



LATVIJAS AMATNIECĪBAS KAMERA

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LATVIAN CHAMBER OF CRAFTS

HANDWERKSKAMMER LETTLANDS

Riga, October 15, 2019

Press release

Vocational education and training reforms are needed

According to the CSB data for 2018, the youth unemployment rate in Latvia has decreased by almost 7 percent compared to 2017. However, among the Baltic States, Latvia has the highest youth unemployment rate - 12.2%, while Lithuania has the lowest - 11.4% and Estonia - 11.9%. At the same time, millions of EU funds are being spent on training (and retraining) the unemployed, but there are still no qualified performers, business organizations are publicly expressing the need to bring in foreign workers, and as we know it is already happening..

Qualification requirements for companies are high and continue to grow, with more and more companies complaining about a lack of qualified and knowledgeable employees, while the level of education of those who have completed vocational education tends to decline. Due to social problems and learning difficulties, a large number of young people in general education are unable to cope with the challenges of vocational training. The goal to be pursued must be the integration of all young people, for both social and economic reasons, as they are all necessary.

In the future, it is expected that, for demographic reasons, the number of people who leave work because of age will be significantly higher than the number of young people joining the workforce. According to projections, the number of people aged fifteen to forty-four in Latvia could decrease by about 25% by 2030. At the same time, as demand for labor increases, a shortage of new qualified staff is holding back growth.

At national level, priority should be given to significant skills upgrades and tackling shortage of workers' skills and entrepreneurs. According to the Latvian Chamber of Crafts, far-reaching reforms of education policy are needed to strengthen innovation and ensure growth and prosperity for all.

In view of the situation above, the Latvian Chamber of Crafts, together with the internationally active Baltic Sea Academy, is organizing an educational conference, which will bring together foreign experts from different Baltic Sea countries, who will present their experiences and suggestions. The conference will present concrete solutions and successfully implemented projects, and entrepreneurs will present their experiences and proposals. Experts will develop proposals for vocational education and training reforms in Latvia.

The conference "Small and medium-sized enterprises shape the future - New paths in vocational education and training" will take place on October 18, 2019, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM, Radisson Hotel Old Town Riga, Z.Meierovica Boulevard 10. Participation, including lunch, is free of charge. If you would like to attend the conference, please register by calling 67213007 or applying online at lak@lak.lv (until October 17, included). During the break at 11:30 AM, questions from the press will be answered by a member of the Hanseatic Parliament, Dr. Jürgen Hogeфорster and Diana Karaša, President of the Latvian Chamber of Crafts.

Attached: Conference Program

Diāna Karaša

President of the Latvian Chamber of Crafts

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