



Strasbourg, 19 February 2020

CDL-REF(2020)009

Opinion No. 975/2020

Or. Engl.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW
(VENICE COMMISSION)

LATVIA

GENERAL EDUCATION LAW

AND

REPORT (*)

**ON THE INITIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
OF THE DRAFT LAW
ON AMENDMENTS TO THE GENERAL EDUCATION LAW**

(*) *Unofficial translation provided by the authorities*

Text consolidated by Valsts valodas centrs (State Language Centre) with amending laws of:

- 5 August 1999 [shall come into force from 13 August 1999];
- 23 September 1999 [shall come into force from 27 October 1999];
- 20 June 2000 [shall come into force from 21 July 2000];
- 14 September 2000 [shall come into force from 4 October 2000];
- 31 October 2002 [shall come into force from 21 November 2002];
- 23 September 2004 [shall come into force from 2 October 2004];
- 16 June 2005 [shall come into force from 12 July 2005];
- 11 October 2007 [shall come into force from 8 November 2007];
- 16 October 2008 [shall come into force from 12 November 2008];
- 12 December 2008 [shall come into force from 1 January 2008];
- 16 June 2009 [shall come into force from 1 July 2009];
- 1 December 2009 [shall come into force from 1 January 2010];
- 23 December 2010 [shall come into force from 1 January 2011];
- 1 July 2011 [shall come into force from 3 August 2011];
- 15 December 2011 [shall come into force from 1 January 2012];
- 15 November 2012 [shall come into force from 1 January 2013];
- 9 July 2013 [shall come into force from 7 August 2013];
- 18 June 2015 [shall come into force from 16 July 2015];
- 22 March 2018 [shall come into force from 16 April 2018];
- 21 June 2018 [shall come into force from 18 July 2018].

If a whole or part of a section has been amended, the date of the amending law appears in square brackets at the end of the section. If a whole section, paragraph or clause has been deleted, the date of the deletion appears in square brackets beside the deleted section, paragraph or clause.

The *Saeima*¹ has adopted and
the President has proclaimed the following Law:

General Education Law

Chapter I General Provisions

Section 1. Terms Used in this Law

(1) Terms used in this Law correspond to those terms used in the Education Law unless specified otherwise in this Law.

(2) The following terms are used in this Law:

1) **certificate of basic education** – an education document attesting to the completion of the basic education programme;

2) **diploma of general secondary education** – an education document attesting to the completion of the general secondary education programme;

3) **certificate** – a document attesting to the completion of part of the basic education or general secondary education programme;

4) [9 July 2013];

4¹) [*Clause shall come into force on 1 September 2020 and shall be included in the wording of the Law as of 1 September 2019. See Paragraph 27 of Transitional Provisions*];

4²) [*Clause shall come into force on 1 September 2020 and shall be included in the wording of the Law as of 1 September 2019. See Paragraph 27 of Transitional Provisions*];

5) **subject** – a system of knowledge, skills, and attitudes developed according to the field of science, technology, and art to be acquired within the framework of a particular educational

programme, taking into account scientifically justified peculiarities of the age group of the educatee;

6) **lesson (class) load** – the number of lessons of regular attendance per study week included in an educational programme;

7) [21 June 2018 / See Paragraph 35 of Transitional Provisions];

8) **social correction** – an educational programme methodologically and organisationally adjusted to persons of compulsory school age with socially deviant behaviour;

9) **extended-day group** – the possibility provided by an educational institution for educatees to receive pedagogical assistance and to spend their leisure time outside mandatory classes in an organised way;

10) **report card** – a document attesting to the learning achievements of an educatee in subjects;

11) **certificate of basic education or general secondary education** – a document attesting to the learning achievements of an educatee in a subject in which a centralised examination is organised;

12) **centralised examination** – an examination developed according to a special methodology and organised according to uniform procedures at the national level for the assessment of the learning achievements of educatees in a particular subject of a basic education and general secondary education programme;

13) **assessment** – an attestation of the acquired level of knowledge, skills, and abilities that are set out in an educational programme;

14) **special needs** – a necessity to receive such support and rehabilitation which creates an opportunity for an educatee to complete an educational programme, taking into account his or her health condition, abilities, and level of development;

14¹) **special education development centre** – a special educational institution founded by a local government to which the status of a special education development centre has been granted and in which consultative and methodological support is provided to educatees with special needs, including children of pre-school age, their legal representatives, and teachers;

15) **international testing authority** – an authority which ensures an examination in a foreign language and issues a document on the results of the examination which are aligned with the language proficiency levels specified in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

[11 October 2007; 1 July 2011; 9 July 2013; 18 June 2015; 21 June 2018 / See Paragraph 38 of Transitional Provisions]

Section 2. Purpose of this Law

The purpose of this Law is to govern the activities of persons in State and local government educational institutions and other persons involved in the process of implementing general education, to specify their rights and obligations, and also to create an environment for the development of a creative and comprehensively educated individual, for uninterrupted continuation of the education of educatees, for the acquisition of a profession, and for independent orientation in public and State life.

Section 3. Levels and Types of General Education

(1) General education shall be implemented at the following levels of general education:

- 1) pre-school education;
- 2) basic education;
- 3) secondary education.

(2) Specific types of general education shall be the following:

- 1) special education;
- 2) social correction;
- 3) [21 June 2018 / See Paragraph 35 of Transitional Provisions].

[21 June 2018]

Chapter II Organisation of General Education

Section 4. Competence of the Cabinet

The Cabinet shall:

1) determine the procedures for the licensing and accreditation of general education programmes;

2) found, reorganise, and liquidate State general education institutions, as well as State special education institutions upon a proposal of the Minister for Education and Science;

3) [16 June 2009];

3¹) determine the procedures by which the earmarked grant from the State budget shall be calculated and allocated for the work remuneration of teachers of local government general basic and general secondary education institutions, and also general secondary education institutions of State higher education institutions;

3²) determine the procedures by which the grant from the State budget shall be calculated and allocated for work remuneration of pre-school education teachers of local government educational institutions employed in the education of children from five years of age;

3³) determine the procedures by which the State shall finance the work remuneration of teachers who implement pre-school education programmes provided for children from five years of age until commencing the acquisition of basic education in private educational institutions.

4) [16 June 2009];

5) determine the criteria and procedures for granting and annulling the status of gymnasium and State gymnasium;

6) determine the criteria by which the pedagogical medical commission shall provide an opinion on the educational programme most appropriate for the needs of an educatee with special needs;

7) determine the criteria and procedures for granting the status of special education development centre to special educational institutions;

8) determine the competence of the pedagogical medical commissions of State and local governments and the professional requirements for members of the commission;

8¹) determine the content of the information system of State and local government pedagogical medical commissions, and the procedures for its creation, maintenance, and updating;

9) determine the procedures for exempting educatees from State examinations;

10) [16 June 2005];

11) determine the State general education standards and the standards for subjects;

11¹) [*Clause shall come into force on 1 September 2020 and shall be included in the wording of the Law as of 1 September 2019. See Paragraph 27 of Transitional Provisions*];

12) each school year determine the time and procedures for the course of State test works according to the State general education standards;

12¹) determine the procedures by which in the general secondary education programme a foreign language centralised examination shall be replaced with an examination in a foreign language by an international testing authority, and approve the list of international testing authorities;

13) determine the procedures for the assessment of learning achievements in special education programmes;

14) [16 June 2009];

15) determine the procedures by which educatees suffering from a long-term illness shall be educated outside an educational institution;

16) determine the beginning and end date of the academic year and study semester, as well as the dates of holidays;

17) determine the mandatory documentation necessary for the organisation of pedagogical process in general education institutions;

18) determine the procedures for enrolling educatees in general education programmes and discharging from them, as well as the mandatory requirements for moving educatees up into the next grade in such programmes;

18¹) determine the procedures for organising competitions in subjects;

19) fulfil other functions related to general education that are specified in this Law and the Education Law.

[20 June 2000; 31 October 2002; 16 June 2005; 16 June 2009; 1 December 2009; 1 July 2011; 15 December 2011; 18 June 2015; 21 June 2018 / Amendment to Clause 5 regarding the deletion of the words “gymnasium and” shall come into force on 1 September 2021 and shall be included in the wording of the Law as of 1 September 2021. Amendment to Clause 11 regarding the deletion of the words “and the standards of study subjects” in relation to the implementation of general educational programmes in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10 shall come into force on 1 September 2020, in relation to the implementation of general educational programmes in grades 2, 5, 8, and 11 – on 1 September 2021, and in relation to the implementation of general educational programmes in grades 3, 6, 9, and 12 – on 1 September 2022. See Paragraphs 27, 28 and 29 of Transitional Provisions]

Section 5. Competence of the Ministry of Education and Science

The Ministry of Education and Science shall:

- 1) develop models for general education programmes and subject curricula;
- 2) [16 June 2005];
- 3) [16 June 2005];
- 4) organise the development of the content and methodology for general education;
- 5) evaluate and approve the educational literature to be used in the learning process;
- 6) [16 June 2005];
- 7) [16 June 2005];
- 8) [16 June 2005];
- 9) [11 October 2007];
- 10) [16 June 2005];
- 11) [16 June 2005];
- 12) [16 June 2005];
- 13) [16 June 2005];
- 14) [16 June 2005];
- 15) [16 June 2005];
- 16) [16 June 2005];
- 17) [16 June 2005];
- 18) fulfil other functions specified in this Law and the Education Law.

[23 September 1999; 20 June 2000; 14 September 2000; 31 October 2002; 16 June 2005; 11 October 2007; 1 July 2011]

Section 6. Competence of Local Governments

The Education Law and other laws and regulations determine the competence of local governments in the implementation of general education.

Chapter III General Educational Institution

Section 7. Founding, Reorganisation, and Liquidation of a General Education Institution

(1) A general education institution shall be founded by the State, local governments, State higher education institutions, as well as private individuals. State higher educational institutions shall found a general secondary education institution.

(2) A general education institution shall be reorganised and liquidated by its founder. A State or local government general education institution, as well as a general secondary education institution of a State higher education institution shall be reorganised and liquidated upon an agreement with the Ministry of Education and Science.

[18 June 2015]

Section 8. Legal Basis for the Activities of a General Education Institution

The legal basis for the activities of a general education institution shall be this Law, the Education Law, other laws and regulations, as well as the by-laws of the general education institution.

Section 9. By-laws of a General Education Institution

(1) The by-laws of a general education institution shall include:

- 1) the name and legal address of the educational institution;
- 2) the founder of the educational institution and the legal status of the founder;
- 3) the objectives, main directions of activity, and tasks of the educational institution;
- 4) the educational programmes to be implemented in the educational institution;
- 5) the organisation of the educational process;
- 6) the rights and obligations of educatees;
- 7) the rights and obligations of teachers and other employees;
- 8) [9 July 2013];
- 9) the procedures for the establishment and the competence of the self-government of the educational institution;
- 10) the procedures for the establishment and the competence of the pedagogical council of the educational institution;
- 11) the procedures for accepting internal regulatory enactments of the educational institution and the institution or administration official to whom a private individual, upon submitting the relevant submission, may contest an administrative act issued by the educational institution or an actual action thereof;
- 12) the economic activity of the educational institution;
- 13) the sources and procedures for financing the educational institution;
- 14) the procedures for reorganising and liquidating the educational institution;
- 15) the procedures for accepting the by-laws of the educational institution and its amendments;
- 16) other important regulations which are not in contradiction with this Law, the Education Law, and other laws and regulations.

(2) The by-laws of a general education institution shall be approved by the founder.

[16 June 2005; 9 July 2013]

Section 10. Activities of a General Education Institution

(1) The basic task of a general education institution is the implementation of general education programmes. A general education institution may implement one or several educational programmes.

(2) In accordance with this Law, the Education Law, and other laws and regulations, as well as the by-laws approved by the founders of the general education institution, a general education institution shall independently:

- 1) organise and implement the educational process;
- 2) select educational work methods and forms.

(3) A general education institution is entitled to take the following actions independently:

- 1) implement interest-related education programmes, further education programmes, and other educational programmes;
- 2) develop the internal regulations of the institution;

- 3) provide catering services;
- 4) provide services for official accommodation facilities, boarding schools;
- 5) perform economic activities and other types of activities if it does not interfere with the implementation of the general education programme.

[16 June 2005]

Section 11. Management of a General Education Institution

- (1) A general education institution shall be managed by the head of the institution.
- (2) The head of a general education institution shall be responsible for:
 - 1) the implementation of educational programmes;
 - 2) the provision of the educational institution with educators;
 - 3) the identification of the special needs of educatees and their education according to special education programmes;
 - 4) ensuring the operations of the educational institution and fulfilment of the tasks of the institution;
 - 5) rational use of the financial and material resources of the educational institution;
 - 6) the compliance with the laws and regulations in the operations of the educational institution.
- (3) The head of a general education institution shall be hired for the position and released therefrom by the founder of the corresponding educational institution.

[20 June 2000]

Section 12. Pedagogical Council of an Educational Institution

- (1) A pedagogical council shall be formed in basic and general secondary education institutions for addressing different issues related to learning and pedagogical processes. The pedagogical council shall be chaired by the head of the educational institution, and its composition shall include all educators employed in the educational institution and the medical practitioner of the educational institution. Meetings of the pedagogical council shall be convened at least once every six months and its course shall be recorded in the minutes.
- (2) The pedagogical council shall:
 - 1) analyse the pedagogical process and develop proposals for the improvement of its results;
 - 2) discuss organisational issues of the pedagogical process and pedagogical experience;
 - 3) form a unified pedagogical position on the basic organisational issues of the pedagogical process;
 - 4) [21 June 2018];
 - 5) develop a draft plan for the operation of the educational institution.

[16 June 2005; 21 June 2018]

Section 13. Council of an Educational Institution

[9 July 2013]

Chapter IV Content of General Education

Section 14. Documents Governing General Education

Acquisition of general education, the content and organisation thereof according to the type, level, and target group of education shall be determined in the following documents:

- 1) the State general education standard;
- 1¹) the guidelines for the State pre-school education;
- 2) standards for the study subjects of general education;
- 3) general education programmes;

4) curricula of general education subjects.
[1 December 2009]

Section 15. State General Education Standard

- (1) The State general education standard shall determine:
- 1) the main objectives and tasks of general education programmes;
 - 2) the compulsory content of general education;
 - 3) the basic principles and procedures for the assessment of the education acquired by educatees.
- (2) The State general education standard shall be compulsory for everyone who develops and implements general education programmes, except for pre-school education programmes.
[31 October 2002]

Section 15.¹ Guidelines for the State Pre-school Education

- (1) The guidelines for the State pre-school education shall determine:
- 1) the main objectives and tasks of the implementation of the content of pre-school education;
 - 2) the values to be included in the content and process of pre-school education;
 - 3) the compulsory content of pre-school education, the planned outcomes of its acquisition in the fields of study, and principles for its implementation;
 - 4) the basic principles for the assessment of pre-school education.
- (2) The guidelines for the State pre-school education shall be compulsory to anyone who develops and implements pre-school education programmes.
[1 December 2009; 21 June 2018 / Amendments to Paragraph one, Clause 1, and also the new wording of Clauses 2 and 3 shall come into force on 1 September 2019. See Paragraph 31 of Transitional Provisions]

Section 16. Standard for a Subject of the General Education

- The standard for a subject shall determine:
- 1) the main objectives and tasks of the subject;
 - 2) the compulsory content of the subject;
 - 3) the basic requirements for the acquisition of the subject;
 - 4) the forms and methodological techniques for the assessment of learning achievements.

Section 17. General Education Programme

- (1) General education programme is a document which shall specify the following in accordance with the Education Law, Cabinet regulations and the State general education standard or the guidelines for the State pre-school education :
- 1) the main objectives and tasks of the educational programme;
 - 2) the content of education;
 - 3) the plan for the implementation of the educational programme;
 - 4) the requirements in relation to the previous education (except for the pre-school education programmes);
 - 5) the criteria and procedures for the assessment of the acquired education or the basic assessment principles;
 - 6) the evaluation and justification of the personnel, financial and material resources necessary for the implementation of the educational programme.
- (2) General education programmes may be developed by their implementers in conformity with the classification of educational programmes.
[31 October 2002; 1 December 2009]

Section 18. Licensing, Accreditation, and Registration of General Education Programmes

- (1) A general education institution may implement only licensed general education programmes.
- (2) General education programmes shall be licensed, accredited, and registered in the Register of Educational Programmes in accordance with the procedures laid down in the Education Law.
- (3) [21 June 2018]
- (4) The decision on the accreditation of general education institutions and general education programmes shall be taken within six months from the day of submitting the relevant application. [31 October 2002; 1 July 2011; 21 June 2018]

Section 19. Curriculum of a General Education Subject

- (1) The curriculum of a subject shall be a component of the general education programme and shall include:
 - 1) the objectives and tasks of the subject;
 - 2) the content of the subject;
 - 3) the order in which the learning content shall be acquired and the time provided for its acquisition;
 - 4) the forms and methods for the assessment of learning achievements;
 - 5) the list of the teaching aids and methods to be used for the acquisition of the learning content.
- (2) A teacher has the right to develop subject's curriculum according to the standard for the general education subject and the general education programme which includes the subject, or to select subject's curriculum from the model subject curricula. [31 October 2002; 1 July 2011]

Part V Pre-school Education

Section 20. Pre-school Education Programme

- (1) Pre-school education programme shall ensure the preparation of an educatee for the acquisition of basic education, comprising in terms of the content:
 - 1) the development of individuality;
 - 2) the intellectual, physical and social development;
 - 3) the development of initiative, inquisitiveness, independence, and creative activity;
 - 4) strengthening of health;
 - 5) psychological preparation for the commencement of the acquisition of basic education;
 - 6) acquisition of the basic skills for using the official language.
- (2) Pre-school education programme shall be completed by children up to seven years of age. [20 June 2000; 31 October 2002; 1 December 2009; 21 June 2018 / Amendment to the introductory part of Paragraph one regarding the replacement of the words "comprising" with the words "comprising in terms of the content" shall come into force on 1 September 2019. See Paragraph 31 of Transitional Provisions]

Section 20.1 Compulsory Nature of the Preparation of a Child of Pre-school Age

- (1) Completion of the pre-school education programme shall be compulsory for children from five years of age.
- (2) Local governments shall ensure the preparation of children from five years of age for the acquisition of basic education in their administrative territory. [1 December 2009; 21 June 2018]

Section 21. Access to Pre-school Education

Local governments shall ensure equal access to pre-school education institutions in their administrative territory to children from eighteen months of age.

[1 July 2011]

Section 21.¹ Compulsory Nature of the Preparation of a Child of Pre-school Age

[16 June 2009]

Section 22. Implementation of the Pre-school Education Programme

The pre-school education programme shall be implemented in a pre-school education institution or another educational institution, as well as in a family by receiving methodological support in the education institution implementing a licensed pre-school education programme or in the pre-school education advisory centre.

[1 December 2009]

Section 23. State Pre-school Education Centre

[16 June 2009]

Section 24. Pre-school Education Advisory Centres

(1) Pre-school education advisory centres shall provide advisory and methodological support to parents and educational institutions for the education of children of pre-school age and for the preparation of children from five years of age for school.

(2) The pre-school education advisory centre shall be founded as a unit of a pre-school education institution or as an independent education support institution.

(3) The procedures according to which parents shall receive advisory and methodological support from the pre-school education advisory centre shall be determined by the founder.

[16 June 2005; 16 June 2009; 1 December 2009]

Section 25. Conditions for the Founding of a Pre-school Education Institution

(1) A local government may found a pre-school education institution for not less than 10 children of pre-school age who live in the administrative territory of the local government if it is requested by parents.

(2) [21 June 2018]

[21 June 2018]

Section 26. Enrolment of Educatees in Pre-school Education Institutions

(1) Educatees shall be enrolled in the general pre-school education institutions of local governments in accordance with the procedures specified by the founder of the educational institution, taking into account the provisions of the Education Law and other laws.

(2) Educatees shall be enrolled in and discharged from special pre-school education institutions and groups in accordance with the procedures specified by the Cabinet.

(3) The procedures for enrolling educatees in private pre-school education institutions shall be determined by the founder.

(4) Pre-school education institutions may not organise entrance examinations.

[20 June 2000; 11 October 2007; 21 June 2018]

Section 27. Number of Educatees in a Group of a General Pre-school Education Institution

[16 June 2005]

Section 28. Lesson Load for Educatees in Pre-school Age

[1 December 2009]

Chapter VI Basic Education

Section 29. Basic Education Institutions

(1) Basic education institutions are educational institutions which implement basic education programmes. Depending on the structure of the educational institution and the organisation of the learning process at the educational institution, the types of educational institutions are as follows:

- 1) primary school;
- 2) elementary school.

(2) The basic education programme may also be acquired at a industrial education school, special education institution, social correction education institution, secondary school, including such to which the status of State gymnasium has been granted, and vocational secondary education institution subordinate to the Ministry of Culture.

[21 June 2018 / The new wording of Paragraph two shall come into force on 1 September 2019. See Paragraph 35 of Transitional Provisions]

Section 30. Implementation of the Basic Education Programme

(1) Complete basic education programme shall be implemented within nine years.

(2) *[16 June 2005]*

(2¹) The basic education programme may be implemented in two stages. The educational programme of the first stage of basic education shall be implemented from grades 1 to 6, and the educational programme of the second stage of basic education shall be implemented from grades 7 to 9.

(3) Educational programmes of the first stage of basic education shall be implemented in primary schools.

(4) Elementary schools shall implement complete basic education programmes.

(5) The basic education programme may be combined with an educational programme for ethnic minorities, including therein the native language of an ethnic minority and learning content related to the identity of ethnic minorities and the integration of ethnic minorities into Latvian society.

[16 June 2005; 1 July 2011; 21 June 2018]

Section 31. Enrolment of Educatees in a Basic Education Institution

(1) An educational institution implementing basic education programmes may not organise entrance examinations for the enrolment of educatees for grades 1–9, except in the cases referred to in Paragraph three of this Section.

(2) State gymnasiums, upon enrolling educatees in the educational programme of the second stage of basic education, are entitled, with the permission of the founder, to organise entrance examinations according to the State basic education standard and to determine criteria for enrolment. If there are several State gymnasiums in the territory of the local government, the local government is entitled to organise uniform entrance examinations and to determine uniform criteria for enrolment.

(3) A State educational institution in which a vocationally oriented education programme is implemented concurrently with a general basic education programme is entitled, with the permission of the founder, to determine requirements for enrolment which an educatee must meet to be able to commence the completion of a vocationally oriented education programme.

[20 June 2000; 16 June 2005; 21 June 2018]

Section 32. Compulsory Nature of Basic Education

(1) The acquisition of basic education shall be compulsory.

(2) The acquisition of basic education shall be commenced in the calendar year when the educatee attains 7 years of age.

(3) An educatee is entitled to commence the acquisition of basic education one year earlier or later depending on his or her health condition and psychological preparedness according to the wishes of parents on the basis of an opinion of the family doctor.

(4) Institutions in which educatees up to 18 years of age reside (child care institutions, orphanages, medical treatment institutions, places of imprisonment, accommodation centres for asylum seekers, etc.) shall ensure possibilities for undertaking the completion of the basic education programme.

(5) [16 June 2005]

[31 October 2002; 16 June 2005; 1 December 2009; 21 June 2018]

Section 33. Lesson Load in the Basic Education Programme

The lesson load per week in one basic education programme shall not exceed:

- 1) 22 lessons in grade 1;
- 2) 23 lessons in grade 2;
- 3) 24 lessons in grade 3;
- 4) 26 lessons in grade 4;
- 5) 28 lessons in grade 5;
- 6) 30 lessons in grade 6;
- 7) 32 lessons in grade 7;
- 8) 34 lessons in grades 8 and 9.

[16 June 2005 / Amendments to Clause 1 shall come into force on 1 September 2005, but to Clause 2 – on 1 September 2006. See Transitional Provisions]

Section 34. Number of Lessons per Day in the Basic Education Programme

Number of lessons per day in the basic education programme shall not exceed:

- 1) 5 lessons in grades 1 to 3;
- 2) 6 lessons in grades 4 to 5;
- 3) 7 lessons in grades 6 to 7;
- 4) 8 lessons in grades 8 and 9.

Section 35. Duration of a Lesson in Basic Educational Institutions

The duration of one lesson in grades 1 to 9 shall be 40–45 minutes. The duration of lessons shall be determined by the head of an educational institution.

[16 June 2005]

Section 36. Duration of the Academic Year in Basic Education Institutions

The duration of the academic year shall be:

- 1) 34 weeks in grade 1;
- 2) 35 weeks in grades 2–8;
- 3) 37 weeks in grade 9.

Section 37. Compulsory Content of Basic Education

The compulsory content of basic education shall be determined by the State basic education standard.

Section 38. Fee for the Completion of the Basic Education Programme

- (1) State and local government basic education institutions may not specify a fee for the completion of a basic educational programme.
- (2) Private basic education institutions are entitled to specify a fee for learning.

Section 39. Documents on the Completion of the Basic Education Programme

- (1) Educatees shall receive a certificate of general basic education and a report card confirming completion of the general basic education programme in accordance with the procedures specified by the Cabinet.
 - (2) Assessment for those subjects in which a centralised examination is organised shall be certified by a certificate of basic education. The assessment of learning achievements for the corresponding subjects that is indicated in the certificate of basic education shall serve as the selection criteria for the enrolment of educatees in secondary level education programmes if they include the organisation of entrance examinations.
 - (3) A certificate shall be issued to an educatee for the completion of a general basic education programme if:
 - 1) no assessment has been obtained in any subject for year or in any of the State examinations;
 - 2) assessment for year obtained in two or more study subjects or in a State examination in conformity with the procedures for the assessment of learning achievements of an educatee laid down in the State educational standard is lower than the mark of 4. Assessment for year and assessment in a State examination in the same subject shall be deemed as one assessment.
- [31 October 2002; 1 July 2011 / Amendment to Paragraph three shall come into force on 1 September 2011. See Paragraph 17 of Transitional Provisions]*

Chapter VII General Secondary Education

Section 40. General Secondary Education Institutions

- (1) Depending on the structure of an educational institution and the organisation of the learning process in the educational institution, the types of general secondary education institutions shall be as follows:
 - 1) secondary schools;
 - 2) evening (shift) secondary schools;
 - 3) gymnasiums.
- (2) The main purpose of a secondary education institution is to implement basic and general secondary education programmes.
- (3) The main purpose of a gymnasium is to implement general secondary education programmes. A gymnasium is also entitled to implement partial basic education programmes for grades 7 to 9.
- (4) The status of State gymnasium shall be granted to an educational institution by the Cabinet.
- (3) The basic task of a State gymnasium is to implement general secondary education programmes. The State gymnasium is also entitled to implement an educational programme of the second stage of general basic education or a complete basic education programme, as well as an international baccalaureate programme. In addition to the implementation of the abovementioned educational programmes, a State gymnasium shall fulfil the functions of the regional methodological centre and the centre for further education of teachers.
- (5) The basic task of evening (shift) secondary school is to implement general secondary education programmes to ensure the persons who have not or are not acquiring education in other general education institutions due to family circumstances, work, socio-economic reasons, health condition or other reasons a possibility to acquire education. Evening (shift) secondary schools may also implement basic education programmes and adult non-formal education programmes.

(6) The basic task of a general secondary education institution of a State higher education institution is the implementation of general secondary education programmes.

[1 July 2011; 18 June 2015; 21 June 2018 / The new wording of Paragraph four shall come into force on 1 September 2018. Amendment regarding the deletion of Paragraph one, Clause 2 and Paragraph five shall come into force on 1 September 2020 and shall be included in the wording of the Law as of 1 September 2020. The new wording of Paragraph one, Clause 3 and amendment regarding the deletion of Paragraph three shall come into force on 1 September 2021 and shall be included in the wording of the Law as of 1 September 2021. See Paragraphs 29, 30, and 33 of Transitional Provisions]

Section 41. Enrolment of Educatees in General Secondary Education Institutions

(1) Every person regardless of his or her age who has acquired a school report on basic education is entitled to undertake the completion of a general secondary education programme.

(2) Upon enrolling educatees in a general secondary education programme, the State, local government general secondary education institutions and general secondary education institutions of State higher education institutions are entitled, with the permission of the founder, to organise entrance examinations according to the State basic education standard and to determine criteria for enrolment. General secondary educational institutions are not entitled to organise entrance examinations in those study subjects in which educatees are taking centralised examinations.

[18 June 2015; 21 June 2018]

Section 42. Directions of General Secondary Education Programmes

(1) Educational institutions are entitled to develop general secondary education programmes in the following directions:

1) the general education direction determined by the group of educational programmes without particularly emphasised subjects;

2) the humanities and social direction determined by the group of educational programmes with particular emphasis on humanities subjects and social science subjects;

3) the mathematics, natural sciences and technology direction determined by the group of educational programmes with particular emphasis on mathematics, natural sciences and technology subjects;

4) the vocational direction determined by the group of educational programmes with particular emphasis on vocational orientation.

(2) A general secondary education programme of the corresponding direction may be combined with the educational programme for ethnic minorities, including therein the native language of the ethnic minority and learning content related to the identity of ethnic minorities and the integration of ethnic minorities into Latvian society.

Section 43. Compulsory Content of General Secondary Education Programmes

The compulsory content of general secondary education programmes shall be determined in the State general secondary education standard.

Section 44. Lesson Load in a General Secondary Education Programme

(1) The lesson load in one general secondary education programme in grades 10–12 may not exceed 36 lessons per week.

(2) The number of lessons in one general secondary educational programme shall not exceed 8 lessons per day.

Section 45. Duration of Lessons in General Secondary Education Institutions

The duration of a lesson in a general secondary education institution shall be 40 to 45 minutes and this shall be determined by the head of the educational institution.

Section 46. Duration of the Academic Year in General Secondary Education Institutions

The duration of the academic year in general secondary education institutions shall be:

- 1) 35 weeks in grades 10 and 11;
- 2) 38 weeks in grade 12.

Section 47. Fee for the Completion of the General Secondary Education Programme

(1) State, local government general secondary education institutions, as well as general secondary education institutions of State higher education institutions may not determine a fee for the completion of secondary education programmes.

(2) Private secondary education institutions are entitled to specify a fee for learning.

[18 June 2015]

Section 48. Documents on the Completion of the General Secondary Education Programme

(1) Upon completion of the general secondary education programme, educatees shall receive a general secondary education diploma, a report card, and a certificate of general secondary education in accordance with the procedures specified by the Cabinet.

(2) The certificate of general secondary education shall certify the assessment in all study subjects in which the centralised examination was organised. If the centralised examination in a foreign language was replaced with an examination of an international testing authority, the document issued by such authority in which the assessment of the examination is recorded is a component of the certificate of general secondary education without the restriction of the term of validity.

(3) The assessments indicated in the certificate of general secondary education for subjects, including the assessment in the examination of an international testing authority, where the centralised examination in a foreign language has been replaced with an examination of an international testing authority, shall serve as the selection criteria in the competition for the enrolment of an educatee in educational programmes of higher level.

(4) A certificate shall be issued to an educatee for the completion of a general secondary education programme if:

1) no assessment has been obtained in any subject for year or in any of the State examinations;

2) the assessment obtained in a study subject for year or in a State examination according to the procedures for the assessment of the learning achievements of an educatee specified in the State educational standard is lower than the mark of four.

[18 June 2015 / *The new wording of Section shall come into force on 1 November 2015. See Paragraph 22 of Transitional Provisions*]

Chapter VIII Special Education

Section 49. Special Education Programmes

(1) Special education programmes shall ensure the possibility of acquiring general education for educatees with acquired or hereditary functional disorders according to their special needs.

(2) [1 July 2011]

(3) The main objectives and tasks, the compulsory content, the implementation plan for a special education programme, and the requirements for the previous education shall be determined in

conformity with the State general education standard in accordance with special needs of educatees.

[11 October 2007; 1 July 2011]

Section 50. Implementation of Special Education Programmes

(1) Special education programmes shall be implemented, taking into account the objectives, tasks, and compulsory content for the implementation of the general education content specified in the the State education standard, according to the type of developmental disorder, abilities, and health condition of educatees.

(2) Special education programmes for educatees with serious mental development disorders or several serious developmental disorders are provided for nine years, and they shall be implemented by drawing up an individual plan for the implementation of the educational programme for each educatee. Depending on the health condition of the educatee and the possibilities of the educational institution, the educational programme may be implemented in a longer period of time, but not longer than 12 years.

(3) Special education programmes for educatees with mental development disorders shall be provided for a period of nine years. If the implementer of a programme provides the possibility to acquire vocational education, the programme may be implemented in a longer period of time, but not longer than 12 years.

(4) Educatees with special needs may also complete vocational education programmes within one to three years in a special education institution after acquisition of basic education or general secondary education.

(5) Special education programmes for educatees with mental development disorders and visual or hearing impairments may last 10 years, but special education programmes for deaf educatees with mental development disorders – 11 years.

(6) For deaf educatees undertaking the completion of a special education programme for educatees with hearing impairments, the acquisition of basic education may last 11 years, but the acquisition of secondary education – three years.

(7) Completion of special basic education programmes for educatees with learning disabilities or serious speech disorders may last 10 years.

(8) Special education programmes for educatees with physical development disorders, mental health disorders, or somatic symptom disorders for the acquisition of basic education are provided for nine years.

(9) Acquisition of basic education for partially deaf educatees who are undertaking the completion of a special education programme for educatees with hearing impairments may last 10 years, but the acquisition of secondary education – three years.

(10) A special basic education programme for educatees with visual impairments may last 10 years, but the acquisition of secondary education – three years.

[1 July 2011; 21 June 2018]

Section 51. Special Education Institutions and Classes

(1) Educatees with special needs may complete special education programmes at general education classes, special classes or groups of general education institutions, or special education institutions.

(2) There shall be the following special education institutions:

1) [21 June 2018];

2) special education institutions of the local governments;

3) private special education institutions.

(3) A special education class shall be a class in a general education institution in which educatees with special needs study. A special education class may also be opened in an educational institution implementing vocational education programmes.

(4) A special education institution shall be granted the status of special developmental centre in accordance with the procedures specified by the Cabinet.

(5) [Paragraph shall come into force on 1 September 2020 and shall be included in the wording of the Law as of 1 September 2020. See Paragraph 36 of Transitional Provisions]
[20 June 2000; 16 June 2005; 21 June 2018]

Section 52. Enrolment of Educatees in and Their Discharge from Special Education Institutions

Enrolment of educatees in special education institutions and their discharge therefrom shall be conducted according to the procedures specified by the Cabinet.
[20 June 2000 / See Transitional Provisions]

Section 53. Enrolment of Educatees with Special Needs in General Education Programmes

(1) Educatees with special needs may be enrolled in general education programmes. The requirements to be imposed on general education institutions so that educatees with special needs would be enrolled in the general education programmes implemented thereby shall be determined by the Cabinet.

(2) The educational institutions shall ensure the availability of appropriate support measures to educatees with special needs who have been enrolled in a general education programme. The educational institutions shall draw up an individual plan for the completion of an educational programme for each enrolled educatee with special needs.

[1 July 2011; 21 June 2018]

Section 54. Pedagogical Medical Commission

(1) There shall be a State pedagogical medical commission and pedagogical medical commissions of the local governments. The State pedagogical medical commission shall be established by the Minister for Education and Science. The pedagogical medical commissions of the local governments shall be established by the local governments.

(2) Information regarding opinions of State and local government pedagogical medical commissions shall be aggregated in the information system of the State and local government pedagogical medical commissions. In addition, information regarding the results of pedagogical and psychological study of an educatee, data on the health condition of an educatee, and the legal representative of a minor educatee who is participating in the meeting of the commission shall be included in such information system. The information system shall be created and used in accordance with the laws and regulations governing personal data protection.

[20 June 2000; 16 June 2005; 1 July 2011; 21 June 2018]

Section 55. Assessment of Learning Achievements in Special Education

(1) Achievements attained by an educatee with special needs in his or her learning process shall be assessed according to the requirements of the special education programme and taking into account the health condition, skills, and development of the educatee.

(2) The completion of a special education programme shall be assessed descriptively for educatees with moderately serious and serious mental developmental disorders.

[11 October 2007]

Section 56. Lesson Load per Week and Number of Lessons Per Day in a Special Education Programme

The lesson load per week and the number of lessons per day in a special education programme shall conform to the provisions of Sections 33 and 34 of this Law.

Section 57. Duration of a Lesson in Special Education Programmes

The duration of a lesson for educatees with serious mental development disorders or several serious developmental disorders from grade 1 through grade 9 shall be 30 minutes.
[1 July 2011]

Section 58. Documents on the Acquisition of Special Education

Educatees who have completed special education programmes shall be issued a certificate for the acquisition of basic education or a diploma for the acquisition of secondary education and a report card.

Chapter IX Social Correction

[21 June 2018 / Amendment to the title of the Chapter regarding the deletion “and pedagogical” shall come into force on 1 September 2019. See Paragraph 35 of Transitional Provisions]

Section 59. Social Correction Education Institutions

Social correction education institutions are general education institutions which implement social correction education programmes for educatees with socially deviant behaviour, ensuring them with acquisition of education or improving the quality of the acquisition of education.

[21 June 2018 / The new wording of Section shall come into force on 1 September 2019. See Paragraph 35 of Transitional Provisions]

Section 60. Founding of Social Correction Education Institutions and Enrolment of Educatees

(1) Social correction education institutions shall be under subordination of the Ministry of Education and Science.

(2) [21 June 2018 / See Paragraph 35 of Transitional Provisions]

(3) [21 June 2018 / See Paragraph 35 of Transitional Provisions]

(4) An educatee shall be enrolled in a social correction education institution in accordance with the procedures laid down in the law On Application of Compulsory Measures of a Correctional Nature to Children.

(5) [21 June 2018 / See Paragraph 35 of Transitional Provisions]

(6) [21 June 2018 / See Paragraph 35 of Transitional Provisions]

[31 October 2002; 16 June 2005; 21 June 2018 / The new wording of the title of the Section and amendment regarding the deletion of Paragraphs two, three, five, and six shall come into force on 1 September 2019 and shall be included in the wording of the Law as of 1 September 2019. See Paragraph 35 of Transitional Provisions]

Section 61. Education Documents

The acquisition of education for educatees who have completed social correction education programmes shall be certified by education documents attesting partial or total completion of an educational programme at a particular educational level.

[21 June 2018 / Amendment regarding the deletion “or pedagogical” shall come into force on 1 September 2019. See Paragraph 35 of Transitional Provisions]

Chapter X Financing of General Education

Section 62. Sources of Financing of General Education Institutions

(1) The sources of financing of general education institutions shall be determined in this Law, the Education Law, other laws and regulations, and the by-laws of the relevant educational institution.

(2) Accredited special education programmes shall be financed from the State budget in accordance with the procedures specified by the Cabinet.

(3) Earmarked grants from the State budget shall cover the following:

1) expenses of the work remuneration for teachers and specialists considered equivalent thereto related to the educational process in accordance with the procedures specified by the Cabinet in general education institutions of local governments implementing general basic education or general secondary education programmes and in general secondary education institutions of State higher education institutions implementing general secondary education programmes;

2) [16 June 2009].

[5 August 1999; 31 October 2002; 16 June 2009; 18 June 2015 / Amendments to Paragraph three, Clause 1 (regarding the work remuneration for teachers and specialists considered equivalent thereto of general secondary education institutions of State higher education institutions) shall come into force on 1 June 2016. See Paragraph 24 of Transitional Provisions]

Section 63. Procedures for the Financing of General Education Institutions

(1) The procedures for the financing of general education programmes and general education institutions shall be specified in this Law, the Education Law, other laws and regulations, and the by-laws of the relevant educational institution.

(2) State gymnasiums shall be granted additional financing from the State budget for the fulfilment of the functions specified in Section 40, Paragraph four of this Law.

Transitional Provisions

1. The Minister for Education and Science shall ensure the development of laws and regulations related to this Law and submit them for approval to the Cabinet within six months from the day of coming into force of this Law.

2. The first sentence of Section 48, Paragraph three of this Law shall come into force in the 2002/2003 academic year, but the second sentence – in the 2003/2004 academic year.
[31 October 2002]

3. [16 October 2008]

4. [5 August 1999]

5. The Cabinet shall, by 1 September 2000, develop regulations for the financing of boarding schools and special education institutions.
[20 June 2000]

6. A gymnasium implementing basic education programmes at the moment this Law comes into force is entitled to continue implementation of the relevant educational programme until 1 September 2003.
[20 June 2000]

7. Section 4, Clauses 6, 7, and 8 shall come into force on 1 September 2001.

[20 June 2000]

8. Amendments to Section 26, Paragraph two of this Law (regarding the enrolment of educatees in special education institutions or in special groups), amendments to Section 51, Paragraph four of this Law (regarding the conferring of the status of special education development centre), amendments to Section 52 of this Law (regarding the enrolment of educatees in special education institutions), amendments to Section 54 of this Law (regarding the pedagogical medical commission) shall come into force on 1 September 2001.

[20 June 2000]

9. Section 39, Paragraph three and Section 48, Paragraph two of this Law shall come into force on 1 September 2003.

[31 October 2002]

10. Amendments to Section 33, Clause 1 (regarding lesson load in grade 1) shall come into force on 1 September 2005, but to Clause 2 (regarding lesson load in grade 2) – on 1 September 2006.

[16 June 2005]

11. In accordance with this Law, the remuneration specified in State and local government authorities (salary, bonuses, gratuities, allowances, etc.) in 2009 shall be determined in accordance with the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities in 2009.

[12 December 2008]

12. The educational institutions implementing pre-school education programmes shall, by 1 January 2011, ensure the conformity of the pre-school education programmes with the guidelines for the State pre-school education and submission thereof for licensing.

[1 December 2009]

13. In 2011, bonuses shall not be paid to teachers of educational institutions founded by the State and local governments, but they shall be materially incentivized and allowances shall be disbursed thereto in accordance with the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities.

[23 December 2010]

14. The Cabinet shall, by 31 December 2011, issue the regulations provided for in Section 4, Clause 8 of this Law. Until the day of coming into force of this Regulation, but not later than until 31 December 2011 Cabinet Regulation No. 1263 of 3 November 2009, Regulations Regarding the Competence of the State Pedagogical Medical Commission and of Pedagogical Medical Commissions of Local Governments, shall be applicable.

[1 July 2011]

15. The Cabinet shall, by 31 December 2011, issue the regulations provided for in Section 4, Clause 18 of this Law. Until the day of coming into force of this Regulation, but not later than until 31 December 2011 Cabinet Regulation No. 822 of 1 November 2005, Regulations Regarding the Compulsory Requirements for Enrolling and Moving of Educatees up into Next Grade in General Education Institutions (Except for Boarding Schools and Special Education Institutions), shall be applicable.

[1 July 2011]

16. The Cabinet shall, by 31 December 2011, issue the regulations provided for in Section 4, Clause 18.¹ of this Law.

[1 July 2011]

17. Amendment to Section 39, Paragraph three (regarding issuance of a certificate to an educatee for the completion of a general basic education programme, if the assessment for year in two or more study subjects or in a State examination according to the procedures for the assessment of the learning achievements of an educatee specified in the State education standard is lower than the mark of 4) and the amendment to Section 48, Paragraph two of this Law (regarding the issuance of a certificate to an educatee for the completion of a general secondary education programme, if the assessment in a subject for a year or in a State examination according to the procedures for the assessment of the learning achievements of an educatee specified in the State educational standard is lower than the mark of 4) shall come into force on 1 September 2011.

[1 July 2011]

18. The Cabinet shall, by 31 December 2011, issue the regulations provided for in Section 53 of this Law. Until the day of coming into force of this Regulation, but not later than until 31 December 2011 Cabinet Regulation No. 579 of 21 October 2003, Regulations Regarding the Provision of General Basic Education and General Secondary Education Institutions According to Special Needs, shall be applicable.

[1 July 2011]

19. In 2012, bonuses shall not be paid to teachers of educational institutions founded by the State and local governments, but they shall be materially incentivized and allowances shall be disbursed thereto in accordance with the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities.

[15 December 2011]

20. In 2013, a severance benefit shall be disbursed to teachers in educational institutions founded by the State and local governments in accordance with the Law on Remuneration of Officials and Employees of State and Local Government Authorities.

[15 November 2012]

21. The Cabinet shall, by 30 December 2015, issue the regulations provided for in Section 4, Clause 12.¹ of this Law.

[18 June 2015]

22. The new wording of Section 48 of this Law (in relation to the documents regarding the completion of the general secondary education programme) shall come into force on 1 November 2015.

[18 June 2015]

23. The Cabinet shall, not later than by 30 September 2015, make amendments to Cabinet Regulation No. 913 of 6 November 2006, Procedures for the Issuance of State-recognised General Education Documents, determining the procedures by which documents regarding the completion of the general secondary education programme shall be issued.

[18 June 2015]

24. Amendments to Section 62, Paragraph three, Clause 1 of this Law (regarding the work remuneration for teachers and specialists considered equivalent thereto of general secondary education institutions of State higher education institutions) shall come into force on 1 June 2016.

[18 June 2015]

25. Amendments to Section 42 of this Law regarding the deletion of its Paragraph two and regarding the rewording of Section 43 shall come into force:

1) on 1 September 2020 – in relation to the implementation of a secondary education programme in grades 10 and 11;

2) on 1 September 2021 – in relation to the implementation of a secondary education programme in grade 12.

[22 March 2018 / The abovementioned amendments shall be included in the wording of the Law as of 1 September 2020 and 1 September 2021]

26. Educational institutions implementing pedagogical correction education programmes shall not enrol educatees in such educational programmes from 1 September 2018. Educational institutions are entitled to continue the implementation of the commenced pedagogical correction education programmes until 30 June 2019.

[21 June 2018]

27. Section 1, Paragraph two, Clauses 4.¹ and 4.², Section 4, Clause 11.¹ of this Law, the new wording of Sections 35 and 45 (regarding the duration of a lesson and the forms of learning organisation in basic education and general secondary education programmes), as well as the new wording of Section 57 (regarding the duration of a lesson and the forms of learning organisation in special education programmes) shall come into force on 1 September 2020.

[21 June 2018 / The abovementioned amendments shall be included in the wording of the Law as of 1 September 2020]

28. Amendments to Section 4, Clause 11 (regarding the deletion of the subject standard), amendments regarding the deletion of Section 14, Clause 2, the new wording of Section 15, Paragraph one (regarding new provisions for the State general education standard), amendments regarding the deletion of Section 16, amendments to Section 17, Paragraph one (regarding new provisions for the contents of the general education programme) and Section 19, Paragraph two (regarding the deletion of the subject standard) shall come into force:

1) on 1 September 2020 – in relation to the implementation of secondary education programmes in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10;

2) on 1 September 2021 – in relation to the implementation of secondary education programmes in grades 2, 5, 8, and 11;

3) on 1 September 2022 – in relation to the implementation of secondary education programmes in grades 3, 6, 9, and 12.

[21 June 2018 / The abovementioned amendments shall be included in the wording of the Law as of 1 September 2020, 1 September 2021, and 1 September 2022]

29. Amendments to Section 4, Clause 5 of this Law (regarding the deletion of the words “gymnasium and”), the new wording of Section 40, Paragraph one, Clause 3, and amendments to this Section (regarding the deletion of Paragraph three) shall come into force on 1 September 2021. From 1 August 2018, the status of gymnasium shall not be granted to an educational institution.

[21 June 2018 / The abovementioned amendments shall be included in the wording of the Law as of 1 September 2021]

30. The new wording of Section 40, Paragraph four of this Law shall come into force on 1 September 2018.

[21 June 2018]

31. Amendments to Section 15.¹, Paragraph one and Section 20, Paragraph one of this Law (regarding the contents to be specified in the guidelines for the State pre-school education and the pre-school education programme) shall come into force on 1 September 2019.

[21 June 2018]

32. Local governments which have gymnasiums under their subordination shall, by 28 February 2019, take a decision in accordance with the procedures laid down in the State Administration Structure Law on the change of the name of gymnasiums or on the completion of the liquidation or reorganisation thereof until 31 August 2021, ensuring further education of

educatees in a corresponding educational programme, as well as shall, by 31 August 2021, take all the necessary actions to make corresponding amendments to the Register of Educational Institutions. The names of the reorganised educational institutions shall conform to the requirements of Section 26 of the Education Law.

[21 June 2018]

33. Amendments to Section 40, Paragraph one, Clause 2 and Paragraph five of this Law [regarding the deletion of evening (shift) secondary schools] shall come into force on 1 September 2020. From 1 August 2018, evening (shift) secondary schools shall not be founded. [21 June 2018 / *The abovementioned amendments shall be included in the wording of the Law as of 1 September 2020*]

34. Local governments which have evening (shift) secondary schools under their subordination shall, by 28 February 2019, take a decision in accordance with the procedures laid down in the State Administration Structure Law on the change of the name of evening (shift) secondary schools or on the completion of the liquidation or reorganisation thereof until 31 August 2020, ensuring further education of educatees in a corresponding educational programme, as well as shall, by 31 August 2020, take all the necessary actions to make corresponding amendments to the Register of Educational Institutions. The names of the reorganised educational institutions shall conform to the requirements of Section 26 of the Education Law.

[21 June 2018]

35. Amendments to Section 1, Paragraph two, Clause 7, Section 3, Paragraph two, Clause 3, Section 29, Paragraph two, to the title of Chapter IX, and Sections 59, 60, and 61 (regarding the deletion of pedagogical correction as the special type of general education) shall come into force on 1 September 2019.

[21 June 2018]

36. Section 51, Paragraph five of this Law shall come into force on 1 September 2020.

[21 June 2018 / *The abovementioned amendment shall be included in the wording of the Law as of 1 September 2020*]

37. Local governments which have rehabilitation centres and special pre-school education institutions under their subordination shall, by 28 February 2019, take a decision in accordance with the procedures laid down in the State Administration Structure Law on the change of the name of rehabilitation centres and special pre-school education institutions or on the completion of the liquidation or reorganisation thereof until 31 August 2020, ensuring further education of educatees in a corresponding educational programme, as well as shall, by 31 August 2020, take all the necessary actions to make corresponding amendments to the Register of Educational Institutions. The names of the reorganised educational institutions shall conform to the requirements of Section 26 of the Education Law.

[21 June 2018]

38. Amendments to Section 1, Paragraph two, Clause 5 of this Law (regarding the combining of subjects in fields of studies), amendments regarding the deletion of Section 42, Paragraph one and the supplementation of the Law with Section 42.¹ shall come into force:

1) on 1 September 2020 – in relation to the implementation of secondary education programmes in grade 10;

2) on 1 September 2021 – in relation to the implementation of secondary education programmes in grade 11;

3) on 1 September 2022 – in relation to the implementation of secondary education programmes in grade 12.

[21 June 2018 / *The abovementioned amendments shall be included in the wording of the Law as of 1 September 2020, 1 September 2021, and 1 September 2022*]

39. Educational institutions which are implementing pre-school education programmes or have commenced new development of such programmes on the day of coming into force of the amendments made to Section 15.¹, Paragraph one and Section 20, Paragraph one of this Law shall ensure the conformity of the relevant programmes with the requirements of the abovementioned legal norms by 31 August 2019.

[21 June 2018]

40. Educational institutions which are implementing general basic and general secondary education programmes or have commenced new development of such programmes on the day of coming into force of the new wording of Section 15, Paragraph one, Section 17, Paragraph one of this Law, and Section 42.¹ shall ensure the conformity of the relevant programmes with the requirements of the abovementioned legal norms by 31 August 2019.

[21 June 2018]

This Law was adopted by the *Saeima* on 10 June 1999.

President

G. Ulmanis

Rīga, 30 June 1999

**Report on the Initial Impact Assessment of the Draft Law
'Amendments to the General Education Law' (annotation)**

I. Necessity for drafting a legislative act		
1.	Rationale	<p>The draft law 'Amendments to the General Education Law' Draft Law (hereinafter – the Draft Law) has been drawn up on the initiative of the Ministry of Education and Science (hereinafter – the Ministry), in order to fulfil the task specified in 5 December 2017 Cabinet of Ministers Meeting Minutes No 60, Para 35.2, and implementation of the principles of the use of the official language in the general education set out in the "Information report on the transition to the learning in the official language in general education institutions" (TA-2509), in the General Education Law.</p>
2.	Current situation and problems, which the Draft Law is intended to solve; the purpose and essence of the legislation	<p>The data of the study, "Language situation in Latvia: 2010–2015" (Latvian Language Agency, 2016) show that 39% of ethnic minority teenagers and young adults in Latvia have excellent command of the Latvian language, the same share of people in this age group know Latvian well, while 22% reported having basic or poor Latvian language skills. The data of the study also show that most of Latvia's residents (approximately 70%) believe that children should start learning Latvian as soon as possible, and as early as kindergarten and first years of primary school. The number of ethnic minority educational programme graduates who prefer to take their state exams in Latvian is rising. In the 2013/2014 academic year, 76% of ethnic minority students chose to do so, with the numbers going up to 92% in 2016/2017.</p> <p>The study 'Bilingual Education' conducted by the Ombudsman (Ombudsman of Latvia, 2014) points out that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The education system must prioritise the best interests of the children, in regulatory and real terms. 2. Ethnic minority children have to be guaranteed the right to learn the official language at an appropriate level. In the situation of Latvia, due to historical consequences, it is especially important to provide minority children with equal rights in further studying and working in Latvia in positions where the requirement of the official language is objectively necessary to ensure the interests of society. 3. The educational process should not be a threat to the identity of minorities; it should give the opportunity to learn the literature, culture, and language of minorities properly, so that ethnic minorities consider the learning of the official language not as a threat to their own identity but as a benefit, value, extension of their outlook. 4. All minorities must have equal rights to learn the language of their ethnicity, with particular attention being paid to the historically marginalised minority – the Roma. 5. National monitoring of minority educational institutions shall be increased in the following areas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) learning of minority languages and culture, use of the official language, and quality of the educational process; b) employment of teachers who meet the requirements laid down in regulatory enactments. 6. Training for minority teachers should be provided to improve the use of the Latvian language, use of the minority language, and application of the bilingual methodology.

7. The education system for representatives of different ethnicities should primarily be aimed at unification, not separation.

8. A methodology should be developed to determine whether the official language and minority languages are used in the bilingual lesson proportionally.

9. Balance must be ensured between the learning and preservation of the official language and the learning of the minority language.

In summarising the current situation, one must keep in mind that the bilingual education system model introduced in 2004, which established a transition to teaching partially in Latvian as part of the general ethnic minority education programmes, was intended as a transitional stage, because the state-funded vocational and higher education is currently only provided in the official state language. The national /State examination materials for general secondary education were prepared in Latvian as early as 2006/2007. During Year 9 State examination and centralised exams, students taught in ethnic minority education programmes may use the language of the ethnic minority in providing their answers; however, in 2016/2017, only 7.75% of the students used this option. These figures, along with the official state language monitoring results, show that, as a whole, the prerequisites for completing the transition to a unified education system in Latvia have been met.

On 8 August 2017, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted amendments to Regulations No 335 “Regulations regarding the content and procedure of the centralized examinations” adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers on 6 April 2010 and amendments to Regulations No 1510 “Procedures for the conduct of the State examinations” adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers on 17 December 2013; both Regulations provided for taking State examinations and centralized examinations in the 9th and 12th grade in the official language. According to these amendments to the Regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers, from the school year 2019/2020, the State examinations of the 9th grade will take place only in the official language, while centralized examinations in the general secondary education will take place only in the official language from the school year 2017/2018, but other State examinations – from the school year 2018/2019.

In general education, the Ministry has initiated fundamental change in educational approach in Latvia in order to review the content of learning and the way of teaching in which educators collaboratively organize and manage students' learning on a daily basis for the first time in a single system and successively at all stages of education. At the level of the general education, the young people prepare for further education at university and/or vocational activities, start to understand their own personal abilities and interests for targeted shaping of their professional and personal future, continues to get a learning and growth experience to establish a responsible and respectful attitude towards themselves, family, society, and the State. The new content of learning and approach should strengthen pupils' language skills to ensure that young people have acquired the necessary skills to continue their education. The transition to learning in the official language at the stage of general secondary education in general education institutions will contribute to the successful implementation of the

new general education content and learning approach. The Ministry's proposals for the transition to teaching in the official language in general secondary education will allow quality implementation of the new approach to the content of learning and learning process and providing the preservation of minority language and culture in accordance with the international obligations of Latvia.

The Draft Law includes amendments in the Law on General Education, enabling the necessary transition to general secondary education provided only in the official language. In view of the fact that according to the **'Information report regarding the transition to teaching in the official language in general educational institutions' (TA-2509) reviewed on 5 December 2017 by the Cabinet of Ministers (Minutes No 60, Item 35), it is planned not to continue with the use of ethnic minority general education programmes in secondary schools, and to exclude Part 2 from Section 42 of the General Education Law.** At the same time, a new Paragraph 2 is added to Section 43 of the law, establishing the right of an educational institution to expand general secondary education programmes with subjects not listed in the general secondary education standard, including teaching content related to ethnic minority mother tongue and ethnic minority identity and integration in the Latvian society. Section 3 of the Draft Law also contains transitional provisions for the amendments to Sections 42 and 43 of the General Education Law taking effect. According to the Draft Law, the amendments are to take full effect on 1 September 2021.

Concerning secondary education, the transition to teaching in the official state language will begin during the 2020/2021 academic year, when those students, who took all the final Year 9 exams exclusively in the official state language at the end of 2019/2020, will start their Year 10, in accordance with the 8 August 2017 amendments to Cabinet Regulation 335 'Regulations for the content and procedure of centralised examinations' of 6 April 2010, and Cabinet Regulation 1510 'National examination procedure' of 17 December 2013. The teaching solely in the official language is to be implemented for Year 11 students that academic year as well, because in accordance with the plan for the implementing the general education content based on competence approach, the implementation of such teaching will begin for Year 11 students, whereby the students choose a smaller number of subjects to learn more extensively, in order to prepare themselves for university studies, and the corresponding secondary education centralised examinations are prepared for the corresponding levels in the official language only. The subsequent academic year (2021/2022) will be Year 12 for these students, and these students will be the first to take final Year 12 exams, in accordance with the subject acquisition level, they have chosen (optimum or superior level). In order to support educational institutions in planning the teaching process for the students in ethnic minority general secondary education programmes, whose Year 10 will begin in the 2019/2020 academic year, and who will complete their secondary education exclusively in Latvian, in 2021/2022, the national general secondary education

		standard is provided with a separate education programme sample for the transitional period.
3.	Institutions involved in the development of the Draft Law	The Ministry.
4.	Other information	<p>In order to successfully implement the amendments proposed in the Draft Law and to change the approach to the teaching content and the language of instruction in general education, the Ministry has planned a set of support measures for teachers who will implement these changes. These changes will require those who shape the teaching process in general education – i.e. general education teachers, supporting and administrative staff – to take the role of language ambassadors and people who create the environment for quality learning of the official language. Language skills also depend on the intensity of use of the language appropriate for the skills level, which is why based on the information provided by teachers, students, parents and education administration bodies, it is planned to improve the skills of use of the Latvian language among the the general education educators, support staff and administration so that they, when implementing the learning process, would be able to fully take the role of the language medium, participate in the implementation of the learning process and provide the required support to the learners in the achievement of their objectives.</p> <p>The availability of teaching aids and appropriate learning materials is just as important in introducing these changes. Teaching aids for the introduction of the new general education content are intended to be prepared in the scope of the project No 8.3.1.1/16/002 “Developing a Competence-Based Approach to the Content of Learning” of Activity 8.3.1.1 “Approval and Implementation of Competency-Based General Education Content” of Specific Objective 8.3.1 “To Develop Competency-Based General Education Curriculum” of the Structural Funds of the European Union, which is implemented by the National Centre for Education.</p> <p>Having regard to the provisions of the Draft Law, the Ministry, in collaboration with the National Centre for Education and the Latvian Language Agency, has assessed that the amount of teaching and methodological aids and measures for the professional development of educators initially planned in the project might not be sufficient for implementation of all changes in the general education. Therefore, the Ministry has drawn up and is forwarding for consideration by the Cabinet of Ministers a proposal for amendments to Activity 8.3.1.1 “Approval and Implementation of Competency-Based General Education Curriculum” of the EU structural funds providing for additional funding in amount of 4,497,498 euro to the project No 8.3.1.1/16/002 “Competency-Based Approach to the Content of Learning” effectuated by the National Centre for Education in order to, in the period from the year 2018 to the year 2023, implement additional measures for the preparation of educators for work with the new educational content and support measures for educators working in a linguistically heterogeneous learning environment described in the informative report, “On the transition to learning in the official language in general educational institutions”, drawn up by the Ministry (Protocol Decision No 60, Para 35, adopted by the sitting of the Cabinet of</p>

	<p>Ministers on 5 December 2017). It is planned that additional support to the improvement of educators' professional competence will be provided to 6,900 educators (including about 4,500 educators who work in a linguistically heterogeneous environment), as well as for the development and availability of methodological and teaching aids, in particular, for the preschool, where it is important to provide not only the presence of teaching aids but also their availability and frequency of use in the educational process.</p> <p>With regard to other stages of general education, the transition to a competence-based general education requires that textbooks already developed and other teaching aids can be used in the learning process, but methodological guidance for practical application of these teaching aids will be changed; and the National Centre for Education will develop this methodological guidance under the European Social Fund Project 8.3.1.1/16/002 "Competency-Based Approach to the Content of Learning" as well as provide professional development measures for the educators to implement this methodological guidance in practice.</p>
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II. Effects of the Draft Law on the general public, economic development and administrative burden		
1.	Target groups in society that are or might be affected by the legal framework	The provisions of the Draft Law directly affect students attaining general education and secondary education teachers.
2.	Impact of the regulatory framework on the economy and administrative burden	The Draft Law does not affect this field.
3.	Monetary assessment of the administrative costs	The Draft Law does not affect this field.
4.	Other information	None.

III. Impact of the Draft Legislative Act on the State Budget and Budgets of Local Governments					
Indicators	2018		Three subsequent years (euros)		
	according to the State budget for the current year	changes in the current year compared to the State budget for the current year	2019	2020	2021
			changes compared to 2018	changes compared to 2018	changes compared to 2018
1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Budget revenue:	0	0	0	0	0

1.1. State basic budget	0	0	0	0	0
1.2. State special budget	0	0	0	0	0
1.3. Local government budget	0	0	0	0	0
2. Budget expenditure:	0	0	0	0	0
2.1. State basic budget	0	0	0	0	0
2.2. State special budget	0	0	0	0	0
2.3. Local government budget	0	0	0	0	0
3. Financial impact:	0	0	0	0	0
3.1. State basic budget	0	0	0	0	0
3.2. State special budget	0	0	0	0	0
3.3. Local government budget	0	0	0	0	0
4. Financial resources to fund expenditure (reduction in compensatory expenditure shall be indicated using "+")	X	0	0	0	0
5. Concretized financial impact:	X	0	0	0	0
5.1. State basic budget		0	0	0	0
5.2. Special budget		0	0	0	0
5.3. Local government budget		0	0	0	0
6. Detailed calculation of revenue and expenditure (if necessary, a detailed calculation of revenue and expenditure can be added to the annex to the annotation):	The Draft Law does not affect this field				
7. Other information	None				

IV. Impact of the Draft Legislative Act on the Existing Legal Framework		
1.	The required related draft legislative acts	After the adoption of the Draft Law, Cabinet Regulation amending Cabinet Regulation 281 'Regulations regarding the state general secondary education standard, subject standards and sample education programmes' of 21 May 2013 in accordance with the amended Sections 42 and 43 of the Law must be issued.
2.	Institution responsible	The Ministry
3.	Other information	None

V. Compliance of the Draft Legislative Act with International Obligations of the Republic of Latvia		
Table 2 Obligations fulfilled or undertaken by the draft legislative act arising from international law or documents of an international body or organisation. Measures to meet these obligations		
Date, number and name of the corresponding international legal document or document issued by an international institution or organisation (hereinafter – the International Document)		
A	B	C
The Draft Law does not affect this field		
Whether the obligations provided for in the international document do not contradict the existing international obligations of the Republic of Latvia	The Draft Law does not affect this field	
Other information	<p>In Latvia, education is provided on the basis of rules laid down in the Constitution (<i>Satversme</i>) and the Education Law, which, in turn, comply with the international obligations of Latvia in relation to human rights, equality and rights of national minorities (incl. education).</p> <p>According to the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), everyone has the right to education; this right shall be directed at the full development of the human personality and at the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. According to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the right of the child to education is recognized, and the right, in community with other members of child's group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language is not denied to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities.</p>	

According to the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the European Council (1995), the Parties to the Convention shall take measures in the fields of education to foster knowledge of the culture, history, language and religion of their national minorities and of the majority as well as promote equal opportunities for access to education at all levels for persons belonging to national minorities. In turn, according to the UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education (1960), it is ensured that the standards of education are equivalent in all public educational institutions of the same level, as well as members of national minorities have the right to carry on their own educational activities while not interfering with the understanding of the culture and language of the entire community. According to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2000), everyone has the right to education and to have access to vocational and continuing training. In addition, any discrimination based on any ground such as race, ethnic or social origin, language, etc. shall be prohibited.

Considering that Latvia has joined the countries that have undertaken to observe the principles defined in these documents, access to education is provided to everyone, without any expressions of discrimination. The implementation of general secondary education programmes with the sole use of the official state language will not change this situation, as ethnic minorities will be able to gain quality education, enabling them to continue their education process and to participate in the labour market, at the same time preserving their mother tongue and culture, for example, by choosing these as subjects at school or as extracurricular activities.

VI. Public Participation and Communication Activities

1.	Planned public participation and communication activities in relation to the Draft Law	After its announcement at the State Secretaries' meeting, the Draft Law will be published at the website of the Ministry; and in addition, in the context of the information report " On the transition to learning in the official state language in institutions of general education ", the Ministry has prepared an infographic about the nature of the planned changes, to be published on the Ministry's website and social media profiles.
2.	Public participation in the development of the Draft Law	The proposals for the transition to the use of Latvian as the language of instruction in secondary education prepared by the Ministry were discussed by the Advisory Council on Ethnic Minority Education on 10 November 2017.
3.	Results of public participation	The Advisory Board for Ethnic Minority Education has granted its conceptual approval for the implementation of the planned changes.
4.	Other information	None.

VII. Enforcement of the Draft Law and its effect on institutions		
1.	Institutions involved in the enforcement of the Draft Law	The Ministry, founders of educational institutions, general and professional education institutions.
2.	Effect of the Draft Law on administrative functions and institutional structure. Establishment of new institutions, dissolution or reorganisation of current institutions; effects of the Draft Law on the human resources of institutions	The Draft Law does not directly prescribe the establishment, dissolution or reorganisation of institutions. The Draft Law will have no impact on the human resources and administrative functions of current institutions.
3.	Other information	None.

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