Riga Distance Education Secondary School

RDESS graduates
Laura Kalnina
Laura Ikauniece



Why was the opening of Distance Education Secondary School in Latvia so urgent?

1. A rich experience has been accumulated in the world concerning distance education. The time has come to adapt this experience in Latvia not only on university or college and secondary school level but even on basic school level (7-9 grades).

2. There were initiative people who were ready to introduce new and unprecedented approach to education.

3. For the increasing number of people the necessity has arisen for distance education.

- After joining the European Union many politicians and their families went abroad to represent Latvia in the EU institutions.

- 3-4 years ago due to economic crisis many Latvian families left the country for the search of better jobs, but their children wished to continue their education in the Latvian language.

- The increasing number of school age children and adolescents were dissatisfied with the traditional school, and they needed more individualized approach.
- There were several reasons.
  - Many young people have so marked individuality –image, behaviour, way of thinking, values, that they were excluded from the traditional school environment.
  - Quite a number of adolescents themselves did not wish to adapt to the traditional school environment.

- Education possibilities for children with special needs who either cannot or do not want to attend a traditional school is a pressing problem in Latvia .

- For an increasing number of people who had obtained basic education or professional training but had not finished secondary school distance education is their second chance.

- Due to economic crisis small rural schools were closed down. Distance education helps these children to acquire education without leaving their parents and commuting long distances.

- Up to now adults were offered various professional education but they could not combine work and studies to acquire secondary education.

The concept, implementation and development of Riga Distance Education Secondary School

The concept of distance school was worked out by Ilze Kalniņa while as an assistant professor she was lecturing at universities of Latvia.



When was the Distance Education Secondary school founded?

The concept, implementation and development of Riga Distance Education Secondary School

Assessing the necessity and economic situation in the country, and supported by the Ministry of Education and Science, Embassy of the Republic of Latvia to Ireland and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, **the first Distance Education Secondary School in Latvia was founded in 2009.**

Riga Distance Education Secondary School (RDESS)

Riga Distance Education Secondary School is the first distance secondary school in Latvia.

The school is accredited for 6 years, and in accordance with the Education Law of the Latvian Republic implements the curricula in a form of extramural studies – distance education.



Enrolment.
Does a student need specific characteristics to study in RDESS?

Students' enrolment is carried out throughout the year. Riga Distance Education Secondary School students are from 22 different countries and cover an age group from 14 to 57 years.

RDESS requirements for enrolment are the same as in traditional schools. Advantage for enrolment – students can do that electronically if they are not in Latvia in our homepage. Our wish is that a student is willing to study.

Every student has individual study plan, it depends on previous education.

It is possible to finish school faster, for example, covering two academic years program in one.



Riga Distance Education Secondary School: Study programmes (1):

Only one study programme was implemented during the first academic year:

- General secondary education comprehensive programme. 168 students, mostly vocational school leavers aged from 25 to 40 started this programme*.

* Students who had professional training without acquiring secondary education which prevents them from enrolling in higher educational establishments.

Riga Distance Education Secondary School: Study programmes (2):

At present the school implements 4 accredited programmes :

- General secondary comprehensive education programme;
- General secondary study program in the humanities and social sciences;
- Basic education programme, 2nd level (7-9 grades);
- Professional efficiency programme *University of Success*

Riga Distance Education Secondary School: advantages (1):

- to acquire basic, secondary education and professional efficiency education **at any age**;

  (at present students aged from 13 to 57 study at distance education school)

- to acquire education in the Latvian language **in any country of the world**;

  (Students live and work in more than 20 countries)

- you can **combine easily** studies, work, hobbies and family.

  (athletes, models, young mothers, etc.)



Riga Distance Education Secondary School: advantages (2):

- learning support system is elaborated to suit busy people
  - possibility to study according individually tailored plan;
  - voluntary attendance of consultations once a month);
  - individual tutoring via the Internet (Skype);

Riga Distance Education Secondary School: advantages (3):

- leaning materials are elaborated by teachers which offer theoretical basis, self-study materials, and exercises for self-evaluation;
- videoed lessons to consolidate the knowledge;
- possibility keeping in touch with fellow students via school's forum and portals Draugiem.lv, Facebook.com, Twitter.com, Skype.



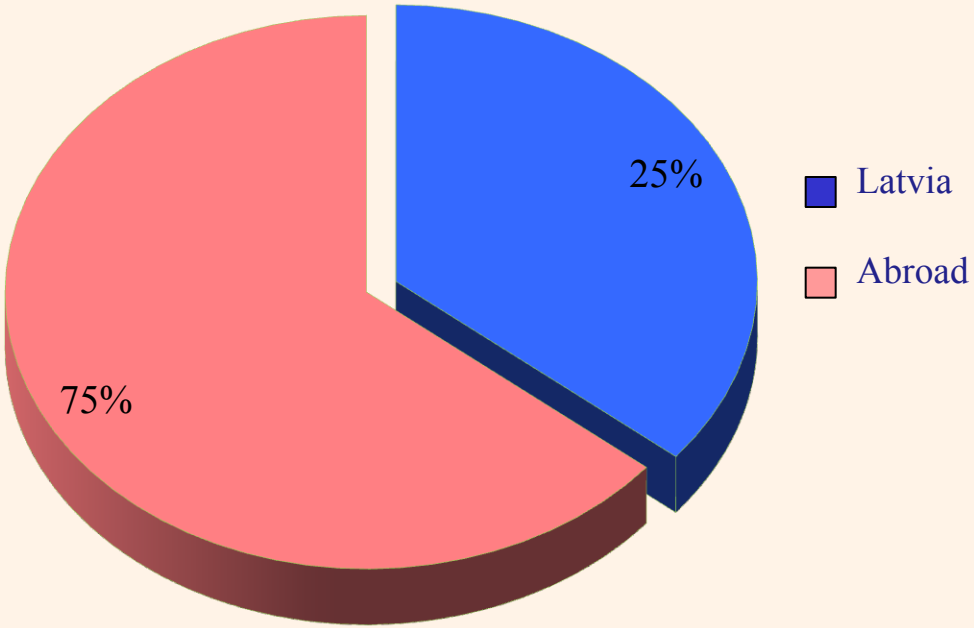
Who studies at Riga Distance Education Secondary School?

Students

2012/2013 academic year

At present there are 537 students, out of them:

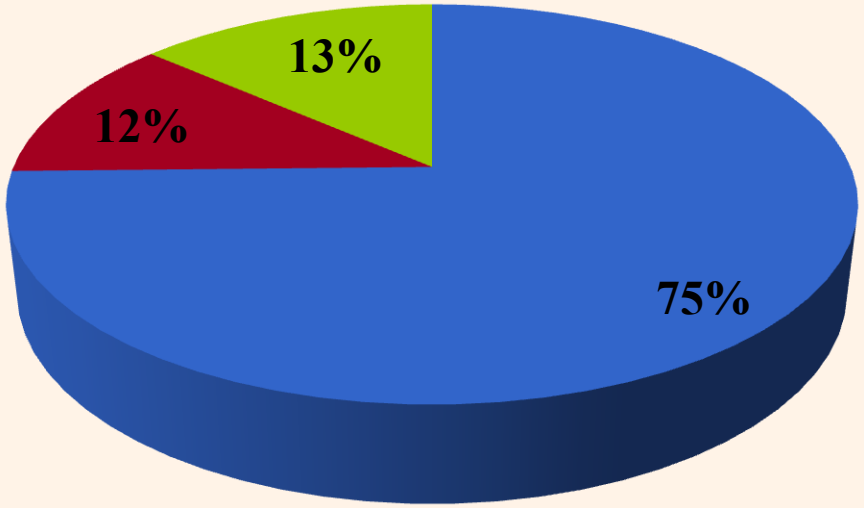
Distribution of students according the place of residence



Students
2012/2013 academic year

Distribution of students according the study programmes :

- General secondary comprehensive education programme
- General secondary study programme in the humanities and social sciences
- Basic education programme, 2nd level (7-9 grades)





Athletes



The Latvian Embassy In the UK
Children of Latvian ambassadors



The imprisoned



Soldiers of Latvian army

RĪGAS Tālmācības VIDUSSKOLA

Target groups



Students at school age



Students with special needs



Businessmen



Young mothers



Latvians living elsewhere in the world

Students of Riga Distance Education Secondary School















More specific: athletes

Among RDESS graduates and current students are:

hockey, football and basketball players, motorcycle riders, gymnasts and models, professional dancers and handball players, horse riders, cyclists and swimmers.



RDESS understands that many athletes have their active seasons in sport.

For example, many hockey players start the academic year in RDESS during the summer, because they are too busy to study at the end of winter / start of spring.



Laura Ikauniece



- Graduated RDESS in 2011
- Currently studies at the University of Latvia, state-funded group, health education and PE teacher faculty.
- Laura took approximately one and the half hour a day while she was studying at RDESS.
- Laura is training herself everyday 3 hours a day.
- Training camps are two in winter, one in spring, each of them is one month long.





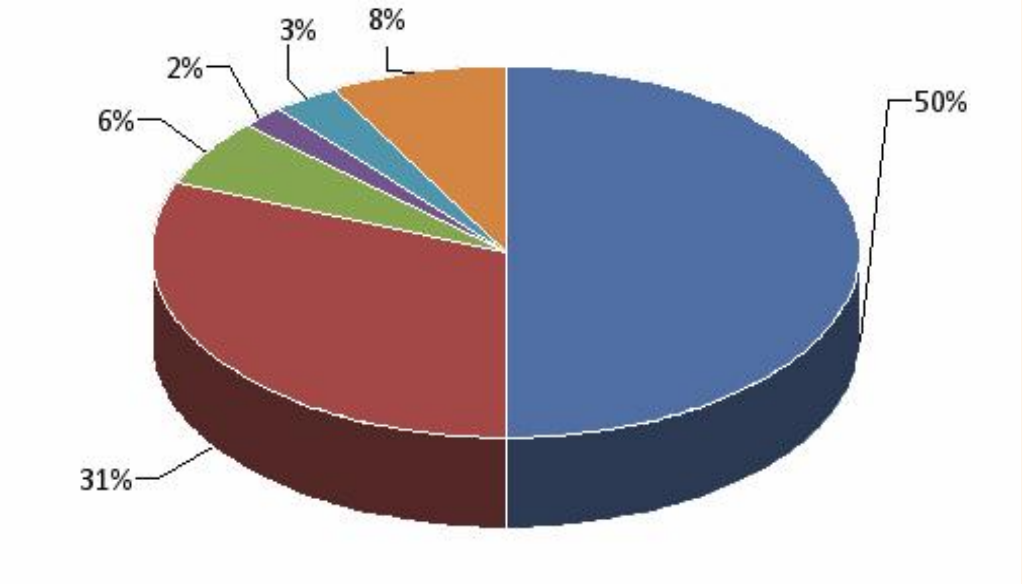




How is the study process organized?

Distribution of the study process, %

- self-dependent studies according supplementary materials offered by the school, 50%;
- self-dependent studies according recommended course books, 31%;
- consultations in groups at school once a month, 6%;
- individual tutoring at school, 2%;
- individual tutoring via the Internet, 3%;
- tests, 8%.



The organization of the learning process (1)

The percentage of students timetable shows how much time is advisable to spend on independent studies, consultations and tests.

The organization of the learning process (2)

- The school employs 29 teachers
- The teachers have elaborated supplementary teaching materials in his/her subject.
- Co-financing from EU Structural funds for the project *Study content elaboration and further education of mathematics, nature science and new technology teachers* is used.

The organization of the learning process (3)

- The students have the possibility to take part in the pilot project **Comprehension Sheet**, and use the new model of study material acquisition, and express their opinions on acquisition of exact sciences in a simplified and more comprehensible way;
- Comprehension Sheet is a new kind of study supplementary learning material for improvement of learning and communication, and is available on the Internet.http://www.goerudio.com/izpratnes-lapa

The organization of the learning process (4)

- The cooperation agreement with SIA “Data Pro Grupa” site **uzdevumi.lv,** which allows using their materials in improvement of the study.

  The portal helps students to learn school subjects and prepare for exams independently

  Available at www.uzdevumi.lv

The administration of the learning process

The supportive function of the internet includes:

Using the homepage of the school
www.talmacibasvsk.lv

RDESS e-klase (e-class) informs about the possibilities to get teachers' or organizational support.



How is the development of personality promoted and career choice supported?

Promotion of personality development

The school takes part in :

- Nordea Riga marathon
- Street basketball competitions
- Lymerick sport games
- Winter Olympics of Latvian youth
- Inter-school bowling tournament
- Organization of various competitions in Latvia
- Christmas party
- Participating in the activities of *University of Success*
- School-leaving party at Melngalvju nams

Support to career choice (1)

Cooperation agreements with several institutions of higher education, where the students can continue their education

SIA “Biznesa augstskola Turība”; Business High school

SIA “RISEBA”; Riga International School of Economics and Business Administration

SIA “Ekonomikas un kultūras augstskola”; Economics and Culture High school

SIA Sociālā darba un sociālās pedagoģijas augstskola “Attīstība”; Social work and social pedagogics high school

SIA “Juridiskā koledža”; College of Law

SIA “Alberta koledža”; The Alberta College

Cooperation and exchange of experience with Oza secondary school in Vilnius (Lithuania)

Support to career choice (2)

The school informs its students about competitions and offers by placing information in e-klase, **“Konkursi”**, thus granting the access to useful information

Support to career choice (3)

The implementation of study programme is carried out in close connection with reality by including environment education in the teaching process and taking part in competitions:

What is a competitive person in Latvia like, 2010
A computer for me, 2011
An ipod for me, 2012

Funding

Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia, Embassy of Latvia in Ireland and United Kingdom support Riga Secondary School of Distance Education.

Riga Secondary School of Distance Education is a private school with private finances. But Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia provides the national budget subsidy for teachers' salaries.

Future plans

- Modernise and improve school's e-klase environment
- Analyse and improve school's methodology
- Create new videoed teaching materials
- Wider inclusion of students in "Skype" consultations
- Continuously staying as a leading distance education school in Latvia

Riga Distance Education Secondary School in Europe

- RDESS is TOP200 in Europe of Distance Learning Schools
- RDESS was presented by Laura Kalnina during the European Virtual Schools Colloquium that took place on 22nd-24th May 2012 in Sheffield, UK.
- In November 2012 RDESS will be represented in Brussels by Giles Pepler, a Senior Consultant in Sero Consulting Ltd.

Video from the European Virtual Schools Colloquium in Sheffield:

http://www.talmacibasvsk.lv/?ZGGM2e2aF%3DsyLOMOLyuG8sv6n9av65

Thank you for your attention!

