

# Motivation of Students of Rural Vocational Secondary Schools for Studies in Latvia University of Agriculture

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Ongoing changes in the society, comprising its nature, institutions, behaviour, and relations of a community people, have a relevant impact on young people's motivation to be career-minded. Its successful development cannot happen without getting a qualitative education yet. The increasing internationalisation of economics, scientific and technological progress, particularly the rapid development of information technologies, fosters the formation of new ways of employment. Therefore education institutions should provide updated and qualitative getting of knowledge and skills. The quality of Latvia's countryside production and environment protection will directly depend on the rural young people education quality. Each education institution has to offer a possibility to comprehend and evaluate career prospects to the young people. It is vitally important for students of vocational education institutions to realise the significance of non-interrupted educational process after getting into the labour market. The implementation of the career education model at secondary vocational education institutions is a vital basis for the young people's career prospects, education kind, and level choice. One of the model functions is to help the young people to keep their learning motivation. Latvia University of Agriculture is a higher education institution of national and regional importance that promotes the rural young people to receive education.

About 30% of Latvia's population still lives in rural areas. Although in the process of urbanisation the vast majority of Latvia's population lives in cities and towns, still the countryside is not only the source of food and raw materials but also the environment which is important for the development of mentally healthy new generation. The intellectual potential of Latvia, protected and non-polluted environment, agro-climatic conditions and other factors are a precondition for competitive activities in the countryside. Its existence should be respected as a space for living and production. Therefore Latvia's countryside future vision is multisided business activities carried out by high qualified, educated, and active entrepreneurs.

Latvia University of Agriculture (LLU) is the only university type higher education institution in Zemgale region, and its mission is to educate intellectual potential for Latvia, and particularly for sustainable development of its countryside. LLU objectives are: to prepare academically educated specialists for national economic sectors, science, culture, education, and state administration; to prove itself as a significant education institution for preparing competitive new specialists; and therefore becoming a university with active involvement in the common European education and science area.

Teaching/learning process at secondary vocational school where students' knowledge, skills and attitudes emerge also from their self-evaluation based on a constructive approach is one of significant factors for motivation to continue studies at a higher education institution. Active interaction among the vocational school students, pedagogues, parents, and employers in career development fostering environment makes learning process more effective.

The following conditions have an impact on young people's education choice ideas:

- the choice to continue education in higher education institutions to a great extent is influenced by special subject teachers and parents;
- the most optimal time to motivate students for studies at higher education institutions is the third year at vocational school, since at that time a young person forms his/her view on the significance of learning binding together theory and practice in the chosen professional field;
- less than a half (41%) of questioned students of LLU who are graduates of rural vocational secondary schools recognise that they have been motivated for studies externally; it means that very close co-operation among vocational schools, labour market and higher education institutions is necessary;

- relevant obstacles for vocational school graduates to choose studies in higher education institutions are insufficient learning results in academic subjects and foreign languages as well as the lack of independent learning skills.

The objective of the Institute of Education and Home Economics of the Faculty of Engineering, LLU is to offer career counselling models to vocational secondary schools in the frame of scientific direction of career education to promote young persons' deeper comprehension of their abilities, knowledge, skills, attitude, interests, aims, actual possibilities, and significance of education in the labour market.

**Key words:** motivation for studies, rural vocational schools, higher education.