

## *Foreword*

Latvia is committed to providing all its citizens with a high-quality and inclusive education and has been making steady progress towards realising this goal. Since the start of the millennium Latvia has managed to significantly improve the performance of its education system. Nowadays children start their education at a young age and many of them continue into tertiary education. These are remarkable achievements considering the socio-economic challenges Latvia has faced during this period including the economic recession that struck the country hard during 2008-10, and the ongoing decline of the student population. Sustaining this progress will be central to realising Latvia's ambitions in education and for society as a whole.

This report has been developed as an input into the process of Latvia's accession to the OECD. It provides an assessment of Latvia's policies and practices compared to OECD best policies and practices in education and skills. Covering the whole education system from early childhood education and care to tertiary education, it assesses current policies and practices against five important principles of well-performing education systems:

- a strong focus on improving learning outcomes
- equity in educational opportunity
- the ability to collect and use data to inform policy
- the effective use of funding to steer reform
- extended multi-stakeholder engagement in policy design and implementation.

The report highlights not only the many strengths of Latvia's education system, but also its challenges and provides recommendations for improvement.

I hope this report will support Latvia in its reform efforts and help realise its ambitions for enhancing the quality and equity of its education system and strengthening the contribution of education and skills to economic growth and competitiveness. The OECD is there to help Latvia in this effort.



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## *Acknowledgements*

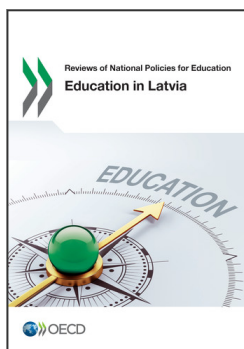
This report is the result of an assessment of Latvia's policies and practices in the field of education and skills, informed by international experience and best practices from OECD countries. The assessment process has involved a background report prepared by the Latvian Ministry of Education and Science, an OECD pre-visit to help define the key areas for review, and an OECD review visit to Latvia in November-December 2014, as well as many exchanges and consultations with different experts and stakeholders in Latvia and internationally.

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