Proceedings of the 2017 International Conference *"ECONOMIC SCIENCE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT" No 46*
Jelgava, LLU ESAF, 27-28 April 2017, pp. 118-126

IMPLEMENTATION OF EUROPEAN STANDARDS IN SHORT CYCLE HIGHER EDUCATION IN LATVIA

Intra Luce[1], M.iur

Riga, Latvia College of Law, Latvia

Abstract Education plays an important role in the economy and everyday life since economic well-being largely depends on the knowledge, skills and proficiency of the labour force. Thanks to the Bologna reforms, students and graduates are able to move freely throughout the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) where qualifications are recognised as well as study stages and study programmes allow students to acquire knowledge, skills and competence. At the same time, it should be admitted that structural reforms are unevenly carried out within the EHEA, for example, provision of short-cycle education and practical implementation of standards and guidelines for higher education in Europe. Although the Bologna process is a voluntary one, it calls for urgent action to create a system of academic degrees in order to facilitate mobility of students, educators and researchers and ensure quality education and training, i.e. the degrees acquired at any higher education institution anywhere in the EHEA will be appropriately recognised elsewhere in this area both to continue studies and to participate in the labour market.

The topicality of the research is determined by an increasing labour demand for mid-level professionals over the past few years.

The goal of the research is to study the available information on short-cycle higher vocational education standards, their role in the higher education system and make a comparison with the European Higher Education Area.

Within the framework of the research, general scientific research methods have been used: analysis, synthesis and logical construction methods.

Key words: degree system, qualifications system, short-cycle qualifications, short-cycle.

JEL code:

Introduction

Knowledge and skills are necessary to make one participate in the labour market. Employers recognise the importance of education and require that prospective employees are educated and competent in their speciality and, thus, specialists with higher education would likely enjoy an advantage. Rapid changes in the economy and globalisation processes mean that nowadays it is not enough to have basic knowledge and employees should constantly update their professional qualifications. Today it is no longer possible to acquire knowledge in 4–5 years that would be sufficient throughout one's professional lifetime because knowledge tends gradually to become out-of-date. This has led to the development and function of a national system of life-long learning so that those already employed would be given an opportunity to improve their competitiveness, raise their qualifications, and improve work efficiency, thus contributing to the gross national product and their well-being.

Short-Cycle Higher Education (SCHE) as the first level of higher education and the fifth level of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) has become increasingly important over the past decade. A growing number of countries involved in the Bologna Process give the underlying programmes a formal position in their education system linked to a national qualifications framework.

SCHE is not a new issue. Already in the 1970s it was discussed as a way to diversify higher education systems in the face of booming participation. In 1973, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defined short - cycle higher education as "[…] postsecondary education of shorter duration with strong vocational elements, generally under the non-university sector of higher education […]". Today, the issue is still at the forefront of policy debates in many countries because of more international uniformity resulting from the Bologna agreements (Cheps, 2012).

The hypothesis of the research is as follows: rapid changes in the social environment create a

[1] Intra Lūce. Tel. + 0037129454614 intra@jk.lv

situation, when one profession and one education do not suffice throughout one's lifetime. This creates the need to provide future occupations that are required today, give an opportunity to improve one's own knowledge and skills in the context of life-long learning in order to adapt to the changing labour market requirements.

The goal of the research is to study the available information on short-cycle higher vocational education standards, their role in the higher education system and make a comparison with the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

Within the framework of the research, general scientific research methods have been used: analysis, synthesis and logical construction methods.

Short-Cycle Education in the EHEA

The Bologna Process initiated by the Bologna Declaration and adopted in 1999 has resulted in fundamental changes in the European Higher Education Area.

The most important aspects of the Bologna Process are related to the goal of creating a system of academic degrees that is simple and allows for easy comparison, thus stimulating the mobility of students, educators and researchers, as well as ensuring qualit higher education and training. At present, the Bologna Process covers 48 countries, together with the European Commission. It is important to note that the Bologna Process is voluntary; it occurs at an inter-governmental level and each signatory to the Declaration carries out reforms in its national system of education.

The most important aspects of education within the Bologna Process are life-long learning, employment issues, financial support, system of degrees conferred, degree of openness to the outside world, data collection and quality assurance [Bologna Process, 1999).

Quality Assurance

In the Berlin Communique of 19 September 2003, the ministers of countries that are signatories to the Bologna Process called upon the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) to develop a compendium of agreed requirements, actions and recommendations for quality assurance and identify ways how to ensure a collegial oversight system for quality assurance.

When Latvia ratified the Lisbon Convention, it signed the Bologna Declaration, as the other signatories did, in order to implement an external quality assurance system, which would comply with standards and guidelines set out by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education as applicable throughout the European Higher Education Area. In order to fulfil this obligation to meet the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area, the quality assurance functions in Latvia were entrusted to the Academic Information Centre (AIC) and the Quality Agency for Higher Education (AIKA), the latter being a member of INQAAHE (International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education) since 2015 (Accreditation and licensing, 2015)

The AIKA works principally to promote the development of higher education institutions, study programmes and internal quality assurance systems, thus enhancing the transparency and acceptance of higher education in Latvia. The document adopted to develop the external system of quality assurance of higher education in Latvia (Universities, college and study programme accreditation, 2015) states that during the 1990s Latvia was one of the leading member states of the Bologna Process to establish a national system for accreditation of higher education. Consequently, the task of the new Latvian national authority for quality assurance is to develop the external system for quality assurance that acts in compliance with the European standards and guidelines and, as a result, the Latvia's system of higher education can gain greater quality, transparency and international recognition. The national system

[1] Intra Lūce. Tel. + 0037129454614 intra@jk.lv

should be registered on the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) no later than by 2019 (Latvian higher education external quality assurance system, 2014).

As noted above, there are two organisations, namely, ENQA and EQAR that deal with quality assurance in higher education. These organisations are slightly different in their function. The ENQA is an association of agencies from 48 countries that deal with quality assurance and assessment of higher education. Twenty-six countries of the European Higher Education Area are the members of the ENQA. Whereas the EQAR unites agencies from all member states of the European Higher Education Area, which work according to the quality standards and guidelines for higher education in Europe.

A revised set of standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area was approved at the Yerevan Ministerial Conference in May 2015 ([Ministerial declarations and communiques, 2015).

With a view to implement the accepted standards and guidelines for higher education applicable in the European Higher Education Area, a new legal framework for the methodology of accrediting study directions at universities and other higher education institutions in Latvia (Universities, college and study programme accreditation, 2015) entered into force on 30 July 2015; the previous regulation (No. 668 as of 25 September 2012) was based on principles, including the presence of representatives of institutions accredited by the accreditation committee as well as the empowerment of these committees by ministry that clashed with the quality standards and guidelines for higher education as applicable to the European Higher Education Area. The latter requires that no member of the accreditation committee may represent any institution being accredited but should express their personal professional opinion, as well as there can be no influence exerted by government bodies, higher education institutions or other interested parties; namely, the results should be based on the independent and objective assessment of quality.

Degree Systems

The "Europe 2020" strategy as adopted by the EU sets forth the obligation of states to make their educational system open to others and raise their significance, develop national qualifications' systems and ensure that the criteria for success relate to the needs of the labour market (COM, 2010).

The Declaration adopted by ministers required that, as part of the Bologna Process, the creation of the European Higher Education Area should be completed by 2010. It was announced during the 2010 Ministerial Conference held in Vienna that a unified European Higher Education Area had been formed, noting at the same time that considerable effort still had to be made to achieve all of the following:

1) the European Higher Education Area should be transparent and mutually comprehensible;
2) the European Higher Education Area should be organised in three cycles: the first study cycle (Bachelor's degree), the second study cycle (Master's degree) and the third study cycle (Doctoral degree);
3) the degrees/diplomas obtained in any part of the European Higher Education Area should be recognised as their equivalent in other parts of this area – both for continuing education and labour market purposes;
4) the graduates should be accepted by the European labour market;
5) the students and academic staff should have the freedom and afford the opportunity for mobility within the ECHA.

The Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2008 on the establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for life-long learning is a significant step taken in achieving the aims listed above.

[1] Intra Lūce. Tel. + 0037129454614 intra@jk.lv

The European Qualifications Framework consists of eight levels whose goal is to promote life-long learning and facilitate mobility of the residents of different countries. By establishing reference values attributable to qualifications obtained in different European countries, the EQF indicators allow for easier and more accurate comparison of these different qualifications. The EQF indicators describe the level at which an individual has acquired his/her knowledge, skills and competences.

Each of the 8 levels is defined by a set of descriptors indicating the learning outcomes relevant to qualifications at that level in any system of qualifications.

The Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area provides descriptors for cycles. Each cycle descriptor offers a generic statement of typical expectations of achievements and abilities associated with qualifications that represent the end of that cycle.

1) The descriptor for the higher education short cycle (within or linked to the first cycle), developed by the Joint Quality Initiative as part of the Bologna process, corresponds to the learning outcomes for EQF level 5.
2) The descriptor for the first cycle in the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area corresponds to the learning outcomes for EQF level 6.
3) The descriptor for the second cycle in the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area corresponds to the learning outcomes for EQF level 7.
4) The descriptor for the third cycle in the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area corresponds to the learning outcomes for EQF level 8 (EQF, 2011).

The degree system for higher education that corresponds to the division of higher education into discrete cycles and the European Qualification Framework is:

1) Associate degree – Short cycle – EQF Level 5;
2) Bachelor's degree – First cycle – EQF Level 6;
3) Master's degree – Second cycle – EQF Level 7;
4) Doctoral degree – Third cycle – EQF Level 8 (Dublin descriptors, 2008).

Associate degree refers to the qualification awarded after successful completion of the so-called short cycle in the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area. The short cycle fits within or is linked to the first cycle (or Bachelor's level). The degree requires approximately 120 ECTS credits.

Bachelor's degree refers to the qualification awarded after successful completion of the first cycle in the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area. The degree usually requires a minimum of 180 and a maximum of 240 ECTS.

Master's degree is the second-level higher education award. It refers to the second cycle in the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area. The degree usually requires a minimum of 90 ECTS, of which at least 60 ECTS at Master's level.

Doctoral degree is the third-level higher education award. It refers to the third cycle in the Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area. The degree usually requires three to four years of study, mostly as a period of research ([Dublin descriptors, 2008).

Undoubtedly, short-cycle education, in the light of the Dublin criteria (Dublin descriptors, 2008), as well as the EQF complies with EQF level 5 (EQF Level 5, 2008); thus, graduates acquire the relevant knowledge and skills at a level higher than that of general education and are qualified either to work or to pursue a profession or to continue studies in order to complete the first cycle of higher education. This means that short-cycle education will satisfy the demand of the labour market by educating and training mid-level specialists that are in demand. The challenge posed to short-cycle education is therefore to implement an intensive study

[1] Intra Lūce. Tel. + 0037129454614 intra@jk.lv

programme that results in knowledge, skills and competences imparted to students in a particular field, which will permit graduates to develop novel or improve existing systems, products and technologies as well as prepare the graduates for pedagogic work in their field. Short-cycle education should ensure that students reach a certain professional level of knowledge and are able to independently take decisions, defend their choice, identify all technical and organisational problems encountered in the respective professional area, react to rapidly changing situations in a timely manner.

Short-cycle education in Latvia does not have a long history behind it. It was introduced in 2000 through changes in the Law on Higher Education. However, elsewhere in the world this form of education has a longer pedigree, for instance, in America where this form of education has been available since 1901. The legal basis for short-cycle education in Latvia consists of the Law on Higher Education Establishments, the Law on Vocational Education and the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers "On the State Standard of First-Level Higher Vocational Education".

Short-cycle higher education is higher vocational education that lasts 2–3 years (120 ECTS – 180 ECTS).

The issue of non-university higher education, which is practice-oriented vocational training, has become topical since the beginning of the Bologna Process.

Non-university higher education began in Europe during the 1960s and 1970s when higher education ceased to be an elite pursuit and became a mass phenomenon. Consequently, the relative number of students in their age group increased from 8 %–10 %, and even approached 25 %–30 % in some countries. Once it became apparent that providing higher education required financial resources, it was found that studying at the university for a long period of time could not be financed to meet the demand for it. It also transpired that young people themselves were willing to acquire professional skills and enter the labour market as quickly as possible. It was found that educating as many as 30 % of youth to the level of Master's degree was inefficient as graduates holding a Master's degree were ready to pursue research, had great ambitions to find a highly-paid job. However, in real life it turned out that such a large number of Master's degree holders would find work that would take advantage of only part of their abilities – principally professional knowledge and skills rather than academic knowledge.

These problems became apparent in Latvia during the 1990s, as expressed in rhetorical questions posed by Andrejs Rauhvargers, former Vice-President of the European Network of Information Centres (ENIC) and Director of the Academic Information Centre of Latvia, "Do we face the same problem as Master's degree holders do when after six years of study they often work at a job that requires all of their limited professional skills and only a fraction of the accumulated academic knowledge, don't we? Are we so wealthy that we can afford to educate a specialist over five or six years, given that in the real world three years would suffice? Is it not the case that employers often accuse graduates from higher education establishments that they lack practical knowledge and skills?" (Rauhvargers, 2002)

At present, the theme under consideration is topical since rapid changes in the economy as well as globalisation processes require employees to constantly develop their professional qualifications. As already mentioned, today it is no longer possible to acquire knowledge in 4–5 years that would be sufficient throughout one's professional lifetime because the acquired knowledge tends to become out-dated. Employers also require that prospective employees are educated and competent in their field.

In his Doctoral Thesis, Aleksandrs Tarvids has stated that "approximately one-fifth of all

[1] Intra Lūce. Tel. + 0037129454614 intra@jk.lv

employees are over-qualified for their daily tasks". The study of the mismatch between education and the needs of the labour market has identified two key phenomena: over-education and under-education. In several European countries, there are between 10 % and 30 % of overeducated employees, and about 20 % of undereducated employees. In certain countries, overeducated employees account for approximately one-half of all employees, for example, 45 % in Russia, 36 % in Ukraine, 26 % in Cyprus, 24 % in Lithuania, and 18 % in Latvia (2008) (Tarvids, 2016).

A. Tarvids illustrates the phenomenon of over-education by providing a simple example: an individual with a Bachelor's and even a Master's degree works as a cleaner; alternatively there is the phenomenon of excessive expectations and pre-conditions, for example, someone with experience in international project management has the post of assistant director at a small enterprise in the local market. These examples show that the labour market needs more mid-level specialists with a sound education and good professional skills and fewer specialists with the highest level of education (Tarvids, 2016).

Thus, short-cycle higher education plays a significant role within the system of higher education in most countries. At present, there are differences from country to country within the European Higher Education Area as how other higher education institutions recognise qualifications gained as EQF level 5. For example, short-cycle education corresponding to EQF level 5 has been introduced in Latvia, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Denmark etc. At the same time, in the Czech Republic, Estonia, and Austria EQF level 5 is understood as further vocational education, in the United Kingdom (Scotland) – as a qualification gained through general education, and it is not practised at all in Lithuania. There are also differences in terms of the degrees conferred, for example, in the Netherlands this is an associate degree, in Latvia – a diploma of first level higher vocational education; in Malta – an undergraduate diploma, in the United Kingdom – a foundation degree, and in Ireland – a higher certificate.

In view of the fact that the Bologna Declaration clearly sets out three distinct levels of higher education, including the degree conferred at each level, this should also be implemented for the system of short-cycle education, defining it to be part of the first cycle of higher education and proposing to confer an associate degree at completion of the study programme. The experience of the Netherlands can be seen as an example to emulate, i.e., an associate degree was given official standing in 2006 as the outcome of two years of study at a higher education programme. Prior to this date, the Netherlands had undertaken a trial period to understand what this new qualification would comprise. As of 1 September 2013 the associate degree is legally defined as a new qualification that is based on the Law on Higher Education and Science and with this step short-cycle education programmes are part of the framework of higher education qualifications fully conforming to the Dublin descriptors.

The demand for short-cycle education is increasing year by year as there is a steadily rising demand for mid-level specialists. In respect of the situation in Latvia, the number of students enrolled in short-cycle education programmes increased four-fold between 2003 and 2015. In academic year 2003/2004, only 5 % of all students in higher education were pursuing short-cycle studies; in academic year 2009/2010, this number was already 12 %, whereas in academic year 2014/2015 20 % of all students in higher education were enrolled in short-cycle study programmes in Latvia. The Netherlands adopted a goal of having 20 % of all university students in applied science disciplines to be enrolled in an associate degree programme.

According to the study on the demand for labour in the medium and long term carried out

[1] Intra Lūce. Tel. + 0037129454614 intra@jk.lv

by the Ministry of Economics of the Republic of Latvia, at present there is a strong demand for specialists and it will also persist in the future, in particular, the demand for mid-level specialists. Hence, the number of individuals enrolled in the SCHE programmes will rise by 17.3 % by 2030. The same study predicts that in 2030 job openings for individuals with higher education, including – SCHE, will comprise half of all openings. A similar trend is also expected in other EU member states (Ministry of Economics, 2013).

As mentioned above, demand is steadily rising throughout the world for SCHE due to the increasing demand for mid-level specialists in job markets. In its forecasts, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP) predicts that demand will grow steadily for specialists with vocational qualifications up to 2020 (CEDEFOP, 2011).

Daniels Pavluts, former Minister of Economics, has made the following observation, "If we wish to become rich and avoid mass immigration, we should return to basics and teach engineering and exact sciences. Our real problem is a relatively large number of young people who enter the job market without any qualification or skill. Additionally, there are a large number of individuals in the job market who have received only elementary education and in 2020 this number may reach 127 thousand. At the same time, the demand for this kind of workers will fall, reaching 75 thousand in 2020." (Pavluts, 2013)

The Latvian Investment and Development Agency has issued a forecast of in-demand future professions in Latvia in such fields as transport and logistics, woodworking, commerce and administration, electronics and mechanical engineering, information technology etc. According to the Ministry of Economics of the Republic of Latvia, there will be a demand for nearly 4500 IT specialists in Latvia by 2020. There is a lack of nurses, surveyors, telemarketing specialists, and others in the labour market (Latvian Investment and Development Agency, 2014).

There is an increasing number of employers who when confronted with an insufficient number of local mid-level specialists are ready to employ workers from third countries.

It has already been noted that SCHE (first level higher vocational education) has been implemented in Latvia since 2000. In 2003, there were 13 colleges in Latvia (9 state and 4 privately owned); today their number has reached 25 (17 state and 8 privately owned ones). SCHE programmes are also offered by five higher education institutions in Latvia (Ministry of Education, 2015).

In Latvia, colleges offer 99 accredited vocational study programmes. The largest number of study programmes is in the field of health care, i.e., 18 study programmes. The next most numerous category is in the field of property management and administration comprising 13 study programmes. The smallest number of study programmes is offered in the fields of agriculture, forestry, fisheries, veterinary medicine and food safety – 1 study programme, chemistry, chemical technology and biotechnology – 1 study programme, environmental protection – 1 study programme, and information and communication science – 1 study programme. At present, there are no study programmes offered in the fields of mathematics and statistics and veterinary science (Ministry of Education, 2015).

This trend is largely driven by the fact that short-cycle education can easily adapt to the demands and requirements of the labour market, educate and train competent specialists in a short period of time, thus raising the employment rate of graduates and decreasing the unemployment rate.

The importance of short-cycle education has been emphasised in the Yerevan Declaration (Ministerial declarations and communiques,

[1] Intra Lūce. Tel. + 00371294546l4 intra@jk.lv

2015), in which ministers responsible for higher education in the European Higher Education Area agreed to include provision for recognition of short-cycle education in the European Qualifications Framework (QF – EHEA), taking into account the Dublin descriptors and conforming to European standards and guidelines for quality assurance; they also agreed to adopt regulations that higher education institutions in their countries would recognise short-cycle education qualifications even in cases when short-cycle qualifications were not part of their national education system.

The "Europe 2020" strategy as adopted by the EU sets forth the obligation of states to make their education system open to others and raise their significance, develop national qualifications systems and ensure that the criteria for success relate to the needs of the labour market (COM, 2010).

Conclusion

1) The Bologna Process was launched on 19 June 1999, when the ministers of education of 29 European states, including Latvia, signed the Bologna Declaration. Until then, Latvia had already implemented a number of reforms set in the Bologna Declaration, i.e., the Education Law of 1991 had already envisaged the introduction of Bachelor and Master study programmes. At present, higher education institutions of Latvia practically offer the three-cycle Bologna programmes, including short-cycle higher education as part of the first cycle, upon completion of which a Bachelor's degree is awarded. Latvia was one of the fifteen European countries that already by 2012 had completed the process of alignment of its national qualifications to the European Qualifications Framework. However, in order to strengthen the short-cycle higher education in the framework of education, the laws and regulations of Latvia on education should envisage that upon completion of short-cycle education an associate degree is awarded and it is part of a professional Bachelor's level (2+2).
2) It is important to note that the short-cycle higher vocational education provides an opportunity to quickly obtain quality education and professional competences that allow immediately entering the labour market, gaining experience and building a career.
3) The importance of short-cycle education has been emphasised in the Yerevan Declaration, in which ministers responsible for higher education in the European Higher Education Area agreed to include provision for recognition of short-cycle education in the European Qualifications Framework, taking into account the Dublin descriptors and conforming to European standards and guidelines for quality assurance; they also agreed to adopt regulations that higher education institutions in their countries would recognise short-cycle education qualifications even in cases when short-cycle qualifications are not part of their national education system.

References

Journal paper with author(s)

1. Rauhvargers, A. (2002).Latvija Boloņas Procesā (Latvia in Bologna process): Administrative and Criminal Justice, 3, pp.36 – 48.
2. Latvijas augstākās izglītības ārējās izglītības kvalitātes nodrošināšanas sistēmas pilnveide (Legislation of the Republic of Latvia (2014). Latvian Higher Education External Quality Assurance System of Education Development). The official publisher of the Republic of Latvia: Latvijas Vēstnesis, no.221, 2014.
3. Augstskolu, koledžu un studiju virzienu akreditācijas noteikumi (2015)(Legislation of the Republic of Latvia. Universities, College and study Programme Accreditation. The official publisher of the Republic of Latvia: Latvijas Vēstnesis, no.146, 2015.
4. Cabinet of Ministers. (2001). Standards for first level higher vocational education: Latvian Journal, no.54, 2001.

Internet sources

5. Tarvids, A. (2016). Agent-Based Modelling of Social Networks in Labour–Education Market System. Springster: Springster Briefs in Compexity. DOI:10.1007/978-3-319-26539-1, ISBN 978-3-319-26539. Retrieved November

[1] Intra Lūce. Tel. + 00371294546l4 intra@jk.lv

29, 27,2016 from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285537062_Agent-Based_Modelling_of_Social_Networks_in_Labour-Education_Market_System

6. Pavluts, D. (2013). Darbaspēka trūkums var kļūt par šķērsli Latvijas izaugsmei (Labour Shortages May Become a Major Obstacle to Latvian Growth). Retrieved November 29,2016 from http://www.db.lv/darbs/darbaspeka-trukums-var-klut-par-butisku-skersli-latvijas-izaugsmei-397167
7. Dublin Descriptors. (2008). Retrieved November 29,2016 from http://www.thematicnetworkdietetics.eu/everyone/1926/5/0/30
8. European Qualification Framework Level 5. (2008). Retrieved February 27,2016 from http://ec.europa.eu/eqf/compare/eqf_en.htm# comparison
9. COM(2010) 2020, Communication from the Commission, Europe 2020, A Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth. Brussels, 3.03.2010. Retrieved November 29,2016 from
10. http://ec.europa.eu/eqf/compare/eqf_en.htm#comparison
11. Akreditācija un licencēšana 2015(Accreditation and Licensing 2015). Retrieved November 29,2016 from http://www.aic.lv/portal/aikna
12. The Bologna process: Setting up the European Higher Education Area (1999). Retrieved February 27,2016 from http://eur-lex. europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=URISERV:c11088&from=EN
13. Ministerial Declarations and Communiques. (2015). Conference at Yerevan of Ministers Responsible for Higher Education Retrieved February 27,2016 http://www.ehea.info/cid101764/yerevan.html
14. Latvijas vidēja un ilgtermiņa darba tirgus prognozes (Information on Middle and Long-term Predictions for Demands of the labour market). (2013) Ministry of Economics. Retrieved November 29, 27,2016 from http://www.em.gov.lv/images/modules/items/tsdep/darba_tirgus/EMZino_21062013.pdf
15. Briefing Note. What Next for Skills on the European Labour market. (2011) CEDEFOP. Retrieved November 3,2016 from http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/9059
16. Pārskats par Latvijas augstāko izglītību 2014.gadā (Overview of Higher Education in Latvia in 2014). Ministry of Education. Retrieved December 12,2016 from ,www.izm.gov.lv/images/statistika/augst_izgl/ 12.pdf
17. Akreditēto programmu saraksts (List of Accredited Study Programmes).(2015). AIC Retrieved February 27,2016 from http://www.izm.gov.lv/lv/izglitiba/augstaka-izglitiba/studiju-virzienu-akreditacija
18. Darba tirgū trūkstošās un pieprsītās profesijas (Labour Market Gaps and demands). (2014). The Latvian Investment and Development Agency. Retrieved February 27,2016 from http://www.lvportals.lv/print.php?id=263705
19. Cheps (2012). Short Cycle Higher Education: An International review. Retrieved February 27,201, from http://www.wissenschaftsmanagement-online.de/sites/www.wissenschaftsmanagement-online.de/files/migrated_wimoarticle/001_CHEPS5ShortCycleHE.pdf

Author's short biography

Intra Lūce, M.iur., M.oec. PhD student at the faculty of of Education, Psychology and Art of University of Latvia. Her current research area is sustainable development and future of short cycle higher education (SCHE) in Latvia.

Intra Lūce is a docent at College of Law. Currently she is the Deputy Director at College of Law, Head of College of Law Board. She has experience in study programme development and evaluation. Intra Lūce is a board member of the EURASHE, PRME Chapter Central and East Europe and FIABCI – Baltic Multinational Chapter.

[1] Intra Lūce. Tel. + 0037129454614 intra@jk.lv