

NEWSLETTER

ERASMUS+ PROJECT "BE-AWARE RE-AWARE AND RE-DISCOVER CURIOSITY
AND CONNECTION IN
EDUCATION THROUGH OUTDOOR LEARNING.
2020-1-LT01-KA226-SCH-094825



Co-funded by the
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On March 2021 Baloži Secondary School started to implement Erasmus + strategic partnership project No. 2020-1-LT01-KA226-SCH-094825 "Be-aware Re-aware and Re-discover curiosity and connection in education through outdoor learning. (Pop-up Learning) in response to the global situation of COVID-19. The aim of the project is to re-evaluate, discover and revitalize outdoor learning as a teaching method in the acquisition of various subjects and skills in the basic education program.

The main goals of the project are the following:

- Strengthen the profile of teachers: be creative and pro-active in identifying and finding solutions to the challenges - individual or academic - that individual students face.
- Try a needs-based virtual training program based on digital-outdoor training;
- Motivate students for online learning;
- prepare materials that facilitate the online learning process for teachers;
- Prepare, adapt and involve students in the new learning reality;
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- To improve students 'and teachers' communication, cooperation, critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving skills;
- Raise cultural awareness and develop the global skills of our students and teachers, which are so necessary for the future;
- Increase cross-sectoral cooperation in school education
- Establish an EU-wide digital outdoor learning learning platform that will lead to new projects.

During the implementation of this project it is planned to jointly prepare a number of intellectual results. One of them envisages that each of the partners prepares 5 virtual training courses for teachers, aimed at the application of the outdoor learning method in the acquisition of various subjects and skills, in the promotion of this approach. In turn, all partners jointly prepare 3 virtual international level training courses.

The second intellectual result is to prepare a toolkit dedicated to outdoor teaching methods. This material is designed to bring together tips, activities and strategies that engage students in online learning.

Project coordinator:

Rokiskis nursery-kindergarten "Varpelis" - LITHUANIA

Project partners:

Baloži Secondary School - Latvia

PROGEU- social-promotion association - Italy

Associaton for Human Resources Development - Croatia

Private school "Synchroni Paideia" - Greece

European Innovative Society Association (EISA) - Turkey

Project duration:

March 1, 2021 - August 31, 2022



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About Baloži secondary school

Baloži Secondary school history stretches back to the year 1948. when after the world war 2 were established first primary school classes in the newly built village Baloži. The school old part as it is today was built in 1958, when 8-year education was introduced. Baloži secondary school was established in the year 2009, by Ķekava Municipality Council 's decision with aim to implement general education in primary and secondary levels. The school implements 4 educational programs:

- Pre-school (kindergarden) educational program*
- Primary education program from 1.-9.grade;*
- Secondary education program from 10.-12.grade*
- Primary education program for minorities from 1.-9.grade.*

In 2011 the new part of the school was built together with modern sport facilities. The expansion of school premises allows to plan expansion of students in the next following years.

At the moment there are about 400 students and ~40 teachers.

The school implements also several interest educational programs that are affiliated to the school and complements general education programs. There are available following after school activities - boys choir, mixed children choir, bicycle safety, ensemble singing, ceramic/clay workshop, basketball, floor ball activities.

Baloži secondary school is one of the schools in Latvia which implements educational programs in two languages – Latvian and Russian. In this sense it makes our school unique from cultural perspective. Students from the first grade are challenged to cope with different cultures in everyday life and learn how to tolerate them.



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Latvian education system

The education system is administered at three levels - national, municipal and institutional. The Parliament (Saeima), the Cabinet of Ministers and the Ministry of Education and Science are the main decision-making bodies at national level. The Ministry of Education and Science is the education policy development and implementation institution that oversees the national network of education institutions, sets educational standards and determines teacher training content and procedures.

The tuition fee for pre-school, basic and secondary education in a state or municipality founded educational establishment shall be funded from the national or municipal budget. A private educational institution may set a tuition fee for providing education.

Pre-school education

Children are involved in pre-school preparation from the moment they start attending kindergartens or pre-primary education institutions. Pre-school education is available from the age of 1.5 years, but children may enter from 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 years of age. It is mandatory to participate in pre-primary education programmes for five and six year old children who do not attend pre-school education institutions. The objective of the pre-school education curriculum is to ensure multi-faceted development of a child's personality, to promote health and readiness to enter the primary stage of basic education. Pre-school education is considered a comprehensive first stage of general education and all children have to complete it by the time they are 7 years old. This deadline may be extended for a year due to specific health or psychological problems by parental request or doctors' request or recommendations.



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Latvian education system

Basic education

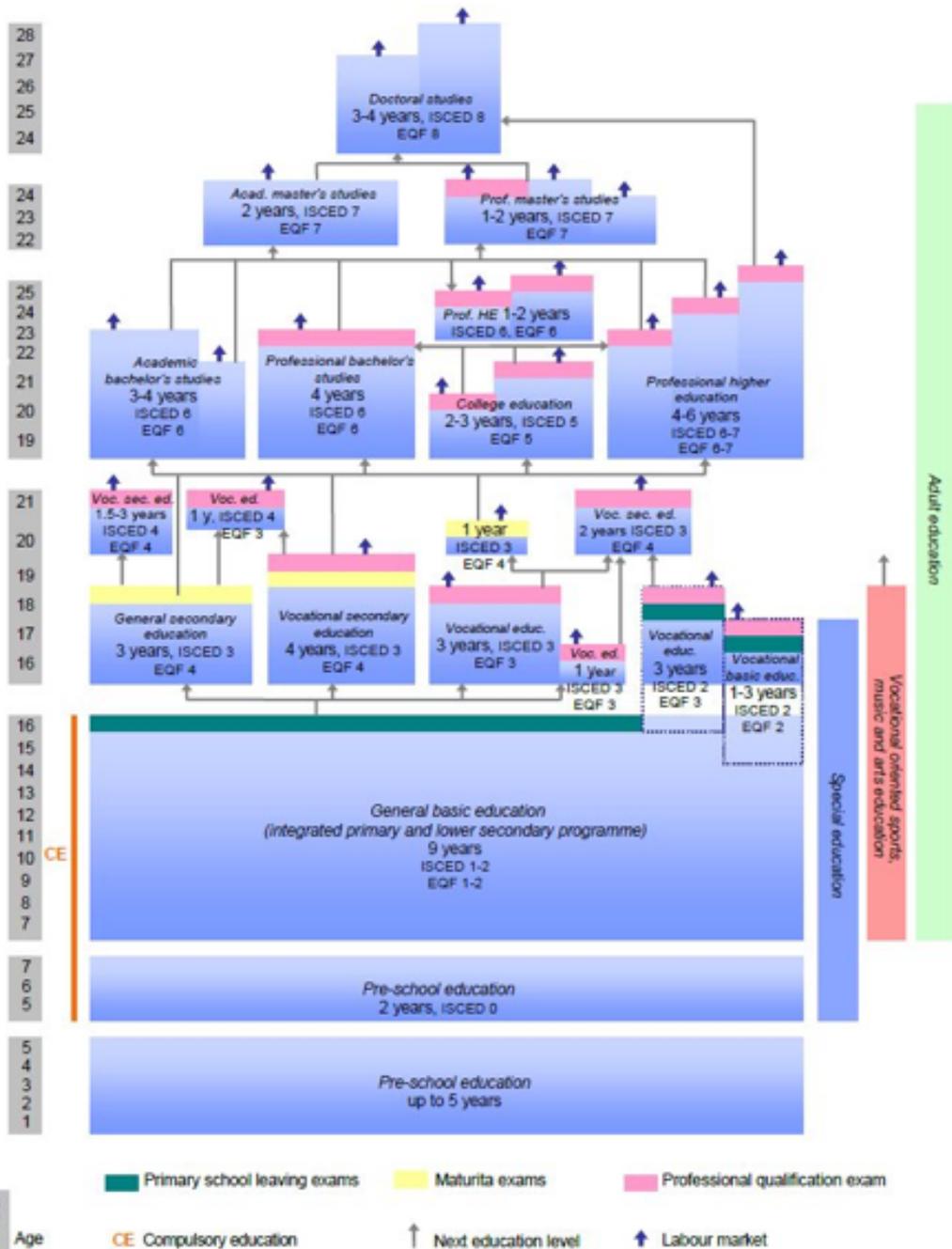
9-year single structure basic education is compulsory for all children from the age of 7 and is generally completed till the age of 16, but may continue till the age of 18. The National Basic Education Standard determines the objectives and tasks, compulsory curriculum and the principles and procedures for assessment of basic education. The aim of basic education is to provide opportunities for acquiring the basic knowledge and skills required for community and personal life, to lay the foundation for continuing education, to promote the learner's harmonious development and to foster a responsible attitude toward one's self, family, society, the environment and the state.



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The education system of the Republic of Latvia (2019)





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What is outdoor learning?

'Outdoor learning' is an umbrella term for actively inclusive facilitated approaches that predominately use activities and experiences in the outdoors which lead to learning, increased health and wellbeing, and environmental awareness.

People benefit from outdoor learning in all areas of life. Outdoor Learning provides a highly effective way of addressing some of society's key challenges:

Lifelong activity and learning

At the intrapersonal level: strengthening self-confidence through engagement with activities and the environment leading to lifelong participation and outdoor competence. Learning through experiences and developing skills, knowledge, character, resilience, and a positive approach to risk-taking.

Appreciating and valuing differences

At the interpersonal level: providing a safe and supportive setting to enhance social skills, appreciate and value difference. Making time to meet and interact with peers and role models from outside the home, school or work environment. Encouraging meaningful relationships across generations that foster tolerance, respect and kindness.



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What is outdoor learning?

Sense of place and community

At the societal level: providing space for spontaneous, in the moment events that are driven by the needs and interests of self and others. Developing a sense of place leading to greater engagement with the community and an appreciation of the opportunities available to live, learn and work in the local area.

Benefits for children

Quality physical and emotional development of children is not possible without physical activity. Physical activity in nature has a very beneficial impact on the child development in general. The environment serves as the medium of beneficial impact on the overall development of a child. Activities in fresh air promote brain development, reduce concentration problems and it is easier for a child to learn and acquire new academic subjects. It also increases the child's well-being. Children who spend at least two hours in the fresh air each day are much happier than those who entertain themselves indoors. Doing physical activities outdoors the children learn about the environment. For children life is movement and sensory stimulation. The children obtain the information about the environment through self-experience, gaining experience and information through activities that promote the child's development, like climbing, catching, holding balance, grabbing items, searching something, jumping, swinging, rolling, running etc.