

# Challenges in the Development of Strategies for Early School Leavers of Latvia: Conclusions and Recommendations from Asian-European Perspectives

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# Background

**In 2010, from the total number of 245.6 thousand inhabitants (aged 18-24) of Latvia, 72.9 thousand of them did not have secondary education and 30.7 thousand of them were not engaged in any kind of learning**

it is necessary to determine the opportunities of engagement of the 'young' adults in school in order to diminish the effect of increasing marginalisation of these groups of people in the future

# Background

Strategies to prevent dropping out -or to support the young people

- **Latvian Ministry of Education and Science (MOES) has initiated the study on identification of good practices that will facilitate adult learning (aged 18-24)**
- **The study started in 2011 led by University of Latvia in close collaboration with policy makers, local governments, evening (shift) schools as stakeholders and university researcher**

# Theoretical background

## Concept of School leavers

### Latvia

- a pupil who has not completed basic education and no longer attends school
- not attended school for six months and thus are unable to meet the demands set for basic education

### Slovakia

- not attending school until its completion, as defined by local norms

### Albania

- who leaves school before its completion, for any reason other than death, without being enrolled in another school or institution

# Theoretical background

## Concept of School leavers

### *Kazakhstan*

- children who are “pushed out” of the system of education due to medical reasons or because they have lagged behind in their progress

### *Mongolia*

- those who have neither secondary education nor secondary higher education

**In most countries, the early school leavers are included in the term “drop out**

# Theoretical background

## Concept of School leavers

Smyth et al. (2000) argue that early school leaving is socially constructed, and emphasize that it is a product of the institutions, systems and culture(s) that we create and sustain

'second-chance education', which is particularly important in terms of the 're-engaging process'

# Concept of School leavers

**EU Commission definition of 2011 the term**

- 'Early School Leaving' includes all forms of leaving education and training before completing upper secondary education or equivalents in vocational education and training and is a complex phenomenon which is influenced by educational factors, individual circumstances and socio-economic conditions and which can be prevented through systematic evidence-based policies**

# RESEARCH QUESTIONS

**What are the new challenges for the second chance education which are to be transformed in the new opportunities for facilitating of early school leavers participation on upgrading their education?**

**What are the key elements in cultures of support that successfully re-engage young people in education?**

**What practices support young people to move from enabling courses to higher level courses?**

# Next stage of the research

What are the particular aspects of the programs that facilitate and help young people return to and remain in education?

What do young people say about their motivation for, and experiences of, re-entry to education?

What do their teachers say about these students?

# Methodology

*'Key factors analysis'*

ASEM LLL  
Hub  
research  
instruments

- Survey on E-Learning (ASEM LLL Hub RN1)
- Survey on Workplace Learning (ASEM LLL Hub RN2)
- Delphi method, survey on core competence of learning facilitators in adult education (ASEM LLL Hub RN3)
- Survey on learning motivation and learning opportunities for employees and employers (ASEM LLL Hub RN4)
- Survey on difficult study subjects for detecting teachers' didactical approach (ASEM LLL Hub RN5)

Small  
technique  
(60  
volunteers to  
703  
responses)

# Sampling

- **21 from 23**  
**Latvian evening**  
**(shift)**  
**schools Twenty**  
**one (21) from**  
**twenty three (23)**
- **352 early school**  
**leavers and 163**  
**teacher of**  
**evening (shift)**  
**schools**

# Main Findings

## New challenges for the second chance education

**Similarities between teachers and student responses**

**Respondents associated e-learning with blended learning**

**There were no statistical differences between responses on how teachers and students perceive different tools of e-learning.**

**Half of the respondents (teachers 50.7%, and students 49.3%) do not use chats for learning.**

**Teachers( 54.5%) and students ( 45.5 % ) think that fora are tools for learning and teaching**

# New challenges for the second chance education

## What students say...

- Most students feel that e-learning helped them to use their time in a more flexible way than the teachers (that is, to work at more convenient time)-  $\chi^2 = 0.0121$ )
- The 18-24 aged school leavers see the effect of formal learning in facilitating further confidence in public situations (p. 0.000) and positive working environment (p.000)

# New challenges for the second chance education

## What teachers say

- using e-learning course enabled them to develop competence of ICT at the same time the content of the course (  $\chi^2 = 0.0121$ ):
- Preparing reports, documents in organized courses , and other activities affect all the working days of teachers (p. 0.000)
- Using IT (software, computers, the world wide web (WWW)) in organized courses (p.0.000) helped the in the use of machines and technology for lifelong skills (p. 0,000)

# Key elements in cultures of support that successfully re-engage young people in education

## Cluster1 : Content centered approach

- Students communicate with teacher and other students in learning of subject context presented in lectures manuscripts, texts, pictures, statistical information, interactive learning materials such as video, demonstrations etc. using the new e-learning tools

# Key elements in cultures of support that successfully re-engage young people in education

Students and teachers used e-exercises and e-tasks for knowledge acquisition; check-up e-works and e-tests.

*The schooling processes provide the opportunities:*

Cluster 2; Learning outcomes are oriented to flexible learning - blended learning

- to learn individually at own time;
- to work and study;
- to live and work in another country, but study in Latvia;
- to plan own study time;
- to communicate online, so lesson attendance is not compulsory;
- to discuss things with my course mates;
- to choose learning resources and learn according to own needs and abilities;
- to learn new knowledge and develop skills and compete
- working in previously unknown situations

# Key elements in cultures of support that successfully re-engage young people in education

## Cluster 2: Didactic design

*The teachers' actions reinforced the development of a sense of community among course participants, focused the discussion on relevant issues that helped the students to learn and teachers to provide feedback that helped the students to understand their learning strengths and*

The teachers clearly communicated important course topics

*The students get to know other course participants that gave them a sense of belonging to the course and to form distinct impressions of some course participants*

# ***Cluster 2: The benefits of learning are***

**Developing  
of learning  
competencies**

**Getting a  
new  
learning  
experience**

**Getting in  
contact  
and  
discuss  
things with  
course  
mates**

**Getting in  
touch and  
consultations with  
lecturers**

**Getting a  
different  
course  
members'  
views and  
change  
own  
opinions**

**Key elements in cultures of support that successfully re-engage young people in education**

## **Cluster 3: Social interactive learning**

Cooperation and interaction between the students and teachers are provided by discussions, forums, chats, surveys

# **Key elements in cultures of support that successfully re-engage young people in education**

**Cluster 4: Individual, social distanced learning**

**The students missed the online communication**

- so there is the feeling of loneliness
- the possibility to carry out the activities in which they are interested in
- Clear procedure and regulations of course organization
- cooperation with other students

**The students are losing time looking for problem solutions alone**

**The students need consultations and missed the group work**

# Practices support young people to move from enabling courses to higher level courses

18-24 year  
old early  
school  
leavers say

....

- **Adult educators have to be flexible (p 0,01)**
- **to be able to reflect their own professional role (p 0,014) and to be self-assured (p 0,011).**
- **They have to be 26.A committed to their own professional development (p 0,05 ).**
- **The adult educators have to be competent in diagnosing the learners' learning capacities (p 0,046)**
- **be able to create a safe learning atmosphere (i.e. a learning atmosphere which is not intimidating) (p 0,049)**

# Practices support young people to move from enabling courses to higher level courses

25 and older (teachers) say .....

- The teachers and elder students mean that the teaching offers have to be oriented to the needs of specific target groups ( $p=0,017$ ) 17
- To have specialized knowledge in their own area of teaching ( $p=0,014$ )
- know about the societal relevance of their area of expertise ( $p=0,000$ )

# Conclusions for Problems 1-3

**Teaching-Learning Process. E-learning allowed several shifts in teaching-learning processes such as:**

- **From highly structured traditional classrooms to web-based, virtual platform and flexible learning**
- **Before the introduction of e-learning, adult learning was confined to the four walls of the classrooms. At the moment, teaching-learning can happen anytime and anywhere.**

# Conclusions for Problems 1-3

From school-based teaching and learning to web-based platform;

- E-learning allows the opening of open classrooms, open universities. Today, a lot of learning happens on line. E-learning has bigger possibilities for lifelong learning. It can address all types of learners since learning became extraterritorial and extra spatial.

From purely classroom-based mode of delivery to blended types of delivery mode;

- Learning became flexible since teachers and students can choose on how they will interact with each other. Teaching can happen through face-to-face interaction or the use of information and communications technology.

# Conclusions for Problems 1-3

**Enhancement of competencies was from classroom based to the use of ICT;**

- **The 21<sup>st</sup> century skills/competencies are better developed using ICT. Competencies are not limited to critical thinking skills but they should also hone the learner's and teacher's**

**From teacher-centered to student-centered teaching learning process;**

- **Learning is not only driven by teachers. Students can actively engage in learning since they are able to explore various activities via the internet**

**From spatial temporal classrooms to virtual classrooms**

- **Traditional classrooms have physical infrastructures and schedules were arranged by school managers. Future classrooms will be in the web, hence, classrooms may exist beyond spatio-temporal dimensions.**

# Conclusions for Problems 1-3

## Learning Outcomes

- learning allowed possibilities of enhancing the learner and teacher competencies in the areas of thinking processes and practical skills needed for employability

## Evaluation

- Evaluation of learners was transformed from traditional classroom-based to balanced assessment.
  - Balanced assessment is a combination of pencil and paper tests to product and performance-based assessment.
  - Web-based assessment has a greater opportunity of integrating all types of assessment and evaluation tools

# Conclusions for Problems 1-3

## Management of adult learning

- Management of professional development for teachers e.g. training of teachers for ICT competencies, systemic approach in the management of e-learning and many other challenges allow many possibilities for e-learning

## Policy Issues

- The use of ICT opens the possibilities of problems such as hacking, phishing, and other forms of destructions as regards software, hardware and learning content

# Recommendations

**Case and pilot studies that develop the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills must be explored to strengthen the theories and principles of e-learning. Moreover, these studies/researches must investigate different types of learners by age, ethnicity, class and race.**

**Develop instructional materials that will allow open and flexible learning. These materials must have features of lifelong learning.**

**Infrastructures, structures, systems and processes of schools and universities must be reviewed to allow flexible learning.**

# Recommendations

**School leaders must also be equipped with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and full understanding of schooling with the use of ICT. A full grasp of the ICT enabled learning environment is necessary not only for teachers but also for school leaders so that these school leaders will allow many possibilities for teaching and learning**

**The introduction of netiquette, new rules on plagiarism, intellectual property rights and other similar guidelines and policies should be explored**

**Policies of schools must be reviewed and such policies must be open to flexible and open learning**

Thank you very much!