

APPROVED
By the Minister of Education and
Science of the Republic of Lithuania
23 May 2007
Resolution No. ISAK-970

**THE STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPING, EVALUATING, RENEWING, AND
IMPLEMENTING THE CURRICULUM OF GENERAL EDUCATION
I. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

1. The purpose of the strategy for developing, evaluating, renewing, and implementing of the curriculum (hereinafter – the strategy for curriculum) is to delineate the aims and principles of the curriculum process, the functions of educational levels, and the responsibilities in this process and to envisage the priorities, measures, and indices of the implementation of the curriculum process until 2012.

2. The strategy for curriculum is being prepared as a result of the implementation of the Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003–2012, which was adopted by resolution No. IX-1700 of 4 July 2003 of the Parliament (*Seimas*) of the Republic of Lithuania (*Official Gazette*, 2003, No. 71-3216) and foresees linking the curriculum with contemporary personal competences and creating a system for the renewal of the curriculum and the programme for the implementation of the Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003–2012, adopted by resolution No. 82 of 24 January 2005 by the government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Official Gazette*, 2005, No. 12-391), Annex IV, measure 1.2.1 of the direction “Content Enhancement”.

3. Curriculum includes pupils' current experience, teaching curricula, teaching and learning methodologies, context, methods for assessing the pupils' achievements and progress, and teaching/learning tools.

4. Curriculum process is defined as the continuous development, implementation, evaluation, and renewal of curriculum at all levels of education.

5. Competences are defined as a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes in a certain field, and proven ability to fulfil tasks and actions according to agreed requirements (Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning (2006/962/EC, p. 10).

6. Key competences are the competences necessary for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social cohesion, and employability: communication in the mother tongue, communication in foreign languages, mathematical competence, and basic competences in science and technology, digital competence, learning to learn, social and civic skills, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, and cultural awareness and expression (Recommendation 2006/962/EC).

7. The strategy for curriculum development and implementation includes the following sections: general provisions; assessment of the condition of the curriculum of general education; the aim, objectives, and principles of the curriculum process; the purpose of the curriculum process of pre-school, primary, basic, and secondary education; priorities for the curriculum process in 2006–2012; the functions of education levels in the curriculum process; indices for the implementation of the strategy for curriculum; and the implementation of the strategy.

II. ASSESSMENT OF THE CONDITION OF THE CURRICULUM OF GENERAL EDUCATION

8. The main strengths of the curriculum.

8.1. Periodically updated documents that regulate the curriculum—curriculum framework and education attainment standards (1994, 1997, 1999, 2002, 2003), general education plans, matura examination syllabuses

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—help to implement the aims and objectives of education and provide prerequisites for seeking the compatibility of the curriculum process within all levels of education and balancing learning loads.

8.2. Development of new areas of curriculum, such as citizenship, healthy lifestyle and living skills, environmental protection, and economic literacy, enables teachers to develop the pupils' values and focus on the training of general skills.

8.3. The third and fourth centres of the curriculum (grades 9–12) provide pupils with more opportunities to select courses and modules in view of their own needs and prospects for further studies.

8.4. The Conception of Assessment of Pupils' Progress and Achievement adopted by resolution No. ISAK-256 of 25 February 2004 of the minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania (*Official Gazette*, 2004, No. 35-1150), the achievement inspection in basic education and, the matura examination system create premises for changing the culture of assessing pupils' achievements, combining methods of internal and external assessment in a better way, and more purposefully using assessment information.

8.5. Participation in the international achievement studies of pupils (TIMSS, PIRLS, CIVIC, etc.) and initiation of national achievement studies for pupils provide opportunities to assess the validity of the requirements established for the pupils both on the national level (education attainment standards) and on the school level, to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum, and on the basis of this to set the priorities for the enhancement of the curriculum process.

8.6. Experience gained during the implementation of the School Improvement Programme adopted by resolution No. 759 of 28 May 2002 of the government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Official Gazette*, 2002, No. 54-2130), projects supported by the European Union Structural Funds and other projects helps teachers be more efficient in responding to changing teaching goals and appropriately adopt the curriculum.

8.7. The breakthrough in the use of information and communication technology in education (resolution No. ISAK-2015 of 14 December 2004 of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania “On the approval of the strategy for using information and communication technology in Lithuanian education 2005–2007 and the programme for implementing information and communication technology in Lithuanian education 2005–2007” (*Official Gazette*, 2005, No. 7-217) offers ever wider opportunities to use these technologies to improve the quality of education and increase the efficiency of the education process.

8.8. The system established for assessing textbooks and computer-aided teaching/learning tools creates premises to improve the quality of these tools and the provision of these tools to schools.

9. The main weaknesses of the curriculum.

9.1. The curriculum developed and implemented at all levels of education remains inordinately knowledge-oriented and focused on the development of the pupils' academic skills, and too little attention is paid to the link between the curriculum and life practice, development of new abilities required for contemporary society, and comprehensive development of a pupil's personality and his national and civic self-awareness.

9.2. Throughout all levels of education, the curriculum does not sufficiently consider the difference in pupils' learning styles and needs, particularly, those of pupils with special educational needs.

9.3. Assessment of pupils' achievements and progress throughout the educational process is predominantly used to identify the pupils' needs and leanings and adapt the curriculum accordingly, but is also used for records and control. The relationship between assessment in the educational process and the external evaluation of pupils' achievements, such as national and international studies, inspection of basic educational achievements, and matura examinations, is too weak. The instruments and conclusions of external assessment are insufficiently used to improve learning and curriculum.

9.4. No conditions have been created for the systematic improvement of qualifications of the people who prepare and assess curriculum on the national level. The content of qualification training and teacher education programmes is insufficiently harmonised with the priorities of the change in the curriculum.

9.5. Schools and teachers are not sufficiently provided with the learning/teaching tools and sets of textbooks required for the implementation of innovations in the curriculum and adapted for more active learning of pupils and individualisation, differentiation, and assessment of learning/teaching.

9.6. The proposed innovations in the curriculum are frequently inconsistently implemented in various strategies, programmes, and projects that do not ensure further support for schools or teachers and therefore do not bring the expected results.

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9.7. Insufficiently implemented provisions of the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania (*Official Gazette*, 1991, No. 23-593; 2003, No. 63-2853) regarding the responsibilities of various levels of education management in renewing, developing, and implementing curriculum.

9.8. Partners (pupils' parents and other representatives in accordance with the law [hereinafter – parents], higher schools, businesses, employers, politicians, and local communities) are not sufficiently included in the curriculum process.

10. Opportunities opening for the enhancement of the curriculum.

10.1. To link the measures of the strategy of curriculum with the programme for the implementation of the Provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003–2012, the Strategy for the Development of Lithuanian Information Society adopted by resolution No. 625 of 8 June 2005 of the government of the Republic of Lithuania (*Official Gazette*, 2005, No. 73-2649), the Strategy for Implementing Information and Communication Technology in Lithuanian Education 2005–2007 adopted by resolution No. ISAK-2015 of 14 December 2004 of the minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania (*Official Gazette*, 2005, No. 7-217), the Vocational Guidance Strategy adopted by resolution No. ISAK-1635/A1-180 of 19 November 2003 of the minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania and the minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania (*Official Gazette*, 2004, No. 56-1955), and the Long-term Civic and National Education Programme adopted by resolution No. X-818 of 19 September 2006 of the Parliament (*Seimas*) of the Republic of Lithuania (*Official Gazette*, 2006, No. 102-3939).

10.2. In the curriculum process, to rely on the internal and external assessment results of school activities and use suggestions by parents, other persons, public organisations, and state authorities.

10.3. To use European Union Structural Fund support for the renewal of the curriculum: to adapt the curriculum to pupils with various needs, to enhance teachers' professional abilities, and to provide schools with contemporary teaching/learning tools.

10.4. To follow the Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning key abilities for lifelong learning (Recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council of 18 December 2006 on key abilities for lifelong learning

(Recommendation 2006/962/EC)) and to adjust the curriculum to the implementation of modern personal abilities.

10.5. To use the opportunity to participate in the international studies of pupils' achievements by assessing the quality of the national curriculum and identifying areas for improvement.

10.6. To include lecturers and doctoral and master's degree students from institutions of higher education in the work on the assessment and update of the curriculum.

11. The main threats to the enhancement of the curriculum.

11.1. Far too much prominence has been given to the results of matura examinations and their single-sided use in assessing the quality of the school and teachers' work may have a negative impact on the curriculum process when teaching is only assessment-oriented and the part of the curriculum important for a person's moral, cultural, and social maturity is neglected.

11.2. Conditions for the admission of students to institutes of higher education prioritise the results of matura examinations in only two or three subjects, thus diminishing the curriculum of general education schools and encouraging pupils to study only a few subjects irrespective of their interests and abilities and the needs of society.

11.3. Due to insufficient cooperation between the institutions developing curriculum and educating teachers, there is a gap between the programmes for teachers' education and contemporary requirements for teachers' professional abilities.

11.4. Insufficient flexibility in the remuneration for teachers limits the school's opportunities to solve the issues of developing and implementing curriculum and assisting teachers and pupils.

11.5. Due to the unpopularity of the profession of teaching, emigration of teachers, and lack of flexibility of the institutions educating teachers in adjusting to the changing aims of education, there is an increasing shortage of qualified teachers.

12. Conclusions of the assessment.

12.1. It will soon be necessary to renew the curriculum at all levels of education: to reduce the volumes of academic knowledge; to review and clarify the expected achievements of pupils in the teaching curricula; to systematically integrate the development of key skills, in particular digital literacy, citizenship, entrepreneurship, and cultural awareness into the curriculum; to strengthen the relationship of the curriculum with

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real life and the world of work; and to pay more attention to the education of values and civic and national self-awareness.

12.2. It is necessary to adjust the curriculum to the age, inclinations, and needs, in particular special ones, of students throughout all levels of education; while developing the curriculum, it is necessary to consider the variety of learning styles.

12.3. It is important to analyse the programmes and tasks of matura examinations in order to ensure that external assessment complies with the teaching goals set in the teaching curricula and with the anticipated achievements of pupils, i.e. not only their knowledge, but also their abilities and skills should be assessed. It should be sought that the assessment information of all levels of education would be used to provide support to pupils and teachers, plan teaching, and improve the curriculum

12.4. It is essential to prepare programs for teacher education and qualification training that will help teachers acquire abilities, differentiate and individualise teaching, purposefully use active teaching/learning methods and assessment for learning, and apply information and communication technologies during their lessons and to provide conditions for training the people who prepare and assess curriculum at the national level.

12.5. It is essential to ensure financial, organisational, and methodological support for schools and teachers in order to implement innovations in education and to enhance the system of expert assessment of textbooks and other teaching material.

12.6. It is necessary to define the functions and responsibilities of the levels of education management and to coordinate actions in the curriculum process.

12.7. It is particularly important in the curriculum process to develop the cooperation of teachers, parents, and all partners of education.

III. THE AIM, OBJECTIVES, AND PRINCIPLES OF THE CURRICULUM PROCESS

13. The aim of the curriculum process is to adjust the curriculum in such a way that each pupil is able to, according to his needs and resources, mature as a person, develop civic and national self-awareness, and acquire the competences required for further learning and meaningful and active life in modern society.

13.1. Objectives of the curriculum process:

13.1.1. to create an integral assessment system—pupils' achievements, educational process, documents of the curriculum, textbooks, and other teaching tools—for the curriculum that would help identify areas for improvement;

13.1.2. on the basis of the conclusions of assessments and the proposals of social partners, to renew the curriculum documents, textbooks, and other teaching tools and the programmes for teacher education and qualification training;

13.1.3. to substantiate the development and implementation of the curriculum by providing financial, organisational, and methodological support to schools and teachers;

13.1.4. to define the functions of the levels of education management and coordinate actions in the curriculum process.

13.2. The following principles are observed in the curriculum process while developing, implementing, evaluating, and renewing the curriculum:

13.2.1. the curriculum provides each pupil with an opportunity to develop a system of values, achieve personal maturity, and acquire the competences required in contemporary society, which include a combination of knowledge, awareness, skills, and attitudes;

13.2.2. the curriculum is differentiated and individualised; it is adapted to the age, experience, needs, level of skills, and learning styles of the pupils;

13.2.3. internal integration of the curriculum, its relationship with real life, the world of work, and cultural processes is strengthened;

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13.2.4. the curriculum process is decentralised; decisions regarding the adjustment of the curriculum for pupils of various needs are made by the school and the teacher on the basis of their knowledge about the pupil and the documents that regulate the curriculum;

13.2.5. renewal of the curriculum is based on information regarding the assessment of pupils' achievements and the educational process, conclusions made by experts based on the regular assessment of the curriculum, and broad consensus with social partners;

13.2.6. implementation of curriculum innovations is based on the financial, methodological, and organisational resources that provide possibilities for teachers to prepare properly and create the desired learning/teaching environment.

IV. THE PURPOSE OF THE PRE-SCHOOL, PRIMARY, BASIC, AND SECONDARY CURRICULUM PROCESS

14. The curriculum process ensures that:

14.1. pre-school education will be oriented to the abilities important to children in this age group, preparation of the child for school, and learning through games and activities;

14.2. primary education will provide pupils a holistic world view, develop the basics of the key competences, and relate learning to the relevant issues in pupils' life and immediate environment;

14.3. basic education will provide possibilities for each person to acquire the key competences required for lifelong learning and to seek better learning outcomes according to his abilities. Special attention should be paid to the development of the pupils' values and positive behaviour and practical application of knowledge and skills. Pupils in grades 9–10 must be provided with opportunities to select subjects from all general programmes of education, test their abilities in various learning and activity areas, and get acquainted with real work places;

14.4. a pupil studying in the secondary education programme will draw up an individual learning plan; deepen and expand his/her knowledge, skills, and competences in the selected areas; get ready for matura examinations, and continue learning at higher or vocational training school.

V. PRIORITIES OF THE CURRICULUM PROCESS 2006–2012

15. To orient the curriculum to the acquisition of key personal competences, in particular learning to learn, citizenship, entrepreneurship, and digital literacy, so that a pupil graduating from a basic education school is prepared to live, learn, and work in contemporary society.

16. To ensure the compliance between the goals of education and assessment (e.g., competences are developed and assessed); to increase the importance of the assessment of pupils in the educational process and to strengthen the relationship to external assessment; and to ensure that after pupils graduate from the basic and secondary education programmes, part of their final assessment includes pupils' projects, individual, and other work.

17. To pay particular attention to getting to know the pupils and individualisation and differentiation of teaching, so that curriculum is properly adapted to the pupils' needs, learning styles, and abilities.

18. To increase opportunities for 14–19-year-old pupils to choose a learning direction, so that they have better conditions to identify their needs and interests and make a decision regarding further learning and a future profession and to ensure that pupils of this age group can get acquainted with various professions via simulated and real work places, meetings with representatives of various professions, and the use of various information and counselling resources.

19. So that teachers are able to develop and implement the renewed curriculum, to enhance teachers' qualifications and teacher education in the following areas: development of pupils' competences, individualisation of teaching, differentiation of the curriculum, assessment for learning, planning of the educational process, and reflection. To assess the activities of schools and teachers, particular focus should be on the assessment of the curriculum to ensure that assessment information helps to methodically enhance the curriculum in response to the needs of pupils and society.

20. To increase the provision of modern teaching/learning tools to schools and the use of information and communication technologies in the curriculum process in order to increase access to quality teaching/learning tools and more successfully involve pupils in active learning.

VI. THE FUNCTIONS OF THE LEVELS OF EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULUM PROCESS

21. The Ministry of Education and Science adopts decisions regarding the following:

21.1. curriculum framework; the renewal, amendment, testing, approval, and implementation of general syllabuses; and identification of the priorities of the curriculum process;

21.2. national and international studies about pupils' achievements; national diagnostic assessment of pupils' achievements; the procedure for the assessment of achievements in basic education; the content of matura examinations and the procedure for conducting examinations; ensuring the validity and reliability of the external assessment of achievements; and setting the guidelines for assessment in education and its relationship to the external assessment of pupils' achievements and procedure for the use of assessment information;

21.3. the conditions for teachers to acquire the required competence and identify and seek education goals and the forecasted outcomes; ensuring compliance between the content of the programmes for teacher education/qualification training and the priorities of the curriculum process;

21.4. the relationship between the renewal of the curriculum and the provision of the required teaching tools (such as sets of textbooks; classroom equipment; and digital, organisational, and other modern tools) and the distribution of the money allocated per pupil (pupil's baskets);

21.5. informing society about the priorities of the curriculum process.

22. Local governments, the founder (in the case of state schools supported by the budget), and the general meeting of interest holders (in the case of public enterprises) make decisions regarding the following:

22.1. implementation of the national curriculum in schools and coordination with the needs of the local community;

22.2. provision of the conditions for teachers, managers, and other professionals in the education system to have access to qualification training and requalification in line with the priorities of the curriculum process and with the regular help of consultants provided to teachers and schools for all the issues of the curriculum process;

22.3. national and international studies concerning the achievements of pupils and organised pursuant to the procedure established in the law and other legal acts; assessment of the achievements of basic education, assessment of matura examinations, and diagnostic assessment of pupils' achievements at the local government level; and the use of assessment information;

22.4. provision of schools with teaching tools and investments (into human and material resources) for the implementation and improvement of the curriculum;

22.5. educational assistance to schools, pupils, and their parents;

22.6. informing society about the development of the curriculum process and quality of work of schools.

23. The school makes decisions regarding the following:

23.1. adaptation and implementation of the curriculum as regulated by national documents concerning the curriculum and proposed by the founder with consideration to the needs of the pupils and schools, the experience of the teachers, and available resources;

23.2. procedure for planning teaching, organising the teaching process, assessing the pupils' achievements and progress, and using the assessment information and the teachers' responsibility for the quality and outcomes of teaching;

23.3. collection and analysis of information about the internal and external assessment of the achievements of pupils and the performance of the school; identification of areas for improvement and implementation of the measures for improvement; and inclusion of the community into the curriculum process;

23.4. provision of opportunities to the pupils studying according to part two of the basic education programme and according to the secondary education programme to select the curriculum

according to their interests and needs and school capacities, acquire skills in career planning, and receive information about chosen fields of further learning or professional activity;

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23.5. provision of the conditions for teachers to cooperate and create an environment that encourages active learning and harmonisation of school teaching plans and timetables with teachers, organisation of the provision of textbooks and other teaching/learning tools, and qualification training of teachers according to the priorities of the curriculum process;

23.6. accounting of teachers to the school administration for the progress of the teaching process and pupils' learning and results;

23.7. cooperating with parents and provision of information about their children's learning, achievements, and progress and informing the local community about the activities of the school.

24. The teacher makes decisions regarding the following:

24.1. implementation of the curriculum framework and the aims and objectives of education set by the founder of the school and the school by adjusting them to the needs of the class and individual pupils, organisation of the appropriate teaching process, selection of learning methods and resources and assessment of the pupils' achievements and progress, and reflection on the teaching process and its outcomes and improvement of the curriculum so that each student can achieve the best results according to his abilities;

24.2. planning the teaching process by considering pupils' learning outcomes, harmonising and discussing plans with colleagues and pupils, and preparing and implementing programmes for optional courses or modules according to the procedure established by legal acts and the school;

24.3. application of the methods of assessing pupils' achievements and progress and use of assessment information to identify pupils' needs and plan further teaching/learning in order to ensure that help is provided to the pupils in timely manner; and discussion of the pupils' learning outcomes and the help that they require with pupils and their parents;

24.4. involving pupils in active learning and cooperation; encouraging the appropriate learning motivation and encouraging pupils to learn how to learn: set achievable goals, assess and self-assess, and reflect on learning; and providing information about opportunities for further learning and the choice of profession;

24.5. creation of an environment encouraging learning and the appropriate selection and use of teaching/learning tools.

VII. INDICES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY OF CURRICULUM

25. Outcomes will be assessed according the indices provided in the annex to the programme for the implementation of the provisions of the National Education Strategy 2003–2012.

26. Renewed curriculum framework for pre-school, primary, basic, and secondary education and general teaching plans were prepared and implemented.

27. Three hundred teachers/consultants were trained for the dissemination of the renewed general programmes.

28. Methodological recommendations (teacher's books) were prepared according to fields of education for the implementation of the general programmes.

29. Methodologies and instruments for assessing pupils' competences were developed.

30. Three projects financed by European Union Structural Funds and devoted to testing the renewed curriculum in schools and seven projects devoted to training teachers, providing schools with teaching/learning tools, developing digital curriculum, and expanding of modern teaching/learning services were implemented.

31. On the basis of the general programmes, three programmes for testing achievements in basic education and 11 programmes for testing matura examination syllabuses were prepared.

32. Four internet sites were established.

33. At least six school improvement networks based on specific areas (curriculum, assessment, and cooperative learning) were established.

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VIII. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

34. The schedule of the measures for the implementation of the strategy of curriculum is provided in the annex.

35. Measures for the implementation of the strategy of curriculum are financed from the general subsidies allocated to the responsible agents by the Law on the Approval of the Financial Indicators of the National Budget and Municipal Budgets of the Republic of Lithuania for a particular year, European Union Structural Funds, and other funds allocated pursuant to the procedures established in the legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania.

36. The Ministry of Education and Science coordinates the implementation of the strategy of curriculum and its measures and by 1 March each year prepares a report concerning the implementation of the measures.

37. By January 30 each year, institutions responsible for the implementation of the measures provide information to the Ministry of Education and Science about their implementation.
