



## **LATGALIAN**

**The Latgalian language in education in Latvia**

| Regional dossiers series |

This document was published by the Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning with financial support from the Fryske Akademy, the Province of Fryslân and the municipality of Leeuwarden.

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and Language Learning, 2009**

ISSN: 1570 – 1239  
1st edition

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#### *Acknowledgements*

The authors wish to express their gratitude to Lidija Leikuma, Associate Professor at the University of Latvia in Riga, and Veronika Dundure, the head of the Latgališu volūdys, literatūrys ī kulturviesturis školuotuoju asoaceejis (Association of Teachers of Latgalian Language, Literature and Cultural History) who have assisted in providing information and data for this dossier.

The Mercator Research Centre wants to thank Brigita Silina for her helpful comments.

From Januar 2009 onwards Tjallien Kalsbeek has been responsible for the publication of the Mercator Regional dossiers series.

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## Glossary

<b>ECTS</b>	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
<b>LASHOR</b>	Латвийская ассоциация в поддержку школ с обучением на русском языке (Association of Russian Language Schools in Latvia)
<b>LgSC</b>	Latgolys Studentu centrs (Students' Centre of Latgale)
<b>LVLKSA</b>	Latgalīšu valūdas, literatūras i kultūrviesturis školotāju asociācija (Association of Teachers of Latgalian Language, Literature and Cultural History)



## Foreword

- background** The Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning aims at the acquisition, circulation, and application of knowledge in the field of regional and minority language education. Regional or minority languages are languages that differ from the official language of the state where they are spoken and that are traditionally used within a given territory by nationals of that state forming a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state's population. For several years an important means for the Mercator Research Centre to achieve the goal of knowledge acquisition and circulation has been the Regional dossiers series. The success of this series illustrates a need for documents stating briefly the most essential features of the education system of regions with an autochthonous lesser used language.
- aim** Regional dossiers aim at providing a concise description and basic statistics about minority language education in a specific region of Europe. Aspects that are addressed include features of the education system, recent educational policies, main actors, legal arrangements, and support structures, as well as quantitative aspects, such as the number of schools, teachers, pupils, and financial investments. This kind of information can serve several purposes and can be relevant for different target groups.
- target group** Policymakers, researchers, teachers, students, and journalists may use the information provided to assess developments in European minority language schooling. They can also use a Regional dossier as a first orientation towards further research or as a source of ideas for improving educational provisions in their own region.
- link with Eurydice** In order to link these regional descriptions with those of national education systems, the format of the regional dossiers follows the format used by Eurydice, the information network on education in Europe. Eurydice provides information on the

administration and structure of national education systems in the member states of the European Union.

**contents**

The remainder of this dossier consists of an introduction to the region under study, followed by six sections each dealing with a specific level of the education system. These brief descriptions contain factual information presented in a readily accessible way. Sections eight to ten cover research, prospects, and summary statistics. For detailed information and political discussions about language use at the various levels of education, the reader is referred to other sources with a list of publications.



## 1 Introduction

### language

The Latgalian language is a language originating in the region of Latgale in Eastern Latvia. It is part of the Baltic language family. Traditionally, it was argued that only two Baltic languages have survived until the present day – Latvian and Lithuanian – with Old Prussian regularly being named as a third variety which died out in the seventeenth century. According to this view, Latgalian is the most distinct dialect of Latvian.

In fact, Latgalian has existed as a separate oral and written variety with a largely different linguistic and cultural development for centuries, culminating in a codified standard in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Today, more and more speakers of Latgalian and linguists working in the field of Baltic languages consider Latgalian to be a separate language (Butkus, 2005; Leikuma, 2002; Nītiņa, 2007). Their argumentation usually follows two separate lines. On the one hand, there are considerable differences between Latgalian and Latvian on all linguistic levels (morphology, syntax and phonological level). And on the other hand you find the history of separate standardisation and the development of a regional identity.

The following table provides some examples of Latgalian in contrast to Latvian and Lithuanian. It shows that there is a common layer of ancient original words in Latgalian and Lithuanian which are not known in standard Latvian:

Latgalian	<i>jīs</i>	<i>vysod</i>	<i>mauduotīs</i>	<i>apleik</i>	<i>sukņa</i>	<i>palāda</i>
Lithuanian	<i>jīs</i>	<i>visada</i>	<i>maudytis</i>	<i>aplink</i>	<i>suknia, suknelė</i>	<i>pelėda</i>
Latvian	<i>viņš</i>	<i>vienmēr</i>	<i>peldēties</i>	<i>apkārt</i>	<i>kleita</i>	<i>pūce</i>
English	<i>he</i>	<i>always</i>	<i>to swim</i>	<i>around</i>	<i>dress</i>	<i>owl</i>

Table 1: Examples of Latgalian lexemes in contrast to Lithuanian and Latvian

The linguistic differences between Latgalian and Latvian are largely a result of the separate historical development of the region of Latgale which exposed Latgalian to strong contact with its mostly Slavonic neighbouring languages (Polish, Russian), but also with Lithuanian, whereas Latvian shows less influence from these languages and has more influence from Germanic varieties.

A written version of Latgalian was created at the beginning of the eighteenth century. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, Latgalian was used as a language of instruction in some parish schools in Latgale and in two church seminaries (Zeile, 2006). A wide range of publications were printed until the use of the Latin alphabet in printed texts and thereby also the Latgalian written language was prohibited in tsarist Russia from 1865 until 1904. The language of instruction during this time was only Russian. From the beginning of the twentieth century, the standardised written language has been developed with final standardising efforts taking place today. In 1917, the famous Latgalian Congress took place in the city of Rēzekne; delegates from all over Latgale decided to demand unification with the other parts of Latvia, thereby explicitly identifying themselves as a part of Latvian nationalism. This proved to be the basis for the inclusion of Latgale into the new Latvian state in 1918. Yet, one of the other demands by the Congress was cultural autonomy, including the possibility to use the Latgalian language for official purposes with a standard orthography based on Polish spelling traditions.

The first Latvian Republic was the time when the strongest official support was given to the Latgalian language. Latgalian was officially recognised as a regional language of administration, in line with a general minority-friendly attitude by the state, although also during this time, centralist and thereby anti-Latgalian attitudes were not unknown. From 1923, Latgalian was taught in the first years of primary school, with a slow transgression to Latvian as the main language of instruction in later years. Latgalian was used by more and more writers, about forty periodicals existed, and about ten school books for Latgalian

were published every year. This attitude changed with the take-over of the Latvian government by the authoritarian Ulmanis regime in 1934, when also a Latvianisation of Latgalian proper names and toponyms set in. The use of Latgalian in schools and the publication of books in Latgalian was reintroduced for a short time during Nazi German occupation (1941-44). After that, the Latgalian language has not been used officially. After the Second World War Latgalian suffered from both communist anti-catholic and Latvian anti-decentralist attitudes. In education, a law was passed in 1956 on the basis of suggestions by Latvian linguists which took an explicitly purist view to Latvian and encouraged teachers to mark the use of Latgalian as wrong. Thereby, Latgalian was stigmatised, an attitude which, in line with similar experiences in other countries, has had its effect on the prestige of the language until the present day. The only place where Latgalian was still quite strong, besides its usage as a language of the (mostly rural) homes was the Catholic Church. The use of the Latgalian written language, however, ceased altogether when a printing prohibition took effect in the 1960s, directed against the Catholic Church Calendars. The written tradition was continued on a very low scale between emigrants in countries such as Germany, the USA, Canada, or Sweden. Latgalian exile writing traditions were maintained through a small number of publications, most prominently by the Latgalian research institutes which were created in 1960 in Indianapolis and Munich and to be found at Latvijas Reģionu Attīstības Portāls (Latvian Regions Development Portal).

Today, as an effect of previous and current policies, there is largely a diglossic situation of Latgalian and Latvian in Latgale, with Latgalian as the low variety of the (rather rural) homes, and Latvian used for more official purposes and in the towns. Almost all ethnic Latvians/Latgalians in Latgale can speak Latgalian in one of its varieties. Many people can also read Latgalian, but as a result of the previous policies, only very few people can write it. Stigmatisation as a rural, unprestigious variety of the less educated prevails, and is strengthened by centralist decision-making processes in Latvian politics as a whole.

	Fluently	Well	Basic skills	Weak
Understanding	58	21	14	7
Speech	50	20	17	13
Reading	33	26	19	22
Writing	20	16	22	42

*Table 2: Skills of Latgalian in percentages (Source: Lazdiņa & Šuplinska, forthcoming).*

In addition, Latgalian is suffering from the consolidation of the Latvian language as a reversal of shift towards Russian. In this, for part of the Latvian policy makers, Latgalian doesn't have a place or is even regarded as a separatist threat. Yet, among Latgalian activists, there are only very few voices who would support a view that Latgalian identity is separate from Latvian identity. For most Latgalians, Latgalian identity and the Latgalian language as its most important factor are part of Latvian identity – thereby creating a situation similar to other regional languages and identities in Europe (Bukšs, 1961, p. 248).

In the 1990s, the development of Latgalian language and culture was accelerated thanks to the activities of some enthusiastic intellectuals: Linguists initiated debates about an orthography reform and started to take care of Latgalian toponyms. Local societies were set up in order to revive lost literary traditions and to create new texts in Latgalian. Teachers proposed plans, programmes and curricula for Latgalian literature, culture and geography to the Latvijas Republikas Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija (Ministry of Education and Science).

The tradition of the Latgales Pētniecības institūts (LPI, Research Institute of Latgale) at the Daugavpils Universitāte (University of Daugavpils) was revived in 1991, and the publishing house of the Latgales Kultūras centrs (LKC, Latgalian Cultural Centre) started its work by taking over the heritage of the V Lōcs Publishing House in Munich.

Today, Latgalian language and culture also attract young people increasingly, due to new authors and trends in Latgalian literature, supported by the publication of textbooks and ABC-books for language teaching and learning (Leikuma, 1993; Cibujš & Leikuma, 1992). In 2007, a new Latgalian orthography was officially adopted by the Valsts valodas centrs (Latvian State Language Centre).

**population**

Latgalian is mostly spoken in the Eastern part of Latvia – the region of Latgale (*Latgola*) and also in families and small communities of people originating from Latgale in Rīga and in other parts of Latvia. It is estimated that, as an everyday means of communication, Latgalian is used by between 150 000 – 200 000 people, which corresponds to 15-22 % of the population of Latvia (Latgale - Latgola, n.d.).

About 1000 Latgalians live in Russian Siberia in the regions of Krasnoyarsk, Tomsk and Omsk who also use their mother tongue in everyday conversations along with the Russian language. A similar number of speakers are estimated to remain in the classical countries of exile, i.e. Germany, Canada, the United States etc.

Broadly speaking, what is understood by Latgale in the cultural and linguistic sense, includes all of the five districts of Rēzekne, Balvi, Krāslava, Ludza and Preiļi, and parts of the four districts of Alūksne, Daugavpils, Jēkabpils and Madona. In the east,



Map 1: Map of Latvia (Source: Latvijas institūts (Latvian Institute))

Migration from Poland and Russia existed throughout the centuries, but it was not before the Soviet migration processes that non-Latgalian speakers in Latgale reached higher numbers and even outnumbered Latgalian speakers. In this, there is a large rural-urban division: Whereas most parts of the Latgalian countryside continue to be Latgalian-dominated until the present day, the cities are much more diverse, with non-Latgalians outnumbering Latgalians and Latvians in general in the biggest cities.

Ethnicity	Latvia (1935)	Latgale (1935)	Latvia (1989)	Latgale (1989)	Latvia (2007)	Latgale (2007)
Latvians (no differentiation between Latgalians and other Latvians)	77.0	61.3	52.0	39.4	59.0	43.9
Russians	9.0	27.1	34.0	43.4	28.3	39.6
Belarusians	1.4	2.4	4.5	6.5	3.7	5.6
Ukrainians	0.1	*	3.5	1.9	2.5	1.4
Poles	2.6	3.5	2.3	6.5	2.4	7.1
Lithuanians	1.2	0.2	1.3	0.7	1.4	0.6
Jews	4.9	4.9	0.4	0.4	*	*
Germans	3.3	0.2	*	*	*	*
Other ethnicities	0.6	0.2	1.7	0.9	2.7	1.8

\* figure below 0.1; included in „other ethnicities”

*Table 3: The ethnic composition of inhabitants in Latvia and Latgale in 1935, 1989 and 2007 (in percentage). Latgale here includes the districts of Rēzekne, Daugavpils, Ludza, Krāslava, Preiļi, and Balvi (Source: Latvijas Statistika (Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia))*

Today, of the 1 355 000 ethnic Latvians/Latgalians in Latvia, 144 000 live in Latgale, in contrast to roughly 350 000 in 1938. The number of Latgalians all over the world is estimated at between 150 000 and 250 000. Interestingly, according to the data of the ethnolinguistic survey done in 2006 (Kļavinska, 2008), a lot of persons responded of their own accord that their nationality was Latgalian. Yet, when the data was processed, this information was put aside and all Latgalians were automatically qualified as Latvians.

**language status** In the early 1990s, there was a situation of asymmetrical bilingualism with many Russians speaking only Russian, whereas most Latvians spoke both Latvian and Russian. Russian was the language of prestige and served much wider functions in

official domains. This functional hierarchy of languages together with migration from other parts of the Soviet Union led to a situation in which at the end of the Soviet occupation, only 23 % of non-Latvians in Latvia were able to speak Latvian. Of all the population in Latvia in 1989, 62 % spoke Latvian, whereas 81 % spoke Russian (United Nations, 1995).

Nowadays Latvian is the state language as manifested in the Valsts valodas likums (Official Language Law - in effect in the year 2000). Latvian language policy since the reestablishment of independence in 1991 has been based on the attempt to reverse language shift from Russian back to Latvian.

Today, therefore, Latvian is the state language and the only language to be used by public authorities. For private purposes, there are no restrictions in language use. In private companies, other languages may be used in addition to Latvian, and there are no restrictions regarding the additional use of other languages in the media and other domains. Officially recognised minorities (traditional as well as Soviet migrants) receive support for their cultural development.

The only other language officially recognised by the Official Language Law in Latvia is the micro-minority language of Livonian, of which today only a handful of speakers remain. No provisions for Livonian are created, although there are some optional lessons of Livonian at schools in the area of Mazirbe (in the region of Kolka) where 1 teacher organises lessons for approximately 1-2 times a month. In addition there are some initiatives for Livonian related to adult language acquisition.

Latgalian is mentioned in the Official Language Law as a “historic second variety of Latvian”, including its written standard – which may be the basis for a better recognition of Latgalian in contrast to the other languages in Latvia. However, it is unclear how this Law should be interpreted. Whereas Latgalian speakers tend to see this law as an encouragement for active language policy and support, the central authorities and linguists

in Rīga tend to stress the historical aspect - i.e. Latgalian may be cherished as a heritage language, but is not assigned any contemporary functions.

**status of  
language  
education**

Because of its unclear position vis-à-vis the Latvian language, Latgalian is not mentioned explicitly in the Educational Laws in Latvia. Where Latgalian is used in education, usage takes place on the basis of the protection and development as a historical variety of Latvian according to the Official Language Law. In this sense, it is a linguistic legislation based on permission, but not on active promotion. In practice this means that there is little support by official bodies, and that steps taken in Latgalian depend on demands by parents, paired with initiatives by individual teachers and education administrators. Where Latgalian classes exist, these have been created on initiative by the individual schools whose suggestions for Latgalian lessons have been accepted by school authorities as part of the historical tradition of Latvian. Another way in which Latgalian is included in teaching, is in the context of regionalism and dialects as a topic in Latvian language lessons. The presence of Latgalian in this context reinforces the official perception of Latgalian as part of the Eastern or "High Latvian" dialects of Latvian, instead of that as a separate language.

**education  
system**

The education system in Latvia consists of pre-school education, of which the last two years (from age 5 until 7) are compulsory, and nine years of primary education. Education is compulsory until the age of 16. After primary education, there are several options for secondary education: basic vocational, general secondary, vocational secondary, and vocational education. In most cases these consist of three or four years. Higher education in one of the universities or university colleges is based on the successful completion of secondary education. Study programmes have mostly been transformed to the European BA-MA structure.

The two main laws which regulate education today are the 1998 Izglītības likums (Education Law) and the 1999 Vispārējās

izglītības likums (General Education Law) with several later amendments. In addition, there are several other laws like the 1995 Augstskolu likums (Law on Institutions of Higher Education), the 2005/2007 Zinātniskās darbības likums (Law on Scientific Activity) and the 1991/2001 Profesionālās izglītības likums (Vocational Education Law).

Whereas there were two largely separate Latvian and Russian education systems during Soviet times, education reforms have since the beginning of the 1990s aimed at overcoming these differences and at integrating linguistic minorities into Latvian society. From a language perspective, these concentrate on overcoming the lack of Latvian knowledge among parts of the population. The last reform from 2004, which aimed at a strong reduction of the use of languages other than Latvian led to strong protests. The final version of the reform introduced a 60/40 solution in secondary education, with 60% of the classes taught in Latvian, and 40% in the minority language.

Minority schooling in Latvia is predominantly aimed at the Russian-speaking population, but there are also schools for Ukrainian, Polish and other minorities. Often, support for these schools comes from the homeland countries, e.g. from Poland. However, there are no separate Latgalian schools in this sense, and there is no official policy for Latgalian in this context. Because of the lack of decentralisation of Latvia, there are also no specific regulations for the region of Latgale and its specific linguistic needs.

**private and  
public**

There is not a long tradition of private schools in Latvia and they do not play an important role in the education system of Latvia today. However, a number of private schools exist. Around twenty of such schools are member of the Latvijas privātskolu asociācija (Latvian Private Schools Association), some of which are of religious nature, and some of which are oriented towards the recognised minorities, such as the Russian Private Gymnasium in Rīga. In the region of Latgale, there is only one private school; a catholic primary school in Rēzekne.

There are some minority schools that receive support from the respective countries whose language and culture they focus at, but they are essentially financed and under the administrative responsibility of the Latvian state. In Latgale, there is a Polish primary and secondary school in Rēzekne which receives strong support from Poland. There is, however, no such school with a focus on Latgalian.

There are around twenty private institutions in higher education. None of these has a specific focus on languages or on a minority culture.

**bilingual**

**education forms**

In the year 2007/2008, 722 schools in Latvia used Latvian as medium of instruction, 141 schools used Russian as medium of instruction, 88 schools were bilingual Latvian-Russian, 5 schools used Polish, and 1 school each Ukrainian and Belarusian. In 1 school some subjects were taught in Estonian, in 1 school some subjects were taught in Lithuanian, whereas 2 schools offered the Romany language as an optional subject and 2 schools offered Hebrew (Latvijas Republikas Ārlietu ministrija, 2008). In 7 schools, Latgalian is offered as an optional subject, all of which are in the region of Latgale. These figures concern both primary and secondary education.

26.1 % of the pupils in 2007/2008 attended bilingual schools with Russian as medium of instruction and 73.4 % attended schools with Latvian as medium of instruction. Until the mid-1990s, two different school systems existed; Russian and Latvian, each with their own curricula. Since 1999, the minority schools in Latvia have been providing bilingual education (first in primary schools, followed by secondary schools in 2004). Today, minority language schools offering primary education can choose between 4 standard models of bilingual education. Again, however, it has to be stressed that this does not apply to the Latgalian language.

Model 1	Grade 1-4: Visual art, Manual training, Sport, Music, Natural sciences in Latvian Grade 5-6: Additionally Geography, Biology, Maths bilingually Grade 7-9: All subjects in Latvian or bilingually, except mother tongue and literature
Model 2	Grade 1-2: 70 – 95% of subjects bilingually Grade 3-6: 50 – 75% bilingually Grade 7-9: 40 – 60% bilingually
Model 3	Gradual transition to learning in Latvian – one subject in Latvian in Grade 1, every year one additional subject in Latvian
Model 4	Grade 1-3: all subjects in mother tongue + Latvian as a Second Language Grade 4-6: 50% subjects in Latvian Grade 7-9: all subjects in Latvian or bilingually, except mother tongue and literature

*Table 4: The four models of bilingual education for linguistic minorities in Latvia (Source: Pamatizglītības mazākumtautību programma, Curricula of Elementary Education for Minorities). Available at: <http://izm.izm.gov.lv/nozares-politika/izglitiba/vispareja-izglitiba/pamatizglitiba/programmas.html> [Accessed April 2009]*

The schools which are classified as bilingual in Latvia are bilingual in the sense that they have Latvian and Russian classes. These classes follow the same rules as classes in only Latvian or only Russian schools. If the guidelines speak about 70-95 % of the subjects taught bilingually, it means that 70-95 % of the classes are carried out in Latvian or in Latvian and the minority language, and the remaining percentage in the minority language only.

There are, however, also some schools in which fewer subjects are taught in the minority language than would be allowed. This applies not so much to Russian than to the other languages. Schools for the smaller minorities have to choose either the Latvian or the Russian model – if they choose the Russian model they follow the same rules as the Russian schools, i.e. they are bilingual Russian-Latvian, plus one subject in the minority language, e.g. Ivrit in the Jewish school. If they choose the Latvian model, they have Latvian in all subjects as the medium of instruction, plus one or two subjects in their mother tongue,

e.g. Polish. It should also be stressed, however, that official regulations are even less complex than reality in the distinction Latvian vs. minority schools, where many schools choose individual solutions.

The Латвийская ассоциация в поддержку школ с обучением на русском языке (LASHOR, Association of Russian Language Schools in Latvia) has developed an alternative model according to which all subjects are taught in L1 until Grade 8. In Grade 9, subjects are taught bilingually with the exception of one hour Civics in Latvian. The aim of LASHOR is to preserve the Russian language to the detriment of the acquisition of Latvian.

**administration**

The school standards are determined by the Ministry of Education and Science. The Ministry of Education and Science has not developed any policy on Latgalian. Schools develop their own profile and courses which need to be approved by the education authorities. Local coordination of schools and supervision is done by the educational councils in every city and district. In addition, there is a separate department in every city and parish which is responsible for the development of educational, cultural and sports issues. These offices may support individual projects in a more informal, unsystematic way.

In reality this system means that school directors have a high degree of influence. Teachers can write Latgalian classes into their curricula within the framework of the following subjects if it is accepted by the director or the educational council of the city or district: Latvian language, Latvian literature, geography, cultural history, and music. In addition Latgalian can be offered as an optional subject. It ultimately depends on the individual school directors to approve these suggestions; educational authorities in practice rarely object to Latgalian in the curricula.

In higher education, study programmes and research are coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Latvian Council of Science (Latvijas Zinātnes padome). Study

programmes need official accreditation by independent international commissions.

**inspection**

The accreditation of educational programmes at all levels is organised by the Vispārējās izglītības kvalitātes novērtēšanas valsts aģentūra (State Agency for Quality Assessment of General Education) under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Science<sup>1</sup>. Accreditation takes place according to the principle of peer group reviews. For schools, these can be e.g. the directors of other schools, for universities these are academic staff from other institutions including a representative of a foreign university. If accreditation is granted, it has to be reviewed after 2 or 6 years, according to the decision of the accreditation commission.

The inspection of educational institutions in Latvia is regulated by the Education Law. According to this law, inspections fall within the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Science and can be conducted at any time without prior announcement (Uzdevumi un kompetence, n.d.). Inspections are carried out by inspectors on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Science and in cooperation with the educational administration of each region or town. The duties of the inspectors are to supervise the connections between the Ministry of Education and Science, the local administration and the educational institutions, to control the fulfilment of the laws, and to act as representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science towards these institutions. Since 2006 similar inspections are also implemented separately for pre-schools.

**support  
structure**

The most important organisation for methodological issues and general information on Latgalian is the Latgališu volūdys, literatūrys l kulturviesturis školuoju asociaceja (LVLKSA, Association of Teachers of Latgalian Language, Literature and Cultural History), established in 2000. It has organised summer camps for teachers with the main aim to deal with issues of how to teach Latgalian, Latgalian literature and culture at school. It is working for the maintenance of the Latgalian language and cultural

heritage and its inclusion in the schools in Latgale. Since 2002, there has also been a methodology centre for the Latgalian written language, literature and cultural history: *Latgališu volūdys, literatures i kulturis viesturis metodiskais kabinets*. Activities include a competition in the field of Latgalian language and literature and geography for secondary school students, a competition of recitation for pupils and students, and the *Pēterdiena* (Peter's Day), a literary evening dedicated to Latgalian poet *Pēteris Jurciņš*.

A number of cultural organisations that had existed before the Second World War, were re-established during the 1990s after the re-establishment of the independence of Latvia. These organisations can be found in various parts of Latgale as well as in other parts of Latvia (e.g. Rīga). In March 2008, the umbrella organisation *Latgališu organizaceju padūme* (Council of Latgalian Organisations) was created, representing today more than 20 cultural institutions. It aims at shaping the development of Latgalian cultural and educational policies.

The Ludzas bibliotēkas kultūrvēstures datu bāze (cultural database of the town of Ludza) collects data on Latgalian culture and uses Latgalian as one of its working languages.

The *Latgolys Studentu centrs* (LgSC - Students' Centre of Latgale) was active between 1990 and 1994 and restarted to work in 2004 with the motto „In Latgale, the sun rises”. It receives funding from the Latvian and the Norwegian state. Its aim is to develop and coordinate Latgalian cultural, economic and social activities. The largest projects include a summer school for students of secondary schools, a festival of Latgalian Music, a monthly evening of folklore and Latgalian traditions, and the *Latgališu Kultūrys Gazeta* (Lakuga, Latgalian Cultural Newspaper).

*Rēzeknes Augstskola* (Rēzekne University College) was created in 1993 and one of its aims is to be a research centre of Latgalian issues. The department of Philology has conducted research of cultural processes in Latgale, Latvia and Europe in co-operation with other organisations. It organises international

conferences, seminars, folkloristic and ethnolinguistic expeditions, and scientific projects. Similarly, the LPI at the University of Daugavpils also carries out several projects on Latgalians, Latgalian literature and created databases within this field.

Material and financial support for education in Latgalian also comes from the Latgalian Cultural Centre which provides books in Latgalian to interested school libraries. From 2007 on Latgales reģiona attīstības aģentūra (Latgale Region Development Agency) and Valsts Kultūrkapitāla fonds (the State Cultural Capital Fund) have organised competitions for projects in culture and education. The Ministry of Education and Science has started a programme targetted at Latgale for the improvement of methodology in Latgalian schools, from which projects on the Latgalian language can gain support. Local governments also have a limited amount of resources available for local projects that may include support for the issues of the Latgalian language.

Only to a certain level, Latgalian is present in the mass media today. After the re-establishment of the independence of Latvia, several media were established in Latgalian: a weekly newspaper *Mōras Zeme* (Māra's Land), and the religious magazine *Katōļu Dzeive* (Catholic Life). On Latvian State TV and radio, there are occasional Latgalian broadcasts of various types. Today, *Mōras Zeme* continues as an insert to the Rēzekne newspaper *Rēzeknes Vēstis* (Rēzeknes Tidings). In addition, several newspapers of the region publish occasional articles in Latgalian (Leikuma, 2002, p. 38).

Of other types of media, the Latgolys Radeja radio station is the most prominent one. It has addressed a general audience all over Latgale since 2006. Since 2007, there has been an online journal *Lakuga* as well as a number of web portals and individual home pages. In addition, some music groups (not only folklore groups, but also pop, rap and heavy metal groups such as Borowa MC, Bez PVN, Laimas Muzykanti, and Dabasus Durovys) use Latgalian in their performances.

## 2 Pre-school education

- target group** Pre-school education in Latvia covers children from 2 years up to the age of 7. Since 2002, 5- and 6-year-old children have an obligation to attend the last two years of pre-school provided by general kindergartens or within normal primary schools as part of compulsory primary education. The aim of this rule is to ensure that children have the necessary skills for entering the first year of primary education when they enter school. Besides aspects of the individual mental, physical and social development of the children, these pre-school programmes are also explicitly aimed at ensuring basic skills of the official language, i.e. Latvian.
- structure** Pre-school education in Latvia is organised by the Ministry of Education and Science. Curricula are created by individual kindergartens based on the general regulations by the Ministry of Education and Science. Curricula have to be accepted by the council of education of the respective city or district.
- legislation** Pre-school legislation is included in the main educational laws. The 1999 General Education Law states that it is the duty of each municipality to provide access to pre-school education. Section 20 (1) 6 of this law stipulates that the acquisition of the basic skills for using the official language (i.e. Latvian) is one of the aims of pre-school education.
- language use** There are pre-school establishments both for children with Latvian as a first language and for the children of minorities, i.e. predominantly Russian-speaking children. Since one of the aims of pre-school education is to guarantee basic Latvian language skills among pupils before they enter primary education, focus of language acquisition in the latter is on Latvian. Yet, parents or the authority of the pre-school establishment may take initiatives to organise and finance other language elements, including Latgalian, in pre-school education. These may be financed by municipalities or by the parents themselves. In schools with Latvian as a first language, this is often

directed towards an early acquisition of English. In some minority schools such as the Polish school in Rēzekne, Polish lessons are organised in the adjacent kindergarten for preparation to this school. In the same way some Latgalian elements, such as songs and games, can be included. Some Russian speakers perceive Latgalian to be easier to acquire than Latvian.

In Latgale, there are several kindergartens where Latgalian is used on the basis of such initiatives. Teaching of Latgalian is oriented towards both children from Latgalian-speaking families and towards other children. Teaching usually is connected with the teaching of traditions and folkloristic elements, such as songs and dances.

Some kindergartens that have been particularly active in the introduction of Latgalian are located in Nautrēni, Makašāni and Gaigalava in the district of Rēzekne, Baltinava and Upītes in the district of Balvi, and Galēni in the district of Preiļi. Due to the unsystematic ad-hoc basis of a lot of Latgalian teaching, more detailed figures are not available.

An important aspect in this context is that individual efforts entirely depend on the initiative and attitudes of individual schools and parents. Besides strong and successful efforts by some enthusiasts of Latgalian, attitudes are also reported where parents are looked down at by pre-school teachers for having raised their children in Latgalian instead of in Latvian, and where kindergartens see their main aim in eradicating “wrong” Latgalian speech elements from the children’s Latvian. Teachers occasionally are even asking parents not to use Latgalian when at school, mostly in kindergartens in the larger towns in the region.

**teaching  
material**

The amount of teaching material available for Latgalian on any level of education is low. Where teaching material exists, it has been developed by teachers or scientists. Pre-school teachers, where they decide to use Latgalian, usually use books of Latgalian songs, folklore and traditional stories suitable for pre-school use. Often used editions are the books written by

Rasma Igaune and Gunārs Igaunis (Igaune & Igauni, 1993; Igaune, 2001).

#### statistics

There are about 100 kindergartens in the region of Latgale. More than 25 % of them are located in the city and districts of Daugavpils and Rēzekne.

The following table shows the distribution of languages which were used in pre-school establishments, pre-school groups at general schools and interest education establishments in Latgale by language of instruction on 1 September 2006:

Latvian	56 788
Russian	17 535
Latvian and Russian (mixed schools)	2 548
Polish	240
Other	167

*Table 5: Amount of children in pre-schools in Latgale on 1 September 2006, by language of instruction (Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia)*

The table is characteristic for the attitude towards languages in Latgale in three aspects: First, it shows that language issues are central for educational policy makers. Second, there is a distinction between groups using Latvian, groups using one of the minority languages, and groups using two languages, with a dominance of policy efforts to increase the number of children attending Latvian rather than other language groups, since Russian as a home language still stands very strong in many families and automatic acquisition of Latvian through society is not guaranteed. Third, there is no information on Latgalian. Yet, this does not mean that Latgalian is never used (although usage is low) – official policy makers simply consider it to be part of the Latvian language and therefore don't mention it explicitly in education.

### 3 Primary education

**target group** Primary education in Latvia is based on nine years at school for primary and lower secondary education which are compulsory for children from the age of 7.

**structure** The curriculum of Latvian primary schools is determined in the Valsts pamatizglītības standarts (National basic education standard). The content of the final national examinations is supervised by the Ministry of Education and Science.

Besides the schools for children of the Latvian-speaking majority, there are programmes which are dedicated specifically to the needs of the linguistic minorities. Their aim is to provide the opportunity for these minorities to acquire sufficient knowledge in Latvian in order to integrate successfully into Latvian society, while at the same time maintaining and developing their specific cultural and linguistic identity. Languages for which these programmes exist are Russian, Belarusian, Polish, Ukrainian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Hebrew, and for the Roma population.

It is the individual schools' decision to plan this type of multilingual education, including which subjects should be taught in the minority language, which subjects should be taught bilingually (i.e. Latvian and the minority language), and which subjects should be taught in Latvian. The aim is to conduct a gradual transition from the minority language to Latvian as the language of instruction.

Latgalian, however, is not among the languages for which such specific programmes have been developed, because of the perception of central policy-makers that it is a part of Latvian. Latgalian language and literature can be taught on initiative by individual schools.

**legislation** Primary-school legislation is included in the main educational laws. The 1999 Law of Education states in its section 30 (5) that the "basic educational programme may be combined with an educational programme for ethnic minorities, including therein

the native language of an ethnic minority, educational content related to the identity of ethnic minorities and the integration of ethnic minorities into Latvian society.”

**language use** The relation between Latvian and minority languages as languages of instruction depends on the model of transition chosen by every school individually as described in chapter 1 (table 3). Latgalian is not part of this system but taught on individual choice by the schools.

The average percentages of lessons in language teaching in schools with Latvian as a medium of instruction of the total schooling for the grades 1 until 9 are:

Latvian language and literature	17.8 %
First foreign language	8.3 %
Second foreign language	4.3 %

*Table 6: Language teaching in primary schools with Latvian as a medium of instruction (Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia)*

In contrast, in schools addressing minorities, the average percentages are:

Latvian language and literature	15.0 %
Minority (native) language	14.6 %
Foreign language	7.9 %

*Table 7: Language teaching in primary schools with a minority language as a medium of instruction. (Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia)*

In the region of Latgale, there are about 120 schools which offer primary education from grades 1 until 9. The language of instruction in these schools is mostly Latvian, but there is a considerable number of Russian minority schools, e.g. in Rēzekne, Daugavpils, Ludza, and Krāslava, and some Polish schools, e.g. in Krāslava. Rēzekne and Daugavpils.

Latgalian language and literature can be organised for students from grades 5 until 9 at schools in Latgale as a facultative subject or in study groups outside the regular curriculum on initiative by the individual school. There are 7 schools which offer Latgalian as an optional subject: Nautrēni and Makašāni in the district of Rēzekne, Baltinava and Tilža in the district of Balvi, Kārsava in the district of Ludza, Galēni in the district of Preiļi, and Dagda in the district of Krāslava. The name of the subject can vary between “Regional Studies”, “Latgalian Cultural History” and “Latgalian Literature”; students from grades 5 until 9 study together in one group.

The Latgalian language is used by teachers in individual lessons within the curriculum for the teaching of Latvian language and literature. On an informal level, Latgalian is used as a language of instruction and between lessons by teachers and pupils according to individual choice. However, prestige patterns that consider Latgalian to be “bad” Latvian prevail in many places by both teachers and parents. There is no data specifying the amount of this type of use of Latgalian.

In addition, folklore, singing and dancing groups exist in almost every primary school in the region which encourage pupils to maintain Latgalian culture and linguistic heritage through their activities.

Finally, Latgalian is frequently used by teachers and students both during and between classes on an ad-hoc basis. Such use of Latgalian depends both on the Latgalian skills of teachers and pupils and on the attitude towards Latgalian which ranges from very positive to very negative.

**teaching  
material**

Teaching material in Latgalian is mainly developed by individual teachers. In addition, a number of scholars have worked on the development of teaching material for Latgalian in the past decade. Of particular importance are the elementary Latgalian ABC by Rīga-based scholars L. Leikuma and J. Cibuļs (1992),

and the grammar for teachers by L. Leikuma (1993). There are several dictionaries, other grammars and scientific volumes on Latgalian language, literature and cultural history which may be useful in classroom situations (Bukšs, 1961; Kursīte & Staņeckā, 2003).

Teaching instruments for different subjects of primary school teaching were created during the first Latvian Republic between 1920 and 1934. However, only very few copies from this time have survived, and no cases have been reported that teachers use them today.

**statistics**

Latvian	171 712
Russian	60 575
Latvian and Russian (mixed schools)	23 250

*Table 8: Number of pupils in Latgale divided by language used as medium of instruction, in 2006/2007 (Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia)*

In each of the 7 schools that offer Latgalian as an optional subject, about 25 students choose this subject every year, i.e. between 150 and 200 students study Latgalian at primary schools every year. Mainly, Latgalian teaching started in the year 2000, with a few enthusiasts already offering Latgalian classes in the 1990s (Naurēni, Baltinava, Tilža).

About 120 students annually from 51 schools, i.e. from almost 50% of the schools in Latgale, have participated in the annual so-called "Olympics of Latgalian language, literature, and cultural history" since the year 2001.

## 4 Secondary education

- target group** Secondary education in Latvia consists of three years which follow after the nine years compulsory primary education, i.e. for students from roughly 15-18 years. The Latvian national standard for education distinguishes four profiles, of which three are part of general education, and one in most cases is part of vocational education: general comprehensive education, humanitarian/social education, mathematics/natural science/technical education, and vocational or professional education (arts, music, business, sports). These profiles may be combined with an educational programme of a minority culture. In these cases, the minority language and subjects related to national identity and its integration into Latvian society are part of the education.
- structure** In schools with Latvian as the language of instruction, students have eight compulsory subjects; among them are Latvian language and literature and two foreign languages. In schools for minorities, the minority language and literature is an additional subject.
- legislation** The General Education Law states in section 42 (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, the educational content related to the identity of ethnic minorities and the integration of ethnic minorities into Latvian society.”
- There is no specific mentioning of Latgalian in the educational law.
- language use** In schools with Latvian as a language of instruction, Latvian is used in all subjects except for the foreign languages. In minority schools, at least five subjects must be taught in Latvian every year, excluding Latvian language and literature. Since the last, highly controversial education reform in 2004, only up to 40% of the total number of lessons may be provided in a minority language (i.e. Russian in most cases).

Latgalian does not appear as a separate subject in the curricula of secondary schools. Individual, rather sporadic elements of Latgalian teaching on the secondary schools have been reported, mostly as part of Latvian language and literature teaching in the context of regional language and culture. Latgalian is thereby presented in line with the official language law as a variety of Latvian with a historical written standard rather than a separate language.

There are 6 schools in which Latgalian can be chosen as an optional subject: Nautrēni and Makašāni in the district of Rēzekne, Baltinava and Tilža in the district of Balvi, Kārsava in the district of Ludza, and Dagda in the district of Krāslava. The name of the subject can vary between “Regional Studies”, “Latgalian Cultural History” and “Latgalian Literature”; students from grades 10 until 12 study together in one group.

Drama groups in several secondary schools have enacted plays in Latgalian by Latgalian authors as classes outside the regular curriculum. Folklore, singing and dancing groups exist in almost every secondary school in the region, in which the regional culture and linguistic heritage is maintained through their activities.

In addition, also in secondary schools Latgalian is used by teachers and students both during and between classes on an ad-hoc basis, depending on language skills and attitudes.

**teaching  
material**

Teaching material in Latgalian is rare and usually based on individual efforts by teachers. However, in recent years some texts in Latgalian have been included in teaching instruments and text books for the teaching of Latvian language and literature. For example, the chapter on post-structuralism in the 2007 teaching instrument *Aktuāli literatūras teorijas jautājumi* (Current questions of literary theory) includes parts of the text *Kaidis stōsts, taida analīze* (What kind of story, such kind of analysis) by the Latgalian author V. Lukaševičs – an example which illustrates for teachers that contemporary literary analysis may also be applied

to the Latgalian language (Lukaševičs, 2007). The edition for the Latvian secondary school Vārds (Word) (Knohenfelde, Pamiljane & Vaivade, 2007) includes Latgalian texts by L. Leikuma on loanwords in Latgalian from other languages.

The dictionaries, grammars and scientific volumes on Latgalian language, literature and cultural history mentioned in the chapter on primary schools may also be usefully applied in secondary schools (chapter 3).

Teaching instruments for secondary schools were created in the times of the first Latvian Republic between 1920 and 1934. However, also of these editions only few have survived; no cases have been reported that they are used by teachers today.

#### statistics

There are about 70 secondary schools in Latgale, including minority schools such as the Polish schools in Daugavpils, Krāslava and Rēzekne, and Russian schools in all regional centres of Latgale.

In each of the 6 schools which offer Latgalian as an optional subject, about 25 students choose this subject every year, i.e. around 150 students study Latgalian at secondary school every year. As in primary schools, Latgalian teaching started mainly in the year 2000, with some particular enthusiasts already starting in the 1990s (Nautrēni, Baltinava, Tilža).

Students from 22 secondary schools, i.e. about one third of the secondary schools in Latgale, have participated in the annual "Olympics of Latgalian language, literature, and cultural history" since the year 2001.

The Latgalian summer camp Atzolys (Growth) takes place in a different part of Latgale every year since the year 2004. It attracts around 30 students between 15 and 19 years annually. The students learn about various aspects of Latgalian language, literature and cultural history.



## 5 Vocational education

**target group** Vocational education and training programmes are one possibility of continuing education after the compulsory 9 years of primary education. The aim is to prepare adolescents for a specific profession from both a practical and a theoretical angle.

**structure** The vocational education programmes are carried out by specific vocational secondary schools, professional secondary schools, schools for trade, schools for music, art or choreography, arts, by technical schools and by some colleges. Most of these programmes last for 3 or 4 years. Their curricula are determined for all branches of the national economy of Latvia through Valsts profesionālās vidējās izglītības standarts (National Standard of Vocational Education) and Valsts arodizglītības standarts (National Standard of Occupational Education)

Vocational education in Latvia consists of the following branches: vocational initial education, vocational secondary education, and higher vocational education. Higher vocational education is divided into first level higher vocational education (college education) and second level higher vocational education.

As with any other education in Latvia, the general rules are set by the Ministry of Education and Science. Local governments cooperate in the development and implementation of the educational programmes.

**legislation** The 2001 Vocational Education Law regulates vocational education in Latvia. This law does not mention languages.

**language use** The dominant language in vocational education in Latvia is Latvian.

There is very little use of Latgalian in vocational education. In the secondary schools for trade in the region of Latgale, some exercises are occasionally carried out in the Latgalian

language. This includes the conduction of practical professional tasks.

In addition, Latgalian is occasionally used in informal ways in and outside the classrooms by teachers and students according to individual preferences.

**teaching  
material**

There is no modern specific teaching material for vocational education in Latgalian. A number of material suitable for vocational education was developed in the time of the first Latvian Republic between 1920 and 1934. However, this material today only exists in two libraries in Rīga and Rēzekne and is scarcely available to the general public (Zeile, 2006, p. 436).

**statistics**

There are about 20 schools for vocational education in Latgale.

There is no data on the amount of lessons or the number of students involved in vocational education which involves lessons or exercises in Latgalian.

## 6 Higher education

- structure** In the region of Latgale, there are 2 institutions of higher education: Daugavpils Universitāte (University of Daugavpils, founded in 1952) and Rēzeknes Augstskola (Rēzekne University College, founded in 1993).
- legislation** In Latvia, the state institutions of higher education are autonomous, but financed and supervised by the Ministry of Education and Science. Higher education is regulated by the Law on Institutions of Higher Education. Study programmes in state institutions of higher education have to be carried out in the official language of the state, with the exception of courses on foreign languages and cultures and courses for foreigners. The question if this means that Latgalian as a historical variety of Latvian according to the Official Language Law may be used in teaching has not yet been officially answered.
- language use** Since 1991, Latgalian has been taught as an optional language course at the Rēzekne branch for students of Latvian language and literature of the Latvijas Universitāte (University of Latvia). In 1993, this branch was transformed into the separate institution of Rēzekne University College; after this transformation these courses were maintained. At the beginning, Latgalian courses were part of the professional programme in Latvian language and literature, from which the current academic programmes in Philology and History on Bachelor's and Master's level were developed. Rēzekne University College is thereby the only institution of higher education in Latvia in which the Latgalian literary language, the history of the Latgalian written language, Latgalian literature and Latgalian Folklore are compulsory items for the students of Latvian philology. In addition, there have been possibilities to study Latgalian literature and the Latgalian written language in optional courses at the University of Daugavpils since 1994 and at the University of Latvia from 1989. Latgalian was also taught for a short time in 2003-2004 at the State University in St. Petersburg in Russia.

In the catholic seminary in Rīga, students who come from the diocese of Rēzekne-Aglona have since 1998 had to pass a 2 Credit Point course in the Latgalian language and cultural history. In Siberia, in the town of Achinski, there has been a winter school on Latgalian with especially developed teaching material since 2006.

Latvian language and literature programmes as well as teacher training do occasionally include elements of Latgalian.

In academic life, Latgalian is used today at various occasions. Since 1991, it has been used as a working language during the annual interdisciplinary international conference organised by the LPI at the University of Daugavpils. At the Department of Philology of Rēzekne University College, Latgalian has also been used as a working language at various occasions since 1995. In September 2008, the State University in St. Petersburg, the University of Latvia in Rīga and Rēzekne University College organised the first international conference on Latgalian Studies which aimed at bringing together researchers dealing with issues of the Latgalian language and culture from Western and Eastern countries. This conference was considered by its participants as the starting point of an annual exchange of ideas and collections of Latgalian studies.

In addition, scientific research on the Latgalian language was carried out by several Latgalians in exile in Germany and the United States. Publications include grammars and linguistic research by authors such as M. Bukšs (1961), J. Lejis (1961), V. Zeps (1984), M. Bukšs & J. Placinskis (1973), L. Latkovskis (1968-1971). Questions concerning the history of literature were researched by M. Bukšs (1957) and S. Škutāns (1953). The most enthusiastic scholar of Latgalian issues in Latvia was A. Bredakšs (2007).

After independence, a Latgalian language course for university students was published by L. Leikuma (2003), and J. Cybuļs & L. Leikuma (2003). Several anthologies which are also used in

higher education include collections of Latgalian literature and folklore (Kursīte & Stafecka, 1995, 2003), and publications written by V. Valeinis (1998) and A. Juško-Štekele (2007).

In some institutions of higher education in Latgale, the Latgalian language is frequently used by university staff and students in informal contexts. The use of Latgalian in formal contexts or lectures, however, is very low and largely limited to courses dealing with Latgalian issues.

**teacher training** There is no specific teacher training for Latgalian since Latgalian hardly exists as a separate subject in schools. Training for teachers of Latvian language and literature frequently includes Latgalian elements. This may occur sporadically all over Latvia, with a focus on the programmes in Rēzekne and Daugavpils as highlighted above. Besides the explicit courses on Latgalian, these topics are addressed in the context of Latvian literature and the use of the Latgalian language in teacher training courses ultimately depends on individual teachers and students. Similarly, this applies to in-service teacher training as part of the training of teachers of Latvian language and literature.

**statistics** Since 1993, more than 200 students have passed the 12 ECTS study cycle on Latgalian language, literature and folklore as part of the Bachelor studies of Latvian philology, history, or as a component of the teachers' programme of Latvian language and literature at Rēzekne University College. Many of these graduates today work in the media, museums, libraries and schools in the region of Latgale.

In the winter schools of Achinski Pedagogical College, 60 participants, among them many future teachers, have attended Latgalian language courses.

There is no other data on how many students have included explicit Latgalian elements in their teacher training.

## 7 Adult education

### structure and language courses

Adult education courses including Latgalian exist at a low scale. The summer school Vosoruošona (Summer Life) took place at different places in the region of Latgale between the years 2000 and 2006. It was financed by the Latvian Cultural Capital Fund with support of municipalities. For one week, between 15 and 30 participants (mostly teachers of Latvian language and literature or cultural history) were introduced to various aspects of Latgalian language, literature and folklore. The lecturers in this summer school were staff from institutions of higher education in Rēzekne, Daugavpils and Rīga. This summer course did not continue after 2006.

Since 2005, there have been several courses at different places in Latgale for professionals who use the Latgalian language in their work, such as journalists, musicians, or staff of radio and TV stations. These courses are usually organised explicitly for a specific company or institution. The courses are carried out by the Latgalīšu Etnokulturys centrs (Latgalian Ethnical Cultural Centre) in Daugavpils, they are financed by the State Cultural Capital Fund or Latgale Region Development Agency.

### language use

In the courses mentioned above, Latgalian is used throughout the lessons, with the exception of some lecturers who don't have sufficient command of the Latgalian language.

### statistics

Normally, approximately 10-20 persons participate in the professional courses in Latgalian. They are held at irregular intervals.



The above mentioned summer school attracted the following number of participants:

2000	26
2001	23
2002	26
2003	28
2004	22
2005	15
2006	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>159</b>

*Table 9: Numbers of participants in the summer school Vosoruošona (Source: Latgališu volūdys, literaturys i kultur viesturis školuoju asociaceja, LVLKSA). Available at [http://lvksa.nautreni.lv/new\\_page\\_2.htm](http://lvksa.nautreni.lv/new_page_2.htm) [Accessed April 2009].*

## 8 Educational research

Until the restoration of the independence of Latvia in 1991, research on Latgalian issues including aspects of education took place on a limited level from abroad by exile Latgalians. Seven editions of the serial publication *Acta Latgalica* were published in Munich between 1965 and 1981.

This tradition was resumed again after Latvian independence with the eight until thirteenth edition published in Rēzekne between 1993 and 2005. Topics included were the cultural history of the Latgalian language and culture, including the situation of education in Latgale with numbers of students, the role of Latgalian in the Latvian curricula and in relation to minority education, and methodological issues.

In recent years, several research projects on the situation of Latgale have also dealt with educational issues such as Zeile's *Latgales kultūras vēsture* (2006) (*Latgalian Cultural History*), or publications of the state teachers' institutes in Daugavpils and Rēzekne and other institutions of education.

Problems of Latgalian education in Siberia were researched during an expedition in 2004 by the University of Latvia in Rīga and the State University in St. Petersburg. *Latvijas Universitātes Letonikas institūts* (Institute of Letonica of the University of Latvia) and *Latvijas Universitātes Latviešu valodas institūts* (Latvian Language Institute of the University of Latvia) are regularly conducting research on Latgalian folklore and language. Further, the University of Daugavpils' *Komparatīvistikas institūts* (Institute of Comparative Studies) is carrying out research on Latgale as a border region.

Finally, the Ethnolinguistic Survey of Latgale, *Valodas Astrumlatvijā* (languages in Eastern Latvia), has been conducted since 2006 by the Department of Philology of Rēzekne University College in cooperation with the Centre d'Etudes Linguistiques pour l'Europe (European Centre for Linguistic Studies) (Lazdiņa

& Šuplinska, forthcoming). The aim of the survey is to research the ethnolinguistic situation of Latgale in 89 territorial units. In addition, the data will be summarised in order to give qualified recommendations for language to educational policy makers at the state level.

This survey includes questions on the use of Latgalian in education. On the question what the role of the Latgalian language ought to be at school, around 6 000 respondents from Latgale (81 %) agreed that the Latgalian language should be included in school syllabi: 58.2 % answered that Latgalian should be an optional subject, 10.8 % said it should be a language of instruction at school, and for 12 % it should be a compulsory subject. Only 19 % of the respondents, mainly persons that are not Latvians or Latgalians, consider that the Latgalian language is not necessary at school.

In spite of these publications on Latgale as a region and education in it, researchers in the region (e.g. the authors of this dossier) strongly recommend that research needs to be improved, both in quantity and coordination. It is in this context that also the recent conference in St. Petersburg on Latgalian issues (see chapter 6) has to be seen.

## 9 Prospects

The future prospects for Latgalian in education and the Latgalian language in general have to be judged ambiguously: On the one hand, there are some initiatives for education, research and cultural activities in Latgalian. There are groups of highly devoted enthusiasts, and the language is still passed on to the next generation by a considerable number of young families in the region, which, however, constitutes only a small percentage of both the population of Latgale as a whole and the traditionally Latgalian-speaking part of the population. Therefore, if an optimistic interpretation is applied, the current situation can be considered to lead towards a stabilisation of Latgalian at a relatively low level.

Yet, what probably is more influential, is that Latgalian continues to be threatened by numerous forces in society when many individuals and institutions accept it only as a dialect of Latvian and as the low variety in diglossia with standard Latvian. Therefore activists and professionals dealing with Latgalian today share rather negative views on the present situation and on future prospects.

In addition, attitudes can be heard by parts of both educational planners and the general public that the current linguistic situation in Latvia requires a concentration on sufficient acquisition of the Latvian language by Russian-speakers in order to overcome social tensions and integrate all parts of society. According to this view, Latgalian has to wait for another couple of decades. Yet, this attitude does not take into consideration that the solid basis of Latgalian language skills still present, at least in the rural parts of Latgalian, may be lost by then.

In the Ethnolinguistic Survey of Latgale about half of the respondents (54.4 %) answered that it is necessary, very important, or quite important to have a command of Latgalian in order to feel as a full-fledged member of society, whereas the other half said that it is not important. This result shows that the population in

Latgale is divided on what role Latgalian plays in today's society and on an integrative motivation to learn Latgalian. Only 28.7 % of the respondents say that it is impossible to have a successful life in their home region without knowledge of Latgalian, whereas 50.5 % say it is impossible to live without Russian and 66.7 % without Latvian. At the same time, 43.3 % of the respondents supported the idea that Latgalian should gain status as a regional official language, whereas 29.8 % were against this idea, with a remarkable high percentage (26.9 %) without an opinion on this question. Together with the attitude towards Latgalian at schools referred to in the previous chapters, this shows that there is a solid basis of support for further measures for Latgalian.

Regarding the assumed role of Latgalian in the future, the answers of the respondents also provide an ambiguous picture. 23.9 % answered that Latgalian will be in a better situation in the future, in contrast to 19.4 % who believe that the situation of Latgalian will deteriorate, with more than half of the respondents answering that there will be no considerable changes. This is the results of the question on how the role of the following languages develop in the future in the respondents town/parish (in % of respondents):

	Better than today	The same as today	Worse than today
Latvian	41.0	55.6	3.5
Latgalian	23.9	56.7	19.4
Russian	13.2	68.1	18.7

*Table 10: Views on the future role of Latvian, Latgalian and Russian (Source: Ethnolinguistic Survey of Latgale)*

Regarding the role of education, there is certainly some hope based on individual efforts at all educational levels. Through these means, Latgalian is not only transmitted to new generations, the presence in a rather official domain such as education also creates a certain level of prestige which is considered to be necessary for further strengthening of Latgalian. Yet, there

are too few examples of such initiatives today. The head of the LVLKSA, Veronika Dundure, argues that the first enthusiasm of teachers as it existed in the 1990s has gone. Teachers are frustrated that Latgalian is not recognised as a subject in its own right. If Latgalian had the status of a regional official language, attitudes towards Latgalian in society at large, and by parents, pupils and teachers in general would probably change. Attitudes which exist nowadays are connected with the perception of Latgalian language during the twentieth century; to speak Latgalian meant to belong to the lower social class.

One of the weak points in this is the attitude of some teachers: In spite of the encouragement by some educational institutions to learn Latgalian and regardless of advice on how to teach it, not all teachers in the region embrace these offers. Therefore, teachers need not only to be prepared much better for the practical sides of Latgalian teaching – also their knowledge of the language and attitude towards Latgalian has to be discussed.

It needs to be stressed that the relative lack of development of Latgalian activities is not caused by a lack of awareness by political decision-makers. Reports in which a stronger role of Latgalian is demanded, and which contradict Latvian traditional centralist views, have existed for quite some time. The Latgale Region Development Agency for instance, a state organisation for regional development, initiated in 2000 a *Latgales attīstības plāns* (regional development plan) as part of the EU Phare programme in order to prepare for EU membership. Research for this plan was conducted by an Italian-Belgian consortium; the plan was published by the Latvian Ministry of Finance. It stressed that the Latgalian language should gain an adequate role in TV and radio stations, in the publication of books and periodicals, and that the maintenance of the Latgalian language and culture should be supported in education through the development of material, research and a database on Latgalian issues. The plan also explicitly states that the teaching of Latgalian should be widely included in schools.

Two recent examples help to illustrate how ambiguous the official position of the Latvian state is today. First, the LgSC addressed the Ministry of Education and Science on expressing their plans to provide more support to Latgalian. The answer of the Ministry of Education and Science was very vague: It envisaged to include more information about Latgalian language, identity and culture into teaching materials and to address these issues in teachers' and other adult education courses. On the other hand, it stressed that practical steps should wait again, until the publication of the results of the Ethnolinguistic Survey of Latgale. There were no suggestions for any stronger developments, or any coherent proposal for the teaching of the Latgalian language as a tool for language maintenance or revitalisation. The answer can be interpreted in a way that the Ministry of Education and Science cannot completely ignore Latgalian issues because of the fact that Latgalian is mentioned in the Latvian Official Language Law – but the answer also shows that there is no clear dedication for improvement (Lakuga, 2008).

Second, it was with some surprise that a recommendation on Latgalian by the Latvian State Language Centre, a public body within the structure of the Ministry of Justice, was noticed in 2007. The workgroup on Latgalian, in its final document, first accepted the new Latgalian orthography, before adding a number of further suggestions for Latgalian. Thereby, the Ministry of Education and Science should establish the new Latgalian orthography as a standard part of the curricula of Latvian language teaching and as a part of the academic study programmes in Latvian Philology and Baltic Philology (Valsts valodas centra Latviešu valodas ekspertu komisijas Latgaliešu ortogrāfijas apakškomisija, 2008).

However, these suggestions so far only had very limited effect, and as with other aspects of the development of Latgalian, it is unclear if any practical steps will follow in the future.

## 10 Summary statistics

Because of the traditional perception of Latgalian as part of Latvian and the resulting inclusion of elements of Latgalian in the teaching of Latvian language and literature, there are no data on the amount of pupils and students who learn something about Latgalian culture, or the Latgalian language, and at which level. It can be assumed that most pupils and students in Latgale and a considerable number in the other parts of Latvia at some point get into contact with some aspects of Latgalian language, literature, or culture as part of their studies of Latvian language and literature.

The following is therefore only a summary of the explicit teaching of Latgalian as subject in its own right:

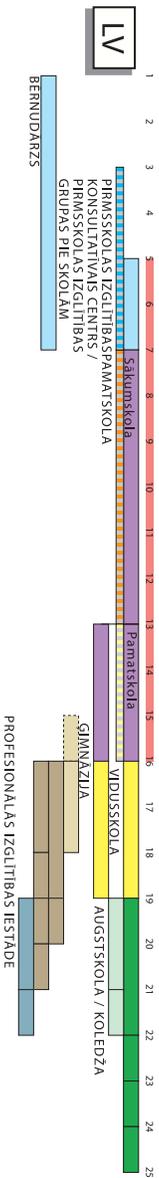
Pre-school	No data on pupil numbers, a large number of kindergartens in Latgalian with some elements.
Primary School	150-200 pupils annually in optional courses in 7 schools. 120 pupils annually from 51 schools in so-called "Olympics of Latgalian language, literature, and cultural history" and other Latgalian activities.
Secondary School	Around 150 students annually in optional courses in 6 schools. Around 60 students from 22 secondary schools in the annual "Olympics of Latgalian language, literature, and cultural history". 30 students annually in the Latgalian summer camp Atzolys (Growth).
Vocational Education	No explicit courses in Latgalian, some institutions with practical exercises in Latgalian.
Adult Education	Some summer schools until 2006 (159 participants - teachers), irregular language training for professionals.
Higher Education	Since 1993, more than 200 students in the study module on Latgalian language, literature and folklore at Rēzekne University College. Latgalian courses as part of Latvian studies at the University of Daugavpils and University of Latvia and at the catholic seminary in Rīga for future priests from Latgale.

*Table 11: Student numbers in courses explicitly dedicated to Latgalian*

## Endnotes

- 1 By June 2009 the given Agency will be reorganised. It merges into the Izglītības satura un eksaminācijas centrs (ISEC, Centre for Curriculum Development and Examinations) of the Ministry of Education and Science.

## Organisation of the education system in Latvia, 2007/08



 Pre-primary education – ISCED 0 (for which the Ministry of Education is not responsible)	 Pre-primary – ISCED 0 (for which the Ministry of Education is responsible)		
 Primary – ISCED 1	 Single structure – ISCED 1 + ISCED 2 (no institutional distinction between ISCED 1 and 2)		
 Lower secondary general – ISCED 2 (including pre-vocational)	 Lower secondary vocational – ISCED 2		
 Upper secondary general – ISCED 3	 Upper secondary vocational – ISCED 3		
 Post-secondary non-tertiary – ISCED 4			
 Tertiary education – ISCED 5A	 Tertiary education – ISCED 5B		
Allocation to the ISCED levels:	 ISCED 0	 ISCED 1	 ISCED 2
 Compulsory full-time education	 Compulsory part-time education		
 Part-time or combined school and workplace courses	 Additional year		
 -/n/- Compulsory work experience + its duration	 Study abroad		

Source: Eurydice.

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W <http://www.ivi.gov.lv/>

**Komparatīvistikas institūts** (Institute of Comparative Studies)

Vienības ielā 13-325, Daugavpils, LV-5401, Latvia

T +371 65424238

E [ki@du.lv](mailto:ki@du.lv)

W <http://du.lv/>

**Латвийская ассоциация в поддержку школ с обучением на русском языке** (LASHOR, Association of Russian Language Schools in Latvia)

Slokas ielā 30a-3, Rīga, LV-1007, Latvia

T +371 9802919

F +371 7602479

E [lashor@inbox.lv](mailto:lashor@inbox.lv)

W <http://www.lashor.lv>

**Latgales Kultūras Centra izdevniecība** (Publishing house of Latgalian Cultural Centre)

Baznīcas ielā 28, Rēzekne, LV-4601 Latvia

T +371 64622298

E [lkcizdevnieciba@apollo.lv](mailto:lkcizdevnieciba@apollo.lv)

W <http://www.lkcizdevnieciba.lv>

**Latgales reģiona attīstības aģentūra** (Latgale Region Development Agency)

Rīgas ielā 2, Daugavpils, LV-5400 Latvia

T/F +371 65428111

E [info@latgale.lv](mailto:info@latgale.lv)

W <http://www.latgale.lv>

**Latgaļišu volūdys, literatures i kulturis viesturis metodiskais kabinets** (methodology centre for the Latgalian written language, literature and cultural history)

Naurānu vydsškola, Naurēnu pag., Rēzeknes raj., LV-4652,  
Latvia

T/F +371 64649890

E [lvksa@inbox.lv](mailto:lvksa@inbox.lv)

W <http://lvksa.nautreni.lv>

**Latgališu volūdys, literaturys I kulturviesturis školuojuju asociaceja** (LVLKSA, Association of Teachers of Latgalian Language, Literature and Cultural History)

Naurānu vydsškola, Naurēnu pag., Rēzeknes raj., LV-4652,  
Latvia

T/F +371 64649890

E [lvksa@inbox.lv](mailto:lvksa@inbox.lv)

W <http://lvksa.nautreni.lv>

**Latgolys radeja** (Latgalian Radio)

Atbrīvošanas alejā 81/5, Rēzekne, LV-4601, Latvia

T +371 64607571

F +371 64607572

E [valdis.labinskis@lr.lv](mailto:valdis.labinskis@lr.lv)

W <http://www.lr.lv>

**Latgolys Studentu centrs** (LgSC, Students' Centre of Latgale)

Daugavys ielā 8, Līksna, LV-5456, Latvia

T +371 29512432

E [lgsc@latgale.lv](mailto:lgsc@latgale.lv)

W <http://www.latgale.lv/lg/lgsc>

**Latviešu valodas apguves valsts aģentūra** (LVAVA, National Agency for Latvian Language Training)

Lāčplēša ielā 35-2, Rīga, LV-1011, Latvia

T +371 67287228

F +371 67220700

E [lvava@lvava.gov.lv](mailto:lvava@lvava.gov.lv)

W <http://www.lvava.gov.lv>

Expected to merge with Valsts valodas aģentūra into Latviešu valodas aģentūra by July 2009.

**Latvijas institūts** (Latvian Institute)

Kaļķu ielā 7, Rīga, LV-1050, Latvia

T +371 67503663

F +371 67503669

E [info@li.lv](mailto:info@li.lv)

W <http://www.li.lv>

**Latvijas privātskolu asociācija** (Latvian Private Schools Association)

Kurbada ielā 2, Rīga, LV-1009, Latvia

T +371 7287230

E [inara.k@delfi.lv](mailto:inara.k@delfi.lv)

W <http://www.privatskolas.lv>

**Latvijas Republikas Izglītības un zinātnes ministrija** (Ministry of Education and Science)

Vaļņu ielā 2, Rīga, LV-1050, Latvia

T +371 67226209

F +371 67223905

E [info@izm.gov.lv](mailto:info@izm.gov.lv)

W <http://www.izm.gov.lv>

**Latvijas Statistika** (Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia)

Lāčplēša ielā 1, Rīga, LV-1301, Latvia

T +371 67366803

E [ic@csb.gov.lv](mailto:ic@csb.gov.lv)

W <http://www.csb.gov.lv>

**Latvijas Zinātnes padome** (Latvian Council of Science)

Akadēmijas laukumā 1, Rīga, LV-1050, Latvia

T/F +371 7228421

E [lzp@lzp.gov.lv](mailto:lzp@lzp.gov.lv)

W <http://www.lzp.lv>

**Ludzas bibliotēka** (Ludza Town Library)

Stacijas ielā 41, Ludza, LV-5701, Latvia

T/F +371 5781194,

E [biblio@ludzasbiblio.lv](mailto:biblio@ludzasbiblio.lv)

W <http://www.ludzasbiblio.lv/>

**Reģionālās attīstības un pašvaldību lietu ministrs** (Ministry of Regional Development and Local Government)

Lāčplēša ielā 27, Rīga, LV-1011, Latvia

T +371 7770401

F +371 7770479

E [pasts@raplm.gov.lv](mailto:pasts@raplm.gov.lv)

W <http://www.raplm.gov.lv/>

**Rēzeknes Augstskola** (Rēzekne University College)

Atbrīvošanas alejā 90, Rēzekne, LV-4600, Latvia

T +371 4623709

F +371 4625901

E [ru@ru.lv](mailto:ru@ru.lv)

W <http://www.dau.lv/ld/ld.html>

**Valsts valodas aģentūra**

Lāčplēša iela 35 -5, Rīga, LV-1011, Latvia

T +371 67201680

F +371 67201683

E [agentura@valoda.lv](mailto:agentura@valoda.lv)

W <http://www.valoda.lv/lv/news>

**Valsts valodas centrs** (Latvian State Language Centre)

Merķeļa ielā 13-400, Rīga, LV-1050

T/F +371 67221258

E [info@vvc.gov.lv](mailto:info@vvc.gov.lv)

W <http://www.tm.gov.lv>

**Vispārējās izglītības kvalitātes novērtēšanas valsts aģentūras** (VIKNVA, State Agency for Quality Assessment of General Education)

Lāčplēša ielā 35-8, Rīga, LV-1050, Latvia

T +371 67142876

F +371 67142877

E [viknva@viknva.gov.lv](mailto:viknva@viknva.gov.lv)

W <http://www.viknva.gov.lv/>

Expected to merge into Izglītības satura un eksaminācijas centrs by July 2009.

**online sources** **Atzolys** (Growth; Latgalian summer camp)

W <http://www.atzolys.lv/>

**Bez PVN**

W <http://www.bezpvn.lv>

**Borowa MC**

W <http://www.borowa.lv>

**Centre d'Etudes Linguistiques pour L'Europe**

W <http://www.celeuropa.eu/home.page>

**Dabasu durovys**

W <http://www.dabasudurovys.lv>

**Laimas Muzykanti**

W <http://laimas-muzykanti.lv>

**Latgales Kultūras Centra Izdevniecība** (Publishing House of Latgalian Cultural Centre)

W <http://www.lkcizdevnieciba.lv/>

**Latgališu kulturys Gazeta Lakuga** (Latgalian cultural newspaper)

W <http://www.lakuga.lv>

**Latgola** (Latgalian Portal)

W <http://www.latgola.lv/>

**Latvijas Reģionu Attīstības Portāls** (Latvian Regions Development Portal)

W <http://www.latreg.lv/pub/>

**Vosorošona** (Summer life; summer courses, mainly for teachers)

W <http://vosoroosona.ihouse.lv/>



## Other websites on minority languages

- Mercator Network** <http://www.mercator-network.eu>  
 General site of the Mercator Network. It gives information about the network and leads you to the homepages of the partners (launch July 2009).
- Mercator Research Centre** <http://www.mercator-research.eu>  
 Homepage of the Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning. The website contains the series of Regional dossiers, a database with organisations, a bibliography, information on current activities, and many links to relevant websites.
- Mercator-Media** <http://www.aber.ac.uk/~merwww/>  
 Homepage of Mercator-Media. It provides information on media and minority languages in the EU.
- Mercator-Legislation** <http://www.ciemen.org/mercator>  
 Homepage of Mercator-Legislation. It provides information on minority languages and legislation in the EU.
- European Commission** [http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/languages-of-europe/doc139\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/languages-of-europe/doc139_en.htm)  
 On the website of the European Commission information is given on the EU's support for regional or minority languages.
- Council of Europe** <http://conventions.coe.int>  
*European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (1992) and *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (1995). European Treaty Series 148 and 157, Strasbourg.
- Eurydice** <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/Eurydice>  
 Eurydice is the information network on education in Europe. The sites provides information on all European education systems and education policies.

**EBLUL**

**<http://www.eblul.org>**

Homepage of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages. This site provides general information on lesser used languages as well as on projects, publications, and events.

**EuroLang**

**<http://www.eurolang.net>**

EuroLang provides coverage of the concerns felt in the minority language regions in the European Union. EuroLang is EBLUL's news service.

## What can the Mercator Research Centre offer you?

**Mission & goals** The Mercator Research Centre addresses the growing interest in multilingualism and the increasing need of language communities to exchange experiences and to cooperate in a European context. It is based in Ljouwert/Leeuwarden, the capital of Fryslân – a bilingual province of the Netherlands – and hosted at the Fryske Akademy (Frisian Academy). The Mercator Research Centre focuses on research, policy, and practice in the field of multilingualism and language learning. The centre aims to be an independent and recognised organisation for researchers, policymakers, and professionals in education. The centre endeavours to favour linguistic diversity within Europe. The starting point lies in the field of regional and minority languages. Yet, immigrant languages and smaller state languages are also a topic of study. The centre's main focus is the creation, circulation, and application of knowledge in the field of language learning at school, at home, and through cultural participation.

**Partners** During the twenty years of its existence, Mercator Education has cooperated with two partners in a network structure: Mercator Media hosted at the University of Wales in Aberystwyth and Mercator Legislation hosted at the Ciemen Foundation in Barcelona. The Mercator Research Centre expands its network in close cooperation with a number of partner organisations working in the same field. This cooperation includes partners in Fryslân, as well as partners in the Netherlands and in Europe. The provincial government of Fryslân is the main funding body of the Mercator Research Centre. Projects and activities are funded by the EU as well as by the authorities of other regions in Europe with an active policy to support their regional or minority language and its culture.

**Research**

The Mercator Research Centre develops a research programme on the basis of the data collections available. Research activities focus on various aspects of bilingual and trilingual education, such as interaction in multilingual classrooms, language proficiency in different languages, and teachers' qualifications for the multilingual classroom. Whenever possible, research will be carried out in a comparative European perspective. A good example of this approach is the study 'The Development of Minimum Standards on Language Education in Regional and Minority Languages' (2007). Research results are disseminated through publications and conferences in collaboration with European partners.

**Conferences**

The Mercator Research Centre organises conferences and seminars on a regular basis. Important themes for the conferences are: measurement & good practice, educational models, development of minimum standards, teacher training, and the application of the Common European Framework of Reference. The main target groups for the Mercator Research Centre are professionals, researchers, and policymakers from all member states of the Council of Europe and beyond.

**Q&A**

Through the Question and Answer Service available on our website ([www.mercator-research.eu](http://www.mercator-research.eu)) we can inform you about any subject related to education in minority or regional languages in Europe.

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