

## Foreword

As highlighted in the OECD Action Plan for Youth, successful engagement of youth in the labour market is crucial not only for their own personal economic prospects and well-being, but also for overall economic growth and social cohesion. Therefore, investing in youth is a policy priority in all countries, including Latvia, and requires concerted action to develop education systems and labour market arrangements that work together well.

Following the launch of the OECD Action Plan for Youth in May 2013, the OECD is working closely with countries to implement the plan's comprehensive measures in their national and local contexts and to provide peer-learning opportunities for countries to share their experience of policy measures to improve youth employment outcomes.

This work builds on the extensive country reviews that the OECD has carried out previously on the youth labour market and vocational education and training (*Jobs for Youth, Learning for Jobs* and *Skills beyond School*), as well as on the OECD Skills Strategy.

The present report on Latvia is the third of a new series on Investing in Youth which builds on the expertise of the OECD on youth employment, social support and skills. This series covers both OECD countries and countries in the process of accession to the OECD, as well as some emerging economies. The report presents new results from a comprehensive statistical analysis of the situation of disadvantaged youth in Latvia exploiting various sources of survey-based and administrative data. It provides a detailed diagnosis of the youth labour market and education system in Latvia from an international comparative perspective, and offers tailored recommendations to help improve school-to work-transitions. It also provides an opportunity for other countries to learn from the innovative measures that Latvia has taken to strengthen the skills of youth and their employment outcomes, notably through the implementation of a Youth Guarantee.

The work on this report was mainly carried out within the Social Policy Division of the Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social

Affairs (ELS). The report was prepared by Stéphane Carcillo and Sebastian Königs, with input from Irina Možajeva (University of Latvia) and Andreea Minea (Sciences Po Paris), and under the supervision of Monika Queisser (Head of the Social Policy Division). The report benefited from many useful comments provided by Stefano Scarpetta (Director, Employment, Labour and Social Affairs) as well as by staff in the OECD Economics Department and the Directorate for Education and Skills.

## *Acknowledgements*

The OECD Secretariat would like to thank the Ministry of Welfare (MoW) of Latvia for its excellent support in carrying out this project and for organising the initial fact-finding mission in September 2014 and the final dissemination seminar in April 2015. In particular, Ilze Zvidrina and Gundars Ignats (MoW) deserve special thanks for their considerable contributions in ensuring a successful completion of this project. The OECD Secretariat is also extremely grateful to Uldis Ainārs from the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia for the assistance and advice on data issues, and for the information and feedback provided by officials from the MoW, the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) and other ministries and organisations in Latvia.

This review was funded by the State Employment Agency of the Republic of Latvia through the European Social Fund co-financed project “Complex Support Measures” No. 1DP/1.4.1.1.1./09/IPIA/NVA/001, agreement “The scientific research ‘Social Policies for Youth’” dated 11 June 2014 – 1.1-13ESF/8.



**From:**  
**Investing in Youth: Latvia**

**Access the complete publication at:**  
<https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264240407-en>

**Please cite this chapter as:**

OECD (2015), "Foreword and Acknowledgements", in *Investing in Youth: Latvia*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264240407-1-en>

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