The *Saeima* 1 has adopted and

the President has proclaimed the following law:

**International School Law**

**Section 1. Terms Used in the Law**

The following terms are used in the Law:

1) **international school** – an educational institution which has been registered in the Republic of Latvia and founded by a legal or natural person and which implements an educational programme in the Republic of Latvia recognised by another Member State of the European Union or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Supreme Council of European Schools, or the International Baccalaureate Organization in the official languages of the European Union Member States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Member States;

2) **international educational programme** – an educational programme which is recognised by a Member State of the European Union or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Supreme Council of European Schools, or the International Baccalaureate Organization;

3) **international education document** – a document attesting the education of a person which has been acquired according to an international educational programme.

**Section 2. Purpose of the Law**

The purpose of this Law is to ensure the accessibility of general education in the Republic of Latvia to the children (family members) of the persons employed and serving in foreign and international organisations (in particular in the authorities of the European Union, the armed forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union Member States), thus promoting the operation of such authorities and organisations in the Republic of Latvia and concurrently contributing to international cooperation in matters related to economics, politics, and also education.

**Section 3. Scope of Application of the Law**

(1) The Law prescribes the requirements for founding, registering, and commencing the operation of an international school, governs the procedures for the issuance of a permit for the implementation of an international educational programme, prescribes the requirements for the implementation of such programme, and also prescribes the procedures for the management and supervision of the international school.

(2) The acquisition of an international educational programme shall be available to any person (child) if his or her family members are permanently or temporarily residing in the Republic of Latvia.

(3) An international school shall ensure equal rights and opportunities to all children as regards the acquisition of an international educational programme according to their skills and shall ensure that the operation thereof complies with the laws and regulations governing the protection of the rights of the child.

(4) The Law shall not apply to such educational institutions the operation of which is governed by international agreements binding on the Republic of Latvia.

**Section 4. Procedures for the Foundation, Reorganisation, and Liquidation of an International School**

(1) An international school as a private commercial company, foundation, or association may be founded, reorganised, and liquidated by natural and legal persons.

(2) The following provisions shall be complied with by an international school in the operation thereof:

1) the international school implements an international educational programme recognised by another Member State of the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Member State, the Supreme Council of European Schools, or the International Baccalaureate Organization;

2) the immovable property or a part thereof (a group of premises) (hereinafter – the immovable property) is in the ownership, possession, or use of the founder of the international school for at least five years for the purpose of implementing an international educational programme and for the performance of related activities;

3) the immovable property, the installations, inventory, and equipment located therein comply with the operating, technical safety, hygiene requirements laid down in laws and regulations, the premises comply with the requirements for the maintenance of equipment and inventory;

4) the safety, preventive health care of educatees and availability of first aid thereto are ensured in the international school;

5) the catering of educatees is ensured in the international school in accordance with laws and regulations;

6) computer equipment, a library where access to the electronic collections of the Latvian and international literature and periodicals is ensured, a sports hall, and a sports ground corresponding to the needs of educatees are available in the international school;

7) the operation and management of the international school, and the educational process at this school are governed by the basic regulations for the operation (for example, by-laws, articles of association) approved by the founder thereof.

(3) An international school shall be reorganised and liquidated by its founder. The international school shall inform the lawful representatives of the educatee, employees of the international school, and the State Education Quality Service of the reorganisation thereof at least three months in advance, but of the liquidation thereof – at least six months in advance.

**Section 5. Registration of an International School in the Register of Educational Institutions and Issuance of a Permit for the Implementation of an International Educational Programme**

(1) The founder or an authorised person thereof shall, within a month after founding an international school, submit to the State Education Quality Service (hereinafter – the Service) an application for the registration of an international school in the Register of Educational Institutions and a permit for the implementation of the international educational programme.

(2) Documents attesting the conformity with the requirements of Section 4 of this Law shall be appended to the application for the registration of an international school and the permit for the implementation of an international educational programme. Documents shall be submitted in the official language, whereas documents submitted in a foreign language shall be supplemented with the translation in the official language.

(3) The decision on the registration or the refusal to register an international school shall be taken by the official responsible for the Register of Educational Institutions within two months after receipt of the documents referred to in Paragraph two of this Section and the assessment of conformity with the requirements of Section 4 of this Law. The decision on the registration or the refusal to register the international school shall be contested to the head of the Service. The contesting of the decision shall not suspend the operation thereof.

(4) Upon taking the decision on the registration of an international school, the initial permit for the implementation of the international educational programme indicated in the application of the founder shall be issued concurrently for a period of time until the founder or the authorised person thereof submits documents to the Service attesting the recognition of the international educational programme in the respective country or also an opinion of the Supreme Council of European Schools or the International Baccalaureate Organization. The initial permit is issued for a period of time which does not exceed one year.

(5) After receipt of the documents referred to in Paragraph four of this Section, the Service shall, within a month, evaluate such documents and issue the permit for the implementation of an international educational programme in the respective international school for the accreditation period of the international educational programme indicated in the documents submitted.

(6) The Cabinet shall determine the aggregate of documents necessary for the registration of an international school, the procedures for the registration of international schools in the Register of Educational Institutions, and also the procedures for the evaluation of the respective documents and the issuance of the necessary initial permit and the permit for the implementation of international educational programmes.

(7) An international school shall begin its operation on the day when it is registered in the Register of Educational Institutions.

**Section 6. Name of an International School**

(1) The name of an international school must clearly and definitely differ from other names of educational institutions already registered in the Register of Educational Institutions.

(2) The name of an international school shall also be indicated in the official language.

**Section 7. Conditions for the Implementation of an International Educational Programme**

(1) Upon implementing an international educational programme, an international school shall concurrently ensure the acquisition of the Latvian language, Latvian history and culture, Latvian nature and geography (hereinafter – the subject Latvian Studies).

(2) The programme of the subject Latvian Studies shall be developed by the international school in compliance with the guidelines stipulated by the Cabinet and the programme samples of the subject Latvian Studies corresponding thereto. The Service shall approve the programme of the subject Latvian Studies.

(3) The implementation of the subject Latvian Studies and an international educational programme shall be commenced concurrently.

(4) The Cabinet shall determine the guidelines for the subject Latvian Studies which cover the content of the subject and the learning outcomes thereof for all levels of an international educational programme, and also the procedures and criteria for the evaluation and approval of the subject programme by the Service.

**Section 8. Equalisation of Education Acquired at an International School**

(1) Education acquired at an international school is equalised to the respective level and type of general education of the Republic of Latvia, and a respective entry shall be made thereon in the State Education Information System upon the issuance of the permit referred to in Section 5, Paragraph five of this Law.

(2) The Cabinet shall determine the procedures for the equalisation of the education acquired as a result of the acquisition of an international educational programme and the conformity with the level and type of general education of the Republic of Latvia.

**Section 9. International Education Document**

An international education document is issued to a person after acquisition of an international educational programme. If the person has acquired the international educational programme partially, a document of partial acquisition of the international educational programme is issued thereto.

**Section 10. Information on the Operation of an International School**

An international school shall post on its website the regulations governing the operation thereof, information on an international educational programme implemented therein, the conformity thereof with the level and type of general education of the Republic of Latvia, a sample of the international education document, the regulations regarding the enrolment and discharging of persons.

**Section 11. Ensuring of the Learning Process**

The duration of the academic year, the lesson or class load per week and day, the teaching and upbringing rules at an international school shall be determined according to the implemented international educational programme.

**Section 12. State Education Information System**

(1) Every year on 1 September, in accordance with the procedures stipulated by the Cabinet, an international school shall enter the information on the international educational programme, educatees, and teachers in the State Education Information System.

(2) The Cabinet shall determine the procedures by which an international school shall enter the information on the international educational programme, educatees, and teachers in the State Education Information System, and also the content of such information.

**Section 13. Competence of the Service**

(1) The Service shall:

1) having received the documents attesting the recognition of an international education programme in the respective country or the opinion of the Supreme Council of European Schools or the International Baccalaureate Organization which are referred to in Section 5, Paragraph four of this Law, evaluate them and enter the information in the State Education Information System, and also shall issue the permit for the implementation of the international educational programme and the subject Latvian Studies for the accreditation period of the international educational programme;

2) decide on the suspension of the operation of an international school if it has been established that the requirements laid down in the laws and regulations regarding the safety and hygiene of educatees, keeping the premises and inventory in order, and also the catering of educatees have been violated;

3) examine the applications related to the operation of an international school;

4) decide on the suspension of the international educational programme if the violations of the requirements of this Law have been established;

5) cancel the issued permit if the implementation of the international educational programme has not been commenced within 12 months after issuance of the permit specified in Section 5, Paragraph five of this Law or it has been suspended for 12 successive months;

6) assess and approve the programmes of the subject Latvian Studies developed by international schools;

7) enter the information on the issued permits for the implementation of the international educational programme, the cancellation and suspension thereof in the State Education Information System.

(2) The Service has the right to examine the conformity of the implementation of an international educational programme with the documentation submitted.

(3) The Service shall, not less than once a year, ascertain that the implementation of the subject Latvian Studies conforms to the programme approved for this subject.

**Section 14. Financing of an International School**

(1) The founders of an international school shall ensure the financing thereof.

(2) An international school is entitled to determine a fee for the acquisition of an international educational programme which shall be covered from the funds of a private individual (natural or legal person).

(3) The costs of the subject Latvian Studies to be implemented in an international school shall consist of the remuneration for work of the teachers involved in the implementation of this subject, the State social mandatory insurance payments, and the amount of expenditures necessary for the implementation of this subject (purchase of teaching aids).

(4) The Cabinet shall determine the procedures and criteria for the calculation and financing of the costs related to the implementation of the subject Latvian Studies from the State budget (remuneration for work of the teachers, State social mandatory insurance payments, purchase of teaching aids).

**Section 15. Requirements for the Heads of an International School**

(1) A person who meets the requirements of an international educational programme and who is not subject to the restrictions to hold the position of a teacher specified in the laws and regulations governing the field of education is entitled to hold the position of the head or deputy head of an international school. The requirements concerning the proficiency in the official language shall not apply to such person.

(2) The head or deputy head of an international school shall have the knowledge of the official language and use it to such an extent which is required for the fulfilment of his or her professional duties, or the international school shall ensure translation in the official language.

**Section 16. Requirements for the Teachers of an International School**

(1) A person who meets the requirements of an international educational programme and who is not subject to the restrictions to hold the position of a teacher specified in the laws and regulations governing the field of education is entitled to hold the position of a teacher who implements the international educational programme. The requirements concerning the proficiency in the official language shall not apply to such person.

(2) A person who meets the requirements concerning the education and qualification of teachers laid down in the laws and regulations governing the field of education and who is not subject to the restrictions to hold the position of a teacher specified in the laws and regulations governing the field of education is entitled to hold the position of a teacher who implements the subject Latvian Studies.

**Section 17. Storage of the Documents of the Education Process**

The implementation of an international educational programme and the organisation of the education process in an international school is documented, the management of documents and the management of the archives of the international school is ensured in accordance with the laws and regulations governing the management of documents and archives.

**Transitional Provisions**

1. The educational institutions which until the day of coming into force of this Law have registered with the Register of Educational Institutions and which conform to the requirements of this Law shall, by 31 August 2020, perform the re-registration of the educational programmes in the State Education Information System, indicating the seventh digit of the language of instruction code – 3 (Other language of instruction) in accordance with the Cabinet regulations regarding the Latvian classification of education.

2. The Cabinet shall, by 31 December 2020, issue the regulations referred to in this Law.

3. The application referred to in Section 5, Paragraph one of this Law may be submitted by international schools not earlier than on 1 February 2021.

4. The educational institutions which until the day of coming into force of this Law have registered with the Register of Educational Institutions shall, by 28 February 2021, submit the documents specified in this Law and the Cabinet regulations. The Service shall, by 31 May 2021, assess the documents submitted and issue the permit for the implementation of an international educational programme and the subject Latvian Studies for the accreditation period of the international educational programme.

The Law shall come into force on the day following its proclamation.

The Law has been adopted by the *Saeima* on 2 July 2020.

President E. Levits

Rīga, 10 July 2020