

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

12 June 2009 [shall come into force on 1 July 2009];  
30 September 2010 [shall come into force on 3 November 2010];  
10 December 2015 [shall come into force on 1 January 2016];  
23 November 2016 [shall come into force on 1 January 2017].

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*<sup>1</sup> has adopted and  
the President has proclaimed the following law:

## Youth Law

### Section 1. Purpose of the Law

The purpose of the Law is to improve the quality of life of young people - persons from 13 to 25 years of age - by promoting their initiatives, work ethic, patriotism, and participation in decision-making and social life, and also by supporting youth work.

[30 September 2010]

### Section 2. Scope of Application of the Law

(1) The Law determines the persons involved in the implementation of the youth policy and their competence in the area of this policy, youth participation in the development and implementation of the youth policy, and also the basic principles for the granting of financing to youth initiatives, for the participation in decision-making and social life, and for youth work.

(2) Within the meaning of this Law youth work is a set of planned youth-oriented practical measures which ensure the implementation of the youth policy, the formation of value orientation of young people, and the strengthening of universal values.

[30 September 2010]

### Section 2.<sup>1</sup> Youth Policy and Youth Work

(1) The youth policy is a set of targeted actions to be implemented in all fields of the national policy which promote full and comprehensive development, inclusion in society, and improvement of quality of life of young people.

(2) The national youth policy shall be implemented by the State administration institutions and local government institutions according to their competence, and also by youth organisations and other natural and legal persons according to a contract.

(3) The basic tasks in youth work shall be as follows:

1) to support and promote youth initiatives by creating favourable conditions for their intellectual and creative development;

2) to ensure that young people have the opportunity to acquire non-formal education skills, knowledge, and competences necessary for their life;

3) to ensure that young people have the opportunity to use leisure time in a useful manner;

4) to ensure young people with access to information appropriate to their development needs.

(4) The basic principles of the youth policy shall be as follows:

1) the principle of participation - to ensure that young people have the opportunity to engage in the discussion of the decisions affecting the youth policy prior to the taking thereof;

2) the principle of availability of information - to promote the provision of information to young people that is appropriate to their development needs;

3) the principle of equal opportunities - to ensure that young people have the opportunity to participate actively in the activities of the public, political, cultural, and economic life without any discrimination;

4) the principle of respecting the interests of young people - to respect the interests, rights, needs, and opportunities of young people when solving matters related to young people;

5) the principle of favourable economic preconditions - to promote the formation of such conditions where young people have the opportunity to be economically independent inhabitants of Latvia;

6) the principle of integration of young people - to promote intercultural dialogue in all stages of the development and implementation of the youth policy;

7) the principle of mobility and international co-operation - to ensure that young people have the opportunity to be mobile, to acquire knowledge and skills outside their place of residence and to promote the exchange of the recommendations, and also best practices of other countries and their introduction into the youth policy of Latvia.

[30 September 2010]

### **Section 3. Competence of State Administration Institutions in the Area of Youth Policy**

(1) The Ministry of Education and Science shall ensure the development of the single national policy in the area of youth policy and coordinated implementation thereof, thus maintaining a system of measures for youth work. The Ministry of Education and Science shall:

1) promote the cooperation of the authorities involved in the implementation of the youth policy and coherence of the activities in the area of youth policy at the national level;

2) ensure the methodological management in the planning, implementation, and assessment of youth work of local governments;

3) coordinate and organise the training and exchange of experience of the persons involved in youth work;

4) develop international cooperation in the area of youth policy;

5) take care that young people and the persons involved in youth work would have access to the information on the rights, obligations, opportunities, and responsibility of young people.

(2) State administration institutions, upon implementing the youth policy according to their competence, shall evaluate the impact of the relevant sectoral policy on youth.

(3) State administration institutions in their activities shall provide youth organisations with an opportunity to engage in discussion of the decisions affecting the youth policy prior to the taking thereof.

(4) The Minister for Education and Science shall approve the annual State programme for youth policy which sets out the priorities for the annual youth policy according to the youth policy planning documents.

[12 June 2009; 30 September 2010; 23 November 2016]

### **Section 4. Youth Advisory Council**

(1) The Youth Advisory Council shall be an advisory institution established by the Cabinet the objective of which is to promote the development and implementation of the coordinated youth policy, and also the youth participation in decision-making and social life.

(2) Delegated representatives of the State administration, local governments, and youth organisations shall be included in the composition of the Youth Advisory Council. Delegated representatives of youth organisations shall form at least half of the composition of the Youth Advisory Council.

(3) The Cabinet shall approve the by-laws of the Youth Advisory Council.

### **Section 5. Competence of a Local Government in the Area of Youth Policy**

(1) A local government shall, while fulfilling its functions, perform youth work in compliance with the basic

principles of the youth policy and the national youth policy development planning documents. The local government shall plan youth work by developing the youth policy development planning documents of the local government. The local government shall ensure an institutional system for youth work.

(2) The local government, upon establishing an institutional system for youth work, is entitled to:

- 1) determine the local government authority responsible for youth work;
- 2) recruit a youth affairs specialist - a person who plans, performs, and coordinates youth work;
- 3) establish an advisory commission on youth affairs which promotes the planning and implementation of the local government youth work, and also the youth participation in decision-making;
- 4) establish a youth centre the purpose of which is to promote the initiatives of local youth, participation in decision-making and social life;
- 5) establish a youth council which promotes cooperation of local youth, exchange of experience, and initiatives in youth work;
- 6) determine other procedures for the performance of youth work.

(3) The local government shall ensure that youth organisations and youth initiative groups (informal and non-registered initiative groups, interest-related associations) have the opportunity to engage in the discussion of the decisions of the local government affecting the youth policy prior to the taking thereof.

(4) If a youth affairs specialist ensures youth work in the local government, he or she shall be trained in accordance with the procedures stipulated by the Cabinet.

(5) If the local government establishes an advisory commission on youth affairs, the local government specialists who perform youth work shall be included in the composition thereof. If necessary, the representatives of the youth council, youth organisations, youth initiative groups, or other associations and foundations who perform youth work shall be involved in the local government advisory commission on youth affairs. The basic tasks of the advisory commission on youth affairs shall be as follows:

- 1) to promote the cooperation of the local government institutions and units in matters related to young people;
- 2) to collect and analyse the information on local youth problems, needs, and interests;
- 3) to develop and submit to the local government recommendations for the performance of the youth work of the local government and for the improvement of the national youth policy;
- 4) to prepare recommendations for the involvement of young people in the activities of the political, economic, social, and cultural life, and also environmental protection;
- 5) to prepare recommendations for the support of the implementation of youth participation and initiatives;
- 6) to provide recommendations to the management of the local government on the financial planning of youth work.

(6) If the local government establishes a youth council, the representatives of the self-governance bodies of educatees, youth initiative groups, and youth organisations shall be included in the composition thereof. The basic tasks of a local government youth council shall be as follows:

- 1) to participate in the study and analysis of the interests and needs of young people, to prepare recommendations for the improvement of life quality of local youth;
- 2) to promote the cooperation and exchange of experience of local youth;
- 3) to promote the cooperation of young people with the local government, other youth councils, authorities, and organisations;
- 4) to participate in the measures organised by the local government;
- 5) to disseminate information on the opportunities for young people;
- 6) to engage in the youth work of the local government and the measures, projects, and programmes organised thereby.

(7) If the local government establishes a youth centre which is a local government institution or a unit of a local government institution, such centre shall perform youth work in accordance with the basic tasks specified in Section 2.<sup>1</sup>, Paragraph three of this Law, ensuring the following:

- 1) the implementation of non-formal education measures, projects, and programmes;
- 2) the engaging of young people in youth organisations or youth initiative groups and voluntary work;
- 3) the inclusion of young people who are at risk of social exclusion in their peer environment;
- 4) intercultural dialogue within the target audience of young people;
- 5) the counselling of young people on subjects topical to them;
- 6) the engaging of young people in the youth work of the local government and the measures, projects, and programmes organised thereby;
- 7) the performance of other tasks according to the competence of the local government in the area of youth policy.

[30 September 2010]

### **Section 5.<sup>1</sup> Competence of Planning Regions in the Area of Youth Policy**

Planning regions shall plan the development of youth work of the respective local governments and their cooperation in this area.

[30 September 2010]

### **Section 6. Youth Organisation and the List of Youth Organisations**

(1) A youth organisation is an association registered in the Register of Associations and Foundations and entered in the list of youth organisations. An association shall be entered in the list of youth organisations if it conforms to all of the following criteria:

- 1) one of the purposes of activity specified in the statutes of the association is to promote youth initiatives and participation in decision-making and social life;
- 2) the association performs youth work and the tasks of activity specified in the statutes of the association conform at least to three of the basic tasks specified in Section 2.<sup>1</sup>, Paragraph three of this Law;
- 3) at least two thirds of the members of the association are children and young people or also several associations, where in total at least two thirds of the members are children and young people;
- 4) participation of young people is ensured in the board of the association and the procedures for such participation are specified in the statutes of the association.

(2) The Cabinet shall determine the procedures for entering youth organisations in the list of youth organisations and the information to be included therein. The Ministry of Education and Science shall be the holder of the list of youth organisations.

[30 September 2010 / The new wording of Section shall come into force on 1 January 2011. See Transitional Provisions]

### **Section 7. Youth Participation in the Development and Implementation of the Youth Policy**

Young people have the right to participate in the development and implementation of the youth policy:

- 1) by engaging in the acquisition and provision of non-formal education and carrying out voluntary work;
- 2) by performing activities in the local governments of educational institutions;
- 3) by developing and implementing projects, and also other initiatives;
- 4) by participating in the activities of youth organisations, and also other associations and foundations;
- 5) by engaging in the process of the taking of State and local government decisions affecting the youth policy;
- 6) by engaging in other activities which are oriented towards the promotion of the youth participation in the development and implementation of the youth policy.

### **Section 8. Useful Utilisation of Leisure Time**

(1) The State and local governments shall promote work ethic and patriotism, non-formal education, voluntary work, physical activities, and the engaging of young people in the cultural life as essential ways of useful utilisation of leisure time.

(2) Non-formal education shall supplement formal education; the objective of non-formal education is to provide knowledge, to develop skills, abilities and attitudes, and also to promote comprehensive development and active youth participation in decision-making and social life.

(3) The State and local governments shall support the respective adjustment of the environment necessary for the useful utilisation of the leisure time of young people as much as possible.

[30 September 2010]

## **Section 9. Youth Voluntary Work**

Youth voluntary work is organised in accordance with the Voluntary Work Law.

[10 December 2015]

## **Section 10. Youth Voluntary Work Organisation**

[10 December 2015]

## **Section 11. Promotion of the Commercial Activity and Employment of Young People**

The State shall promote the commercial activity and employment of young people, particularly:

- 1) training of young people in matters related to the commencement of commercial activity;
- 2) support to the commencement of commercial activity of young people;
- 3) support to projects for the promotion of employment of young people, particularly young people who are at risk of social exclusion.

## **Section 12. Granting of Financing**

(1) Financing from the State budget which is provided for the promotion of youth initiatives and participation in decision-making and social life, and also for youth work shall be granted in an open procedure within the scope of the annual State programme for youth policy.

(2) Youth organisations have the right to receive the financing from the State budget which is provided for projects the objective of which is the promotion of youth initiatives and participation in decision-making and social life, and also projects for youth work.

(3) A recipient of the financing from the State budget may also be a local government and an association or a foundation a project of which is oriented towards youth work.

(4) A youth organisation has the right to receive financing from the State budget also for the support of the activity of the organisation, including representation in international organisations if it conforms to all of the following criteria:

- 1) the organisation has been entered in the list of youth organisations in accordance with the provisions laid down in Section 6 of this Law;
- 2) the organisation implements non-formal education programmes for young people;
- 3) the organisation is a full-fledged member of an international cooperation network of a related area of activity;
- 4) the organisation has not less than 300 members or union of youth organisations has not less than 300 members in total;
- 5) the organisation performs youth work in at least three planning regions;
- 6) the organisation performs its activity according to the annual youth policy priorities;
- 7) the duration of activities of the organisation, upon carrying out youth work, is at least three years;
- 8) every year the organisation organises at least one conference at national scale for its members and other interested parties on topical matters related to the youth policy;
- 9) information on the activity of the organisation is available to the public on the website.

(4<sup>1</sup>) Once every two years a separate open procedure for projects shall be organised for the support of the activity of youth organisations within the scope of which youth organisations apply for the financing of support to the activity for a period of two years. The agreement setting out the content of works of the project and its stages, the time periods for the performance thereof, and also the rights of the parties and the results to be achieved is entered into after taking the decision on the granting of the financing for the implementation of a project. The contract on the

implementation of the project stages shall be entered into with the project applicant for every year. The contract shall determine the content of works of stages, the time periods for the performance thereof, the costs of performance of stages, and the results to be achieved.

(5) The Cabinet shall determine the procedures for granting financing from the State budget which is intended for the promotion of youth initiatives and participation in decision-making and social life, for youth work and support of the activity of youth organisations, and also the procedures for administering and supervising the supported projects and the permitted rate of the co-financing of the project applicant which may take the form of an investment in kind or voluntary work.

(6) The decision on the granting of the financing for the implementation of projects within the scope of the non-formal youth education programmes of the European Union shall be taken, and also the administration and supervision of the supported projects shall be ensured in accordance with the procedures stipulated by the European Commission.

(7) A local government may support youth initiatives according to open procedures and may finance the projects of youth organisations and youth initiative groups in accordance with the procedures and within the amount stipulated by itself.

*[30 September 2010; 10 December 2015; 23 November 2016]*

### **Section 13. Delegation of the Tasks of State Administration Institutions**

The Ministry of Education and Science may delegate the performance of administrative tasks to private individuals, including associations and foundations, by entering into a contract in order to implement a system of measures for youth work in an efficient manner. The delegation of the abovementioned administrative tasks may include the issuance of administrative acts in relation to the organisation of open procedures for projects referred to in Section 12, Paragraph one of this Law.

*[12 June 2009; 30 September 2010]*

## **Transitional Provision**

*[30 September 2010]*

Amendments of this Law in respect of the new wording of Section 6, the supplementation of Section 12, Paragraph four, Clause 5 and Paragraph five shall come into force on 1 January 2011.

This Law shall come into force on 1 January 2009.

The *Saeima* has adopted this Law on 8 May 2008.

President V. Zatlers

Rīga, 28 May 2008

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<sup>1</sup> The Parliament of the Republic of Latvia

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