvia, the Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for the sports sector. According to the Sports Law, the Ministry of Education and Science performs state administration functions in the sports sector and, in the field of sports, it implements a unified national policy; drafts laws and regulations; pursues targeted international cooperation and ensures representation of Latvia in international sports organizations; perform other functions and tasks specified in regulatory enactments.

The sport sector is regulated by more than 40 regulatory enactments in different directions regarding: sport facilities; the organization of sport events; doping; National sport council; national sport federations; sport awarding; medical care; information about budget funding; sport team funding; certification of sport specialists; foundation and operation of non-governmental organizations; foundation and operation of enterprises; donations.

The necessity of the Sports Law was initiated by the society already in 1998, but obtained only in 2002. The purpose of the Sports Law is to specify the general and legal basis for the organisation and development of sport, mutual relationship of sport organisations, state and local government institutions and basic tasks in sport development, and the basis for the financing of sport and the principles that shall be observed when taking part in the international sport movement. The Law determines basic principles in the sport sector: the principle of equality, the principle of fair play and the principle of safety.

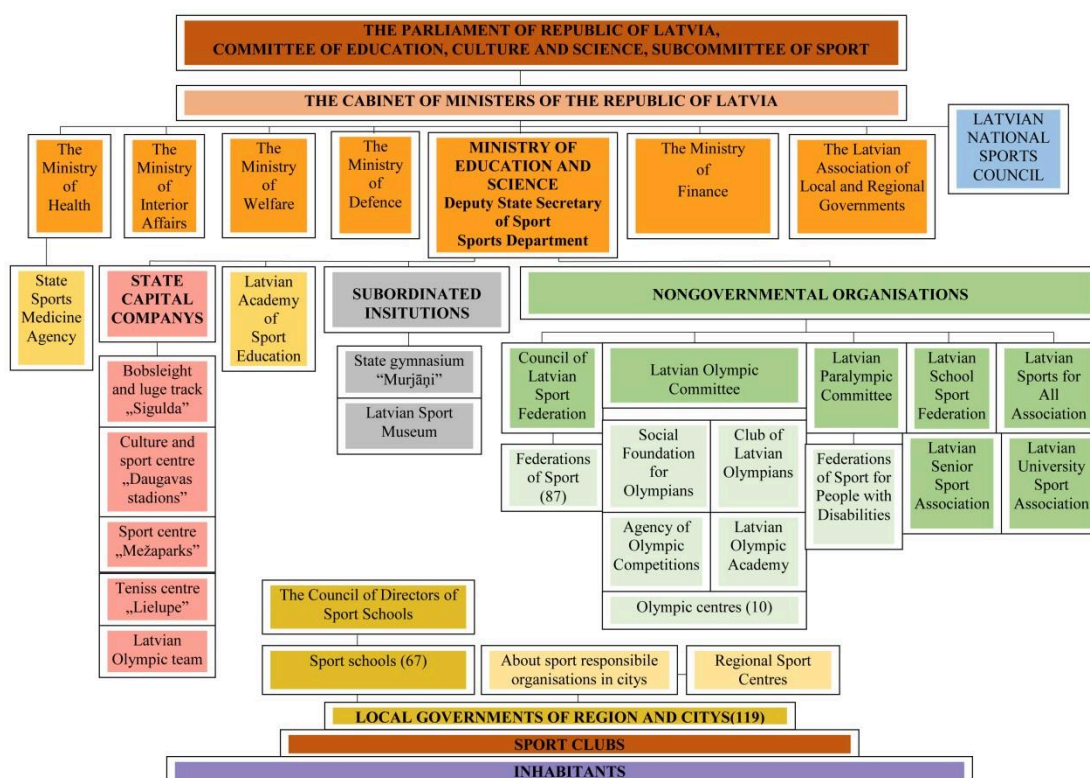
At present, the main sport sector planning document is "Guidelines for sport policy for 2014-2020" (Approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on December 18, 2013 by order No. 666). Sport Policies Guidelines outline the following directions of action:

1. Sufficient physical activity of the population and understanding of the need for physical activity in maintaining and strengthening health
2. Improvement of the system of sportsmen preparation and competitions
3. Athletes health care and medical supervision
4. Sports infrastructure
5. Alternative solutions for the increase of sport finances.

Neither the public health policy planning document "Public Health Guidelines for 2014-2020" (Approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on October 14, 2014, Order No. 589), nor the social policy planning documents refer to sport as a means to promote specific politics.

The sport sector in Latvia consists of three components: governmental and local authorities; societies and foundations; and merchants. The development of the sport sector in Latvia is ensured by a large number of institutions and organizations with different legal statuses. The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia has established an organisational model of the sport sector that includes governmental and non-governmental organizations, and enterprises. The organisational model of the sport sector is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The organisational model of the sport sector in Latvia



(Ministry of Education and Science, 2018)

According to the Latvian Constitution Article 64 the right of legislation belongs to the parliament – the Saeima. The Saeima is the leading institution in the sport sector, which develops and submits proposals for legislation.

The Saeima has adopted the Sports Law, which defines the organization and development of sport in general and the legal framework for sport organizations, the state and local authorities and basic tasks in the development of sport and sport funding foundations. Sports Law also includes the principles observed for taking part in the international sport movement.

The Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia implements executive power, which includes a wide range of competences, such as the right to decide relevant issues in the sport sector. Firstly, as the most important competencies to approve the Latvian National Sports Council and its Chairman, and the regulation of the Latvian National Sports Council. Secondly, to define the procedure for allocating and assigning money prizes for outstanding achievements in sport.

The Cabinet of Ministers, as it is determined by the Sports Law, established by the Latvian National Sports Council – is a public, advisory body consisting of ministers and heads of national sport organizations. The Latvian National Sports Council, according to the Sports Law shall: participate in the development of the national sport policy; draw up proposals for the state budget funds in the field of sports and submit them to the Ministry of Education and Science; provide the cabinet with recommendations in relation to the awarding of monetary prizes for outstanding achievements in sport; provide an opinion regarding the conformity of a sport facility to the status of a national sport facility; advise the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Interior regarding the types of sport to be supported in the institutions of such ministries; provide the Ministry of Welfare with an opinion regarding a support programme for the outstanding sport veterans of Latvia.

The Cabinet of Ministers, in accordance with its competence, has established ministries. The sport sector, together with education and science is under the governance of the Ministry of Education and Science.

The Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for the sport sector. According to the Sports Law it shall: implement a unified state policy; develop draft regulatory enactments; implement purposeful international cooperation and ensure Latvian representation in international sport organisations; perform other functions and tasks specified in regulatory enactments.

The sport organisation system in Latvia also includes ministries of other sectors, which, according to the Sports law, have a particular competence for reaching goals in the sport sector. These are the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Welfare, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The Ministry of Education and Science has shares in five capital companies: “Bobsleja un kamanīņu trase “Sigulda” Ltd.” (Bobsleigh and Luge track “Sigulda”); “Kultūras un sporta centrs “Daugavas stadions State Ltd.” (Culture and Sports Centre “Daugava”); “Sporta centrs “Mežaparks Ltd.” (Sports Centre “Mežparks”); “Tenisa centrs “Lielupe” Ltd.” (Tennis Centre “Lielupe”) and “Latvijas Olimpiskā vienība Ltd.” (Latvian Olympic Team).

According to the “Law On Governance of Capital Shares of a Public Person and Capital Companies” the state capital company is a capital company in which all capital shares or voting stocks belong to the state. In those organisations the representatives of the holders of the capital shares or local government capital company shall promote the implementation of the objectives and tasks laid down in laws, cabinet regulations, and approved sectoral development concepts and strategies, and other documents governing the development of the sector.

“Latvian Academy of Sport Education” is under the supervision of The Ministry of Education and Science. According to the constitution of the “Latvian Academy of Sport Education” (approved on April 26, 2007 in Saeima), it provide students with the highest academic and professional education and qualification to develop sport science and improve culture.

“Latvian Sports Museum” and “Murjani Sports Gymnasium” are also under the supervision of The Ministry of Education and Science. “Murjani Sports Gymnasium” is a sport educational institution established by the state that is entitled to implement basic education, general secondary educational programmes and professional sport education programmes

The aim of “Latvian Sports Museum” is to collect, maintain, investigate, exhibit and popularize material evidences connected with Latvian sport history. It includes also intangible assets that possess historical, scientific and memorial significance, and information connected with Latvian sport history.

The Ministry of Health is responsible for an important sport sector organization, namely “State Sports Medicine Centre”. The aim of “State Sports Medicine Centre” is to carry out research about the residents (especially children and adolescents) by collecting and analysing data about their physical development and fitness, capacity for work, movement and motor ability. Moreover, the collected data has to be compared with the similar data from other countries. Additionally, the centre has to provide recommendations for residents (especially children and adolescents) regarding the improvement of physical fitness and the formation of correct standing posture.

The largest part of the organizations in the sport organisation system is non-governmental organizations. In Latvia the non-governmental sector consists of societies and foundations. According to the Law of Societies and Foundations, an association is a voluntary union of persons founded to achieve the goal specified in the articles of association, which shall not have a profit-making nature. A foundation, also a fund, is an aggregate of property that has been set aside for the achievement of a goal specified by the founder, which shall not

have a profit-making nature. In most of the cases non-governmental organizations have been created to satisfy the needs of the society where they are not fulfilled by the government, local government or businesses. Non-governmental organisations provide opportunities for people to improve their quality of life, self-assertion in a professional way and personal growth. In 2014, there are 749 associations and foundations in the field of sport.

Many non-governmental organizations are included in the organisational structure that is formed by the Ministry of Education and Science. One of the leading organizations is the “Latvian Sports Federation Council”. According to the Sports Law, “Latvian Sports Federation Council” shall coordinate, represent and implement the shared interests of the recognized sport federations in Latvia.

An important non-governmental organization established by the representatives of Olympic sport federations is the “Latvian Olympic Committee”. Its aim is to ensure the representation of Latvia in the international Olympic movement and the participation of Latvian athletes and sport teams in the Olympic Games.

“Latvian Olympic Committee” plays an important role in establishing non-governmental sport organizations. It founded such non-governmental organisations as “Olimpiešu sociālais fonds” (Olympians Social Fund), and “Olimpisko sacensību aģentūra”(Olympic competition agency), association “Latvijas Olimpiešu klubs” (Latvian Olympic Club) and ten Olympic centres.

Sport federations for people with disabilities are united in the association “Latvian Paralympic Committee”. Its operations are regulated by the Sports Law by defining that “Latvijas Paralimpiskā komiteja” (Latvian Paralympic Committee) is responsible for the activities of sport federations of disabled people recognised in Latvia in respect of the types of sport represented in the International Paralympic Committee. This organisation also coordinates other types of disabled sports as well as represents and implements sport interests of the disabled people.

The “Latvian School Sports Federation” (LSSF) as a non-governmental organization is highlighted in the sport organisation system. LSSF is a non-governmental organization, which unites general education schools and sport school clubs in Latvia to promote the development of sport and youth engagement in sport activities.

“Latvian Sports for All Association” is placed in the non-governmental organization sector. The association aims to create necessary conditions for grassroots sport in Latvia and find possibilities for all residents to engage in physical activities.

The main objective of the “Latvian Veteran/Senior Sports Association” is to lead, coordinate and organize the movement of sport veterans/seniors in Latvia in cooperation with sport federations, government, local authorities, public and private organizations. This organisation also promotes the participation in international sport veteran/senior events.

An important role in the sport organisation system belongs to the “Latvian University Sport Federation”. Its main objective is to promote and popularize sport activities and healthy lifestyle among Latvian university students and employees.

An important role in the organization of sport in Latvia belongs to the local governments (authorities). Article 7 of the Sports Law defines:

1. Local governments, when promoting a healthy lifestyle and sport development in their administrative territories, are entitled to: specify an employee or institution responsible for sport; build and maintain sport facilities and ensure the necessary equipment; promote the formation and operation of sport organisations, including sport clubs; support the further education of sport specialists and other sport






employees; finance sport competitions; finance licensed sport education programmes and sport events, which are implemented by sport clubs in the administrative territory thereof.

2. Local governments shall finance sport education programmes in the accredited sport educational institutions under their supervision.

The local governments have the right to establish sport education institutions – sport schools, which are financed by the budget of local government or the state. In 2014 there were 72 sport schools operating in Latvia, and 32,803 people in age of 6 to 25 years were engaged in those sport schools.

The inhabitants of Latvia are more and more engaged in physical activity. However, Special Eurobarometer 472 "Sport and physical activity" demonstrates the opposite. According to Special Eurobarometer 472 "Sport and physical activity" (December 2017), in Latvia 19% of the population have "never" engaged in sports, while according to the Special Eurobarometer 472 "Sport and physical activity" (December, 2013) 13% never engaged in physical activity.

The most popular types of physical activity / sports in Latvia are:

-  Longer distance walking (37% of the physically active population, more often older (55-64) respondents (63%) and women (47%))
-  Bicycling (33%, more often rural residents (42%) and financially less well-off respondents (45%))
-  Gymnastics (including attending a gym) (25%, more often young people under the age of 24 (33%) and most financially well-off respondents (28%))
-  Swimming (23%; more often respondents aged 35-44 (32%) and residents with average income per family member per month (34%))
-  Running (19%, more often young people under the age of 24 (32%) and men (24%)).

According to the Register of Sports Bases of the Ministry of Education and Science, currently in the Register are **1229** sports bases and **3185** sports facilities/objects. Distribution of sports bases according to the form of ownership: state owned – approximately 6%; municipal property – approximately 80%; privately owned – about 14% and 30 sports bases are assigned the status of a national sports base in accordance with the order of the Law "On the Status of the National Sports Base".



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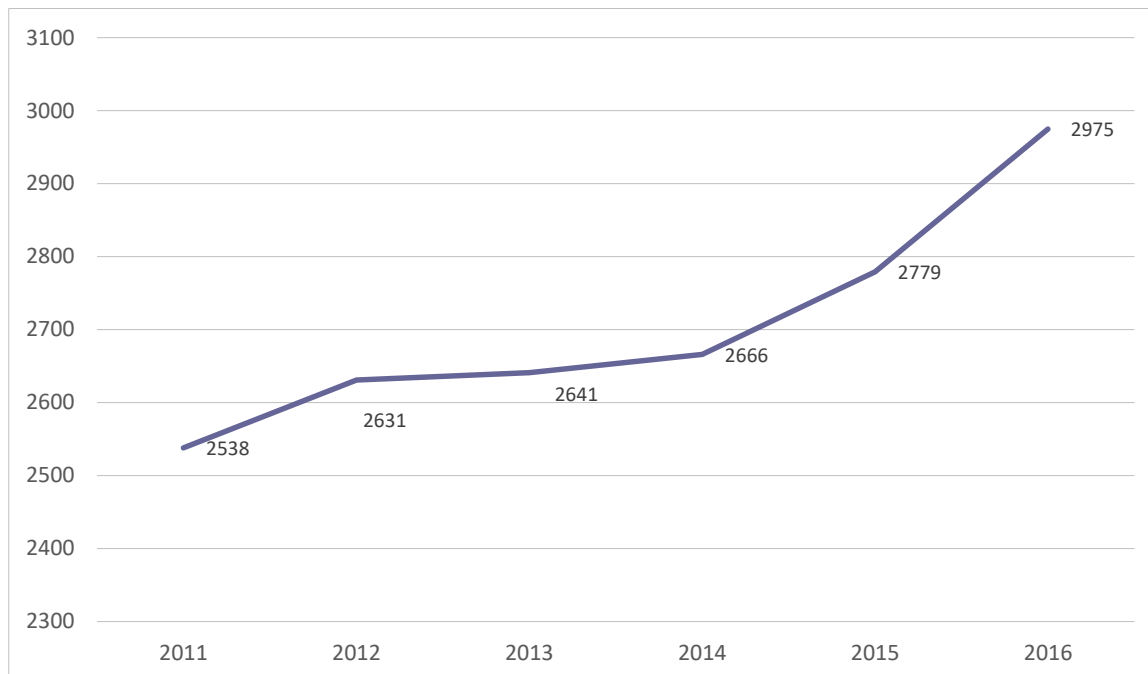
4

SPORT LABOUR MARKET STATISTICS

4. LABOUR MARKET STATISTICS

In Latvia, in the period from year 2011 to 2016, the workforce in the sports sector tends to increase. Figure 2 shows the total number of people employed in the sport sector.

Figure 2. Total number of employed people in the sport sector in years from 2011 to 2016



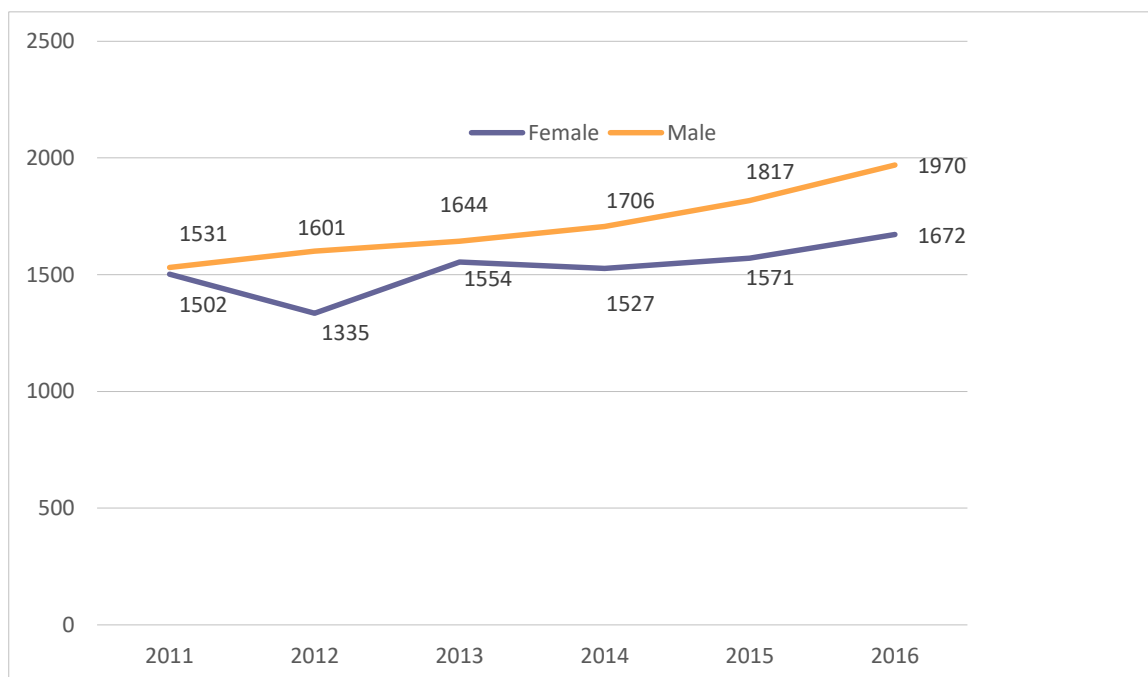
Analyzing the number of employees according to NACE codes in sports sector, it can be seen that each of the code indicators shows an increase. The highest grow is in code *93.19 Other sports activities*, where the number of employees increased from 165 employees in year 2011 to 306 employees in year 2016. The total number of the persons working in the sector is shown in Table 3.

Table 3) Total number of persons working in sport sector in years 2011 till 2016

NACE CODES	TOTAL NUMBER OF PERSONS WORKING IN THE SECTOR					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
93.1 Sports activities	2538	2631	2641	2666	2779	2975
93.11 Operation of sports facilities	996	9981	1032	1137	1165	1284
93.12 Activities of sport clubs	1110	1176	1083	994	951	1024
93.13 Fitness facilities	267	277	303	288	351	361
93.19 Other sports activities	165	197	223	247	288	306
85.51 Sports and recreation education	495	535	557	567	609	667

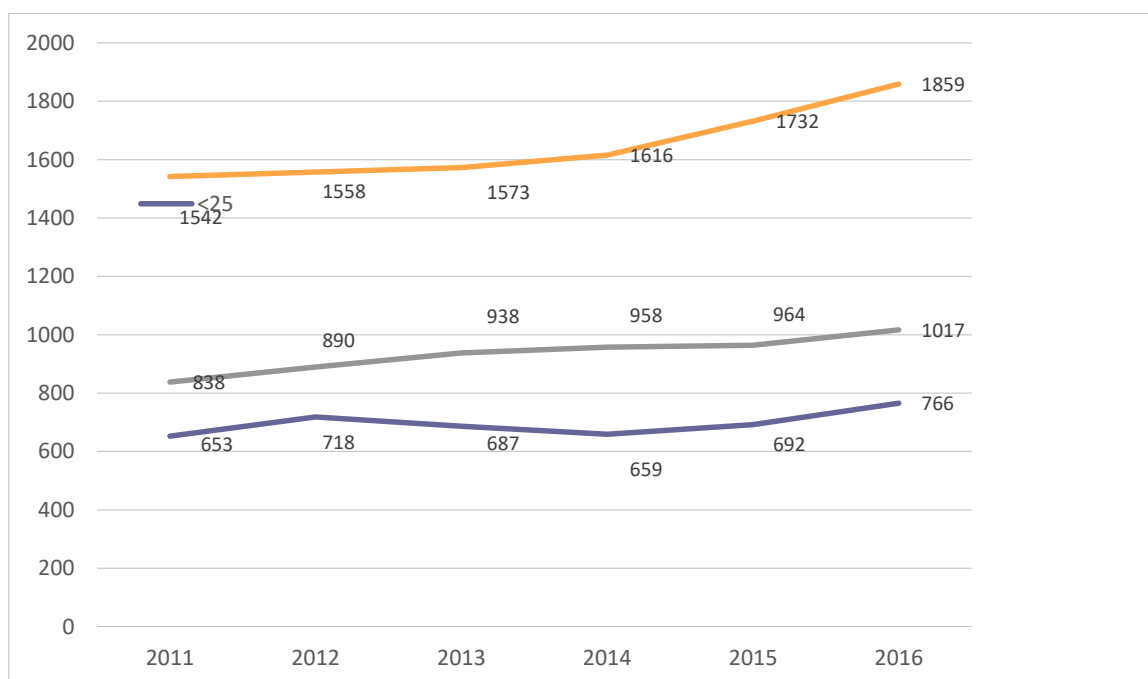
During the year 2011 till 2016, more male than female are employed in the sports sector, but the number of female are similar. Gender proportions in this period are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Number of female and male working in the sports sector in years 2011 till 2016



People at the age of 26-49 are the most active in the sports sector in Latvia - approximately 50% of all employees. The number of people working in the sports sector by age group from year 2011 till 2016 is shown in Figure 4.

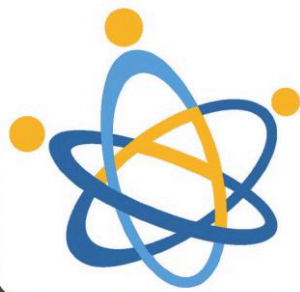
Figure 4. The number of people working in the sports sector by age groups in year 2011 till 2016



The data about employment in sport was requested from the Central Statistical Bureau and from the Business Database "Lursoft", as the Ministry of Education and Science, under the direct supervision of which is the sport sector, in cooperation with the Central Statistical Bureau collects only three indicators: number of sports teachers, number of sports coaches and number of sports organizers. It is only possible to get information on how many of them are women and men. For effective analyses of employment in sport sector It could be very useful to have more detailed information, for example, about number of persons

working in the sector by type of contract or by level of education but unfortunately there is not so detailed information.

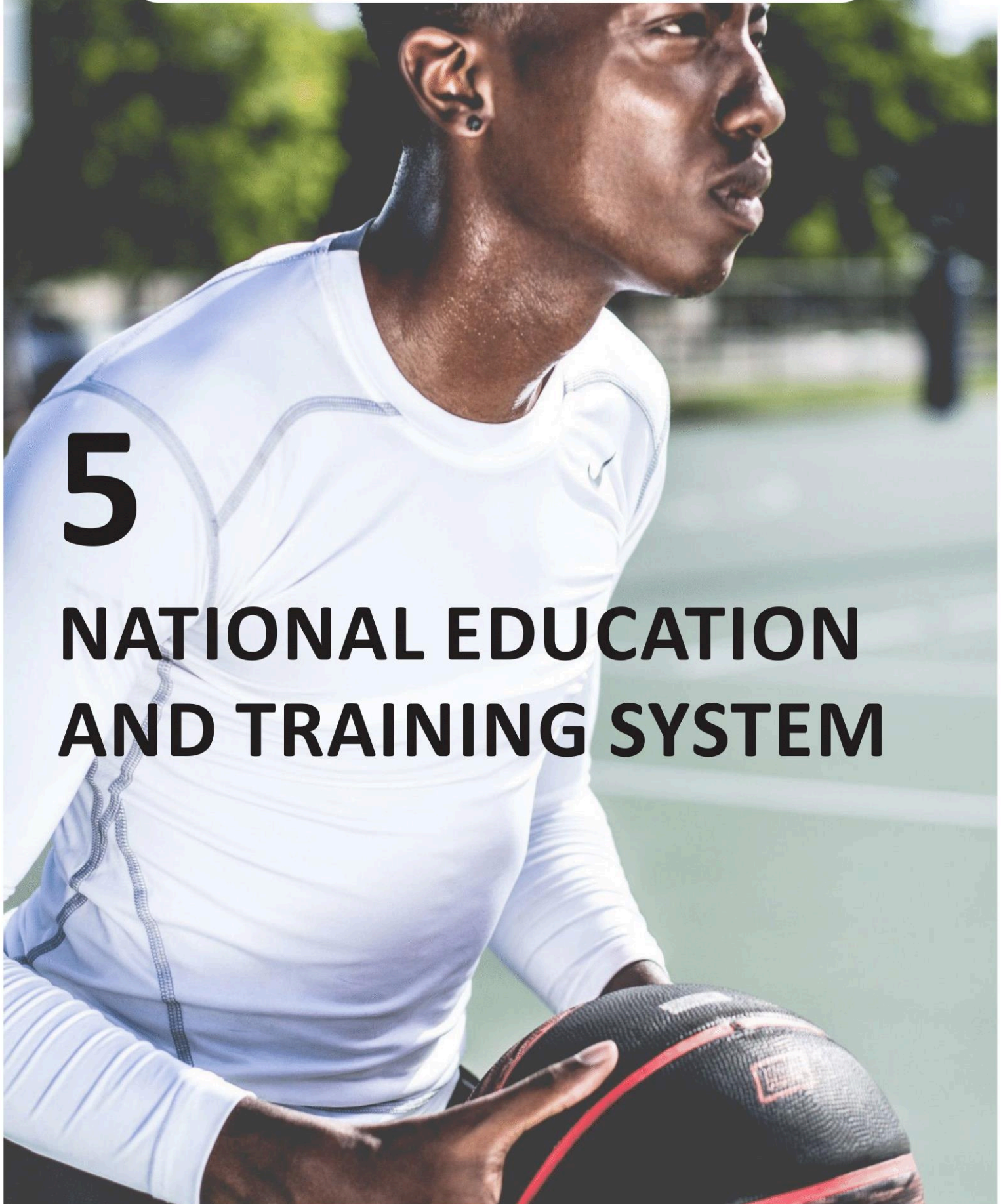
Having familiarized with data available to us about employment in sport sector it is possible to conclude that the overall number of people working in the sports sector is slightly higher and these statistical data could be close to the real situation in the field of sports sector employment in Latvia.



ESSA-SPORT
Improving the Supply of Skills to the Sector

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NATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM



5. NATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

The Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for education, science, sports, youth and state language policies in Latvia. We are here to foster a highly innovative, wealthy and integrated society in which everyone has equal opportunities for development.

Responsibilities for:

-  pre-school, basic and secondary education, including education in minority languages
-  vocational, continuing education and life-learning
-  informal and values education
-  juvenile correctional education
-  education for children and young people with special needs
-  the field of higher education and research
-  the national sports policy
-  coordinating development and implementation of youth policy
-  international cooperation in youth field
-  promoting access of young people to their rights
-  strengthening the status of the Latvian language
-  promoting engagement in foreign language learning among the public

The Ministry operates according to the principles of openness, transparency and accountability. We are committed to facilitating dialogue with the public by sharing information and providing extensive explanation of the relevant policies.

In Latvia are distinguished four levels of education. The first is pre-primary education, the main purpose of which is to promote the general development of the child, as well as prepare it for the next level of education. Pre-primary education is for 5-6 year olds. It is compulsory and is offered by general preschool educational institutions or kindergartens. The second level is primary education, which aims to provide the students with the basic knowledge and basic skills necessary for their life, and it also aims to form human values. In Latvia, basic education is compulsory; the program begins at the age of 7 and usually lasts up to 16 years. The length of basic education is 9 years and its content is determined by the mandatory national standard. This level of education is offered by elementary schools, vocational schools, special education institutions, evening (shift) schools, boarding schools and other educational institutions. 1st-4th grade educational programs are also implemented by primary schools. At the end of the primary education institution, the student must take state centralized examinations. In the case of passed examinations, the learner obtains a certificate confirming the acquisition of the basic level of education. This certificate allows you to continue your studies at secondary education level. The third level is secondary education, which can be acquired in two types of programs - general secondary education schools or vocational schools. General secondary education can be obtained over a period of three years, and it is more academic and prepares for the next level. General secondary education is divided into four directions: general education (non-accented subjects), humanitarian and social (emphasis on subjects of humanities and social sciences), mathematics, science and technology (emphasis on subjects in these categories) and professional orientation (professional orientation in a particular field, for example, in art, music, sports). All of these programs also include 8 compulsory subjects. General secondary education can be acquired at secondary schools and gymnasiums. At the end of a secondary school, the student must take examinations in 3 compulsory subjects and choose one additional subject. In the case of successful results, the learner receives a certificate of general secondary education, a Transcript of Records and the results in centralized examinations. A vocational secondary education institution is tended to acquire a professional qualification;

it offers study programs in all areas of economic activity. The duration of learning depends on the program to be completed; these programs are tailored according to the branches of the national economy. Vocational secondary education can be acquired at vocational schools and vocational secondary schools, after successful completion of which it is possible to obtain a certificate of education. The fourth level is higher education, in which it is possible to acquire knowledge by passing entrance examinations or the competition for the places in the offered study program, and learning both for a fee and for a budget. Higher-level study programs are divided into two types - academic studies and professional higher education. Academic study programs are based on scientific research and at the end of the studies is worked out an individual work - a bachelor's thesis. After acquiring a degree, it is possible to continue studies in the Master's program, after successful completion of which the student can continue his studies in the doctoral program. The duration of studies at each level of the higher education depends on the chosen study program. A professional bachelor's or master's degree can be obtained if the duration of the studies is at least 4 academic years. They are practical, focused on acquiring skills, but not on the development of scientific research. Higher education in Latvia can be obtained at higher education institutions, universities and colleges.

The system of higher education comprises academic higher education and professional higher education. There are Bachelor's and Master's degrees in both academic and professional higher education.

a) Academic higher education (LQF/EQF levels 6-7)

The aim of academic higher education is to prepare for independent research activities and to provide theoretical basis for professional activities.

The amount of an academic bachelor study programme is 120-160 Latvian credit points (180-240 ECTS credit points). The length of studies in full-time studies is from six to eight terms.

The amount of an academic master study programme is 80 Latvian credits (120 ECTS credit points). The academic education programmes are implemented in compliance with the state academic education standard.

b) Professional higher education (LQF/EQF levels 5-7)

The objective of professional higher education is to ensure the acquisition of in-depth knowledge in a concrete field, ensuring the graduates' ability to develop or improve systems, products and technologies and to prepare the graduates for creative, research and pedagogical work in this field. The graduates of the first level professional higher education programmes (college education) are awarded with the relevant education document and the Latvian professional qualification level 4 (theoretical and practical background that enables the holder to perform complicated tasks as well as to organise and manage others in their work). When graduating a second level professional higher education programme (university education), graduates are awarded with the relevant diploma and the Latvian professional qualification level 5 (highest specialist qualification which provides for practical performance as well as abilities to plan and perform research and scientific work).

The professional bachelor study programmes ensure the acquisition of professional competence, the amount of these programmes is at least 160 Latvian CP (240 ECTS credit points).

The amount of professional master study programmes is at least 40 Latvian CP (60 ECTS credit points).

There are also other types of programmes in professional higher education alongside bachelor and master programmes:

First level professional higher education (college) study programmes leading to the Latvian professional qualification level 4. The amount of the programmes is 80-120 CP (120-180 ECTS credit points), and they are basically intended for the acquisition of a profession, but the graduates may continue studies in second level professional higher education programmes.

Second level professional higher education programmes ensure the acquisition of the Latvian professional qualification level 5 upon their completion. These programmes are in the amount of at least 40 CP (60 ECTS credit points) after the acquisition of a Bachelor's degree or at least 160 CP (240 ECTS credit points) after the acquisition of secondary education. In both cases the programme should comprise practice training in the amount of at least 26 CP (39 ECTS credit points) and a state examination (including the graduation thesis) in the amount of at least 10 CP (15 ECTS credit points). If the programme of 240 CP comprises the mandatory part of a bachelor's programme, the graduates acquire the right to enrol in a master programme.

c) Doctoral studies (LQF/EQF level 8)

Since 1 January 2000 only one type of scientific degree is awarded – a Doctor's degree. The pre-condition for enrolment in a doctoral programme is a master level degree. A Doctor's degree is awarded to a person, who has successfully passed the examinations in the chosen field of research and who has elaborated under the guidance of an experienced research advisor and publicly defended a doctoral thesis, which contain the results of original research and new insights in the respective branch of science. The doctoral thesis may be elaborated within the period of 3-4 years within the framework of doctoral studies in a HEI or after carrying out an appropriate amount of independent research. The doctoral thesis can be a dissertation, a set of anonymously reviewed thematically united publications or a monograph. The doctoral degree is awarded by the Doctoral Council. A Doctor's degree is awarded according to the procedure stipulated by Law on Scientific Activity (14.04.2005, last amendments 01.01.2011). The awarding of a Doctor's degree is supervised by the National Commission for Scientific Qualification established by the CoM.

Vocational education provides the opportunity to continue education after graduating from the basic school or secondary school and to acquire the initial professional qualification, as well as to develop abilities for continuing vocational education and to acquire the right to continue education on a higher education level. Vocational education establishments offer education programmes in all lines of economic activities.

Section 4 of the Vocational Education Law (1999) defines three levels of vocational education:

1. Vocational basic education;
2. Vocational secondary education;
3. Professional higher education (more detailed in the chapter on HE):

First level professional higher education (college education);

Second level professional higher education.

The content of vocational secondary education programme is defined by the state vocational secondary education standard and the relevant occupational standard. Vocational secondary education programmes are elaborated and implemented in conformity with all lines of economic activities in Latvia.

d) Vocational basic education (LQF/EQF level 3)

Persons are enrolled in vocational basic education programmes without restrictions as regards previous education and not before the calendar year, in which the person turns 15. Vocational basic education programmes last 1-2 years. A certificate of vocational basic education indicates that the student has

acquired vocational basic education and has obtained Latvian professional qualification level 1 (theoretical and practical readiness, which allows fulfilling simple tasks in a specific sphere of practical activities, for example, a cook's or a carpenter's assistant). Those students without complete basic education before the age of 15 have the possibility to finish general basic education programme parallel to the acquisition of professional qualification.

e) Vocational education (LQF/EQF level 4)

The state vocational education standard stipulates that vocational education programmes last three years for those persons, who have finished basic school. The completion of a vocational education programme is attested by a certificate of vocational education. It attests that the awarded qualification conforms to the Latvian professional qualification level 2 (theoretical and practical readiness, which gives the possibility to perform independently qualified executor work, for example, a carpenter, a hair-dresser, a cook, a seamstress, a welder). General education subjects are integrated into vocational education programmes. Vocational education does not ensure the right to continue education in a HEI, however, to those students, who wish to continue their education, a one-year adjustment course of secondary education is offered, or they have to study additionally at an evening school.





Vocational education programmes are oriented towards acquisition of necessary knowledge and skills, which give the opportunity to perform independently the work of a qualified executor/worker, require responsibility for one's work, which is performed under instructions, and the ability to work in a group.




f) Vocational secondary education (LQF/EQF level 4)

Pupils, who have completed general or vocational basic education, may be enrolled into the vocational secondary education programmes. These programmes last for 4 years following the acquisition of basic education or for 1-2 years following the acquisition of vocational education, or up to 2 years after general secondary education. Upon completion of the programme a diploma of vocational secondary education is awarded, as well as the Latvian professional qualification level 3 (increased theoretical readiness and professional mastery, which allows performing certain duties of an executor, which comprise the planning and organisation of work, for example, various technicians, car mechanics, modellers, and hospitality service specialists). The diploma gives the right to continue education at a HEI.

According to amendments to the Law on Institutions of Higher Education and the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of 14 July 2015 No. 407, 408 and 409 as they have entered into force, the Academic Information Center (AIC) organizes the accreditation of HEIs and study directions and licensing of study programmes. Meanwhile, in order to ensure the completion of the specified functions, the AIC established a department whose competence is to organize the accreditation of HEIs and study directions, licensing of study programmes, as well as the implementation of other tasks related to higher education quality assurance. In order to draw attention to the quality function of the AIC, the name of the established department is "Quality Agency for Higher Education".

In accordance with the regulatory framework, the main functions of the Agency are as follows:

-  Ensure the accreditation of institutions of higher education and study directions, as well as licensing of study programmes.
-  Ensure the quality monitoring/improvement of study directions.
-  Perform the analysis at the system level, carry out research, participate in the projects related to external quality assurance matters.
-  Inform society about assessment results.

-  Provide the necessary information and support for HEIs/colleges and other stakeholders.
-  Develop procedures and guidelines for ensuring the functions of the Agency.
-  Participate in international networks for external quality assurance.




National Qualifications Framework is based on: The development of national qualifications frameworks in Europe, 2010; Referencing of the Latvian Education System to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) for Lifelong Learning and the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) Self-Assessment Report, Riga, May 2012.

Latvia is developing a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) based on learning outcomes in line with the needs of different subsystems of education and training and lifelong learning. It will take the existing five-level qualification structure in Vocational Education and Training (VET) and three-cycle structure in Higher Education (HE) into account.

A qualification framework for higher education in the context of EHEA has already been prepared. Its descriptors have been approved by the Higher Education Council and will soon become a part of the new Higher Education Law. A concept of attractiveness of VET was approved in December 2009 by the Cabinet of Ministers. It includes the linking the five existing Latvian qualifications levels to the eight levels of EQF.

The Ministry of Education and Science plans to submit amendments to the regulation on classification of education (75) with the aim to redefine some key terms (e.g. qualification, qualification level, knowledge, skills and competence) and to define qualifications levels and corresponding general level descriptors of knowledge, skills, and competence. An ESF (European Social Fund) project is planned to support further development of NQF.

Rationale and the main policy objectives

-  to strengthen the link between the labour market and education;
-  to strengthen the cooperation of all stakeholders involved in the design and award of qualifications;
-  to increase understanding of national qualifications and ease linking them to the EQF.

Development of NQF and referencing of national qualifications to EQF are parallel processes.

The Ministry of Education and Science has the leading role in the development of the NQF. For the Higher Education level also higher education institutions, social partners, the Rectors' Council and the Higher Education Council are involved; in VET social partners are involved.

The Latvian NQF will have eight levels: four addressing primary and secondary education and VET; four for higher education level qualifications. Levels 1-4 will be defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence.






The descriptors for higher education qualifications based on Dublin descriptors and Bloom taxonomy have been drafted and adopted by the Higher Education Council. Descriptors for basic and secondary education level qualifications are being elaborated.

There is a growing emphasis on learning outcomes in Latvia, although the term is not widely used and there is not yet a systematic approach. Skills and knowledge are the commonly used terms. Draft legislation for HE introduces the terms and principles of learning outcomes. In general education, subject-based outcomes have been defined in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Standards for VET are labour market linked (through tripartite agreements) and stipulate goals of education programmes as well as their content. There are two types of standards: occupational (professional) and vocational education standards. The occupational standards stipulate the basic and specific requirements for a specific professional qualification and describe the knowledge and skills requirement as determined by the Regulation of the Cabinet of




Ministers (Regulation on the professional standards, 2000 and the Order of developing occupational standards (2002). Standards have been developed for all occupations. The Ministry of Education and Science has established a register of occupational standards. The standards of the state vocational education stipulate the goals of the educational programmes, compulsory educational content, and assessment procedures for the education obtained. They are determined by the Regulation on the standard for state vocational secondary education (2000) and the Regulation on the standard for state vocational higher education (2001) adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers.

General aim of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) as a common reference system is to promote the development of lifelong learning principle and foster the international mobility of inhabitants. The EQF offers to Latvia an opportunity to describe its education system for the system and qualifications awarded within the system would be better understandable for other countries. Simultaneously, also Latvian inhabitants may understand better the Latvian and other national education systems, including qualifications referenced to the EQF.

The referencing of national qualifications to the EQF imparts several advantages:

-  The implementation of qualifications framework definitely will improve international comparability of the Latvian qualifications. The qualification descriptions including learning outcomes allow comparing qualifications from different countries much better. Present descriptions naming study courses or subjects acquired during the learning frequently are not only insufficient, but also ambiguous – because titles of study subjects differ, subjects of large volume are divided differently into smaller ones in different countries, as well their teaching direction is not clear. The framework also will improve international recognition of Latvian qualifications – both for studies and employability.
-  The qualifications framework will help employers to understand better education process and its outcomes. An employer is not really interested how many hours an applicant has learnt each subject, in this case credit points are not the solution. The employer wants to understand in general what level qualification the applicant has, but mostly – what the applicant knows, understands and is able to do. Actually developing qualifications framework corresponds to the needs of employers.
-  Learners acquire greater awareness of learning/teaching process if intended learning outcomes are formulated. It helps a learner in both choosing education program according to their interests and needs and understanding requirements in each study subject; thereby, the learner can plan their learning more successfully.
-  The qualifications framework provides wider possibilities to lifelong learning. Formulating learning outcomes for each education program and for each of its components promotes recognition of prior learning acquired outside formal education system. Meanwhile, formulating learning outcomes for several study subjects or their parts (modules) that are related and have to be acquired simultaneously allows providing these modules not only to learners, but also to adults, who need the relevant knowledge, skills and competence for their professional or personal improvement.
-  Qualification level descriptors based on learning outcomes may be and already are used as guidelines for developing education programs. The education programs are developed for them to ensure the attainment of general and sectoral learning outcomes. Thereby, the syllabi for the relevant study subjects are developed according to the common aim to achieve intended learning outcomes.

Yet the referencing process may also include some **risks**, which should be taken into account when referencing national qualifications to the EQF:

-  *The referencing process is arranged in a hasty and unreasoned manner.* In order to prevent this risk, the referencing process in Latvia is planned in two steps.
-  *All stakeholders do not participate in the referencing process.* During the referencing process meetings, conferences, as well as both face-to-face and virtual discussions were organized involving representatives from ministries, national and local governments' agencies, social partners including employers' organisations, trade unions and students' organisations.
-  *The stakeholders and inhabitants do not have a clear understanding on the meaning of the EQF.* Engaging the stakeholders in the consultation process raised awareness of the current process, as well as ensured their support to the provided placement of national qualifications in the EQF. Yet informing inhabitants about the EQF should be continued.

As result of referencing process, 8-level Latvian Qualifications Framework (LQF) was established. The developed level descriptors are based on learning outcomes and formal education qualifications are linked with these levels. The level descriptors were elaborated regarding national education and occupational standards, as well as the EQF level descriptors. The LQF comprises formal higher, vocational and general education sectors. The placement of Latvian formal education qualifications on eight LQF and EQF levels is illustrated in the Table 4 below.

Table 4) The placement of the Latvian formal qualifications in the LQF and EQF

Latvian education documents (qualifications)	LQF and EQF level
Certificate of general basic education (for students in special education programs for students with severe mental development disorders or several severe development disorders)	1
Certificate of general basic education (for students in special education programs for students with mental development disorders)	2
Certificate of general basic education Certificate of vocational basic education	3
Certificate of general secondary education Certificate of vocational education Diploma of vocational secondary education	4
Diploma of first level professional higher education (1st level professional higher (college) education, the length of full-time studies 2-3 years)	5
Bachelor's diploma Professional Bachelor's diploma Diploma of professional higher education, diploma of higher professional qualification (2nd level professional higher education, the length of full-time studies – at least 4 years)	6
Master's diploma Professional Master's diploma Diploma of professional higher education, diploma of higher education, diploma of higher professional qualification (2nd level professional higher education, the total length of full-time studies – at least 5 years)	7
Doctor's diploma	8

The European Union recommendation states that by 2018 Member States should take measures to recognize non-formal and informal learning. This point is included in the Education Guidelines 2014 - 2020, setting the implementation of Youthpass at the national level.

In Latvia, unfortunately, also showed that youth work is not always perceived as a learning environment and, although learning is happening, it is not always identified either by young people or by young people. Thus, the introduction of the Youthpass process would strengthen this learning dimension and improve the quality of youth work. Currently, it is planned that the organizations that can issue the Youthpass are accredited on-site.

Currently, Youth International Programs Agency (JSPA), in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Science, has been actively involved in improving the quality of non-formal education in the youth field and introducing a system of recognition of non-formal learning at national level. JSPA's proposal is to base the system of recognition of non-formal learning in Latvia on the basis of the Youthpass documents of the European Commission, which is a document recognizing the competences acquired in the non-formal education program "Erasmus + Youth in Action". The document on participation in international training, youth exchanges and European voluntary work has already received 13,000 Latvian young people and youth workers.

Youth non-formal education is any youth educational activity organised outside the formal education, which complements the knowledge acquired during formal education with skills, abilities and practical experience necessary for any socially and economically active individual. In total, 35.453 youth are involved in non-formal sports education.

There is not a national system of apprenticeships in Latvia.



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NATIONAL SPORT EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM











6. SPORT EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM

According to the educational standard, the school must provide two sports lessons per week (the length of one lesson is 40 minutes).

The main university which gives education in field of sport is Latvian Academy of Sport Education. On 6 September 2011, the Latvian Academy of Sport Education (LSPA) celebrated its 90th anniversary since its foundation and Latvian higher education in sports. The history of LSPA goes back to the spring of 1919, when the progressive press of that time noted that theoretical aspects and forms of organisation of physical education require a scientific basis. The Latvian Ministry of Education accepted this need of the society and on 6 September 1921, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted a decision to establish the Latvian Physical Education Institute (LFII). On 5 November 1991, the Republic of Latvia Ministry of People's Education issued an order No. 459, which stated that in the future, in order to better reflect the status and profile of the school, its name will be Latvian Academy of Sport Education. The Academy's first constitution was approved by the Supreme Council of the Republic of Latvia on 10 March 1992.

In the academic year 2013/2014, educational work at the university was provided by 70 lecturers, including 18 professors, 19 associate professors, 20 assistant professors, 7 lecturers and 6 assistants, of which 43 held a scientific degree. All students have graduated from the university and successfully obtained higher education and have been prepared to work at very different occupations as appropriate for the specific time period, such as:

-  Sports (physical education) teachers;
-  Social science (health education) teachers;
-  Sports coaches;
-  Physical culture (education) instructors;
-  Education and sports managers;
-  Active tourism managers/recreation specialists;
-  Physiotherapists;
-  Masseurs.

LSPA is the only university in Latvia, which coordinates and conducts research in sports and educates sports science specialists. So far, scientific activity at the school was mainly carried out at the schools' departments, but currently several scientific research institutes are being set up with their own laboratories, such as the Sports Science Institute, the Institutes of Recreation and the Environment, the Teacher Education Development Institute, and the Movement Ergonomics Institute.

According to the Sports Law, the Federation of Sports has the right to manage and coordinate work in the respective sport (Sports Law, 2002). As a result, sports federations are responsible for sports education as far as they consider it necessary. For example, the association "Latvian Football Federation" has a separate Education Division which conducts training courses for coaches, judges and other football related staff, while in most federations the educational process is episodic.

Certification of regulations provide for three categories - A, B and C category certificate issuance.

For A and B category certificates may qualify a person who has completed the highest pedagogical education in sport, as well as meets the other requirements Certification Regulations. If the sports specialist applying for the Certified cannot produce documents of sufficient seniority or the necessary number of hours spent to increase his/her qualification, he/she must pass a certification examination to obtain the certificate.

For obtaining C category A can apply a person who has at least secondary education and has during the last five years completed at least 320 hours of professional development (not less than 320 hours) in programs licensed by the Ministry of Education and Science including knowledge in sport theory, sports medicine, sports physiology, sports pedagogy, sports psychology, in the kind of sport or in the field of activity.

Private training providers engage in educational process in cooperation with educational institutions if they deem it necessary to involve them.

In total, more than 2,000 coaches are registered in Latvia and, according to national legislation, the coach certificate is issued for 5 years, but in order to renew this certificate, it is necessary to learn 50 hours in continuing education. In Latvia, there are several organizations offering continuing education seminars, such as the Latvian Academy of Sports Education, the Continuing Education Center for Trainers of Latvia, as well as sports federations are entitled to carry out coach life-long education. Obtain continuing education in disability sports, social inclusion training and sport for employability is only possible if one of these organizations offers such continuing education, but these topics are not priorities for coaches' continuing education seminars.

NQF developments are closely related to opening up the qualification system to competences acquired outside the formal system.

The system on validating professional competence obtained outside formal education is new in Latvia and was legally introduced in February 2011. Regulations stipulate the procedure on how professional competence (except for regulated professions) that corresponds to NQF levels 3 and 4 can be assessed, validated and recognised. In June 2011, the first qualifications were awarded using this procedure. For levels 5 to 8, in January 2012, cabinet regulations on recognising learning outcomes acquired in previous education and professional experience were approved to determine the procedures for assessing and recognising learning outcomes (for higher education) obtained during previous education or professional experience, as well as criteria for recognition.

In vocational education, a vocational qualification (not educational qualification) can be awarded through a validation procedure identical to the qualification that can be obtained by studying any vocational education programme (LQF levels 3 to 4). In the higher education sector several limitations to validation exist: prior experiential learning can be validated in both academic and professional programmes, but only using up to 30% of the credit points intended for studying the whole academic or professional study programme.

There is no such system of recognition of informal and non-formal education in sport.



ESSA-SPORT

Improving the Supply of Skills to the Sector

7

**FINDINGS FROM THE
EMPLOYER SKILLS
SURVEY**

7. FINDINGS FROM THE EMPLOYER SURVEY

The “European Employer Skills Survey” was launched electronically in October 2018. The survey was sent to 94 sports federations, 72 sports schools, more than 30 municipal sports organizations, more than 300 sports clubs, and more than 300 private sports clubs. A total of 49 respondents completed the questionnaire after it was sent repeatedly.

Of the 49 respondents who participated in “European Employer Skills Survey”, 42.86% represented public organizations, 18.37% represented Commercial organizations (private for profit), 16.33% represented not for profit, voluntary and charitable organizations, and 22.45% represented other organizations.

Responding to the questions about the profession of SPORT COACHES, the following skills were noted as essential: sport specific knowledge and skills (94.7%) and coaching session and program planning (94.7%). On the other hand, marketing and selling skills (31.6.3%) were marked as not important ones. Team working skills (38.24%) were noted as skills, which are the weakest or in the need of improvement.

Motivational skills (90%), team working skills (90%) and problem - solving skills (90%) were noted as essential for the OUTDOOR ACTIVITY LEADER and animator. In its turn, the skill to plan activity sessions was noted as not important (70%). Team working skills (36.36%) and the skill provide appropriate feedback (36.36%) were regarded as the weakest or in need of improvement.

Responding to the questions about the profession of FITNESS INSTRUCTOR / PERSONAL TRAINER, as essential were marked exercise science knowledge (100%) and the skill to ensure health and safety of participants (100%). Marketing and selling skills (42.9%) were noted as not important. Motivation skills (40%) were noted as the skills which are either the weakest or in need of improvement.

Responding to the questions about the profession of SPORTS OFFICIAL, as essential were marked organisational and planning skills (100%), leadership skills (100%) un decision making skills (100%), while customer service skill (53.8%) were rated as not important. Organizational and planning skills (30.77%), team working skills (30.77%) and problem - solving skills (30.77%) were identified as skills that are either the weakest or in need of improvement.

Responding to the questions about SENIOR MANAGEMENT STAFF, decision-making skills (100%) were noted as essential, while business development skills (15.4%), change leading (15.4%) and innovations facilitating and financial control and management skills (15.4%) were selected as not important ones. Knowledge of external policy issues (45.45%) and strategic thinking (45.45%) were identified as skills that are either the weakest or in need of improvement.

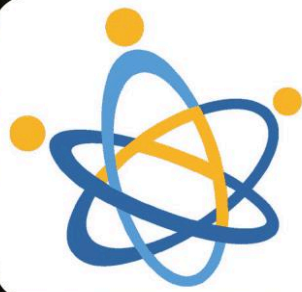
Responding to the questions about MIDDLE MANAGEMENT STAFF, team working skills (90%) were recognized as essential, while customer service skills (15.8%) and marketing and sales skills (15.8%) were selected as not important. In their turn, strategic thinking (47.06%), marketing and sales skills (47.06%) and problem - solving skills (47.06%) were identified as the weakest or in need of improvement.

Responding to the questions about OPERATIONAL STAFF, as essential were recognized technical skills and knowledge required for their role (90%), and communication skills (90%). On the other hand, marketing and selling skills (20%) and leadership skills (20%) were noted as not important. In their turn, decision-making skills (60%) were recognized as the weakest or in need of improvement.

Responding to the questions about CLERICAL AND OFFICE STAFF / RECEPTIONIST, as essential was recognized writing skill (100%), but as not important was recognized leadership skill (16.1%). As skills that are either the weakest or in need of improvement were chosen understanding written documents and writing clearly skills (42.31%) and problem-solving skills (42.31%).

An interesting fact emerged, answering the question of the professions that are most needed - the profession of sports coach ranks first (50%), also sports coaches are professions, which have vacancies (54.5%). Questionnaire data show that sports coaches are also the profession which in sport industry is the most difficult to keep (40%), and as the main reason for not having these employees in the organization is the fact that in other organizations they get better salaries (58.33%).

Although a small number of respondents participated in the questionnaire, we believe that these data are representative and reveal the real situation about employment in the field of sports. Analyzing what is currently happening in the sports sector in Latvia, neither the regression of the situation nor the progress in solving the identified problems can be expected.



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REPORT ON NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS

8. REPORT ON NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS












Round table “Labour market in sport” was organized on April 11, 2019.

There were two key issues on the agenda: a report on the research “European Employer Skills Survey” and group discussions on proposals and activity directions for improving the provision of workforce in the sports sector.

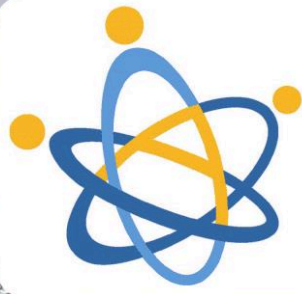
To participate in the round table discussion were invited stakeholders from major sports organizations representing the state sector and the non-governmental sector, municipalities and educational institutions, as a result in it participated the representatives of the Latvian Football Federation, the Latvian Sports Educational Institutions Board of Directors, Talsi Sports Schools, Liepaja Sports Department, Latvian Academy of Sport Education, Latvian University, Latvian Trainers Continuing Education Centre, Skiing Association, Tennis Union, Latvian Fitness and Health Promotion Industry Association, altogether 14 participants. Unfortunately, representatives of the leading ministry in the field of sport - the Ministry of Education and Science - did not participate in the discussion.

The participants of the round table, after presenting the results of the research, welcomed the execution of such a study and the existence of the data and agreed that although a small number of respondents participated in the research, the data of the research represent the current situation in the industry.

The greatest focus of the discussions was on the profession of coach, on the problem, which was also revealed by the results of the research - that there is a considerable lack of coaches in the industry. The main issues contributing to the lack of coaches were mentioned the following:

-  Lack of coaches in the sports sector;
-  Catastrophic lack of coaches in small towns;
-  Lots of aging coaches, few new coaches;
-  Small number of professional, knowledgeable coaches;
-  Most industry coaches with the lowest C category certificate;
-  Lots of without any certificate, especially in fitness;
-  Coaches with higher grades - A and B are not always knowledgeable;
-  Low pay for trainers;
-  Working coaches are very busy;
-  Unarranged pay system for coaches working in sports schools;
-  Existing coaches are not interested in improving their knowledge.

Participants in the round table agreed that the Ministry of Education and Science urgently needs to address the issue of providing the sports industry with sports coaches and providing the necessary conditions to attract and retain young people in the profession.



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**NATIONAL
CONCLUSIONS**

9. NATIONAL CONCLUSIONS

The sports sector in Latvia is developing, which is clearly evident by the increase in the number of employment. For example, in 2011 there were 2538 employees in the sports sector and in 2016 - 2975.

Employment in the sports sector in Latvia is based on the following NACE codes: operation of sport facilities (93.11), activities of sport clubs (93.12), fitness facilities, other sport activities (93.13.), sport and recreation education (85.54). The biggest employment is in operation of sports facilities (1284 in year 2016) and activities of sport clubs (1024 in year 2016).

Getting acquainted with the situation with employment in the sports sector in Latvia, the number of sports coaches should be noted as a major problem in the sports industry. According to data of the Ministry of Education and Science, there were 1572 coaches in Latvia in year 2011 and 1920 coaches in year 2016.

The "European Employer Skills Survey", made at the end of the year 2018, in which participated 49 respondents (42.86% represented public organizations, 18.37% represented Commercial organizations (private for profit), 16.33% represented not for profit, voluntary and charitable organizations, and 22.45% represented other organizations) confirmed that in field of sport there is problem with coaches. Questionnaire data show that sports coaches are also the profession which in sport industry is the most difficult to keep (40%), and as the main reason for not having these employees in the organization is the fact that in other organizations they get better salaries (58.33%).

The problem with coaches also lit up in round table discussion "Labour market in sport" which was organized on April 11, 2019. To participate in the round table discussion were invited stakeholders from major sports organizations representing the state sector and the non-governmental sector, municipalities and educational institutions, as a result in it participated the representatives of the Latvian Football Federation, the Latvian Sports Educational Institutions Board of Directors, Talsi Sports Schools, Liepaja Sports Department, Latvian Academy of Sport Education, Latvian University, Latvian Trainers Continuing Education Centre, Skiing Association, Tennis Union, Latvian Fitness and Health Promotion Industry Association, altogether 14 participants. Unfortunately, representatives of the leading ministry in the field of sport - the Ministry of Education and Science - did not participate in the discussion. In the round table discussion were two key issues on the agenda: a report on the research "European Employer Skills Survey" and group discussions on proposals and activity directions for improving the provision of workforce in the sports sector. At the end it was concluded that in order to promote the development of the sports sector, it is primarily necessary to find a solution to improve the remuneration system of sports coaches and to raise the prestige of the coaching profession.



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**NATIONAL ACTION PLAN
AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

10. NATIONAL ACTION PLAN AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Theme 1: Coach selection and provision				
Recommendation	Priority Action	Actors	Timeline	Measure of success
1. Providing funding to coaches	1. To improve the coach remuneration system for the employees of municipal sports education institutions	Ministry of Education and Science	01.01.2021	Developed motivating and competitive coach remuneration system
	2. Attract sponsors to the provision of national team coach remuneration	National federations in a kind of sport	01.01.2021	Increased remuneration for sports coaches working in sports clubs and working with national teams
Coach selection and attraction	1. Develop a dual career system for athletes to become coaches	Ministry of Education and Science; Latvian Academy of Sport Education	01.01.2021	Developed a dual career system for athletes
	2. Increasing the prestige of the coach profession	Ministry of Education and Science	01.01.2021	Developed a plan for increasing the prestige of the coach profession
Coach education and continuing education	1. Provide coaches with professional development opportunities under the guidance of highly qualified coaches	National federations in a kind of sport, Latvian Academy of Sport Education, Latvian Trainers Continuing Education Centre	01.01.2021	Regular and systematic professional development of trainers on topical topics of coach work
	2. Develop changes in coach certification regulations by raising the minimum knowledge requirements for Category C coaches.	Ministry of Education and Science	01.01.2021	Developed and implemented changes in coach certification regulations by raising the minimum knowledge requirements for Category C coaches.

Theme 2: Management of the workforce in the sports sector

Recommendation	Priority Action	Actors	Timeline	Measure of success
Improvement and analysis of statistics compilation	1. To develop a new sports industry statistics questionnaire	Ministry of Education and Science	01.01.2021	Developed a new detailed sports industry workforce data compilation questionnaire
	2. To perform analysis of sports work force statistics.	Ministry of Education and Science	01.01.2021 Every 2 years	Sports workforce statistical data analysis with problem identification and proposed problem solutions



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