



EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SCIENCE COMMITTEE



Arvils Ašeradens, Chairman of the Education, Science and Culture Committee

The Education, Culture and Science Committee (hereinafter – Committee) is one of the standing committees of the Saeima that holds legislative powers.

The Chairman of the Committee during the 13th Saeima is Arvils Ašeradens. To see the full list of the Committee members, visit the Saeima webpage at www.saeima.lv.

FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee is responsible for matters pertaining to education, culture, science, official language and sports, as these areas are interlinked and vital for Latvia. The Committee deals not only with developments in these various sectors but also keeps sight of the

strategic goals and sustainable development of the country.

LEGISLATIVE TASKS OF THE COMMITTEE:

- Preparing draft laws submitted to it as the responsible parliamentary body for further official consideration by all MPs;
- Providing its opinion on draft laws submitted to it as a co-responsible parliamentary body;
- Submitting proposals for draft laws and initiating legislation;
- Drafting and submitting draft resolutions for approval by the Saeima resulting from the tasks stipulated in the legislation.

As part of parliamentary scrutiny, the Committee constantly monitors the work of the government, ensuring that it handles socially relevant matters with maximum efficiency. The Committee also handles written requests and proposals. During its field meetings, the Members of the Committee meet representatives of local governments and local education, culture and sports experts in order to determine whether challenges of specific territories or institutions require legislative changes.

The Committee also meets with its counterparts from foreign parliaments and representatives of international institutions such as Lamberto Zannier, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities, representatives of the Committee on Culture and the Committee on Education and Science of the Lithuanian Seimas, as well as the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of Lithuania, the delegation of the Committee on Education, Research and Technology Assessment of the German Bundestag. The relevant committees from the other two Baltic

CHAIRPERSONS OF THE COMMITTEE

Convocation	Name	Tenure
5 th Saeima	Andrejs Siliņš	26.07.1993 – 06.11.1995
6 th Saeima	Dzintars Ābiķis	16.11.1995 – 02.11.1998
7 th Saeima	Dzintars Ābiķis	12.11.1998 – 04.11.2002
8 th Saeima	Jānis Strazdiņš	15.11.2002 – 02.11.2006
9 th Saeima	Jānis Strazdiņš	17.11.2006 – 02.11.2010
10 th Saeima	Ina Druviete	04.11.2010 – 17.10.2011
11 th Saeima	Ina Druviete	20.10.2011 – 23.01.2014
	Dana Reizniece-Ozola	28.01.2014 – 03.11.2014
12 th Saeima	Jānis Vucāns	10.11.2014 – 18.02.2016
	Ilze Viņķele	18.02.2016 – 14.09.2017
	Aldis Adamovičs	19.09.2017 – 06.11.2018
13 th Saeima	Arvils Ašeradens	Since 21.11.2018

States are invited to visit the Saeima to promote the development of a common education area.

For its part, the Latvian National Commission for UNESCO participate in the work of the Committee when it discusses such vital issues as the role of life-long learning, the synergy between culture and the national development plan in facilitating the country's growth, the challenges of inclusive education, the accessibility of high-quality education, etc.

In 2019, the Committee considers such matters as the state budget financing for the education, science, culture and sports; the improvement of the quality of the general education and optimal utilisation of resources, the gradual transition to the official language as the sole language of instruction in general secondary education; the promotion of inclusive education; the introduction of education quality monitoring and the improved governance of higher education institutions; the match between the number of students in information and communication technology field and the demand in the labour market; the link between scientific progress and economic development; the protection of art, cultural and architectural monuments, and the construction of new culture sites; the development of the film industry, the infrastructure development of the National Archives of Latvia.

The Committee's meetings serve as a forum for exchanging diverse political ideas and opinions on how to deal with particular matters at hand. The broad

range of representatives invited to the Committee meetings provides a better insight into the opinion of the society and the views of industry experts.

The legal framework for the **education** sector includes the Education Law, the Vocational Education Law, the General Education Law and the Law on Institutions of Higher Education.

In the first quarter, the Committee has prepared amendments to the Education Law for further consideration by the Saeima regarding the register of education documents issued by foreign states and the information system for State examinations. It also dedicated several meetings to the reorganisation and financing of boarding schools. During the spring session of 2019, the Committee will consider amendments to the Education Law submitted by the Cabinet of Ministers providing for administrative liability and application of penalties in the education sector.

The **science** sector in Latvia is regulated by the Law on Scientific Activity. The commercialisation of innovation and research outcomes is governed by the Patent Law and the Industrial Property Institutions and Procedures Law.

The **culture** sector is governed by the Museums Law, the Law on Libraries, the Law on Coat of Arms, the Film Law, the Design Law, the Copyright Law, the Latvian National Opera and Ballet Law, the Law on Protection of Cultural Monuments, etc. Special emphasis should be placed on the Song and Dance Festival Law that plays a very important role in

preserving and furthering the tradition of song and dance festivals that have a special place in every Latvian's heart.

In the field of **sports**, the Sports Law and the Law on the Status of a National Sports Facility specify the general and legal basis for sports organisation and development, mutual relationships of sports organisations, State and local government institutions and basic tasks in sports development, and the basis for the financing of sport, as well as the principles that shall be followed when taking part in the international sports movement.

The Official Language Law ensures the maintenance, protection and development of the Latvian language.

Laws are constantly updated to address public concerns and to introduce innovations in response to public and economic development. It is the main task of the Committee, which is the main forum in the Saeima for comprehensive and thorough debates on proposed legislation within the scope of its competence. Currently the following draft laws are envisaged in the legislative process: the Law on the Freedom Monument and the Riga Brethren Cemetery, the Law on the Riga St. Peter's Church, the Law on the Centres for Culture, as well as draft laws regarding the system for introducing codification of administrative violations: "Amendments to the Design Law", "Amendments to the Education Law" and "Amendments to the Law on Protection of Cultural Monuments".

SUBCOMMITTEES

The Committee may establish subcommittees to fulfil specific tasks. During the 13th Saeima, the Education, Culture and Science Committee created two subcommittees: the Sports Subcommittee and the Higher Education, Science and Innovation Subcommittee.

Agendas of the meetings of the Committee and its subcommittees are available on the Saeima website.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SUBCOMMITTEES

Convocation	Subcommittee
6 th Saeima	Subcommittee on Drafting the Education Law
7 th Saeima	Sports Subcommittee
8 th Saeima	Sports Subcommittee
	Subcommittee on the Future Development of Latvia
9 th Saeima	Sports Subcommittee
	Subcommittee on Monitoring the Implementation of the National Development Plan
10 th Saeima	Sports Subcommittee
11 th Saeima	Sports Subcommittee
	Civic Education Subcommittee
12 th Saeima	Sports Subcommittee
	Civic Education and Youth Affairs Subcommittee
13 th Saeima	Sports Subcommittee
	Higher Education, Science and Innovation Subcommittee