

UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA  
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LIFELONG LEARNING FOR TEACHERS OF ENGLISH IN LATVIA AS A  
PREREQUISITE OF CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN  
THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN UNION

MŪŽIZGLĪTĪBA ANĢĻU VALODAS SKOLOTĀJIEM LATVIJĀ KĀ  
PRIEKŠNOTEIKUMS PASTĀVĪGAI PROFESIONĀLAI ATTĪSTĪBAI  
EIROPAS SAVIENĪBAS KONTEKSTĀ

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## DECLARATION OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

I declare that this study is my own and does not contain any unacknowledged work from any source.

Barbara Medniece

30 November, 2008

## **ABSTRACT**

The author of the Diploma Paper has chosen the theme which meets the subject of interest of the contemporary language teacher in Latvia, a citizen of the European Union (EU). Because of the fact that Europe is the area where the English language is being used most of all, irrespective of the subject of the communication, the author considers the teacher of English in particular.

A teacher today faces increasingly many changes in educational sphere due to the EU common goal to set the unified European educational area. In order to enforce this process efficiently, there are considerable improvements in the education system introduced, what prescribe the acquisition of the new knowledge and skills for the EU citizens to successfully take part in the social environment. The teacher as an educator should be aware of the ongoing processes and innovations not only within the subject he/she is an expert, but also of the surrounding spheres to be able to operate with different kinds and forms of information and process it appropriately. Therefore the strategy of Lifelong Learning (LL) had been introduced some years ago in order to carry out the processes of continuous learning throughout the lifetime. According to the aspects mentioned, the aim of the Diploma Paper is to study the implementation of the current EU strategy of LL and how it enhances the English language (EL) teacher's professional development in the current situation of Latvia.

In order to acknowledge the aim of the Diploma Paper, a survey was carried out as the method of research. The data was collected using the questionnaire, which had been distributed to the EL teachers in general education institutions in different regions in Latvia.

It was found that the major part of the EL teachers have studied in different types of continuing teacher training courses in order to broaden their professional competence. It has been facilitated mostly by the schools teachers work at, by providing them the corresponding information, though it has been also the initiative of the teachers themselves. The significant point to be highlighted is that most of them consider themselves lifelong learners, associating it closely with the process of their own professional development.

The author had come to a conclusion that educational institutions should be aware of the ongoing LL processes and lay the foundations for its successful implementation into the agenda, what, thereby, implies also the continuous cooperation between the teacher and the educational institution. That is an invaluable yet indispensable initiative to arouse teachers' sense of lifelong learners starting already from the period of teachers' initial training.

## ANOTĀCIJA

Diplomdarba autore ir izvēlējusies tēmu, kas skar mūsdienu valodu skolotāja Latvijā, Eiropas Savienības (ES) pilsoņa, intereses. Saistībā ar to, ka Eiropa ir telpa, kurā neskatoties uz saziņas priekšmetu, angļu valoda tiek lietota visvairāk, autore aplūko tieši angļu valodas skolotāju.

Šobrīd skolotājs saskaras ar pārmaiņām izglītības jomā aizvien vairāk, sakarā ar kopējo ES mērķi izveidot vienotu Eiropas izglītības telpu. Lai efektīvi īstenotu šo norisi, izglītības sistēmā tiek ieviestas ievērojamas izmaiņas, kuras paredz jaunu zināšanu un prasmju apguvi visiem ES pilsoņiem, lai tie veiksmīgi iekļautos sociālajā vidē. Skolotājam kā izglītotājam vajadzētu apzināt notiekošos procesus un jauninājumus ne tikai tajā priekšmetā, kurā viņš ir speciālists, bet arī apkārtējās jomās, lai spētu rīkoties ar dažāda veida un formas informāciju un to piemēroti apstrādāt. Tādēļ jau vairākus gadus atpakaļ tika ieviesta Mūžizglītības stratēģija, lai īstenotu tālākizglītības mūža garumā pasākumus. Atsaucoties uz minētajiem aspektiem, Diplomdarba mērķis ir izpētīt šī brīža ES Mūžizglītības stratēģijas ieviešanu un kā tā vairo angļu valodas skolotāja Latvijā profesionālo attīstību šobrīd. Lai apliecinātu Diplomdarba mērķi, kā pētījuma metode tika veikta aptauja. Informācija tika apkopota pielietojot aptaujas lapu skolotājiem, kura tika izdalīta angļu valodas skolotājiem dažādās vispārējās mācību iestādēs dažādos Latvijas rajonos.

Tika atklāts, ka lielākā daļa angļu valodas skolotāju ir mācījušies dažāda veida skolotāju tālākizglītības kursus, lai paplašinātu savu profesionālo pieredzi. To pārsvarā ir sekmējušas skolas, kurās skolotāji strādā, nodrošinot viņus ar atbilstošu informāciju, tomēr tā ir bijusi arī skolotāju pašu iniciatīva. Izceļot svarīgu iezīmi, jāpiemin, ka vairākums skolotāju uzskata sevi par cilvēkiem, kuri mācās mūža garumā, cieši sasaistot to ar pašu profesionālās attīstības procesu.

Autore ir secinājusi, ka izglītības iestādēm būtu jāapzina šobrīd notiekošie Mūžizglītības pasākumi un jāliek pamats to veiksmīgai īstenošanai ikdienā, kas tādējādi ietver sevī arī nepārtrauktu sadarbību starp skolotāju un izglītības iestādi. Rosināt skolotājos apziņu, ka nepieciešams mācīties mūža garumā, sākot jau skolotāju sākotnējās izglītības posmā, ir nenovērtējama un arī nepieciešama izglītības iestāžu iniciatīva.

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## INTRODUCTION

Today, due to the globalisation, not only the common European economic, but also the education area is facing considerable changes. The changes or improvements are being constantly updated, mainly supplemented by new points according to the increasing demands in the education field, attempting to create and maintain the knowledge-based society, a term introduced by the EC. To achieve this goal the contribution of the teacher is crucial. Teacher, though still having viewed stereotypically in some European countries and is often undervalued, is considered a very significant person in learners life. In fact, he is the one who should guide the learner, regardless of the age group, through the process of self awareness and knowledge acquisition.

Figel (2008) Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth points out that education and training are crucial for the future of the European Union. Better knowledge and skills are factors for personal and societal development, employability, social cohesion, cultural awareness and civic maturity. High quality and accessible education is essential for all citizens - entrepreneurs, workers, researchers, i.e. all those who are able to contribute to the European knowledge society

([http://ec.europa.eu/commission\\_barroso/figel/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_barroso/figel/index_en.htm)).

The amount and diversity of the information for a citizen of the EU to be aware of increases. The current situation in the European educational field requires new competencies and skills to be obtained. The teacher, as an educator faces it foremost and therefore has to update his own knowledge and skills in order to transfer this information further to the learners. It means he or she learns continuously, constantly renewing his competencies and acquiring the additional information to the one he already possess, thus enhancing his professional development. The strategy of Lifelong Learning (LL) was introduced and carried out in the EU with the aim to enforce the acquisition of knowledge of citizens of the EU continuously, throughout the lifetime.

The importance of LL has increased - both in Latvia and the European Union requirements for LL and improvement of professional qualifications have been put forward. LL is considered one of the cornerstones of the EU Member States in the area of development of human resources. The European Commission points out its mission, stating

that to reinforce and promote lifelong learning, linguistic and cultural diversity, mobility and the engagement of European citizens, in particular the young.

Taking into account all the opinions and facts mentioned, the author of this Diploma Paper considers the issue topical nowadays. Therefore the theme of the Diploma Paper “Lifelong Learning for Teachers of English in Latvia as a measure of continuous professional development in the context of European Union” is introduced.

The author of the Diploma Paper would like to give an explanatory basis regarding the particular choice of an English language teacher has introduced in the Diploma Paper and in research. English is one of the two languages (including French) regarded and used as an official operational language of the governing bodies of the EU. English is officially regarded as the European *lingua franca* due to its widespread usage in practically all EU economical, political and social spheres. It is also most used in business correspondence, tourist industry, student and educational institutions’ intercommunication. Most student exchange and teacher education programmes, international conferences, seminars are developed and being conducted in English (though the translations mostly in French and German is also provided).

The aspects, formulated above, leads to aim of the Diploma Paper, which has to be achieved. **The aim of the Diploma paper** is to study the implementation of the current EU strategies of Lifelong Learning and how it enhances the EL teacher’s professional development in the current situation of Latvia.

The following enabling **objectives** are set out to reach the aim

- To study literature regarding teacher pre-service (initial) and in-service education, as well as the current reforms introduced by the governing bodies of European Commission (EU);
- To study literature and other information sources about the strategy of Lifelong Learning and the current guidelines and innovations concerned;
- To highlight the teacher training possibilities for EL teachers offered by the European Commission (EC) and training providers in Latvia;
- To design a questionnaire for English language (EL) teachers in order to find out the ways they acquire and implement the new knowledge obtained in teacher (re)qualification training (in-formal/formal) training, thus applying the strategies of LL in order to enhance their professional development.

The **research questions** of the Diploma Paper are:

- What the current situation in pre-service and in-service teacher education is;
- What the concept of professional development of the teacher means and what it prescribes;
- What the concept of Lifelong Learning means;
- What the latest guidelines and innovations in LL are;
- What the EL teacher training possibilities offered by the EU and Latvian training providers are.

The **hypothesis of the Diploma Paper** is:

The implementation of the current and ongoing EU strategies of Lifelong learning enhances the professional and personal development of the EL teachers.

The chosen **Research method** is the following:

The **Survey** has been used. The research has been carried out with EL teachers in different general education schools in Riga and other regions of Latvia.

The **Data collecting** technique is a **Questionnaire** – to collect the views and shared experiences of EL teachers in order to find out the ways they acquire and implement the new knowledge obtained in teacher (re)qualification training (in-formal/formal) training, thus applying the strategies of LL in order to enhance their professional development;

The **outline** of the chapters:

Chapter 1 – deals with the current EL teacher training in Latvia, provides an explanation of the concept “professional development” and introduces the requirements for the teacher Professional development.

Chapter 2 – deals with the concept of Lifelong Learning as such and with the current LL guidelines and innovations as well as provides the insight into the EL teacher training possibilities offered by the EU and Latvian training providers.

Chapter 3 – describes the survey carried out in different general education institutions and presents the results of the research.

There is a list of abbreviations attached in order to clarify the introduced terms and organizations.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>APA</b>	- Academic Programme Agency;
<b>CEFR</b>	- Common European Framework of Reference for Language;
<b>CELTA</b>	- Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults;
<b>CPD</b>	- Continuous professional development;
<b>ELP</b>	- English language portfolio;
<b>ELT</b>	- English language teacher;
<b>EHEA</b>	- European Higher Education Area;
<b>ECTS</b>	- European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System;
<b>EC</b>	- European Commission;
<b>ECML</b>	- The European Centre for Modern Languages;
<b>EFTA</b>	- European Free Trade Association) countries which are members of the European Economic Area;
<b>EEA</b>	- European Economic Area;
<b>ELP</b>	- English language portfolio;
<b>EU</b>	- European Union;
<b>Eurydice</b>	- The information network on education in Europe;
<b>EQF</b>	- European Qualifications Framework;
<b>DG EAC</b>	- Directorate General of the Education and Culture;
<b>FEP</b>	- Faculty of Education and Psychology;
<b>ICT</b>	- Information and communication technologies;
<b>ILS</b>	- International Language Services;
<b>ISCED</b>	- International Standard Classification of Education;

- LAEA** - Latvian Adult Education Association;
- LL** - Lifelong Learning;
- MES** - Ministry of Education and Science;
- PD** - Professional development;
- TESOL** - Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages;
- TOEFL** - Test of English as a Foreign Language;
- TT** - Teacher training.

# 1. ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER IN LATVIA IN EUROPEAN CONTEXT

The theme of the Diploma Paper (DP) deals with the education and, in particular, the current changes influencing it. The changes in the education field are being developed constantly within the common European area, and attribute to the teacher as a educator and representative of the educational institution. This chapter therefore explores the status of the EL teacher in the context of EU, implying the stages from the initial or pre-service teacher training till the aspects of professional development of the teacher.

Amongst the direct professional duties and functions of a teacher, skills and knowledge regarding teaching process, the teacher profession standard, qualified by the governmental body “Administration of Professional Education”, prescribes the “special requirements for the performance of the functions”, which encompass the higher education of teacher profession, and the readiness to continuously acquire knowledge according to the latest conclusions in the sphere of psychology and educational theory and to the topicalities of the profession in the unified European education area ([www.izmpic.lv](http://www.izmpic.lv)).

The author has already introduced the choice of the English language teacher (EL) teacher, explaining it by the language, which has been taught most of all in Europe. Thus the EL teacher represents the features, expectations, functions and requirements common for English, as well as to other foreign languages. Languages are one of the key features of cultural identity. The European Union's current motto "Unity in diversity" is a reflection of the multilingualism which lies at the heart of the EU ([http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/index_en.htm)).

Multilingual citizens are better equipped to take advantage of the educational opportunities created by an integrated Europe. The EU's language policy promotes multilingualism and aims for a situation in which every EU citizen can speak at least two foreign languages in addition to their mother tongue. ([http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/eu-language-policy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/eu-language-policy/index_en.htm)).

The European Council (EC) as an executive power of the EU develops this policy continuously and recently there were New Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers

to its member states on *The use of the Council of Europe's "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages" (CEFR) and the promotion of plurilingualism* introduced ([http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/default\\_EN.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/default_EN.asp)). The author of the DP clarifies it is a reference tool for the development and implementation of coherent and transparent language education policies in Europe.

The teacher, a central representative of the educational area, faces significant changes today due to the globalisation, having an effect on the education systems within Europe. Kopelovicha and Zhukovs (2004) admits that the higher education in Latvia today attempts to adjust itself to the guidelines of the Bologna Declaration. The author of the Diploma Paper, thereby, wishes to introduce the process of the Bologna Declaration, by highlighting the main principles set.

The premises of the Declaration are to be found in the Declaration of Paris-la Sorbonne, may be regarded both as the product and continuation of a series of European conferences and a certain number of policy decisions aimed at establishing a European Higher Area by 2010. *The Bologna Process Commitments to Institute a European Higher Education Area by 2010* (EHEA). The nine principles of the Bologna Declaration has set are the following;

- Facilitating the readability and comparability of qualifications;
- Implementing a system based essentially on two main cycles;
- Establishing a system of credits, such as ECTS;
- Developing arrangements to support the mobility of students, teachers and researchers;
- Promoting European cooperation in quality assurance;
- Promoting the European dimension in higher education (in terms of curricular development and inter – institutional cooperation);
- Lifelong Learning;
- The involvement of the higher education institutions and students as active partners;
- The need to enhance the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area.

The last three specific points were added by the Prague Conference in 2001 (Focus on the Structure of Higher Education in Europe 2003/04. national Trends in the Bologna process).

In the European context of educational matters, local faculty members also take part in the discussion of the status of the teacher profession in Latvia, requiring continuous learning and development. Kopelovicha and Zhukovs (2004) point out that today teacher's consideration only of the learner's knowledge and skills is not enough. They believe that the teacher has to have deep knowledge in psychology, and that the success can be achieved only by close connection between the psychology and pedagogy. Unfortunately, as they remark, the next teacher is not ready to discuss about the dynamics of the learner's development; he or she mainly relies on his or her experience and intuition.

Rasmussen (2008), Danish professor of Educational Sociology, also admits that the efficient and professional teacher must possess the right combination of professional and subject didactic knowledge. And this combination is best achieved by way of a *research-based teacher training* (Rasmussen 2008:11). The research he has studied suggests that the professional knowledge will only be a real advantage when it is combined with pedagogic and subject didactic knowledge and competencies.

Tūna (2006) also considers that the teachers profession is linked with constant learning, self development. She introduces the concept *the New teacher* as being the one, who operates in this new situation together with constantly new pupils or students, and therefore revives himself all the time; besides he or she is maintaining the optimism and belief his own ability to make a learner's life better and fulfilled (Tūna 2006). The author of the Diploma Paper believes the concept *the New teacher* can be paraphrased to a good teacher, as people usually call it. A good teacher is a very general denomination, though it contains the full range of characteristics, mentioned above.

After making an elaborated research work lately, Moore (2004) identifies his image of a good teacher. He points he or she is a competent craftsman, currently favoured by central governments and the reflective practitioner, which continues to get widespread support among teacher trainers and educators.

The role of the teacher functioning in the common EU educational area is considered a very crucial one and regarding the aspect of the prestige of the teacher's profession has currently been much discussed. The newspaper concerning educational field "Izglītība un Kultūra" lately reports that unfortunately there are very few newly qualified educators applying for the work at school. The number of them has recently decreased, proportionally

increasing the teachers of the age 60 and more, concluding in the average teachers' age of 40 up to 59.

From the Author's of the DP point of view, that is an indicator not of the low prestige of the teacher (irrespectively of the specialization of a teacher) status as such, but of the current salary system, what has been put forward as one of the greatest problem area. The other reason, from the author's mind, is the fact, the common educational goals set by EC are achievable only when their objectives will be successfully implemented into the national schooling starting from the primary education level, thus enabling the appropriate orientation of the moral values into the awareness of a pupil, a prospective student, a life long student.

To improve this protracted situation, the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) has elaborated the draft law "The Amendment of the Education Law" in order to raise the image and role of the teacher in the educational institutions. The rights of the teacher defined by the Education Law has been expanded, defining the rights to take part in the completion of the educational process, as well as the rights to receive not only the financial support, but also the provision of the information (<http://izm.izm.gov.lv/aktualitates/jaunumi/2897.html>).

## **1.1 THE CURRENT EL TEACHER TRAINING IN LATVIA**

Before passing onto the description of the teacher training, the author of the Diploma Paper offers to introduce the reader with the system of higher education in Latvia in the context of the EU. As the data provided by the Ministry of Education and Science shows, the system of higher education in Latvia is binary since the Law on Education Establishments sets a difference between academic and professional higher education but it is not strictly institutionalised. Universities and other institutions of higher education mostly run both academic and professional programmes.

In Latvia, the transition to a two-cycle higher education system consisting of undergraduate and postgraduate studies is ongoing in order to implement the provisions of the Bologna declaration and to make acquisition of higher education more effective, comparable and competitive. The two cycle model, "3+2", corresponds to three years of bachelor and two years of master studies. There are already a significant number of higher

education institutions providing bachelor programmes of three years duration. It promotes faster joining in labour market, more intensive studies, lower expenses and better comparability of acquired degrees (<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/Eurydice/EuryPage?country=LV&lang=EN&fragment=132>).

The comparability of acquired degrees has its legal basis within EU as well. In other words, the recognition of educational qualifications within EHEA is also one of the priorities in the agenda of the educational institutions of Europe. As the EC points out, it is the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), which the Commission formally published as a Staff Working Document on 8 July 2005. The objective of the EQF is to facilitate the transfer and recognition of qualifications held by individual citizens, by linking qualifications systems at the national and sectoral levels and enabling them to relate to each other. The EQF will therefore be one of the principal European mechanisms intended to facilitate citizen mobility for work and study, alongside for example, Erasmus, the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) and Europass ([http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/et\\_2010\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/et_2010_en.html)).

The official report, issued by EC informs that the *National Education development Plan* adopted in 2002 in Latvia states that the education system provides an opportunity for members of society to educate themselves on a lifelong basis, upgrading their qualifications or obtaining new qualifications that correspond to the demands of the labour market. The Plan further states that the system of professional and academic degrees should be consistent with arrangements elsewhere in the European area of learning, in order to promote latvian student mobility in Europe and attract foreign students to Latvia (Focus on the Structure of Higher Education in Europe 2003/04 national Trends in the Bologna process; 64).

To enact the real citizen mobility throughout the Europe, the other key objective is to foster the students' sense of citizenship of the Europe. However, as the Key Data on Higher Education in Europe 2007 reports, internationally mobile students are still relatively few in number and are largely at doctoral level (ISCED 6). The Data admits that student mobility is not unconnected to the distribution of financial assistance awarded by different countries for its support (Key Data on Higher Education in Europe, 2007).

### 1.1.1 PRE-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING

European Commission official web page on education in Europe denotes that the initial training of teachers of a foreign language is the responsibility of Member States, which have an essential role to play in ensuring that all teachers of a foreign language have appropriate initial training, including practical training in the pedagogy of foreign languages, and experience of living in the country whose language they are going to teach

([http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/language-teaching/doc56\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/language-teaching/doc56_en.htm)).

The education of a language teacher can be obtained in several educational institutions in Riga and some other major towns in Latvia, such as Rezekne, Daugavpils and Liepaja. The major higher educational institution, Faculty of Education and Psychology (FEP), University of Latvia provides the teacher education programmes in different spheres, including German and English languages. The aim of the educational programme "Professional Bachelor's degree in education and the qualification of English language teacher" is the teacher training for English language teaching ([www.ppf.lu.lv](http://www.ppf.lu.lv)).

As it was mentioned previously, since the signing of the Bologna Declaration in 1999, there were initiated structural reforms within the higher education sector. These reforms also call for new approaches to teaching and learning. One such approach is the student-centred or learner-centred approach, which is perceived by many as a new paradigm in higher education. This approach aims at empowering students to achieve the organisational and educational objectives of the EHEA based on a deeper reflection on their needs and developmental processes. Rott (2008) also clarifies that the main elements of the learner-centred approach are student's active involvement in the learning process and broader choice in what and how one learns (C 3.8-2, p.13; 31) He further admits that in today's most advanced concepts of higher education, the student role is perceived as being actively and explicitly engaged in personal development of the self in relationship to social and knowledge contexts (Rott in print, p.11) (C 3.8-2, p.2; 31).

As it was mentioned in the previous chapter, the European Commission has invited Member States, through several Action Plans on mobility in education, to increase teacher mobility in general. Thus the EU recommends that teachers spend time abroad as part of their initial teacher training, as well as regularly during their teaching careers. Stays abroad and

exchanges can provide valuable experience, motivation and continuing professional development ([http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/language-teaching/doc60\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/language-teaching/doc60_en.htm)).

General Directorate of Education and Culture (DG EAC) remarks that student mobility is expected to make a major contribution to developing the EHEA. Mobility also depends on support for its growth, not least of all the financial assistance offered to students by education systems (Key Data on Higher Education in Europe 2007).

The mobility of students are offered to be enacted by the taking the advantage to obtain the assistantship. The assistantships of the EU's Comenius programme for school education have the objective of giving assistants, who will be future teachers, the opportunity to enhance their knowledge of other European languages, countries and education systems, as well as to improve their teaching skills. The assistantship gives the assistants, who will be future teachers, the opportunity to enhance their knowledge of other European languages, countries and education systems, as well as to improve their teaching skills. It improves the language skills of the pupils at the host school and increase both their motivation to learn languages and their interest in the assistant's country and culture. Assistants receive a grant to help cover mobility costs resulting from the assistantship. This includes travel and a monthly contribution towards subsistence costs

([http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/comenius/activities/mobility\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/comenius/activities/mobility_en.html)).

In Latvia, during the Year 2006 18 students from teacher education department English/German programme have received foreign language assistantships within Socrates Comenius 2 programme framework. The future teachers of foreign languages practice in different European countries, teaching English or German in Norway, Germany, France, Portugal, etc. (<http://www.ppf.lu.lv/v.3>). The author of the Diploma Paper has conversed with the student, having practised in France. She had learned French as well. In addition to her mother tongue, she speaks in three languages, what corresponds the image of the preferred multilingual student, a citizen of the EU. She admitted it was undeniably valuable experience for both her professional and personal development as the future teacher. The author is convinced this case is a very demonstrative example to assure that the sense of professional development a pre-service student can obtain, is the one to be initiated and cultivated in initial teacher training stage in order to train teachers in conformity with the principles of the Bologna Declaration.

Campbell et.al. (2004) have drawn a conclusion, noting that the dichotomy between initial teacher training and the continuing professional development of teachers is gradually being eroded, as systems start to incorporate training that is coherent and developmental across each phase of a professional career.”Initial teacher training, whatever its formal regulations, is fundamentally about the development of teacher effectiveness” (Campbell et.al. 2004: 141).

### **1.1.2 IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING**

In-service training is considered a part of adult education, the term which includes also all types of formal, non-formal and informal education including further and interest education, professional upgrading. It is provided to satisfy needs in lifelong education process to support personal development and competitiveness in the labour market regardless of person’s age and previous education (<http://izm.izm.gov.lv/education/education-system.html>). The author would like to paraphrase, saying that in-service teacher education is teacher training that occurs after a teacher is certified and employed.

The information network on education in Europe (Eurydice) reports that in-service training is compulsory in Latvia for teachers (including school heads and their deputies) at all education levels, though the results do not reflect in teacher salaries. The aims of in-service training are to ensure the necessary teacher qualification, to conform to the necessities of society and to promote the growth of pedagogues as creative personalities. Training may be provided by education institutions, institutions or enterprises belonging to the state or municipalities, non-governmental institutions or private providers. In-service training is usually organized during the working time

(<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/Eurydice/EuryPage?country=LV□=EN&fragment=187>).

In in-service training field, as the Commission states, Member States have a crucial role to play in ensuring that all teachers of a foreign language have regular paid access to in-service training. Although teachers play a critical role in society, they cannot act alone. Their own high quality education needs to be supported by the institutions where they are

employed, within the context of coherent national or regional policies that are appropriately resourced ([http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles_en.pdf)).

The European Commission declares that professionals in any sector need to keep up-to-date and motivated. Language teachers need regular opportunities to keep their language and teaching skills up to date, *inter alia* via e-learning and distance learning. Even the chance to reflect on practice and discuss situations with teachers working in a different context is valuable and can lead to professional development. They name some following areas for in-service training in language teaching, such as up-date teaching skills and classroom practice; familiarity with new technologies (e.g. e-learning, distance learning, interactive whiteboards; development of reflective practice and action research skills, management skills, etc. ([http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/language-teaching/doc58\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/language-teaching/doc58_en.htm)).

Furthermore, in the *Common Principles for Teacher* issued by DG EAC, European Commission, emphasize the importance of the teacher profession placed within the context of lifelong learning. It includes education, training, retraining, updating in schools and in public and private institutions ([http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles_en.pdf)). The author of the DP remarks the concept of the Lifelong Learning will be examined in greater detail in the Chapter 2.

According to the Common Principles, mobility should be a central component also of initial and continuing teacher education programmes. Teachers should be encouraged to participate in European projects and spend time working or studying in other European countries for professional development purposes. These EC recommendations are aimed to support policy makers at a national or regional level by setting out common European principles for teacher competences and qualifications

([http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles_en.pdf)).

Nevertheless, the EU is aware that foreign language teachers can face personal, financial or institutional obstacles to taking part in mobility programmes. It has recently commissioned an in-depth study into this issue - *Detecting and removing obstacles to the mobility of foreign language teachers* and is committed to encouraging measures to reduce these obstacles ([http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/language-teaching/doc60\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/language-teaching/doc60_en.htm)).

The author of the DP has been inquiring a certain part of EL teachers to find out would they leave to other EU country for some period of time to practice. The major part answered they would go abroad only if they could bring their families with them. Some

confessed he/she would feel homesick, some other could never leave his or her family (this was the most widespread), others, in its turn, confessed they do not believe it would improve something.

The author can conclude that the educational goals set by the EU regarding in-service teachers directly aims to facilitate the teachers' continuous learning in order to professionally develop themselves.

## **1.2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF ELT**

Taking into account previously mentioned educational reforms carried out (introduced and gradually applied), there inevitably an aspect of teacher's professionalism emerges. It is an aspect of professional development (PD) of the teacher. The concept of PD can often be added a word continuous, what denotes to the continuity of this process. For the reason of the keeping teachers up to date with the skills required in the knowledge based society throughout their careers, PD has to be enhanced throughout their careers.

The specialized web page on the issues of Continuing professional development (CPD) defines the process is a combination of approaches, ideas and techniques that will help teachers manage their own learning and growth. The focus of CPD is firmly on results – the benefits that professional development can bring you in the real world (<http://www.cipd.co.uk/cpd/aboutcpd/whatiscpd.htm>). The Author of the Diploma Paper would like to accentuate the contiguity of the concept continuing professional development and continuing teacher training, concluding it in a interrelated concept, which is one of the key concepts of the Diploma Paper, and is chained with the meaning of Lifelong Learning.

Earley and Bubb (2004) provides the following explanation that CPD is an ongoing process building upon initial teacher training and induction, including development and training opportunities throughout a career and concluding with preparation for retirement.

Holmes (2005) instead remarks it is not about competitiveness in the workplace, and it is not only reliant on quantifiable information. It requires the co-operation between colleagues and the recognition of qualitative experience. In its broader sense, CPD is an enhancement of professional and pedagogic practice throughout the duration of a teacher's career (Holmes 2005).

Gray (2005) admits people often think of professional development as referring to courses, yet the range of on-the-job, off-the-job, and close-to-the-job professional development opportunities is huge. He considers that guilt at being away from the classroom, a lack of information about course quality and funding shortages are stopping many teachers from updating their subject knowledge and skills in the job (Gray 2005). The author of the DP agrees to this statement, as she has acknowledged it from the conversations with a few teachers.

There have been uncertainties expressed and discussions occurred concerning the differences between professional and personal development. Holmes (2005) emphasizes that it is impossible to distinguish between professional and personal development – the two are inextricably intertwined. She continues saying that in a profession such as teaching there is no option to stagnate (Holmes 2005). The author of the DP agrees and believes that continuous learning and acquisition of the new knowledge develops one's personality as well.

Having a team of teachers who are committed to professional and personal development can greatly influence learning, increase staff morale and draw all elements of the school together in a common purpose (Holmes 2005: 133). The Author of the Diploma Paper thinks it is a statement which is to be implemented in the global changes in the schools' system; a statement, which is in a way the ideal model from the point of view of personal development.

The author wishes to pay attention to another aspect of teachers' professional development much discussed - the significance of the teacher educators in young, newly qualified teacher career development. At the same time a great amount of discussion has been devoted to the professional development of the teacher educators or mentors themselves.

Eric Parsloe (2006) from The Oxford School of Coaching & Mentoring defines the mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be. Mentoring is a powerful personal development and empowerment tool. It is an effective way of helping people to progress in their careers and is becoming increasingly popular as its potential is realised. It is a partnership between two people

(mentor and mentee) normally working in a similar field or sharing similar experiences (Parsloe 2006).

Bubb (2005) also adds: “In-house professional development – networking among teachers, mentoring and coaching within the same school or group of schools – is highly effective, particularly when it is well managed and purposefully organized within a climate of openness and mutual support” (Bubb 2005: 24).

In addition to many previously listed different dimensions of teacher’s quality and efficacy, there has to be a very significant feature mentioned. Long et.al. (2002) remark:” Quality teachers are lifelong learners. All master teachers, without exception, have a burning desire to impart knowledge to their children. To these teachers, knowledge not shared with others, is inert, meaningless (Long et.al. 2002:131). To take part in the common education area a teacher’s knowledge and skills should be consistent with requirements it puts forward. The author, thereby introduces some points in the next sub-chapter, guidelines for a teacher.

### **1.2.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR EL TEACHER’S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE EU CONTEXT**

Education for a knowledge-based society is a challenge for educators, education providers, and governing bodies as it faces new requirements. The teacher is the one whom the requirements are therefore attributing to most of all. The EC denotes that teachers should be equipped to respond to the evolving challenges of the knowledge society, participate actively in it and prepare learners to be autonomous lifelong learners.

Thus, the requirements for teachers’ social competencies, e.g. classroom leadership, increase, partly result of the increasing social and cultural challenges in the educational institutions. Teachers also have a key role in preparing learners for their role as EU citizens. As such, they need to be able to recognise and respect different cultures. Priority should, therefore, be given to the development of mutual trust and recognition of the competences and qualifications of teachers between member states ([http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles_en.pdf)).

The author of the DP has already mentioned the Common European Principles, issued by DG EAC this year. As to the issue of requirements for the teacher’s professional

development, the Common Principles concern it in a great extent as well. The guiding Principles recommended it should be a well-qualified profession; a profession placed within the context of lifelong learning; a mobile profession and a profession based on partnerships.

The Principles stress also that teachers should be able to work with others; work with knowledge, technology and information and to work with and in society ([http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles_en.pdf)).

Kelly et.al. (2002) in the report devised to DG EAC points out some essential premises saying that European Qualified Language Teacher Status should be introduced, qualifying its holders to teach in any member state, and use the title 'European Language Teacher'.

- Teacher trainees should be required to achieve agreed levels of linguistic competence corresponding to their specialist, semi-specialist or non-specialist teacher status.
- European Language Mentor status should be introduced to recognise key individuals involved in training;
- Teacher trainees should gain experience of teaching in more than one country;
- Teacher trainees should be able to compile their qualifications by taking different units in different countries;
- Specialist language teachers should be trained to teach more than one language;
- Language teachers should be trained in the skills and approaches necessary to make students aware of their role as European citizens, and more training materials should be developed to support this training;
- All teachers should be trained in using ICT approaches for interactive use with pupils in the classroom (Kelly et.al. 2002).

As the EC indicates in a report, teachers themselves in general are responsible for acquiring the necessary in-service training. A general education teacher in Latvia has a duty of further education of at least 36 programme hours in three years. Besides, teacher has the right to use 30 calendar days during a 3-year period for professional development, including improvement of competences

(<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/Eurydice/EuryPage?country=LV&lang=EN&fragment=187>).

From particularly the language teaching point of view, there is one more organization, setting the recommendations. The work of language education is coordinated by two

complementary bodies of the Council of Europe, one of which is the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) - a Centre to promote Language education in Europe. (ECML), also remarks one of the priorities of their area of responsibility. Approaches to teaching content through languages, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and bilingual education are increasingly popular across Europe, but teacher training programmes for language teachers with an explicit focus on CLIL remain rare and, for subject teachers, almost non-existent (<http://coordination.ecml.at/Projects/Content/tabid/1479/language/en-GB/Default.aspx>).

Besides that, the Association of teachers of English of Latvia also points to the features of personal development, reminding that the Council of Europe hopes that, in this increased age of mobility, all members of the EU will introduce the English Language Portfolio (ELP), which is designed to provide a record of a child's language experiences, skills, abilities and achievements. They inform that the ELP is a very positive document which highlights what a child can do in a foreign language. It is a very motivating and empowering classroom tool. In Latvia, the development of the ELP has been sponsored by the Agency of Official Language (<http://www.late.dj.lv/?id=4&sid=50>).

Cabinet of Ministers of Republic of Latvia has recently issued a new regulation in compliance with the Education Law – „Regulations on general education and in formal education teachers' professional development”. It has become valid from September 1, 2008. It defines the responsibilities of the teacher, as well as offers to enforce the development by acquiring A and B programmes, provided by educational institutions, registered in the Register of Educational Establishments. After the completion of the courses, the teacher receives a certificate. The programmes are an integral part of the lifelong learning as well. (<http://www.viknva.gov.lv/?go=mod&opt=www&goto=read&cat=199>).

National Agency of General Education Quality Assurance (NAGEQA) in cooperation with the EU, has elaborated new criteria for quality assurance of the teacher performance, which will allow teachers themselves to increase salary individually according to their quality of performance.

The previous chapters explored the status and the training of the teacher in Latvia, in the context of the EU, putting more stress on the English language teacher. The clarification of the teacher's professional development was given as well. To attest it by the official EC issues on the education sphere, the requirements on the professional development of teachers

were pointed out. The author of the DP considers that the process of the professional development means to broaden one's professional competence, what in its turn, means to acquire new knowledge continuously in order to attain one's development. To learn continuously means to meet the principles of Lifelong Learning.

## 2. A STRATEGY OF LIFELONG LEARNING

The name of the chapter indicates to the certain arrangements of the activities or actions of Lifelong Learning (LL). The strategy is the one who comprises these actions. It could be called the European Strategy in order to cooperate in education and training. Therefore, the author wishes to introduce this concept of LL as such and the activities vital to the teacher in order to enhance his or her professional development. There has been previously mentioned the educational reforms prescribing that the education system at the moment provides an opportunity for members of society to educate themselves on a lifelong basis.

The *Basic guidelines of LL policy* defines it is an education process during the whole life of an individual, that is based on changing needs to acquire education, skills, experience in order to increase or change their qualification in accordance with the demands of the labour market and own interests and needs. Lifelong learning comprises informal learning and formal education, develops inborn abilities together with new competences (<http://www.laea.lv/49/view.aspx>).

The website of the EC denotes that LL programme generally is divided in 2 main sectors - schooling, which administers and oversees school issues, e-learning, higher education and language learning, and a sector of transversal measures, which oversees mobility and lifelong learning issues (<http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/s19001.htm>). The author would like to highlight the language learning are one of the most regarded areas to develop as this conforms with the EC policy of multilingualism.

The website also recalls that historically, the Year of "European Year of Lifelong Learning" firstly was proclaimed in 1996. During this year, measures to provide information on, create awareness of and promote lifelong learning were undertaken. The Year had a major political impact at European level by putting lifelong learning centre-stage and by involving new players in a field which until then had been reserved for specialists. At that time, the simultaneous implementation of the programme throughout the European Economic Area gave it added weight. The EU's contribution to the global debate on LL was marked by a broad concept embracing a "cradle to grave" approach which initiates such issues as

personal growth, participation in the democratic decision-making process, recreational learning and active ageing (<http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/cha/c11024.htm>). Taking into the account different sources on the issues about LL, the author has learned the concept of it is not only associated with the professional, but also with the personal growth, what verifies the opinions stated in the chapter 1.2.

In economic terms, the employability and adaptability of citizens is vital for Europe to maintain its commitment to becoming the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based society in the world. The EC remarks that LL is, however, about much more than economics. It also promotes the goals and ambitions of European countries to become more inclusive, tolerant and democratic (A European Area of Lifelong Learning, European Commission, 2002)

The author would like to add the LL addresses greatly to the excluded social groups, the young adults, lacking appropriate education and immigrant and ethnic groups; the continuing adult education, particularly teacher training is only one of the integrated sectors.

## **2.1 THE CURRENT GUIDELINES AND INNOVATIONS OF LIFELONG LEARNING IN EU**

The European Commission and Member States have been working on a number of policy initiatives in the field of education and training since 2000 as part of 'Education & Training 2010' programme, the motto of which is diversified systems, shared goals. Activities also contribute to the Bologna intergovernmental process in the field of higher education ([http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc36\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc36_en.htm)).

There has been a great amount of various official documents and treaties concerning the strategy of Lifelong Learning issued by the EU. As part of the wide-ranging consultation initiated the “Memorandum on Lifelong Learning” worked out by the European Council and signed in Brussels in 2000. In the Communication of the Commission of European Communities “Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a reality” (adopted in Brussels in 2001) and Lisbon European Union Conclusions, it is pointed out that for a successful

transition to a knowledge based economy and society, Lifelong Learning is an important precondition (<http://www.laea.lv/49/view.aspx>).

The European Union (EU) is reaching a significant number of its citizens directly through its education and training programmes. The general objective of the lifelong learning programme is to contribute towards the development of the Community as an advanced knowledge society in accordance with the objectives of the Lisbon strategy (<http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/cha/c11082.htm>).

The EU Commissioner responsible for Education, Training, Culture and Multilingualism, Jan Figel points out: "The way we receive the information and services, changes continuously. To take part in ongoing processes effectively in the world, where the increasing significance is attached to digital technologies, we must acquire new skills and competencies" (Figel 2006).

For the reason of the acquirement of new competences, the European Parliament adopted the recommendation in the Year 2006 on key competencies of lifelong learning. The key competencies provide added value for the labour market, social cohesion and active citizenship by offering flexibility and adaptability, satisfaction and motivation. Because they should be acquired by everyone, this Recommendation proposes a reference tool for the Member States to ensure that these key competences are fully integrated into their strategies and infrastructures, particularly in the context of LL. The Key competences for lifelong learning recommend the following:

- 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 competences;
- sense of initiative and entrepreneurship;
- cultural awareness and expression.

The EC web page explains these competencies are a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the context. They are particularly necessary for personal fulfilment and development, social inclusion, active citizenship and employment. They should be acquired by: young people at the end of their compulsory education and training

equipping them for adult life, particularly for working life, whilst forming a basis for further learning; adults throughout their lives through a process of developing and updating skills (<http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/cha/c11090.htm>). The author considers it especially concerns teachers as the updating their professionalism is a crucial necessity, having been explored in the previous chapters.

In response to the concerns expressed at the Lisbon European Council in 2000, and repeated in the revised Lisbon strategy in 2005, the key competences form part of the objectives of the Education and Training 2010 work programme (<http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/cha/c11090.htm>). The author of the DP remarks that the LL strategy had been incorporated in the education policies and thus different action plans and programmes since it was introduced; the strategy is an integral part of the education system in Europe today.

European Commission official web page denotes it has integrated its various educational and training initiatives under a single umbrella, the Lifelong Learning Programme. With a significant budget of nearly €7 billion for 2007 to 2013, the new programme replaces previous education, vocational training and e-Learning programmes, which ended in 2006. The current programme includes the following actions: dissemination and exploitation plans must be presented by the four sectoral programmes (Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig) and the languages and ICT key activities. The other action plan prescribes the key activity 4 of the Transversal Programme, the 'Dissemination and Exploitation of Results' ([http://ec.europa.eu/education/dissemination-and-exploitation-of-results/doc76\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/dissemination-and-exploitation-of-results/doc76_en.htm)). They also explain that a single Community support programme in the field of education and training is more rational, coherent and effective.

The new LL programme set by the official decision of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006, will promote the transborder mobility of teachers and learners at all levels of education and it will support cooperation between education institutions in various European countries. This action programme comprises the entire path of lifelong learning from school to higher education and vocational training up to and including adult education. The objective of the programme is to develop and foster interchange, cooperation and mobility so that education and training systems become a world

quality reference in accordance with the Lisbon strategy (<http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/cha/c11082.htm>).

The author would like to highlight the main directions of each of the six sub-programmes. The *Comenius* program is addressed to schools. Funding is among other things provided for school partnerships as well as for supporting the mobility of school students and teachers. New teaching methods can, for example, be developed within the framework of European projects. The opportunities to apply to this programme offered by the FEP were already examined previously (see the Chapter 1.1.1).

The *Erasmus* programme addresses formal higher education and vocational education and training at tertiary level, whatever the length of the course or qualification may be and including doctoral studies. Unlike the previous programmes, vocational education and training at tertiary level comes under Erasmus now and not Leonardo da Vinci.

The *Leonardo da Vinci* programme addresses vocational education and training, other than at tertiary level. The *Grundtvig* programme addresses participants in adult education. Funding is among other things provided for the development of courses and innovative teaching and learning methods.

The *Transversal programme* is not a sectoral programme; it mainly addresses activities which extend beyond the limits of the sectoral programmes, as well as the Jean Monnet programme, which targets specific issues of European integration in the academic world and the support needed for institutions and associations active in education and training at European level (<http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/cha/c11082.htm>).

To conclude, this programme also falls within the framework of the specific future objectives for education systems in the *Education and Training 2010* work programme, the action plan for skills and mobility and the action plan promoting language learning and linguistic diversity.

As the member state of Europe, Latvia is currently involved in the processes of education reforms and the implementation of the Lifelong Learning in National level. In the sphere of development of educational system, the aim of the state is to orientate to a knowledge based society cultural, social and economic development of which is determined by the high intellectual level of inhabitants. Co-operation between different members of lifelong learning in Latvia, as well as internationally is essential for the development of lifelong learning (<http://www.laea.lv/49/view.aspx>). The author of the DP considers the next

two sub-chapters has to be introduced in order to deal with the aim of the DP and to reveal the current situation of the implementation of LL strategy in Latvia.

## **2.2 THE PRESENT LIFELONG LEARNING STRATEGY IN LATVIA**

As Eurydice reports on the situation in Latvia, in order to popularize lifelong learning the Ministry of Education and Science has applied for and received a grant of the European Commission "Establishment and Implementation of National Lifelong Learning Strategies – Education and Training 2010". It is planned to facilitate LL by organizing various promoting events and to hold a conference "Lifelong learning Strategy, its Challenges and Solutions"

(<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/Eurydice/EuryPage?country=LV&lang=EN&fragment=159>).

The non-governmental, non-profit organization LAEA, which unites adult education providers in Latvia, and the aim of which is to participate in life-long learning policy making, thereby promoting development of a civic, democratic and open society in Latvia, has elaborated the project, called "Development of Lifelong Learning Strategy 2005 – 2008". The project was financed by ESF and the Republic of Latvia ([www.laea.lv](http://www.laea.lv)).

The goals of the project are the following: in cooperation with regional development agencies to elaborate LL policy guidelines and the action plan, as well as the necessary informative and organizational system for the development of LL in regions. Elaboration of the LL policy guidelines is related to the long-term and short-term goals of the National Programme "Development and Implementation of Lifelong Learning Strategy". Different social partners will be involved in its implementation.

The basic guidelines of Latvian lifelong learning are developed, basing on several strategic, political and other kinds of planning documents (see Appendix I). The basic guidelines determine actions implementation of which creates preconditions for people to help themselves. The basic guidelines determine actions that in Latvia create a society that is learning and by the help of education improve democracy, welfare of society and competitiveness in the international context ([www.laea.lv](http://www.laea.lv)).

The author of the DP would like to give an insight in some of the premises of the vision of the development of LL in Latvia, a desirable situation by the year 2013, more attributing the education aspect. They have been elaborated in conformity with the guidelines. They envisage that people in Latvia recognise education as the main resource of their welfare; they possess confidence, initiative, knowledge, creative approach to things and skills, so that they can take part in economical, social and civil life. Knowledge, skills and abilities of people are created and developed in order to increase work efficiency; people have free access to information, consultations, education and support; new learning approaches under the influence of ICT will continue be created and their frameworks will expand.

In the basic guidelines, accent is put on adult education that is the weakest point of provision of education in Latvia and is not clearly reflected in the lawful acts. Basically it is informal education in the changing labour market and among the new technologies is able to ensure appropriate new knowledge, skills and competences for employers, employees and individuals. Simultaneously work is started at the creation of united education system, in order to promote all education stage and form connection (<http://www.laea.lv/49/view.aspx>). Eurydice also denotes that there is no separate law on adult education in Latvia; the legal basis is the Education Law and the national policy paper Basic Standpoints on Lifelong Learning 2007-2013 (<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/Eurydice/EuryPage?country=LV&lang=EN&fragment=159>).

As Lasmanis (2008) remarks in the report on Lifelong Learning, in the further development of Latvia as the member of the EU there are several scenarios possible: backwardness, stagnation and development scenarios. Only the development scenario ensures Latvia rapid and stable advance to the average Standard of living in the countries of the EU, what corresponds to European as well as to the national interests in Latvia. It can be approached by setting the long term goal. The *Development Model of Latvia*, valid from 2005, determines an integrated development model in the context of the global development (Lasmanis 2008; 5).

LAEA gives implications that every executive has an important role in strategy development, implementation and evaluation. We wish the employers, ministries, information providers and other intermediary organizations to work more closely together to

deliver integrated, responsive, relevant services to learners. With respect to learning providers they suggest making sure that learning provision meets the needs of learners wherever they live; state the provision of the highest quality; plan and adopt provision to be relevant to Latvia's economic and social needs.

The Commission also stresses that teachers and their employers should recognise the importance of acquiring new knowledge, and teachers should be able to innovate and use evidence to inform their work. The Principles particularly recommend that teachers need to be employed in institutions which value lifelong learning in order to evolve and adapt throughout their whole career ([http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/principles_en.pdf)).

To the Author's of the DP mind, this is the cornerstone of the successful implementation of the LL strategy into continuous teacher training system in Latvia, in particular, and should be one of the main priorities for national educational governing institutions to promote the opportunities for teachers

In a report, recently carried out by LAEA in 2007, the significance for the implementation of the LL has a crucial role in contemporary society, often being called the knowledge society.

## **2.2.1 THE INFORMATION SOURCES AND PROVIDERS OF LIFELONG LEARNING IN LATVIA**

This sub-chapter provides an insight into the wide scope of providers of continuous learning and requalification for both, in-service and pre-service teachers. As there has been mentioned, the distance between the initial training (pre-service) and the professional development is gradually being reduced, finding these concepts in close relation. The author has realized there are different sources providing information about PD possibilities, courses and seminars, most of it can be found in the Internet.

In-service education deals with the adult education, and as there has been already acknowledged adult education is one of the premises of the strategy of LL. Eurydice reports there are different types of adult education programmes providers, such as adult training

centres established by municipalities at regional level, private education institutions, professional associations, ministries and organizations under their authority, such as the Teacher Training Centre of the Ministry of Education and Science, further education centres at higher education institutions. The education centres mentioned here, are those concerning the teacher training; there are, of course, different other training centres what deal with unqualified adults or provide interest-related education (folk schools, a.o.)

(<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/Eurydice/EuryPage?country=LV&lang=EN&fragment=159>).

In 1993 in FEP the new structure was established the Institute of Adult Teachers Education, later recalled a centre. Later on, in 1995 the Department of Adult Education was established as well. (Kopelovicha and Zhukovs 2005). The teaching staff of higher education institutions is offered a continuing professional development programmes. In order to re-qualify, many of the teachers of other subjects come to the centre to obtain the status of teacher of English.

The Education Development Centre is the leading non-profit nongovernmental organization in Latvia in the field of teachers' professional development. One of the main objectives of the centre is the provision of professional development opportunities for teachers, school administrators and other specialists working in all levels of schooling. The centre has single out the providers of continuous learning as the best ones. They are Soros Foundation Latvija; the School boards; the Centre of Support for educators; the Support centre for schools; the University of Latvia; the British Council; the University of Daugavpils ([www.iac.lv](http://www.iac.lv)).

The British Council (2008) , for example, offers to obtain the most commonly accepted qualifications, such as Certificate of English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA), which is awarded by the Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (Cert. TESOL) awarded by Trinity College London. ([www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)).

Distance learning courses can also be a good introduction, but feedback on your teaching practice is essential and most distance courses will not include this, and therefore will not be acceptable to many teaching institutes.

One of the educational organizations in Riga, Latvia, named International Language Services (ILS) organizes the language courses abroad. It offers a wide range of different level courses – General English courses, Individual courses, English for Professionals and Teacher

Training in England. It can be proud of their ILS 8 level system, which matches the common European Framework, which means that when learners are studying with the ILS, their syllabus reflects internationally recognized standards. In addition to that, each ILS level correlates with appropriate Cambridge, IELTS, TOEFL and LCCI (English for business, are recognized in Commerce and Industry in countries throughout the world) exams ([www.ils.lv](http://www.ils.lv)).

If you are student and want to study abroad, then IRIS can help you find out more about your intended host university, city, or country. IRIS – It is an Integrated Reporting for International Students - is a project funded by the European Commission DG EAC. The Norwegian Centre for International University Cooperation (SIU) is the developer. The goal of IRIS is to provide a service to both students and universities involved in *Erasmus* ([/iris.siu.no/iris.nsf/aboutiris](http://iris.siu.no/iris.nsf/aboutiris)).

The other State Agency "Academic Programme Agency" (APA) is submitted to the Ministry of Education and Science. Its main mission is to promote the implementation of European Union education programmes and other national and international education development projects. The main objective of the APA activities is to support the integration of Latvia in the common European education area in a lifelong learning context through promoting the mobility of pupils, students, non-formal and informal learners, teachers, trainers and education administrators and cooperation between education institutions of Latvia and the European Union, and other countries. The task of the APA is to ensure the administrative, informative and financial support to the involvement of Latvian institutions in the EU-financed cooperation and assistance programmes and initiatives in education ([www.apa.lv](http://www.apa.lv)).

The Association of teachers of English of Latvia which aims is to promote English language learning in Latvia and to provide professional support with respect to teaching resources and access to professional development courses for EFL educators in Latvia as well as many more informs that teachers from EU member states are eligible to apply for a grant from Grundtvig-Comenius to fully cover all their costs. The next course will take place in January 2009, but there are also courses taking place in March/April and August 2009. If teachers are interested in this opportunity, they are invited to visit the website at (<http://www.themoderninstitute.eu/tesol-home-english.htm>) to find out more about the course itself and (<http://www.themoderninstitute.eu/tesol-grundtvig-english.htm>) to find out the

exact details of the procedure to apply for a Comenius / Grundtvig / Lifelong Learning grant (<http://www.late.dj.lv/?id=2>).

There was a conference on Lifelong Learning “Lifelong Learning – for personal growth and State development” held in Riga, within the LL week in October, 2008. Based on that there was recently a website developed ([www.muzizglitiba.lv](http://www.muzizglitiba.lv)) in order to provide broader and more updated interactive information on the ongoing processes of LL.

The website ([www.muzizglitibavisiem.lv](http://www.muzizglitibavisiem.lv)) compiles documents, proposals, explanations, projects, and current events on LL and arranges the information in the sections of regions of Latvia. The author admits there are many more educational organizations and education administratives providing local and European scale teacher training.

## **SURVEY**

In order to examine and to prove the hypothesis of the Diploma Paper (DP), the research was carried out; a survey as the research method was chosen. The author of the Diploma Paper chose the survey for the reason it is the most appropriate to reflect a great amount of views of the respondents surveyed. To gather the data necessary for the research, the data collection method was chosen a questionnaire. The reason the author chose the method, a questionnaire, was to collect and afterwards analyse different opinions and view points of English language (EL) teachers.

To prove the hypothesis, which states that the implementation of the current strategies of Lifelong Learning (LL) enhances the professional development of the EL teachers, the author designed a questionnaire, attempting to reveal the overall, yet a distinguished outlook in the situation of continuous professional development in Latvia, inseparably connected with the strategy of the LL. To recognize this, it was vital to acknowledge if there is an overall awareness of this strategy among the teachers at all.

The choice of the research sample, the EL teacher, is due to some reasons. It has been mentioned previously in the Diploma Paper, that English is one of the operational languages in almost all the areas in European Union. The aspect which also determined the choice of the research sample, is the predominance of English as a foreign language in Latvia, and the last, but not the least reason is the fact that the author of the Diploma Paper is an undergraduate pre-service EL teacher herself. The fact that the author have not taught English until now is the one she would like to highlight in order to impart herself the status of the observer.

The author herself contacted several schools from almost all the regions, in order to acknowledge the overall image of the current situation, regarding the awareness of LL and professional development.

When mentioning a teacher, the author of the Diploma Paper means both, in-service or practising EL teachers and pre-service or future teachers. The major part of the respondents, 71% are in-service EL teachers, the other part, comparatively small, 29% are becoming teachers (almost all undergraduates), thus having only studied until now.

According to the significance of the implementing educational reforms of the teacher training of pre-service teachers (mentioned in the theoretical part of the Diploma Paper), the

gathered opinions of such respondents are relevant and valuable as much as the opinions of the in-service teachers. It corresponds also to the general idea for the teachers, irrespective of whether he is practising or not, to acquire the concept of LL and to implement it in order to professionally develop themselves. Because of the fact that English is being taught as the foreign language in Latvia, there are no teachers of English as a second language (ESL) surveyed in this questionnaire.

There were also some respondents, teaching English either in private courses, and in higher education institutions, though it was relatively small part. The other part were those who do not teach until now.

The questionnaire consists of 17 questions; it has been limited to this number due to some reasons. The author of the Diploma Paper would like to comment on the reason of the choice of the number of questions. It is explicable with the fact the author is aware that the majority of the teachers are overloaded, what can be explained with the shortage of some of the subject teachers in demand, EL teachers in particular. Therefore, the author deliberately chose the number of questions for not to disturb the teachers' daily routine too much. The author was also aware of the possible backlash of teachers, when encountering with a long and tiresome questionnaire.

The other reason, what was solely the author's own assumption is that there is a certain part of teachers, especially in-service teachers, who are ignorant with what regards a computer; they simply avoid using it due to the lack of computer skills. This assumption was later attested by the head of the resource room of foreign languages in one of the towns in Latvia. The number of questions was the compromise for to hopefully receive the filled in samples back.

There were some teachers who wished the questionnaires to be delivered to them personally. When possible, the author went to the schools herself and meet the teachers, thus providing personal contact. One could be sure to receive these questionnaires back. Due to the certain distance between the towns, the author of the Diploma Paper was delivering the questionnaires mainly via e-mail. The previously mentioned aspect led to the teachers' reluctance to open the e-mail box and fill in the questionnaire. Regarding the teachers, who never responded, it was the second widespread reason, what was noted by the accordant school staff, who agreed giving some feedback to the author of the DP.

The process of the gathering of the research data lasted from October 10 until November 5 in 2008. It was carried out in different general education schools. There were altogether 80 EL teachers surveyed. They were of a very different job experience as a teacher, from 2 months to 45 years. Nevertheless, they all share the same professional area.

As already mentioned previously, the author of the Diploma Paper wanted the questionnaires to be personally introduced and delivered to the EL teachers, by the head of the study department or the resource room of foreign languages. Therefore, the author herself called the schools, attempting to establish personal contacts with the official representative of the school beforehand and to ask for their permission to spread the questionnaires among EL teachers. The author thinks the overall response was positive and promising at that moment. Some seemed to be a little intruded, the others, instead, admitted that the students, the prospective teachers, should be supported and encouraged.

However, there was still a large number of questionnaires, which were sent to the respondents and never were received back. The most responsive was Riga region, and some other towns from the Vidzeme and Kurzeme, whereas there were some other regions there was not any response at all, not sending any information back. As the author has mentioned it above, this can be explained with the limited technological (ICT) awareness and the lack of the appropriate office equipment, what is still an unpromising reality in regions of Latvia.

It was recognized that the practising teachers are more aware of the concept of LL, and other terms, such as teacher training, requalification courses, etc. This conclusion can be drawn when the answers of the pre-service and in-service English teachers are compared and analysed. However, the major part of the pre-service teachers had come across these concepts as well.

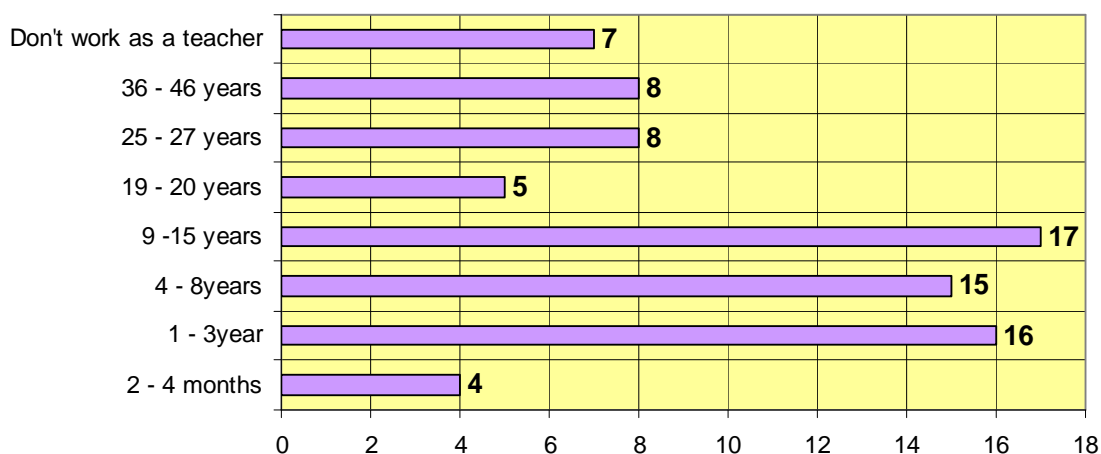
After the designing of the questionnaire template, it was sent to be piloted to one of the respondents, who had also later filled in the questionnaire herself. There were some mistakes recognized during the process of piloting, though not of a character of the content, but more of a form. There was a suggestion to add some answer options, otherwise it would not be comprehensive and complete enough.

The author would like to clarify that all the continuous teacher training and any types of requalification courses has been put under the common description, which is TT courses, in order to ease the readability, and to avoid misunderstanding.

## ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was designed and provided in English because of the chosen sample of respondents. There were questions which respondents were allowed to underline more than one answer. All of the questions are reflected visually in charts and analysed as well in the following data interpretation of the research.

The first three questions were deliberately designed to uncover the background information about the surveyed respondents. According to the gathered data from 80 respondents, there were more EL teachers having a respectable job experience. Nonetheless, a part of them admitted they were ready to fill in the questionnaire, though they had not taught English at all. Such respondents were mostly still studying, they were pre-service teachers. The results of the first question are reflected in the Figure 1.

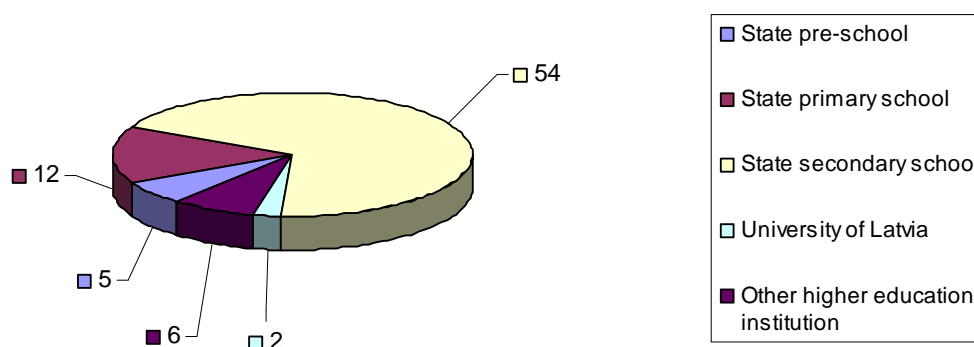


**Figure 1.** How long have you been teaching English?

This chart shows the opinions of already practising EL teachers prevail. This can be explained by the fact that the author delivered the questionnaires mostly to in-service English teachers in different educational institutions, the other part, the pre-service EL teachers, received them being as students of teacher educational institution, i.e. FEP. The author of the

Diploma Paper would like to remark, that she considers the opinions of the pre-service teachers, represented in the survey, are those of equal significance in comparison with the in-service teachers, because of the fact they are teachers to-be and are potentially future lifelong learners.

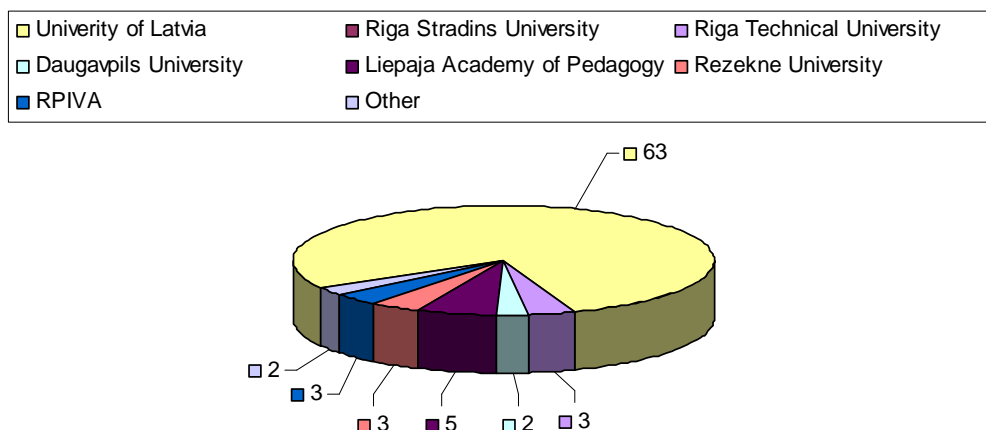
The second question, the author of the Diploma Paper had introduced, aimed to show the scope of the education institutions they were working at. According to the gathered data from the respondents to the question asking which educational institution they work at, answers are reflected in the Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Which educational institution do you work at?

Nevertheless, the results of these answers does not impact the final conclusion made from the data analysis, nor it specifies the respondent in some specific way. It shows the diversity of the educational institutions represented by the respondents. Due to the different location of the educational institutions the surveyed teachers work at, it allows to see as much different opinions and it shows the overall point of view.

The third question as well as the first and the second one serves for the background information about the respondents and it shows the higher educational institutions they study at now or have already studied. This question also does not serve as the one of the greatest significance regarding the aim of the research. It shows the respondents' own learning experience and the differences of the respondents acting in the same educational field. According to the question inquiring what educational institution the respondent has graduated from or studying at now, answers are reflected in the Figure 3.



**Figure 3.** What educational institution have you graduated from or studying at now?

The Figure 3 displays the University of Latvia is the most selected answer. The most of the respondents, who work in schools in other regions than Riga, have also studied or study at the moment in the University, in Riga. The author has inferred that the part of the respondents are studying as well as working. It is explained by the regulations prescribing that one should obtain the higher education certificate in teacher education area to work as a teacher, according to the legislation of the Republic of Latvia. Due to the changes in the legislation several years ago, a great amount of EL teachers practising for a long time had to enter the University or other higher educational institution to study and get an accredited certificate or a diploma to work legally at school as a teacher. A certain part of already practising teachers of subjects other than English language, had chosen to obtain EL subject teacher status additionally. The author would like to remark there were some of such teachers surveyed as well in order to widen the scope of views.

All the previous three questions are considered as introductory questions to be better acquainted with the respondents. The fourth question is the first in the questionnaire to deal with the main idea of the research. It also leads the respondents to the upcoming questions, the aim of which was to disclose the amount of the respondents who have studied in TT courses and who have not. The division between „Yes” and „No” answers will be separately correlated with all of those questions which had been answered by both the respondents, having and having not studied in any TT courses, in order to distinguish and analyse the views of both sides.

The answers to the fourth question asking if the respondents have studied at any re-qualification/teacher training (TT) or other professional courses, offered three given answers:

“Yes”, “No” and “Other”. The major part, 58 respondents, has studied in TT courses or has attended seminars as it will be displayed later in the analysis. The other part or 22 respondents, has not studied at any of the courses. The table below reveals the different reasons teachers denote for not having studied.

**TABLE 1.** Have you studied at any re-qualification/teacher training (TT) or other professional courses?

ANSWER	ANSWERS PROVIDED	RESULTS/VOTES
<b>NO</b>	• I am not interested in this	2
	• There is never enough time for that	9
	• I have no financial support for that	5
	• I do not believe it is worth it	-
	• I do not feel motivated by my workplace	3
	• Other *	7
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>

The Table 1 reflects the most frequently reason is the lack of time, generally regarded to be one of the most characteristic features of the teacher’s profession. Considering the fact, the major part has studied in TT courses, the gathered data later shows that this part of the respondents examined here, are either too overloaded, or have not really acknowledged the usefulness and furthermore, significance of such continuous studies. The reason of not having financial support, in its turn, could be explained by the unawareness of the opportunities to receive it, though the author can not exclude the fact the finances are not accessible enough; they are limited or uneasy to claim for.

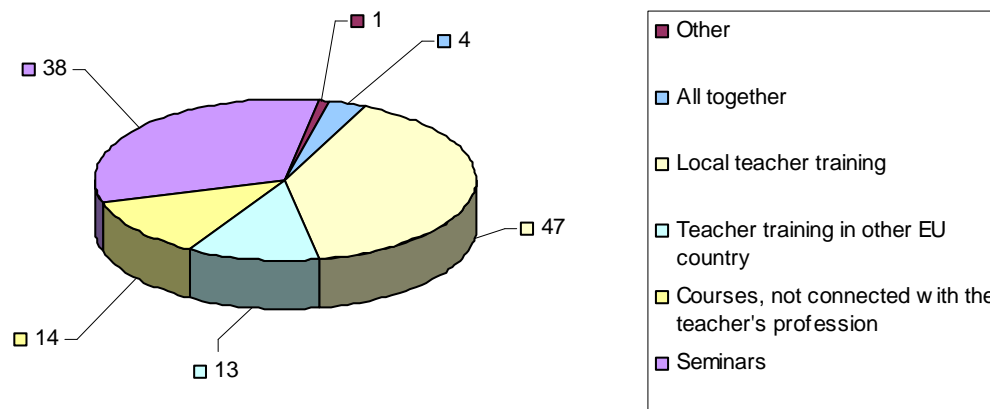
The answer that one does not feel motivated by the workplace denotes that there is a possibility a certain part of schools does not pay enough attention to the processes concerning the promoting teachers’ professional development. It is further more affirmed by the analysis of the sixth question. Two respondents have noted they are not interested in continuing studies at all. The number of these answers, though, does not indicate to the opinion shared by many teachers, it is an individual decision, influenced by certain reasons.

All of the above mentioned respondents are in-service teachers, as almost all of the 7 pre-service teachers have selected “other” answer option. As to the pre-service teachers, almost all of them have not studied in any courses, explaining this by the current studies in the University. An exception is one respondent who had received the grant for EU and had been the teacher’s assistant in other EU member state during the same time period of studies in the University in Latvia. There were also some comments added to the answer option “other”, the author of the Diploma Paper would like to highlight. They were mainly connected with the status of the pre-service teacher. They all shared the same reason, which was either the recent graduation or current studies, adding there is no need for TT courses at the moment.

Nevertheless, as the analysis later shows they are quite determined to become lifelong learners after the initial teacher training in the University, as well as almost all of them share the same opinion, one should learn continuously in order to develop professionally.

There were also some in-service teachers, who have not attended any courses, because of the lack of time and financial support. Irrespective of the reason of the respondents not having studied at any TT courses, most of them gave answers to the other questions, concerning professional development and Lifelong Learning. The author is convinced, that indicates to the presence of the opinion and standpoints of their own as regards teacher education sphere.

The gathered results have revealed there was yet a predominance of those, who had studied at courses or had attended seminars, irrespective of how many times they have had such an opportunity. It can be also explainable with some other thing, which was later learned by the author of the Diploma Paper, that there is a definite period of time, demanded by the state, teachers have to attend the courses in order to enhance their professional development. The respondents, who answered “Yes” to the fourth question, were provided with several answer options in order to find out what kind of courses or other training forms they have attended. They are reflected in the Figure 4



**Figure 4.** What courses have you attended?

The data provided show the most selected answer is “local teacher training”, meaning any kind and form of courses, conducted in Latvia. As described in the theoretical part of the Diploma Paper, the teacher training can be provided by different national and private organizations. The prevalence of this kind of training can be explicable with the fact that the local training occurs in the person’s home country, i.e. the teacher does not have to leave for a certain time period; he or she is staying at home, what seems to be a very determinant factor for the choice between local training and training in other EU country.

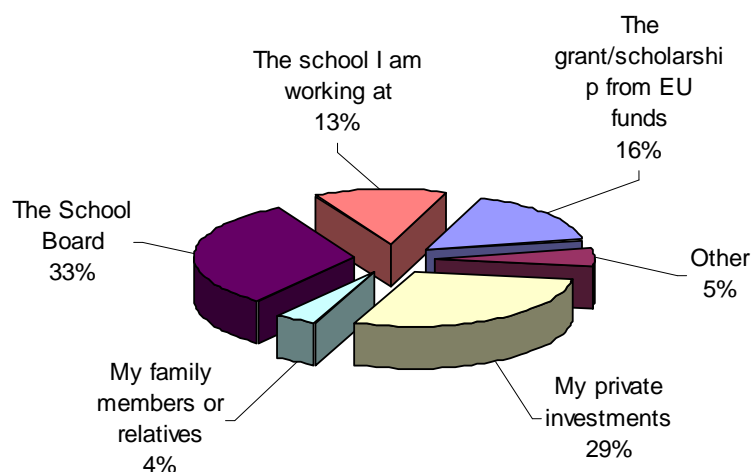
The positive indicator, the author of the Diploma Paper wants to point out is that there are 18% of the respondents, having attended teacher training, which has not been connected with the teacher’s profession. According to the principles of the LL, professional development is a very extensive and diverse knowledge acquirement process, which may take the most different ways and forms, that is to say, the teacher, EL teacher in particular, can enhance his or her professional development by acquiring the knowledge from different area than education. The acquirement of wide range of knowledge areas is also very much suggested by the changing common European education policy.

One of the respondents, who have not yet studied in TT courses and is currently studying at the University, besides practices English teaching for about two years, pointed out an opposed opinion: “Lately I start to think that these professional courses (compulsory or optional) which are offered by the school or The School Board are just a waste of time and money. I have this feeling after conversations with my colleagues who have taken them –

they have not gained anything new, interesting and usable for them. I believe that the situation is different when you take some courses which have you found yourself, somewhere abroad or with more qualified teacher trainees”. This opinion refers to the certain part of the EL teachers, who have really attended TT courses, but, nevertheless, hold the view the courses are not worth. As there are not any clear reasons mentioned, to the author’s point of view, a teacher possibly might have obtained the knowledge, he or she already possesses. This could mean the courses have not been offered or chosen according to the teacher’s needs and knowledge level. The author thinks this could be the case when the courses are being attended for the sake of the learning as such, regardless of what kind of subject has been offered. Nevertheless, as the data gathered from the question, asking what new knowledge the teacher has obtained in TT courses, and which will be analysed later, shows that the majority of the respondents surveyed have obtained some new and useful knowledge for them.

It has to be mentioned that the self-evident and comprehensible fact is a correlation of the teachers’ job experience and the amount of teacher training courses attended. That is to say, there were more respondents having 3, 4, 5 and 10 years job experience, who had studied in TT more than once.

In order to find out the information about the respondents who have studied in TT courses in greater detail, thus answering “Yes” to the fourth question, the next fifth, sixth and the seventh questions has been attributed exceptionally to them. The aim of the fifth question is to acknowledge the financial source, which was allocated to support the opportunity for the teachers to have studies in TT courses. The gathered data are displayed in the Figure 5.



**Figure 5.** Who covered your TT expenses?

The division of answers displays an unexpected distribution of answer options. Although the School Board is the most selected, the answers reveal there is almost the same number of teachers have disposed of their private investments as well. The two answer options at once, selected by some of the teachers, e.g. “my private investments” and “the School Board” may indicate the respondent has attended TT courses more than once, spending his or her own money to obtain new knowledge. That, to the author’s mind, points to teachers’ involvement and wish to develop themselves.

The financial support from EU funds and schools the respondents are working at shares the next most selected position. The latter was a questionable matter; taking into the account the fact that schools always have the shortage of the finances. The author had clarified that the school has no possibility to offer one the money, but it may allocate the finance in cooperation with nongovernmental organizations and the donation funds.

There were 3 respondents, who, although have not studied in TT courses, have ticked the option “my private investments”, what alludes the author to the idea, they have perceived the fifth question of the questionnaire differently from others, i.e., they have attributed it to the initial teacher training in higher education institution, what they have studied previously at or study at the moment, meaning the annual tuition fee.

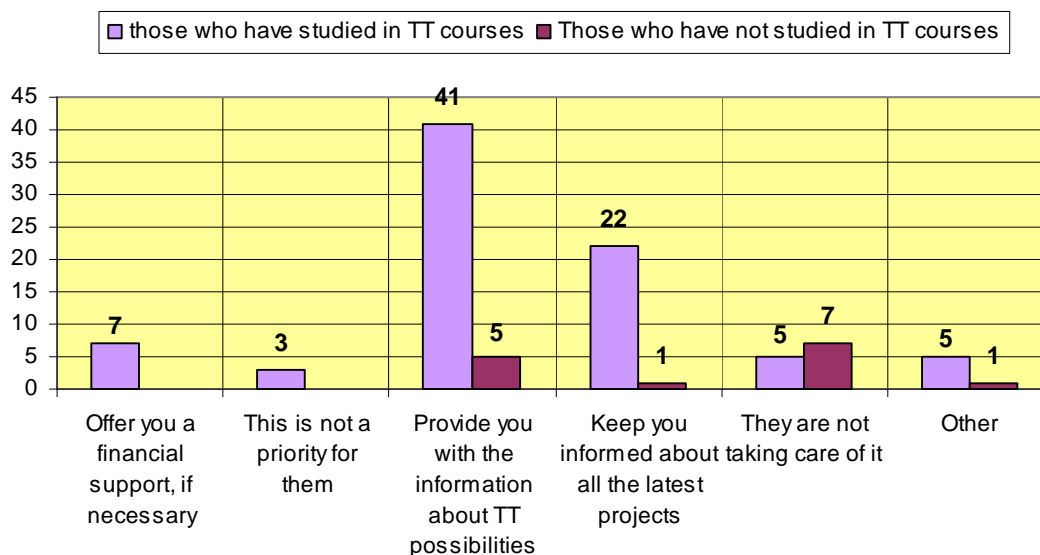
Some of the respondents have expressed other points by selecting the option “other”, three of them bringing forward some points worth mentioning:

- I do not think I should cover the expenses with my private investments;
- I pay for my studies at LU, and that is it;
- There were also state supplied courses for teachers.

One of the respondents mentioned British Council in Riga, which had offered the coverage of the expenses. The author supposes these comments could be agreed by the most part of the respondents; the major part simply does not expand, and select the answers, provided in the questionnaire. This can be applicable to many of the questions.

The data gathered from the sixth question reveals the one of the most significant aspects regarding the aim of the research. It, though indirectly, shows the attitude from the school’s management personnel towards the implementation of the strategies of LL in the

school or other educational establishment the respondent works at. The results are displayed in a figure 6.



**Figure 6.** In what way the educational institutions you work at encourage or motivate you to attend TT course?

The Figure 6 uncovers the dominating ways how to encourage and motivate teachers, which is providing and keeping one informed with the TT possibilities, as it was initially expected to be the most selected by the respondents. To the author's point of view, that is explainable with the role of the educational institution as information providers first and foremost. As there has been previously mentioned, European Commission, though just in a permissive manner, but still points to the significance for the educational institutions in all levels to act in conformity with Lifelong Learning principles, i.e. provision of the activities for the professional development of teachers. The results of the data of the sixth question approve the overall conformity with these principles to the extent of provision of the information.

The respondents, who have not studied in TT, do not have either the opportunity to receive any support or encouragement, because they simply do not work at school, or they are not provided with the information for some other certain reason. About four of the respondents, who teach English for about 3, 4 years, already marked in the fourth question that they had not had any financial support or had not felt motivated by their school they

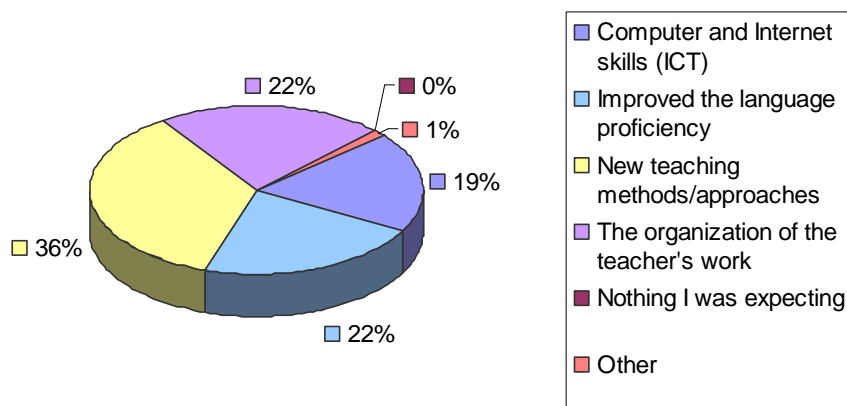
worked at to attend any TT courses. By answering this sixth question, they continue to assure that the school does not take any care of the encouragement or motivation to attend any of the courses. Nevertheless, the author considers the number of such respondents is comparatively small, and does not indicate to serious drawbacks concerning the involvement and the sense of responsibility of educational institutions; it has to be taken into account.

A comparatively small part or six teachers have been offered a financial support by the school they work at. This is explainable with the disposition of the funds of the EU, the author has mentioned in the analysis of the fifth question.

The author of the Diploma Paper would like to draw the attention to the answer “other” selected, where teachers have remarked that in-service TT is an obligation as State demands 33 hours within the three years period of studies. The other respondent also added it was a must to attend the courses, in order to professionally develop.

When the author of the Diploma Paper compared the denoted answers of the financial sources who had covered the TT expenses (see the fifth question) to the ways the educational institutions encourage and motivate teachers to attend the courses, she drew the conclusion that the great amount of the private investments allocated could be explicable with the fact the educational institutions are mostly just providing the teacher with the information about TT possibilities or keeping one informed about such projects, and thus accomplishing their role.

The seventh question was aimed to learn what was the knowledge, teachers as adult learners had gained after studying in TT courses. It was attributed solely to the respondents, having studied in any of the TT courses, just like the fifth question was. The range of the answers is shown in the Figure 7.



**Figure 7.** What new knowledge did you acquire in TT courses?

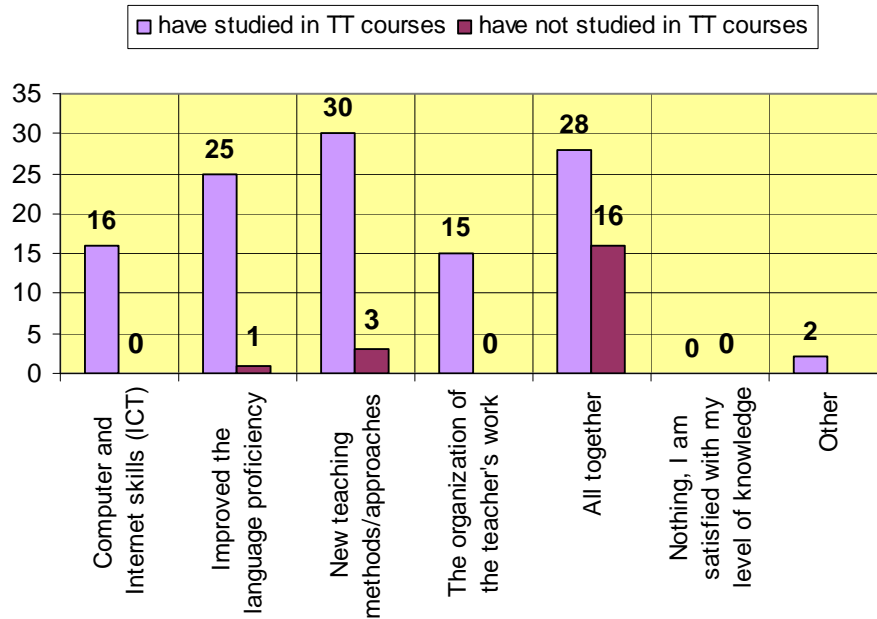
The given answers verify the areas of the knowledge to be improved. The author of the Diploma Paper presumes that if the training programmes have been chosen by the teachers in any of the cases, it in a way reveals the desired knowledge for the teacher to be gained. And it probably reveals the areas of knowledge and competences, to the point of view of the respondents, which were not satisfactory before.

The acquirement of the new teaching methods turns out to have taken the first place, followed by the next three areas, similarly selected, such as language proficiency improvement, the organization of the teacher's work and the improvement of ICT skills. The new teaching methods and ICT skills are especially essential to the list, as they are assigned special significance in order to meet the increasing requirements in educational area, particularly in the EU context. Also the ability to organize the teacher's work is a must nowadays, if one wants to manage great amount of everything in the constant lack of time.

When later asked for an opinion, what aspects of knowledge a teacher should develop, the respondents pointed to almost all the same aspects, although more putting stress to the option "all together". The author considers the respondents, thereby, believe it would be the complete and ideal set of knowledge to be acquired.

One respondent has added her own personal experience after the studies abroad within the Comenius programme. She noted she learned a lot about students with learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, attention deficit, other disorders and emotional and behavioural problems. To the author's point of view, this is an invaluable experience and can be also regarded as the knowledge every teacher should acquire especially because the number of learners, having these difficulties, increases all the time.

The author of the Diploma Paper believes that the answers to the next, eighth question uncover even more significant information than the seventh question does. It affirms the respondents' beliefs and viewpoints and possibly those areas to be improved, which they themselves either have not yet managed to acquire or think other colleagues should acquire in order to be a more professional EL teacher. The data gathered are shown in Figure 8.



**Figure 8.** What aspects of knowledge should a teacher develop in TT courses?

As the Figure 8 displays the new teaching methods prevail this time as well, disclosing the great importance of this area for the teachers. Although the respondents had been offered the integrated answer option “all together”, the major part of them still selected the distinguished “New teaching methods” option, what makes the author of the Diploma Paper realize it is the area of the greatest significance and should be improved uppermost.

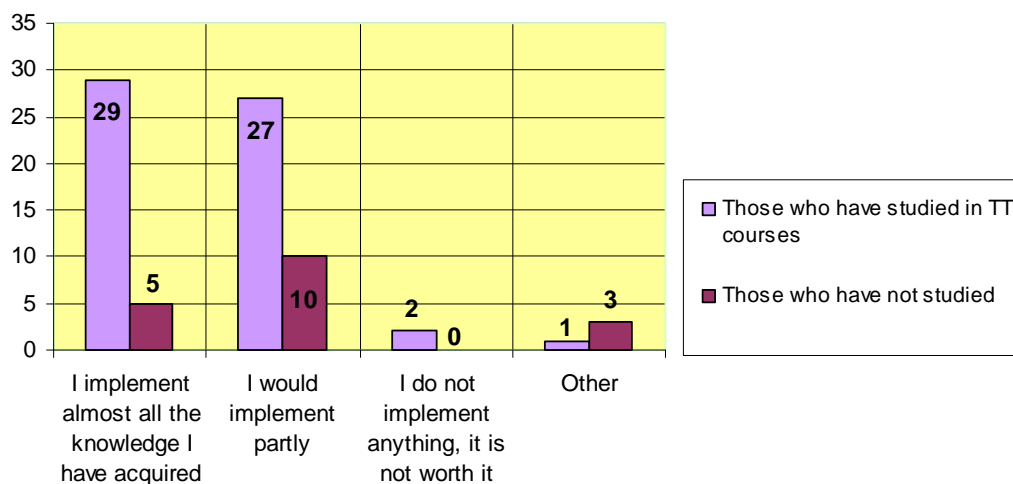
Nevertheless, it can not be underestimated that the option “all together” is the next most selected, reflecting their overall critical attitude to the areas for teachers to be improved.

The dominant position of the answer option “all together” among the respondents, who have not studied in any TT courses, affirms their general opinions. The fact almost all of them (except two respondents) have answered to this question, means that they have drew their attention to all of the questions in the questionnaire and once the question appears not only attributing those, who have studied in TT courses, they are ready to response and take part in expressing their viewpoints. That, to the author’s of the Diploma Paper point of view, denotes that they also care and wish to be involved in this discussion.

One respondent has added her personal point, seeing it as a missing part of the areas offered. She denotes that the knowledge of personal development, psychology should also be developed, as the work causes a lot of stress.

In order to disclose a considerable aspect regarding the approval of the hypothesis, the ninth question was introduced. It was aimed to realize the significance of the new knowledge acquired by the teachers and their determination to implement it and carry out in teachers' daily teaching practice.

This question was answered by both in-service (whom the question was more supposed to be addressed to), and pre-service teachers as well, just as they answered to the previous question. The author of the Diploma Paper considers it because of the fact, the pre-service teacher is a teacher to-be in the nearest future, and the involvement into the discussion (non-verbal, in particular) the question evokes, can be explained by the knowledge and skills acquired during their studies in higher education institution. The author can acknowledge it herself, recalling plenty of discussions carried out with her peers during her studies. The answers to the ninth question are reflected in the Figure 9.



**Figure 9.** Would you implement the new knowledge in your daily teaching practice?

As the Figure 9 shows, there is almost the same number of respondents who denotes that they do implement almost all the knowledge they have acquired in TT courses and those who would implement it just partly. These two answer options could be considered as quite close in their meaning, yet the selection of both of the answer options shows the respondents have made the distinction between them. The author of the Diploma Paper assumes this is because of the reason that not all of the new knowledge a teacher considers to be suitable with his or her own beliefs or teaching principles; some of them he or she values too high to

change or simply are not ready to do it yet. According to the author's own observations, not all the knowledge obtained is necessary for the particular classes the teacher is working with.

This supposition of the author has been verified with a couple of the comments, given in the answers, by selecting the "other" option. This option was selected by 2 of the respondents, in-service EL teachers, who pointed out the following ideas: "It depends on the knowledge acquired and the suitability". The other remarked: "I select the things that fit me best and satisfy my and my students' needs". The author of the Diploma Paper thinks both of the comments could be said by nearly every respondent if she or he would be specially asked for their personal opinion regarding the implementation of the new knowledge, because not all the knowledge gained in teacher training process (the in-service teacher training is more stressed here) can literally to be implemented in teachers' daily teaching practice. The author holds the view that the considerable part of the new knowledge serves as the background information for the teachers as learners to better assimilate it, in order to implement it successfully in their teaching practices.

There is, of course, always some knowledge one has been coming across more than once if studying in TT courses or attending seminars, but, to the author's point of view, it is the best way of adjusting the new aspects to the knowledge one already possess or, the old saying can be used as well, acknowledging that the revision is the mother of knowledge; to cement the existing knowledge or to recapture it. Finally, it is the feature of the continuous learning, one of the cornerstones of the Lifelong Learning strategy.

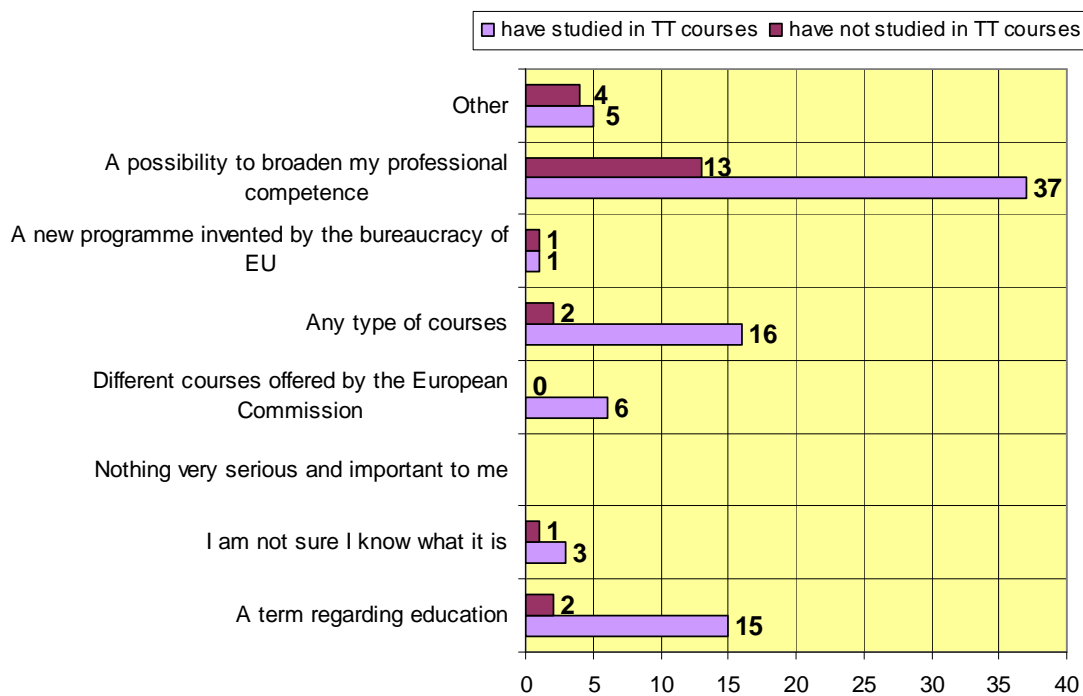
As for the in-service or pre-service teachers, who have not studied in any TT courses, the correlation differs a little, although to the opposite from those, who have studied in TT courses. The reason could be they can just presume now they will be implementing the knowledge, as they are still studying and mostly not working as teachers.

As the author of the Diploma Paper had already mentioned previously, there are some pre-service teachers, though a very small part (taking into the account the total number of the pre-service teachers, see the Figure 1.), who have meant the teacher training as the current studies at the University. By answering this question, they also have been considering the knowledge they have acquired there.

To summarize the analysis of the ninth question, the author wishes to add that to her point of view, the fact of implementing almost all the new and suitable knowledge, gained in TT courses, into teacher's daily teaching practice indicates that their professional competence

therefore is being improved. The author also believes that the idea and significance of the professional development justifies itself by implementing the knowledge gained in order to professionally develop.

In order to acknowledge what the concept Lifelong Learning means to the respondents and if they are aware of it as such, the tenth question was introduced. It was necessary to include this question in the middle of the questionnaire so that the respondents are guided to it through the previous questions. The author thinks it would be inappropriate to introduce this question at the outset of the questionnaire in order not to puzzle the respondents with this term. However, by doing so, it might have therefore made some of the respondents answer the fourth question perceiving the teacher training in the University.



**Figure 10.** What does “Lifelong Learning” mean to you?

As the results show, the term is mostly and predominantly associated with the professional competence, what the author of the Diploma paper interprets as an awareness of this concept. There is also a part of those respondents, having pointed it as the term regarding education, what is also regarded the right answer. Although, the author considers that it can indicate to the possible uncertainty of the term and its meaning. There were also a few respondents, who had answered to both of these answer options, and even three options together were selected (though very few), adding also the option “any type of courses”. The

author thinks these respondents wished to clearly affirm they were aware of the concept, and it only attested the concept of LL was very well known in general.

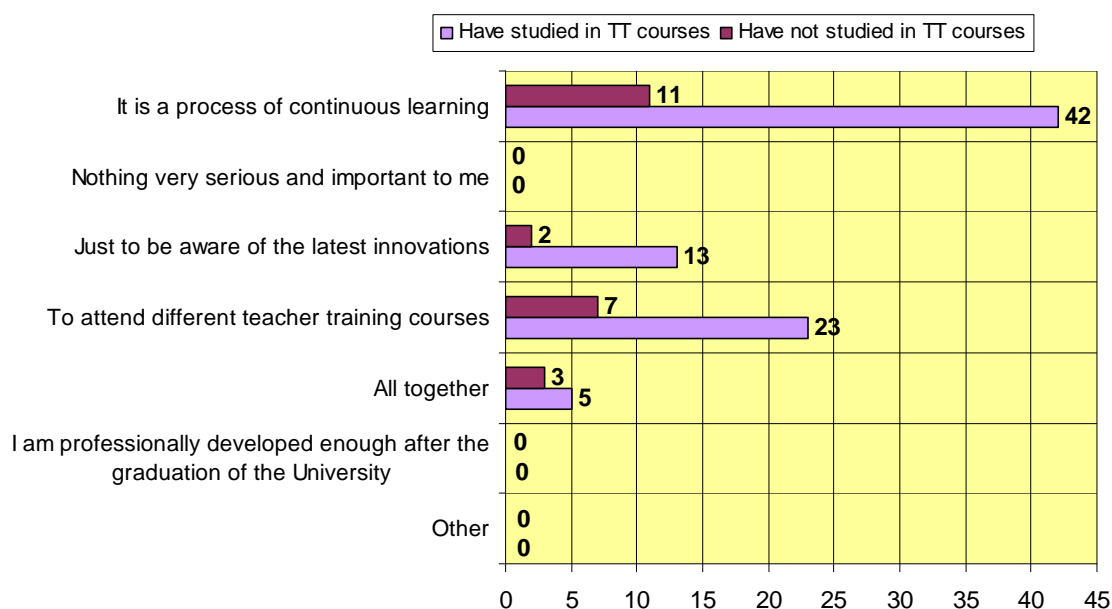
However, 3 of the teachers, who have studied in the TT courses, have confessed they are not sure they know the concept and its meaning. The author considers that the concept is recently popularized greatly and wonders what could be the reasons of these answers given by the respondents. She thinks it could be either a reluctance or unwillingness for a teacher to communicate with the school colleagues and the administration, or a problem area the school would have to make considerable improvements in to be able further to provide the latest information and innovations more effectively.

The respondents, not having studied in TT courses, all were expected to give answers to this question, and almost all of them did. They expressed the same awareness of the concept, though showing a little more indecisiveness. The author ascertained that there was a proportionally bigger part of them expressing other views, by selecting “other” option. Such individual explanation provided, might denote to the idea or notion as such, while one has not really studied further due to different reasons the respondents have mentioned in the fourth question. There are some comments worth mentioning, such as: “It is a possibility to broad not only my professional competence, but also everything. I want to know in other areas (from sewing to architecture); it is a development of my personality”, or “Readiness to develop my personality through all my life in various – educational and non-educational ways”, and the other, remarking it is not about the developing only the professional competence. The author assumes the respondents have pointed out the common idea of the personal development as well, which in this case has been put forward if compared with the professional competence.

There were also comments, which the respondents, in-service teachers, having studied in TT courses, wished to add from their personal point of view. Someone admitted that LL also meant gaining additional knowledge even when the book was read. The other respondent shares the LL concept means to be competent and professional all the time, by someone else expanding it is important for her to develop her language knowledge all her life. Some other respondent mentioned the LL was keeping ones brain fit and not to loose flexibility. One respondent considers it a possibility to make new contacts and share methods.

Taking into the account the expressed opinions, the author of the Diploma Paper can draw a conclusion that the majority is aware of what the concept of Lifelong Learning is, though a certain part displays more profound knowledge of it. The author therefore considers the process of LL implementation within the whole education system, and, thereby, the overall awareness is only at the outset of its development.

The eleventh question was introduced to realize the correlation between the perception of the concept of LL and professional development. This time also both, all of the in-service and the pre-service had taken part by responding to the question. There was again more than one answer selected. The data is displayed in the Figure 11.



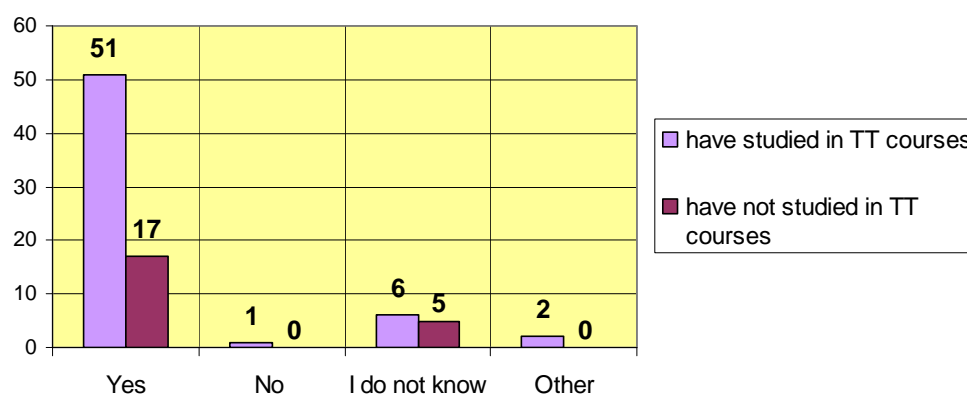
**Figure 11.** What does „professional development” mean to you?

As the Figure reflects, the majority have associated it with the continuous learning. Furthermore, it has been intensified by the considerably selected other related option „to attend different kind of courses” and, to the author’s point of view, it verifies the assumption that the professional development is closely interlinked with the concept of LL, and, moreover, it is a underlying principle of the LL.

Notable is the opinion pointed out that one should just be aware of the latest innovations, and that this opinion is held by the 13 respondents who have studied in TT courses and by 2, who have not. The author regards the respondents probably had already

studied in different courses, finding themselves professionally developed enough, and now is ready to look upon the new information from aside. The same opinion, stated by the ones, not having studied in any TT courses, may indicate to the superficial view of the concept due to the fact, they might be still studying in initial phase of teacher training.

The twelfth question was intended to gather the overall attitude towards the LL as the facilitating factor of professional development. It was also meant to verify the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the previous questions. Two respondents have additionally selected „other” option. The data gathered is reflected in the Figure 12.



**Figure 12.** Do you agree the strategies of Lifelong Learning can facilitate teacher’s professional development?

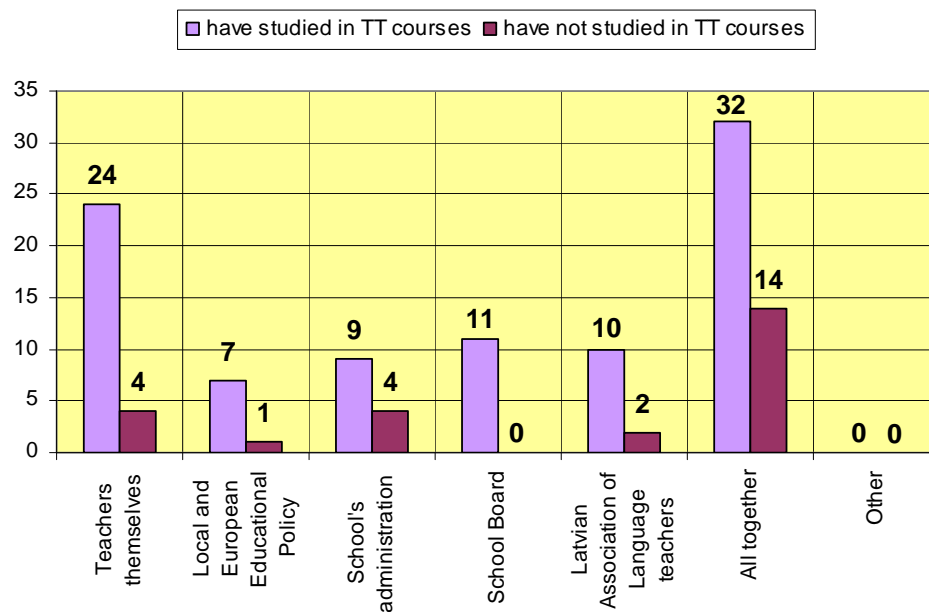
As the Figure 12 displays, there is a sound predominance of both, those, who have or who have not studied in TT courses, agreeing the strategy of LL can facilitate teacher’s professional development. The data shows the proportionally bigger part of those, having not studied in TT courses, who confess they do not know if the LL facilitates the professional development. The author considers they are uncertain of this due to the obvious reason, i.e. they have not had their own experience with the continuous teacher training. Nevertheless, there is a small part, altogether 6 teachers, who have studied in TT courses, denoting they do not know as well. Some of these answers correspond with the perception of the LL as the term of education, as it was mentioned previously, denote to a little unawareness or a misconception of the term. It can not be also excepted this is the matter of the inappropriate choice of training, from either the point of view of the type of training or subject matter.

Summarising the results of the answers provided in the seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh and the twelfth questions, the author of the Diploma Paper believes there can be an evident conclusion drawn, which claims that the concept of Lifelong Learning is a prerequisite of continuous professional development of teachers. It can be verified by the predominant teachers' participation and involvement in teacher training, irrespective of the motive they have been driven by. The fact that the state demands 33 hours of in-service teacher training within 3 years time period, is not the one what fosters a teacher a lifelong learner. Quite the contrary, the provided answers attest it is a part of their own beliefs and standpoints.

The provided answers to the question regarding the aspects of knowledge a teacher should develop, also verifies the claim, showing that the respondents are not indifferent when discussing about this essential matter. They remark the areas to be improved most with apparent certainty. The given answers to this question mostly correspond to the areas the respondents have studied themselves, what denotes to the conformity between the things to be done and the things had been done already.

Along with the answers to the questions what the LL and professional development mean to the respondents and if they agree the strategies of LL facilitate teacher's professional development, the overview portrays that the teachers wish to improve their knowledge in order to increase their professional development, which they agree can be facilitated by the Lifelong Learning, verifying almost all of them are aware of the concept of LL, and, moreover, believing they are lifelong learners themselves or are on their way to become such (as the results of the seventeenth question later disclose).

In the next, thirteenth question of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked who they think should be responsible for facilitating teacher professional development. This question was intended to develop the aspect concerned in the previous one, and to find out those who teachers consider to take the highest responsibility on. It serves also to recognize if the implementation of the LL strategies can be therefore carried out successfully. To the author's of the DP mind, this question includes another hidden sub-question, which having answered, would also reveal the willingness to either be provided the information by someone else, or to search for it oneself. The opinions are displayed in the Figure 13.



**Figure 13.** Who do you think should be responsible for facilitating teacher professional development?

The data shows the evident prevalence of the answer option „all together”, clearly marking the common point of view expressed from both samples of the respondents. The author of the DP did not expect such a prevailing response to the option „teachers themselves”, what is a notable and positive indicator to the teachers’ own highly developed sense of responsibility. The high indicator of this responsibility can be tied together with the high indicator of the private investments, having been expended in order to study further (see the fifth question). That reveals the involvement of the teachers in order to broaden their professional competencies. At the same time teachers might have wished to highlight this point, saying if they are active themselves, they can not avoid the opportunities for broadening their professional competencies.

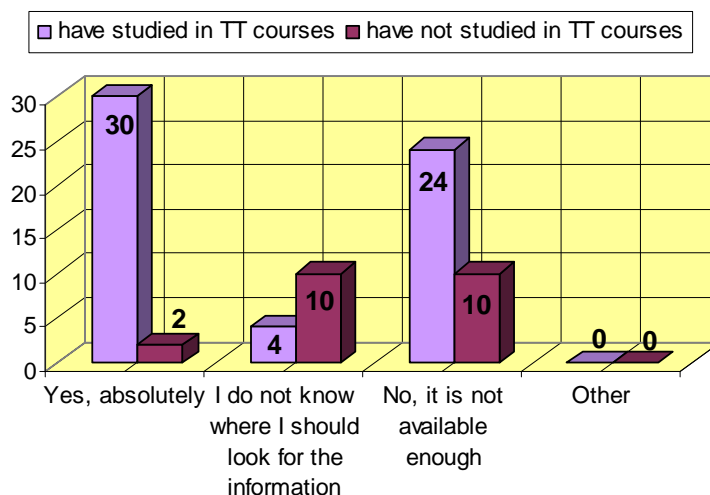
There was, as in many questions, more than one answer often selected by the respondent; sometimes there were even three options altogether. The author thinks it uncovers that teachers in general are aware of the functions of the mentioned educational institutions, and thus, their legal responsibilities. That is the reason almost all the options are selected.

The author believes the respondents generally regards this is the large scale responsibility, which should be enhanced and fostered by all the institutions and

administrative bodies concerning the education. They view it as the integrated process, which is to be enacted simultaneously by all of the educational institutions and stakeholders.

The next, fourteenth question inquires if the respondents consider the information about the TT courses available enough. This question, as well as the next two ones, deals with the aspect of the availability of the information. The author is convinced that, this aspect should be paid as much attention as the aspect of teachers' attitude towards the Lifelong Learning and professional development as such. The gathered data also revealed if the implementation of the LL strategies can be carried out successfully at all.

There were answers represented from both the respondents, who had and who had not studied in any courses, as well as the answers from pre-service and in-service teachers. The results are reflected in the Figure 14.



**Figure 14.** Do you think the information about TT courses is available enough?

There are 30 respondents, almost all in-service teachers, whose answers affirm that the information about the TT courses is absolutely available, what can be explained in the way the particular educational institutions they work at are well aware of the necessity to promote the teachers' professional development and accordingly fulfil their responsibilities. Although the answers to the question in what way the schools the teachers work at encourage and motivate them to attend TT courses (see the sixth question) showed the selection of the provision of information and keeping teachers informed about it prevails, analysing this question, it turns out that 24 of the respondents consider it not available enough. The author

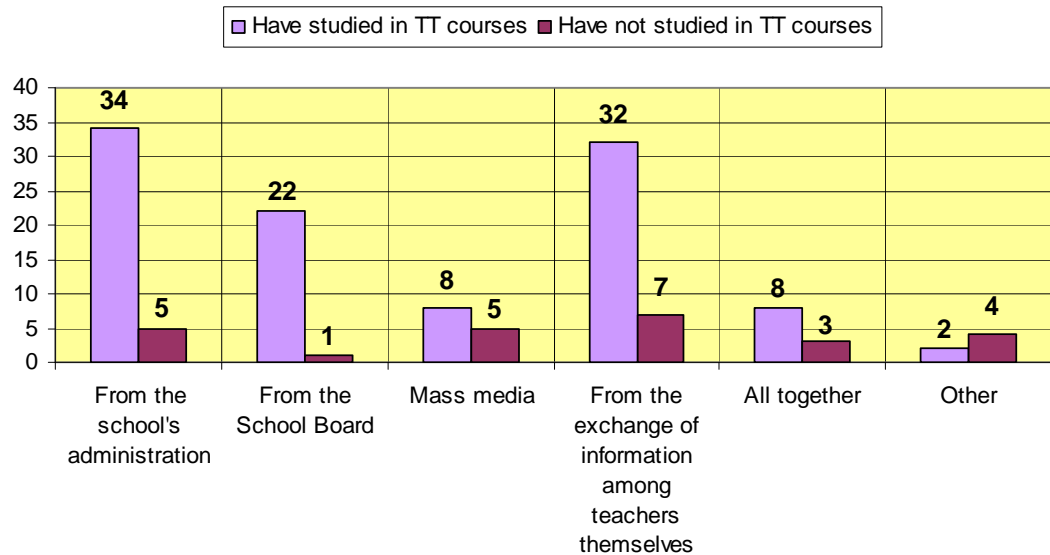
believes the respondents have sooner referred this to all of the educational institutions together mentioned in the previous, thirteenth question. The provided answers could be partly explained from the psychological point of view, by the way the respondents take the sequence of the questions in the questionnaire into the account.

Further on, there were 4 teachers, having studied in TT course, still admitted they did not know where they should look for the information. The author thinks that the fact they have had teacher training, does not always make implications that they associate any further studies with the process of their own professional development. They sooner had been offered to attend some training by any of the educational institutions or have been recommended by their colleagues.

As for the respondents, who have not studied in TT courses, the division is almost only between the fact they either do not know where to look for the information or they think it is not available enough. As the major part of them are pre-service students, this verifies that at the present they are not in need of their further professional development, though they are interested in this process to be enacted in future (see also the fourth question).

The author of the Diploma Paper would like to summarize that teachers are also very much expected to draw their attention and show interest to the latest innovations and reforms in the field they live and work, including the enrooted strategy of LL as much as it should be done within the educational management in all local and national authority levels. Moreover, they are expected to promote the process of their own personal development by involving themselves and taking part in applying for different TT courses.

To continue the analysis of the aspect of the availability and now also the dissemination of the information about teacher training, the fifteenth question was further introduced. The respondents were asked what information source about TT courses they had ever heard from. The question was intended to realize other sources, which spread the information alongside with the educational institutions, which are supposed to be the primary providers of the information. The division of the answers is shown in the Figure 15.



**Figure 15.** What information source about TT courses have you ever heard from?

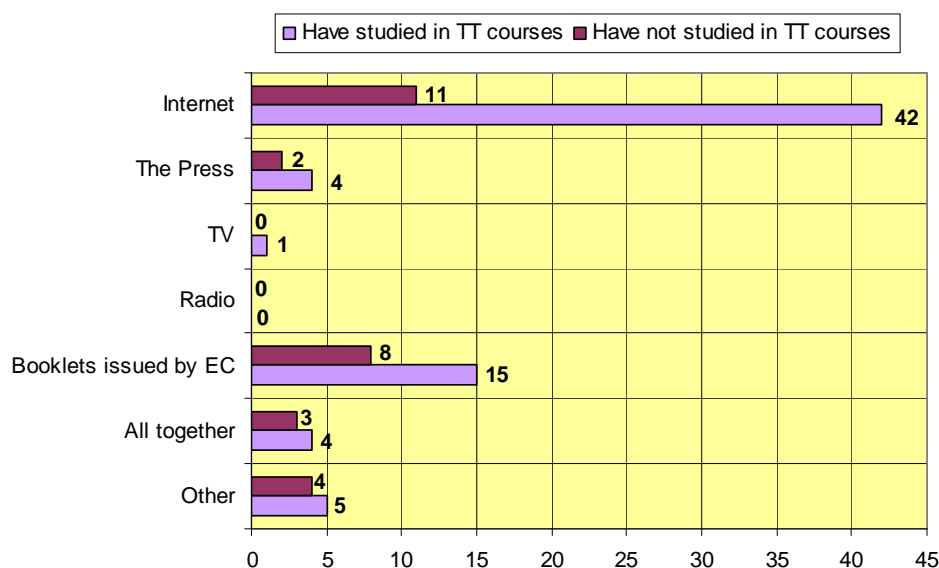
The Figure 15 above once again affirms that the schools are the main providers of the information. Nevertheless, it is quite a self-evident fact, for that reason the teachers spend their working hours in the school. The author believes that it only confirms the significance of the role of the educational environment teachers are working at.

It is further closely followed by the next most selected answer; it is the way of the exchanging the information among the teachers. As it is generally regarded the information is mostly being spread and what is more important, acquired by the way of verbal communication, and, moreover, it always proves its effectiveness. As the figure also displays the School Board is the third most acknowledged source. The author has consulted with the EL teacher, who has been studying in different TT courses from time to time and found out that the schools initially suggest teachers the sources where they should look up for the information, and the School Board is one of them. It may be concluded that all three information sources mentioned above are undoubtedly interlinked and the provision of the information can be regarded successful only when they all cooperate together.

Although there are altogether six respondents, having ticked the answer option “other”, only one clarified it were her friends, who gave the information about TT courses.

The teacher might often rely on the fact, the school will provide with all the necessary information, thus neglecting the source of mass media a little. Nevertheless, it is a very miscellaneous and flexible source of information, offering us a variety of ways to acquire the

information. Therefore, the sixteenth question was introduced in order to bring out the representatives of mass media, the respondents consider, provide the information about teacher training most frequently. As the total number of the respondents show, there was again more than one answer selected. The data gathered is displayed in the Figure 16.



**Figure 16.** Which one of mass media provides the information about teacher training most frequently?

The selections of the answer option “the Internet” prevails considerably. It also can be assured that the data in a way reveals the type of mass media the respondents prefer using. The Internet has considerably pushed aside other sources of information, such as the TV and the Press, as it becomes more and more accessible for the teachers due to the increased adoption of the modern technologies in educational institutions. As a result of upgrading the working conditions in educational institutions in order to conform to the latest innovations and requirements of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in education sphere, the usage of the Internet has grown frequent particularly in the recent years. The author of the DP recalls the answers given by the respondents on the knowledge areas which have to be improved, by mentioning ICT skills as the one of the uppermost importance. Almost no one doubts the efficiency of the usage of the Internet anymore; no matter how uneasy it was to be accustomed to at the beginning, especially for a certain part of teachers. The analysis of this question verifies it once more.

The both types of the respondents marked out that the booklets issued by the EC are also providing the information rather frequently. Taking into the account the total amount of those, who have not been studying in TT courses, comparatively big part of them have selected this answer option. The author of the DP interprets it because they often come across these materials in the higher education institutions they study at, as well as in various other places dealing with education, in libraries, for example. The author can assure it by her own experience with this kind of materials.

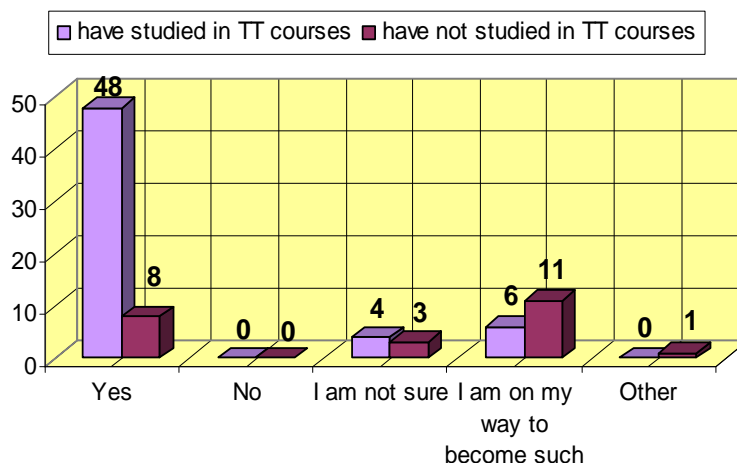
It is explainable in the following way that the information centres throughout the Europe, hosted by the European Commission, currently issues and spreads a great amount of informative materials, what have been carried out within the common education reforms framework. As it was mentioned earlier, it is the main educational goal of the EC, which is set to be achieved within a certain period of time.

There were some comments added by the respondents to this question as well. Two respondents specified the information had been provided by booklets from different institutions and the Centre for Curriculum Development and Examinations (ISEC), which is also responsible for implementing and supporting the government policy for the promotion of teachers training and their professional development. However, the rest of the comments shared the common view and stated they had not ever heard about the TT courses in any of the source. The author is convinced it is because of the fact that some people feel uncomfortable and therefore dislike using different kinds of information sources, saying it is time consuming and not always worth striving.

Summarizing the aspect of the availability, it has to be stated, that although the educational institutions, including schools, various educational administrative bodies, and such mass media sources as the Internet, are approved as the providers of the relevant information, the evaluation of the availability of the information about continuous teacher training possibilities discloses as being just half satisfactory. The conclusion may be drawn that it is the beginning of the way to the constant improvements to be made, and the both parties, the involvement of the teachers themselves and the educational establishments should be incorporated.

The last, seventeenth question was considered a closing one, giving the respondents the opportunity to evaluate themselves. The other reason of it being as the closing one was to entertain the respondent a little. To speak about oneself is usually a pleasant pastime from the

psychological point of view. Nevertheless, the main reason was to acknowledge the level of their awareness self as lifelong learners. The data is reflected in the Figure 17.



**Figure 17.** Do you consider yourself a lifelong learner?

It turned out to have an unambiguous confidence of being lifelong learners. As the questionnaire was said to be anonymous, the author of the DP believes it to be honest indicator of the self evaluation of the respondents. It also discloses a firm determination of the respondents to continue the started process of continuous learning in order to develop their professional competence. This is also further affirmed by the answer “I am on my way to become such”. It was surprisingly to realize there was no one admitting she or he was not a lifelong learner. The author believes it justifies the close connection between the respondents’ perception of the concept of LL and the professional development.

The results of the survey for EL teachers helped the author of the Diploma Paper realize the teachers mostly are interested and involved on condition that they are offered an opportunity to study further. However, being sometimes reluctant they do not show initiative, what can be explained by the overloaded and tiresome daily routines.

Secondly, teachers are well aware of the knowledge to be improved in order to professionally develop themselves. They acknowledge TT as the tool of broadening professional competence, and as the results gathered showed the majority was aware also of the concept of LL. Moreover, they agreed the strategy of LL can facilitate the professional development of the teacher.

Concerning the support teachers receive, provided by the educational institutions, the analysis of the survey revealed that those schools, enforcing their role as the information, prevail. The best achievements can be only gained when both parties cooperate and are involved. However, there can not be the extent to which teachers are informed about TT possibilities, judged objectively, as every school might have its own level of awareness. There could be a further discussion and action plan be developed and promoted in order to hasten the process of implementing the LL strategies.

The author would also like to remind there were different regions of Latvia surveyed. Although, there were several schools which did not respond at all, the author has observed that the involvement of EL teachers in continuing learning of the schools which responded to the survey, is very much the same. The provided answers therefore reflect the common opinion in different schools in Latvia.

To conclude, the author of the Diploma Paper believes there can be an evident conclusion drawn, which claims that the concept of Lifelong Learning is a prerequisite of continuous professional development of teachers.

## CONCLUSION

The aim of the Diploma Paper (DP) is to examine the current situation of the EL teacher in the education area in EU countries and to find out how the implementation of the Lifelong Learning (LL) strategy enhances the professional development of the English language (EL) teacher, as well as to analyse the opinions of the EL teachers regarding the main aim of the DP. The aim of the practical research deals with the hypothesis of the DP, which states that the implementation of the current strategies of Lifelong Learning (LL) enhances the professional development of the EL teachers, and which has been approved by the analysis of the results of the survey.

The author of the DP has acknowledged and described theoretical stand points and statements of the current improvements in the teacher education, particularly in pre-service and in-service EL teacher training, according to the set goals by the common EU education policy. The Policy aims to establish appropriate conditions for the teachers to acquire the new knowledge and skills to be competitive members of the social environment and labour market. To further develop the theme, the author has introduced the guidelines and innovations of the strategy of Lifelong Learning (LL) and the actions to be taken in Europe as well as in Latvia in order to implement it in the education systems, and accordingly in the general education institutions. With respect to the professional development of the language teacher, the strategy of LL within Europe aims to create conditions for them to have the opportunity to study continuously in order to broaden their professional competence. The schools and other educational institutions employing language teachers are highly recommended to be aware of the strategy of LL as such and to follow its latest innovations and activities; to act as the information providers and facilitators to keep the teachers motivated and encouraged to professionally develop and arouse their sense of lifelong learners. All these principles lay under the general aim of the LL, what prescribes the developing a common European area of Lifelong Learning, a knowledge society.

The conclusions of research the author of the Diploma Paper has drawn are highlighted in the following way: the major part of in-service EL teachers have studied in different types of continuing teacher training courses in order to broaden their professional competence. The author of the DP was surprised to realize the considerable part of the teachers' private investments having been allocated to have the possibility to study further,

what approves the personal involvement and intentions concerning the professional growth.

Nevertheless, as it could be expected, teacher training has mostly been financed by the governing educational bodies, such as the School Board, the grant from the EU funds; also the school was mentioned as the source of the finance probably because the school uptakes the finances from the EU funds. The information about such training programmes, in its turn, has been facilitated by the educational institutions teachers work at. The author regards this to be a positive aspect, taking into the account that according to the EU education policy, the schools should enact the role of information providers and coordinators in order to encourage teachers to attend teacher training courses.

The analysis of the gathered opinions also showed the knowledge aspects teachers have already obtained and, and what they consider a teacher should develop. The correlation between the answers given disclosed almost the same aspects, the greatest significance having been assigned to the acquisition of the new teaching methods, improvement of ICT skills and the organization of the teacher's work. To the author's of the DP mind, these are the areas in today's scope of education which have been put forward as the most essential ones. Its relevance can be verified by the fact that the most part of the respondents are fully or partly applying the gained knowledge, what means they have studied in TT courses with a certain purpose to put the knowledge in use.

Concerning the general availability of the information about the opportunities to develop professional competences the respondents state that they obtain it from the educational institutions, as well as from the exchange of information among colleagues. The author considers the communication among the colleagues to be a very motivating and facilitating factor serving as the encouragement to involve and take actions. The other reasonable information providers such as the Internet and the booklets issued by the EC are pointed out; however, the overall view of the availability differs, tending to be not available enough. Summarizing it, the author would like to note that the provision as such is already a part of the implementation of the strategy of Lifelong Learning.

The hypothesis can also be maintained by the recognition that teachers perceive the concept of LL and professional development as the matters closely interlinked, mostly of them agreeing the strategy of LL can facilitate their professional development. To give it added weight, most of the teachers surveyed considered themselves the lifelong learners.

The author of the DP acknowledges that the hypothesis has been proved, revealing the current situation of continuous professional development in Latvia, inseparably connected with the strategy of the LL. After the analysis of the data, the author of the DP is convinced that the implementation of the current and ongoing EU strategies of Lifelong Learning enhances the professional and personal development of the EL teachers.

All the previously stated issues considered and analysed can be concluded in the statement that the aim of the Diploma Paper is reached, although there are still areas to make implications in order to examine the teachers' attitude to the quality of the continuing teacher training and the providers of the training. There have been some uncertain and even negative points mentioned in the research analysis by few in-service teachers, having already studied in TT courses, and realizing it is not worth attending them. Referring to it, the author of the DP is convinced the adequate choice of the appropriate training programme meeting the changing needs of the teacher is absolutely required as the prerequisite for the successful implementing of the LL strategy.

## THESES

1. The EL teacher in Latvia is at the same time the citizen of the European Union, what means they are the central representative and the integral part of the common European Higher Education Area (EHEA).
2. The ongoing higher educational programmes have been shortened and improved at the same time within the common European framework (Bologna Declaration) in order to promote faster joining of teachers to the labour market, and to enforce an efficient comparability of acquired degrees.
3. The Member States of the EU has been invited to increase teacher mobility in general, recommending that not only pre-service, but also in-service teachers should also be offered an opportunity to spend some time abroad in order to increase their professional competence.
4. In-service teacher training is considered a part of adult education, which includes all types of formal, non-formal and informal education. It is provided to satisfy needs in lifelong education process to support professional development and competitiveness in the labour market.
5. The professional development of the teacher cannot be distinguished from his/her personal development; both of the concepts are mutually intertwined.
6. Teachers cannot act alone in order to professionally develop, they need to be supported by the educational institutions where they are employed. In order to foster this, the European Commission address this requirement to National and regional education policy makers.
7. The Lifelong learning has increased its significance in Latvia as well, due to the growing demands for the knowledge society in the EU context. Different events have been carried out to facilitate the awareness of the LL among the citizens.
8. The EL teachers in Latvia mostly associate the concept of LL with the process of teachers' professional development, believing it can be facilitated by the implementation of the LL. The teachers also acknowledge themselves as Lifelong learners.
9. The role of the different types of educational establishments and governing bodies as the facilitators of the implementation of the LL strategies is indisputable and invaluable.

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