The *Saeima* 1 has adopted and

the President has proclaimed the following law:

**Law on the National Defence Training and the Youth Guard**

**Chapter I**

**General Provisions**

**Section 1. Purpose of the Law**

The purpose of this Law is to create a possibility for a child and a young person to acquire age-appropriate knowledge, skills and competences in the national defence by undergoing the national defence training or working in the Youth Guard.

**Section 2. Cadet Force Centre**

(1) The Cadet Force Centre shall organise the national defence training for children and young people and implement the work of the Youth Guard. Public and local government institutions shall provide support to the Cadet Force Centre for the achievement of the objectives referred to in Section 1 of this Law.

(2) The Cadet Force Centre is a direct administration authority under subordination of the Minister for Defence.

(3) The Cadet Force Centre shall have the following functions:

1) educate youth in the field of national defence;

2) promote civic awareness and patriotism in youth;

3) implement cooperation with associations, foundations, and youth organisations in the issues related to the organisation of the national defence training and the Youth Guard movement.

**Chapter II**

**National Defence Training**

**Section 3. National Defence Training**

(1) National defence training shall constitute a subject in secondary education programmes. The State general secondary education standard shall determine the content of the national defence training.

(2) The knowledge, skills, and values acquired in the national defence training shall be supplemented by mastering the interest education programme which is implemented in national defence training camps. The Minister for Defence shall approve this content of the education programme and the programme shall not be licensed in a local government.

(3) The Cadet Force Centre may delegate the acquisition of topics of civic participation included in the national defence training to associations and foundations.

**Section 4. Acquisition of the Subject of National Defence Training**

(1) Acquisition of the subject of national defence training shall be compulsory in secondary education programmes. The subject of national defence training shall be acquired within two consecutive academic years in general secondary education, vocational secondary education, and professional education institutions. Partial acquisition of the subject of national defence training shall be implemented in the forms of acquisition of education such as extramural studies and distance learning.

(2) A non-commissioned officer of youth guards shall adapt the content of teaching and teaching activity individually to educatees who due to their religious or philosophical beliefs or for other objective reasons may not acquire part of the subject of national defence training by ensuring that such educatees acquire other topics of the subject of national defence training.

**Section 5. National Defence Training Camps**

(1) Participation in national defence training camps shall be voluntary. The Cabinet shall determine the procedures for the organisation and operation of camps.

(2) The Cadet Force Centre shall enter into a contract with an educatee or a legal representative of a minor educatee prior to participation in the camp.

(3) During the camp an educatee may wear the uniform of a youth guard and inventory may be issued thereto. The Director of the Youth Guard shall determine the inventory, the procedures for issuing it, and the procedures for wearing the uniform.

(4) Educatees who participate in the camp have the right to receive paid health care. The Cabinet shall determine the types, amount of paid health care services, conditions for receipt, and the procedures for the payment thereof.

(5) The Ministry of Defence shall gather on an annual basis and publish on its website before 1 April of the next year the information on the number of participants in the national defence training camp in the previous year and the number of participants who have joined professional service of the National Armed Forces, who have been included into the National Armed Forces’ reserve, or who have joined the National Guard in the previous year.

**Section 6. Education and Professional Qualification Necessary for the Implementation of the Subject of National Defence Training**

(1) A non-commissioned officer of youth guards is entitled to implement the subject of national defence training.

(2) A person who corresponds to the following education and qualification requirements may be a non-commissioned officer of youth guards the official duties of which include implementation of the subject of national defence training:

1) has acquired or acquires higher education and professional qualification of a teacher;

2) corresponds to the requirements laid down in Section 72, Paragraphs five and six of the Law on the Protection of the Children’s Rights and has also acquired and maintains, in accordance with the prescribed procedures, the specific knowledge in the field of the protection of the rights of the child;

3) has completed or completes the courses determined by the Minister for Defence which are necessary for the implementation of the subject of national defence training;

4) is a professional service soldier, a national guardsman, or a reserve soldier and corresponds to the requirements laid down by the Minister for Defence for the state of health and physical preparedness.

(3) If a non-commissioned officer of youth guards the official duties of which include implementation of the subject of national defence training has reached the maximum age specified for the service in the National Guard or the National Armed Forces’ reserve but corresponds to other requirements laid down for the position of a non-commissioned officer of youth guards, including the requirements for the state of health and physical preparedness, the Director of the Cadet Force Centre may, taking into account the need for the performance of official duties, extend the time period until which the non-commissioned officer of youth guards occupies the position but not longer than until reaching the age necessary for granting an old-age pension.

(4) Only a person who has undergone basic military training may participate in the study module for the implementation of the national defence training in a higher education institution.

**Section 7. Provision of the Subject of National Defence Training**

(1) The Cadet Force Centre shall provide the training aid necessary for the implementation of the subject of national defence training.

(2) A founder of an educational institution shall provide free of charge a classroom and a room for the storage of materials and technical facilities necessary for the implementation of the subject of national defence training.

(3) The Cadet Force Centre shall provide educatees with catering on training days when field classes take place.

**Chapter III**

**Youth Guard**

**Section 8. Concept of the Youth Guard**

The Youth Guard is a movement in which children and young people voluntarily master the interest education programme for youth guards.

**Section 9. Attributes of the Youth Guard**

(1) The Youth Guard shall have its flag, emblem, and any other attributes.

(2) The motto of the Youth Guard shall be *“Augsim Latvijai!”* [We Grow for Latvia!].

(3) The Director of the Cadet Force Centre shall lay down the procedures for using attributes of the National Guard.

**Section 10. Interest Education Programme for Youth Guards**

The Director of the Cadet Force Centre shall approve the interest education programme for youth guards after coordination thereof with the Ministry of Defence and it shall not be licensed in a local government.

**Section 11. Educational Process within the Youth Guard**

(1) Educational process shall be implemented in units of youth guards in appropriate age groups.

(2) The Director of the Cadet Force Centre shall determine the division of the units of youth guards.

(3) A non-commissioned officer of youth guards shall be in charge of a unit of youth guards and ensure that interest education of youth guards is implemented.

(4) If the Cadet Force Centre has entered into a cooperation agreement with a local government or a founder of educational institution, the local government or founder of educational institution shall provide the support specified in the respective agreement to implement the interest education programme for youth guards. The local government or founder of the educational institution shall provide the rooms necessary for the implementation of the programme free of charge.

**Section 12. Education and Professional Qualification Necessary for the Implementation of the Interest Education Programme for Youth Guards**

(1) A non-commissioned officer of youth guards is entitled to implement the interest education programme for youth guards.

(2) A person who corresponds to the following education and qualification requirements may be a non-commissioned officer of youth guards the official duties of which include the implementation of the interest education programme for youth guards:

1) has acquired or acquires higher education and professional qualification of a teacher and has completed or completes a programme for the improvement of professional competence in education (at least in the amount of 72 hours) or study courses related to education in higher education studies (at least in the amount of two credit points or 80 hours);

2) corresponds to the requirements laid down in Section 72, Paragraphs five and six of the Law on the Protection of the Children’s Rights and has also acquired and maintains, in accordance with the prescribed procedures, the specific knowledge in the field of the protection of the rights of the child;

3) has completed or completes the courses determined by the Minister for Defence which are necessary for the implementation of the interest education programme for youth guards;

4) is a professional service soldier, a national guardsman, or a reserve soldier and corresponds to the requirements laid down by the Minister for Defence for the state of health and physical preparedness.

(3) If a non-commissioned officer of youth guards has reached the maximum age specified for the service in the National Guard or the National Armed Forces’ reserve but corresponds to other requirements laid down for the position of a non-commissioned officer of youth guards, including the requirements for the state of health and physical preparedness, the Director of the Cadet Force Centre may, taking into account the need for the performance of official duties, extend the time period until which the non-commissioned officer of youth guards occupies the position but not longer than until reaching the age necessary for granting an old-age pension.

**Section 13. Self-governance Body of Youth Guards**

(1) Youth guards shall elect a self-governance body of youth guards from amongst themselves which represents interests of youth guards, promotes creation of community life and efficiency of teaching activity.

(2) The self-governance body of youth guards has the right to request and obtain information from the Director of the Cadet Force Centre in issues related to interests of youth guards and also the right to put forward suggestions and proposals to the Director of the Cadet Force Centre or the Ministry of Defence.

(3) The composition and activities of the self-governance body of youth guards shall be determined in the by-laws of the self-governance body of youth guards which is approved by the Director of the Cadet Force Centre.

**Section 14. Assistant Non-commissioned Officers of Youth Guards**

(1) A youth guard, who is at least 16 years old and, while being involved in the interest education programme for youth guards, has reached the level of preparedness determined by the Director of the Cadet Force Centre, as an assistant non-commissioned officer of youth guards may provide support to the implementation of the interest education programme in the National Guard or to the implementation of the national defence training under authority and supervision of a non-commissioned officer of youth guards.

(2) If a youth guard acts as an assistant non-commissioned officer of youth guards, he or she may work in the Youth Guard until acquisition of secondary education or until the moment he or she has reached the age of 21 years, whichever comes first.

**Section 15. Duties of Youth Guards**

Youth guards shall have the following duties:

1) participate in classes and activities according to the interest education programme for youth guards;

2) treat the issued uniform and inventory with care, maintain them in order, comply with the procedures for wearing the uniform, including not to wear the uniform or elements thereof outside classes and activities of the Youth Guard without coordination thereof with a non-commissioned officer of youth guards;

3) follow the standards and code of conduct of youth guards;

4) follow safety rules.

**Section 16. Admission to the Youth Guard**

(1) Children from the age of 10 years who acquire primary education and young people who have acquired primary education may be admitted to the Youth Guard.

(2) A person who can pose a threat to his or her life, health, or safety or life, health, or safety of other persons during classes and events of the Youth Guard or whose membership is not possible for other objective and unavoidable reasons may not be admitted to the Youth Guard. The Director of the Cadet Force Centre or an authorised person thereof may take the decision to refuse admission to the Youth Guard.

(3) A child or a young person shall become a youth guard after entering into a contract for membership in the Youth Guard and giving an oath of a youth guard. The contract for membership in the Youth Guard shall be entered into with a legal representative of a minor child or young person, or a young person himself or herself if he or she has reached the legal age. The Director of the Cadet Force Centre shall determine the content and term of the contract, and also lay down the procedures for the extension of the term.

(4) The Director of the Cadet Force Centre shall lay down the procedures for admission to the Youth Guard.

(5) Youth guards shall give the following oath:

“I, a youth guard of the Republic of Latvia, solemnly swear to spare no effort and mind for creating a better life for the sake of Latvia and its people. I swear to fulfil duties of a youth guard conscientiously.”

**Section 17. Termination of the Contract for Membership in the Youth Guard**

(1) The contract for membership in the Youth Guard may be terminated early at any time by agreement of the parties.

(2) The contract may be terminated unilaterally by a youth guard who has reached the legal age or a lawful representative of a youth guard by informing a non-commissioned officer of youth guards thereof.

(3) The contract for membership in the Youth Guard shall be terminated if a youth guard has reached the age of 21 years, started to acquire secondary education (except for the case where a youth guard acts as an assistant non-commissioned officer of youth guards), commenced service in the National Armed Forces or the National Guard, or a national guard cannot participate in classes and activities of the Youth Guard for objective and unavoidable reasons.

(4) The contract for membership in the Youth Guard shall be terminated early by the Cadet Force Centre if a youth guard:

1) has failed to attend classes and activities of the Youth Guard for more than three months without due cause;

2) poses or may pose a threat to his or her life, health, or safety, or life, health, or safety of other persons;

3) fails to perform any other duties of youth guards specified in this Law.

**Section 18. Uniforms and Inventory**

(1) The Director of the Cadet Force Centre shall determine the uniform of a youth guard and an employee of the Cadet Force Centre, the identifying insignia of the Youth Guard, and the procedures for use thereof. The uniform of a youth guard and an employee of the Cadet Force Centre may be made of the fabric the pattern of which is identical to that of the uniform of a soldier.

(2) The Cadet Force Centre shall issue the uniform, the identifying insignia of the Youth Guard, and the inventory.

(3) The Director of the Cadet Force Centre shall determine the inventory to be issued to a youth guard, an employee of the Cadet Force Centre, and a soldier transferred to the Cadet Force Centre and lay down the procedures for issuing thereof.

**Section 19. Safety in Classes and Activities of the Youth Guard**

The Cabinet shall lay down the procedures for ensuring safety in classes and activities of the Youth Guard.

**Section 20. Health Care of Youth Guards**

Youth guards have the right to receive paid health care. The Cabinet shall determine the types, amount of paid health care services, conditions for receipt, and the procedures for the payment thereof.

**Transitional Provisions**

1. Section 6, Paragraph two, Clause 4 and Section 12, Paragraph two, Clauses 1 and 4 of this Law shall enter into force on 1 September2022. Persons who perform the duties of non-commissioned officers of youth guards until 1 September 2022 but are not professional service soldiers, national guardsmen, or reserve soldiers are entitled to continue performing the duties of non-commissioned officers of youth guards not longer than until 1 September 2027.

2. Section 4, Paragraph one of this Law shall come into force on 1 September 2024. Until 31 August 2024 the national defence training in the secondary education programme shall be implemented as a specialised course in the field of health, safety and physical activity training.

3. The Cabinet shall issue the regulations referred to in Section 5, Paragraphs one and four, and also Sections 19 and 20 of this Law by 28 February 2021.

4. Section 17, Paragraph three of this Law shall come into force on 1 September 2024.

The Law has been adopted by the *Saeima* on 3 December 2020.

President E. Levits

Rīga, 22 December 2020