Surveys conducted by the Ministry of Education and Science at the end of the 2019/2020 academic year

The survey data were compiled, and the report was drawn up by Edurio.

The surveys were conducted in the time period from 26 May till 12 June 2020.

The questionnaires were completed by:
- **4662** teachers of general secondary and secondary vocational education institutions;
- **8352** parents of 1st - 12th grade pupils;
- **10177** pupils of 5th - 12th grades at general secondary education institutions and students of secondary vocational education institutions;
- **360** heads of secondary education institutions.

IN BRIEF

- **The evaluation provided by most teachers, pupils and parents has demonstrated that their school has provided a good or very good distance learning service.**

- **Distance learning has provided a significant leap in the digitalisation of the learning process.** Teachers mention learning digital tools as the main professional benefit, 3/4 of the teachers had the opportunity of conducting lessons online.

- **76% of the teachers spent much more time teaching remotely than in person.** 74% of the teachers often or very often felt overwhelmed.

- **The experience of distance learning has differed significantly for pupils from different schools of Latvia.** The study load of the pupils, the forms of learning, weekly and daily lesson plans, as well as other elements differed considerably.

- **The role of parents during distance learning was far more important than their role during full-time learning.** On average, 42% of the surveyed parents spent 3 or more hours a day helping their children with their studies.

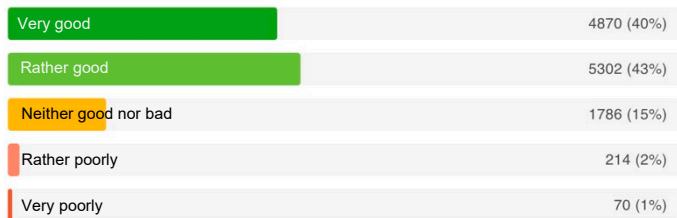# Distance learning - description of the situation

The evaluation provided by 94% of the teachers, 83% of the pupils and 77% of the parents has demonstrated that their school has provided a good or very good distance learning service.

72% of the pupils replied that they succeeded in remote learning rather well or very well, only 7% of the pupils replied that their success was rather poor or very poor. From the teachers' point of view, the process looked even more positive, with 86% of the teachers saying that their pupils did quite well or very well at distance learning, with only 1% of the teachers saying that the pupils managed quite poorly or very poorly. In general, teachers were also very satisfied with their ability to conduct learning remotely - 90% of the teachers replied that they managed to conduct learning remotely quite well or very well, only 1% replied that they succeeded quite poorly or very poorly.

Slightly more than half (53%) of parents are rather convinced or very confident that their child or children have acquired new skills and competences through distance learning and that their growth is noticeable. In contrast, almost a quarter, or 24% of the parents, are rather unsure or very unsure about that. The opinions of the parents vary considerably depending on the school their children attend as well - there are institutions where 80% of the parents are rather convinced or convinced that their child or children have acquired new skills and competences through distance learning, their growth is noticeable, however, there are also schools, where less than 30% of the parents are more or less confident.

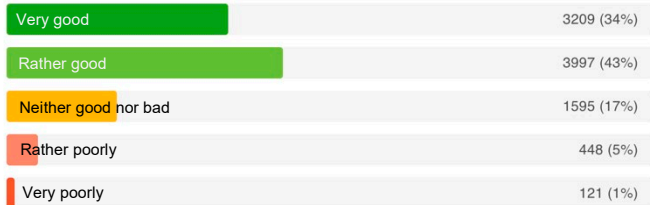**3) How did your school provide distance learning?**

12,242 answers

Very good	4870 (40%)
Rather good	5302 (43%)
Neither good nor bad	1786 (15%)
Rather poorly	214 (2%)
Very poorly	70 (1%)

Average	Positive answers
4.2	83%

Respondents: parents

2) How did your school ensure distance learning?

9,370 answers

Very good	3209 (34%)
Rather good	3997 (43%)
Neither good nor bad	1595 (17%)
Rather poorly	448 (5%)
Very poorly	121 (1%)

Average	Positive answers
4.0	77%

Respondents: pupils

3) How did your educational establishment ensure distance learning?

4,958 answers

Very good	2435 (49%)
Rather good	2228 (45%)
Neither good nor bad	276 (6%)
Rather poorly	14 (0%)
Very poorly	5 (0%)

Average	Positive answers
4.4	94%
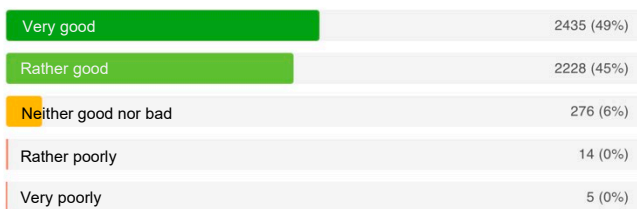
Respondents: teachers

Distance learning process

What was the daily life of the pupils like? Questions about the main components of teaching were summarised in a teacher survey. Most of the distance learning process of the pupils consisted of the performance of different types of tasks:

- creating and saving as documents on a computer (64%),
- performing interactively online (58%),
- filling out on paper (57%).

This is followed by obtaining information in 3 different ways:

- watching a teacher's presentation or video (52%),
- reading digital or non-digital texts (49%),
- watching the TV channel "Tava klase" (Your class) (38%).

Daily learning activities of slightly fewer pupils involved participation in online video lessons (34%) and even fewer - different types of creative work:

- recording video or audio (32%),
- drawing, gluing, creating visual arts (25%),
- writing essays, argumentative conclusions and other written works (25%).

21) Mark 3-5 main components and elements of distance learning that involved a lot of invested effort and gained experience by the pupils during your lessons, both independently and online.

4,716 answers

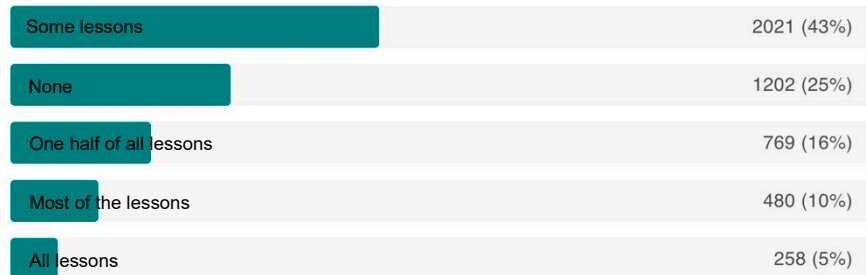|	
Performance of tasks on the computer, saving the work in the form of a document and	3023 (64%)
Performance of interactive tasks, including the use of automatic answer checks or …	2729 (58%)
Completion of written assignments in their notebook, worksheet, or on paper	2684 (57%)
Independent watching of a presentation or a video prepared by a teacher	2439 (52%)
Reading of digital or paper books, texts	2321 (49%)
Watching the TV channel "Tava klase" (Your class)	1793 (38%)
Participation in online video lessons	1606 (34%)
Recording of video or audio	1507 (32%)
Drawing, gluing, creation of visual art	1184 (25%)
Writing essays, argumentative conclusions and other written works	1183 (25%)
online collaboration with classmates, discussions, sharing documents	640 (14%)
Performance of larger tasks by using various applications or programs after...	424 (9%)
Created collections of their works (portfolio) and self-evaluated them	326 (7%)
Other (please enter)	214 (5%)

Respondents: teachers

Powered by **Edurio**

75% of the teachers tried to conduct online lessons, most of them taught a few lessons during the distance learning period (43% of all teachers), while 5% of the teachers provided all of their lessons online. 25% of the teachers did not conduct a single lesson online.

Most commonly, teachers provided individual consultations to pupils in written form - by e-mail or E-klase (E-class)/ Mykoob messages (83%), text messages, chat correspondence (67%). Audio calls were mentioned as the most common form of individual consultations by 63% of the teachers, and video calls - by 35% of the teachers.

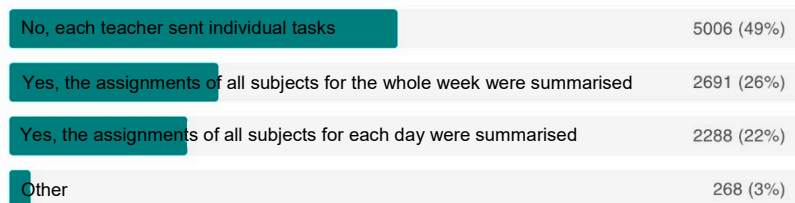**20) What was the share of your lessons that you provided online?**

4,730 answers

Some lessons	2021 (43%)
None	1202 (25%)
One half of all lessons	769 (16%)
Most of the lessons	480 (10%)
All lessons	258 (5%)

Respondents: teachers

17) When sending (informing about) the tasks for the school week, did the school compile a summary of the tasks?

10,253 answers

No, each teacher sent individual tasks	5006 (49%)
Yes, the assignments of all subjects for the whole week were summarised	2691 (26%)
Yes, the assignments of all subjects for each day were summarised	2288 (22%)
Other	268 (3%)

Respondents: pupils

26% of 5th - 12th grade pupils said that they received the assignments for the whole week from the school as an aggregated summary. Another 22% of the pupils said that they received aggregate assignments in all subjects for each day, meanwhile about half of the pupils (49%) received assignments from each teacher separately. When asked when and how teachers provided information about lessons and tasks to be performed, most pupils replied that each teacher sent their assignments in the morning on the day of the scheduled lesson (52% of the pupils noted this) or that each teacher posted their assignments in an electronic diary at different times (46% of the pupils). If the school summarised assignments of different subjects, most of these assignments were received by pupils on Monday (23% of the pupils noted that) or they were posted in the electronic diary on Monday (14% of the pupils), the number of pupils, who had all weekly tasks available on the Friday of the previous week was lower (15% of the pupils said that they received the assignments on Friday, 11% of the pupils said that tasks were posted in the electronic diary on Friday).

Pupils:

"Distance learning was the coolest thing that happened in my life, I believe that distance learning is much, much more interesting than learning at school."

"It is the worst nightmare that I have ever had. I hope nothing like this happens again."

Teachers:

"I learnt about the possibilities offered by uzdevumi.lv, www.soma.lv and google, as well as, zoom.us, which I will use in the future as well. There was more time to read and design more interesting lessons, to prepare."

"I have gained experience in how to work differently - remotely. It was definitely a challenge for every teacher. Digital tasks - which are not created in such large amounts on a daily basis. And, definitely, I feel proud of my colleagues here and throughout Latvia, since the awareness of how creative we, teachers, are is building up and, last but not least, we share our experience on a wider scale."

Parents:

"In fact, I really enjoyed the distance learning process. I see this as an opportunity to review the curriculum in the future so that children can also study remotely in cases where they happen to live in rural areas or in another country. (...) This type of distance learning process definitely promotes the adaptation of children to the work environment, where they often have to plan their work themselves, search for the necessary information themselves, use online webinars and tutorials to achieve the result. The distance learning process also demonstrated the weaknesses of each child to the parents, enabling them to understand what support their child needs in the learning process and how much he or she is actually capable or incapable of learning on his or her own."

"I do not think that distance learning has been useful for us in learning the subject matter. We had the feeling that the child was given assignments with the sole purpose of thoroughly filling their time while at home and also - paralysing the working hours of the parents and causing stress to all family members!"
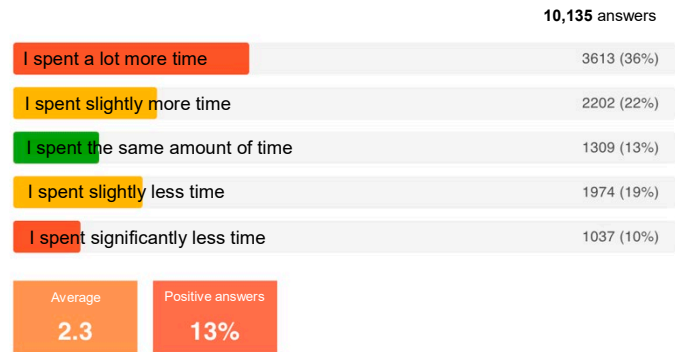
Study and work load

The learning load of pupils during distance learning varied widely, it was often diametrically opposite.

Already in the first survey of the Ministry of Education and Science, which was conducted during the second week of distance learning, there were schools, where even more than 80% of the pupils stated that they spend much more time studying than in person, while at other schools - less than 10% of the pupils said that. In a survey conducted at the end of the school year, we see that this huge difference in pupil workload among schools has not diminished, but has even increased slightly at some schools.

19) How much time did you spend studying on distance learning in comparison with studying at school?

10,135 answers

I spent a lot more time	3613 (36%)
I spent slightly more time	2202 (22%)
I spent the same amount of time	1309 (13%)
I spent slightly less time	1974 (19%)
I spent significantly less time	1037 (10%)

Average	Positive answers
2.3	13%

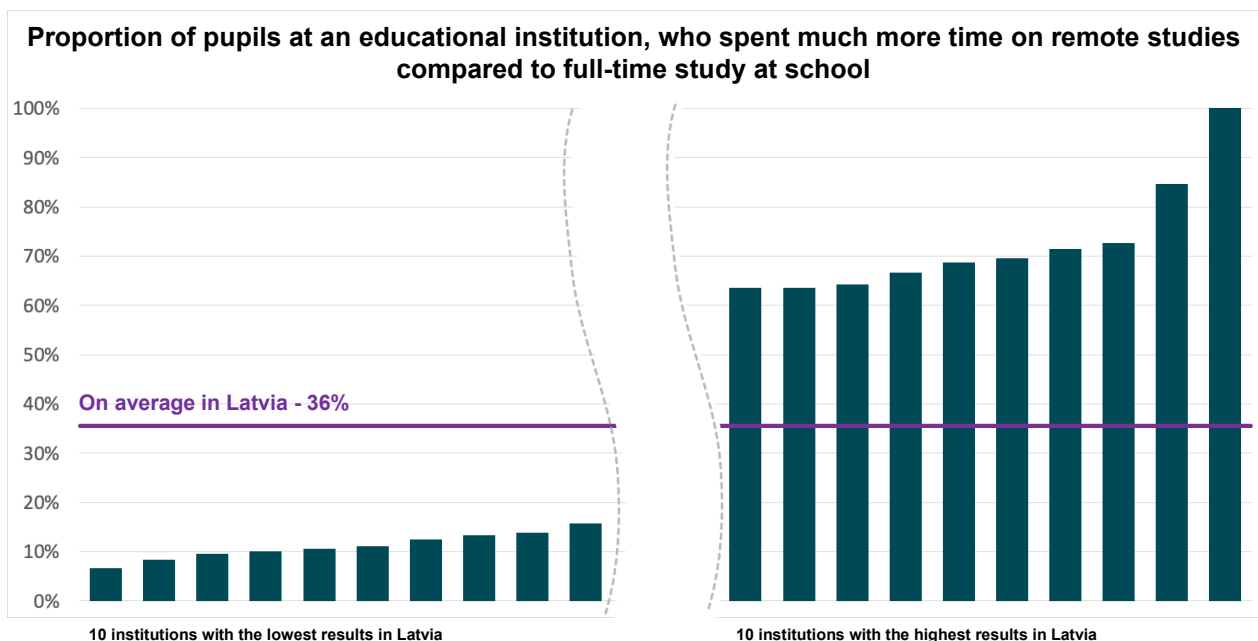*Respondents: pupils*

Powered by **Edurio**

In general, the proportion of pupils in Latvia with high workload has been practically constant - at the beginning of distance learning 38% of the pupils noted that they spend much more time studying than in person; at the end of distance learning 36% noted this. Throughout the distance learning process, there have been more pupils, who spent more time on distance learning than on learning in person, compared to the number of pupils, who spent less time on distance learning than on learning in person. In Latvia, 58% of the pupils spent a little more or much more time on remote studies than on learning in person.

Proportion of pupils at an educational institution, who spent much more time on remote studies compared to full-time study at school

On average in Latvia - 36%

10 institutions with the lowest results in Latvia

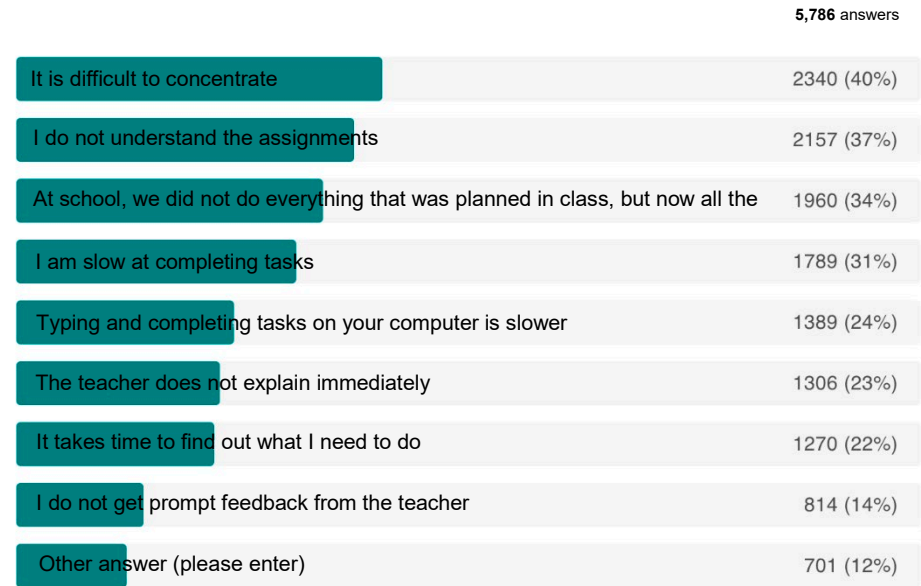10 institutions with the highest results in Latvia

Each column demonstrates the results from one educational institution.
This graph includes those educational institutions, where at least 10 pupils completed the survey.

Pupil survey conducted by the **Ministry of Education and Science** and **Edurio**

The main reasons why pupils took more time to study include concentration difficulties (40% of the pupils), failure to understand the assignments (37% of the pupils) and the need to complete all assigned tasks remotely, as opposed to face-to-face learning (34% of the pupils). Several pupils also indicated that they were slower at completing assignments at home because it took more time to write and complete assignments on a computer and the explanations of the teacher were lacking.

21) What are the main reasons for the fact that studies demanded more of your time compared to full-time learning?
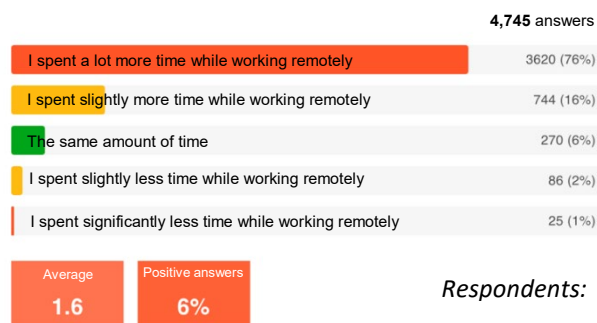
5,786 answers

It is difficult to concentrate	2340 (40%)
I do not understand the assignments	2157 (37%)
At school, we did not do everything that was planned in class, but now all the	1960 (34%)
I am slow at completing tasks	1789 (31%)
Typing and completing tasks on your computer is slower	1389 (24%)
The teacher does not explain immediately	1306 (23%)
It takes time to find out what I need to do	1270 (22%)
I do not get prompt feedback from the teacher	814 (14%)
Other answer (please enter)	701 (12%)

Powered by **Edurio**

Respondents: pupils

Almost all teachers in Latvia noted that they had a heavier workload during distance learning - 76% of the teachers indicated that they spent much more time on conducting the distance learning process, in comparison with face-to-face teaching. 74% of the teachers admitted that they often or very often felt overwhelmed with work. The increase in workload is understandable, as the situation surprised everyone unexpectedly and new solutions were needed, the testing and use of which require time. Teachers were unable to continue many of the processes that had taken place over the years and have been proven to be familiar and efficient.
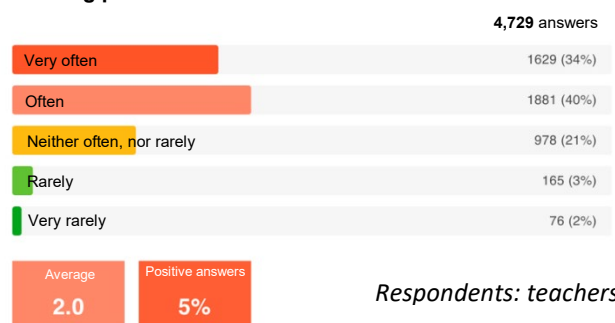
16) How much time did you spend on conducting the distance learning process, compared to the face-to-face learning process?

4,745 answers

I spent a lot more time while working remotely	3620 (76%)
I spent slightly more time while working remotely	744 (16%)
The same amount of time	270 (6%)
I spent slightly less time while working remotely	86 (2%)
I spent significantly less time while working remotely	25 (1%)

Average	Positive answers
1.6	6%

Respondents:

Powered by **Edurio**

19) How often did you feel overworked during the distance learning process?

4,729 answers

Very often	1629 (34%)
Often	1881 (40%)
Neither often, nor rarely	978 (21%)
Rarely	165 (3%)
Very rarely	76 (2%)

Average	Positive answers
2.0	5%

Respondents: teachers

Powered by **Edurio**

Teachers spent the most time on the development or adaptation of new teaching materials, providing remote feedback to pupils and correcting the work submitted by the pupils. If school management can help teachers to carry out these activities more effectively by organising training, summarising examples of good practice, purchasing additional tools or materials, this could significantly relieve the teachers, if distance learning is repeated.

17) Which activities took the most of your time, while conducting the distance learning process?

4,734 answers

Activity	Count
Development or adaptation of new teaching materials	2851 (60%)
Providing remote feedback to pupils	2793 (59%)
Correction of work submitted by pupils	2777 (59%)
Communication with pupils and/or parents	1781 (38%)
Online lesson planning	586 (12%)
Nothing	52 (1%)
Other (please enter)	37 (1%)

Respondents: teachers

Pupils:

"I would like to spend less time at school. While studying at home, I had the opportunity not only to study all day, but also to relax, listen to music, resume my hobbies, which I had to postpone during school due to a lack of time."
"Teachers did not always stick to their school time - 40 minutes, and significantly exceeded it at home, causing fatigue and difficulty concentrating on other subjects afterwards. I would also like the week to be scheduled in advance so that on days when there is little to do, I can do some work for another day. Every day was not balanced." One day was very long, the other short. (a pupil on "What practices did your school and teachers use during remote learning that you would like them to discontinue?")

Teachers:

"After completing the distance learning process, I conclude that it would have been better, if I had personally set the limits of how late people may call me. I think it would have been good if mass media, from time to time, published a reminder to pupils and parents not to forget that the teacher is also a human. As well as a reminder to teachers that they have working hours during distance learning as well. Educators are enthusiasts who tend to get too excited about their work. It can lead to burnout."

"We need to think about workload planning for pupils and teachers, which has to be planned much differently in the event of distance learning..."

"The concept that " every evil has some good" is really working. First of all, the schedule is much more flexible, the process involves more technology, the emotional background has improved - there is no loud fuss, no explanation of situations, no conflicts."
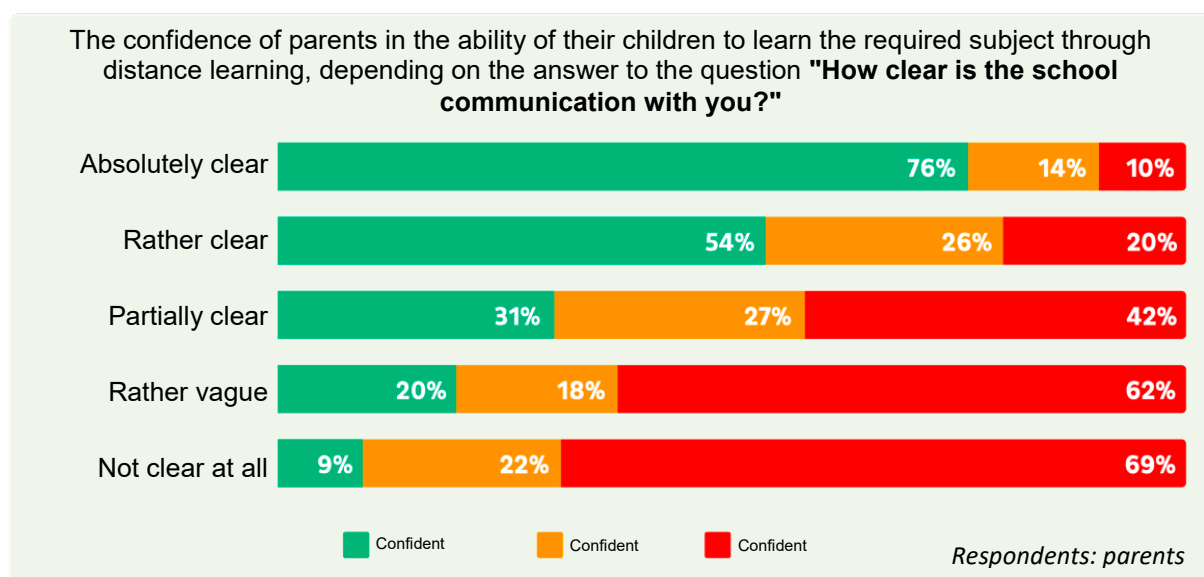
Parents:

"I do not think that the load was too high. My children managed to do everything. Children in the youngest grades - grades 1-3 - should not be given deadlines, because their parents work and children often do not understand or misunderstand, or fail to read the assignments to the end."

"The demands were often disproportionately high. In reality, a school day of a pupil lasted the full 8 hours (not lessons) to complete all assignments, which is basically a full-time adult day. In order to do everything that was required, the pupils also studied on holidays."

The importance of communication in times of change

In general, the parents of the pupils provided positive ratings of school communication - 72% of the parents evaluate communication with teachers during the distance learning period as rather good or very good. 84% of the parents also indicate that the communication of school management on various changes in work organisation was rather understandable or well understandable. In times of uncertainty and instability, clear and structured communication can provide significant support and great value to all involved.

Our study conducted during the second week of remote learning shows that there is a strong link between the clarity of communication provided by the school and general satisfaction of the parents and pupils with distance learning. More than half of the pupils, who think that school communication is clear, have a positive opinion of the distance learning experience. In contrast, only a quarter of those who lack clarity are positive about distance learning in general. This trend is even more pronounced among parents. 76% of the parents who say that school communication is completely clear to them are convinced that their child will learn the required subject matter by means of distance learning. On the other hand, only 9% of the parents, for whom school communication is not clear at all, express confidence in the growth of their children during distance learning. Their confidence is 7 times lower than that of the parents, to whom completely clear school communication has been provided.

The confidence of parents in the ability of their children to learn the required subject through distance learning, depending on the answer to the question **"How clear is the school communication with you?"**

Absolutely clear	76%	14%	10%
Rather clear	54%	26%	20%
Partially clear	31%	27%	42%
Rather vague	20%	18%	62%
Not clear at all	9%	22%	69%

■ Confident   ■ Confident   ■ Confident   *Respondents: parents*

Pupils:

"Information on some tasks was very vague, some was moderately clear, some was rather clear and some was rather unclear."

"It was unclear in some subjects, but my mother and I went through it and I did all the work."

Teachers:

"During this time, a very good connection with parents developed, and this should be continued."

"I am testing new ways to interact with my pupils. Many of them can be used later as well. I have significantly improved communication with the parents of my pupils."

"Mobbing, aggressive communication by some parents, is something that is unfortunately little talked about in society. It also takes a long time to recover from and keep working afterwards."

"Every teacher has had cases, where parents talk about them behind their backs, instead of writing questions directly to teachers in private. There were cases, where pupils or parents called and wrote at night. Not everyone is a highly cultural person."

Parents:

"There were teachers who successfully collaborated with pupils, you could feel that they were trying not to overload them and were responsive in all ways. They assigned tasks proportionately, successfully developed communication with the child and I think that they were also the biggest beneficiaries in building mutual relationships with pupils. From communication with some of them, you could perceive that they were burdened by any kinds of questions - they responded, but impersonally, which developed the impression in the child that this teacher did not like them."

"A stronger bond with the pupil was developed, as well as confidence in their abilities and teacher support, which in turn increased self-confidence."

"Teachers need to consider their communication with children, the instructions of the work assignment in 1st grade must not be on 2 A4 size pages, as the child cannot read and comprehend it. No communication with the teacher occurred during the classes of Latvian Language in the 1st grade, they even refused to send tasks to the child; only coded page numbers in the book were sent to the parents. There was no feeling that the teachers realised that there were families where the 1st grade pupil actually had to study alone because their parents work."

Role and contribution of the parents

The role of parents during distance learning was far more important than their role during full-time learning. **On average, 42% of the surveyed parents spent 3 or more hours a day helping their children with their studies.**

There are significant differences in the involvement of parents in the distance learning process, depending on the age of their children. In a survey conducted at the beginning of distance learning, 70% of the parents of first-grade pupils noted that they devote 3 or more hours to the studies of their child every day. This amount of hours gradually decreased with each grade, and in grade 9 only 28% of the parents spent 3 or more hours on the studies of their child.

13) On average, how much time per day did you help your child(ren) in their studies?

8,476 answers

Less than 1 hour	1715 (20%)
1 - 2 hours	2319 (27%)
3 - 4 hours	2361 (28%)
5 - 6 hours	799 (9%)
More than 6 hours	460 (5%)
There was no need to help	822 (10%)

Average	Positive answers
3.5	53%

Respondents: parents

Powered by **Edurio**

At the end of the school year, these figures are very similar - 72% of the parents of first grade pupils noted that they devote 3 or more hours to the studies of their child every day, in 9th grade there were 28% of the parents, who spent similar time on their children's studies. It should be noted that parents may have several children and they indicated the total amount of time spent on the studies of all children. Nevertheless, 3 hours or more a day is a very high contribution from the parents, especially in addition to their regular working hours.

Many of the activities that parents performed during distance learning are also desirable at home as an addition to full-time learning. For example, helping to look for sources of information or sharing their knowledge (performed by 63% of the parents), helping the child to plan their time (46% of parents), encouraging (33% of the parents), discussing with the child how they are doing in studies (30% of parents).

There were also activities that the parents spent a lot of time on; however, pupils, with certain support of the teacher, should have been able to cope themselves. Such activities include helping to understand learning assignments (70% of the parents spent a lot of time) or helping to complete tasks (39% of the parents spent a lot of time). **If, during the face-to-face learning process, the teacher set an example in the lesson, modelled and demonstrated how the task should be done, then during distance learning this element of learning was often missing and parents had to explain the tasks.**

14) Which activities, while supporting your child/children in the learning process, took most of your time?

8,462 answers

I helped to understand learning assignments	5923 (70%)
I helped to search for sources of information or shared my knowledge	5326 (63%)
I helped the child/children to plan their time	3916 (46%)
I helped with the performance of the tasks	3262 (39%)
I encouraged	2809 (33%)
I discussed with the child/children how they were progressing in their	2569 (30%)
I listened to how the child/children read out to me	2182 (26%)
I discussed his/her well-being with the child/children	2142 (25%)
We read together	2035 (24%)
I worked together with the child/children in other ways (please share	1228 (15%)
Other (please specify)	467 (6%)
There was no need to provide support	272 (3%)
Nothing	88 (1%)

Respondents: parents

Powered by **Edurio**

Parents frequently indicated that assignments were given to pupils, but the demonstration of a teacher of how to perform the respective task was lacking. The parents of primary school pupils provided several suggestions on how their children could cope with their studies on their own or with less parental involvement:

"*Shared classroom communication, web or zoom, to perform tasks simultaneously, with the teacher pointing at the board or telling them the procedure of how to perform the task.*"

"*To organise more online communication with the teacher to enable the teacher THEMSELVES to say what exactly needs to be done. If the child does not understand, it must be explained!*"

"*More processes that involve the teacher teaching and explaining must be organised, instead of just assigning tasks.*"

"*More subject matter needs to be explained by teachers and children need to be taught, rather than leaving everything to the child or parent. Currently, the teacher only provided the evaluation.*"

Parents:

"More help was needed in the first week to learn IT solutions for learning and submission of the performed tasks. More time was devoted to day-to-day control of whether the task had been completed to ensure that unfinished tasks are not delayed beyond control."

"In the first month, I did all that all day long. Then I resumed my work, which was otherwise completely neglected, and "I put my head in the sand", I didn't read the e-mails, I only checked the 3rd grader once a week to see if everything was done/sent in."

"The volume should be reduced; of course, the knowledge will suffer, but the family would not last long if we had to carry on at such a pace. We also borrow devices, if this situation repeats, I cannot provide children with equipment. And most importantly - the tasks should be designed in a way that enables the children to deal with them alone. My children could not do it; it was good that I was at home and helped them all the time. It was difficult for me, but it was also interesting, I learnt to make origami, repeated geography, and listened to bird songs on the internet ... and so on."

"Since I have three children, there were often days, when I sat with them from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., to ensure that everything was done."

Teachers:
"Primary school pupils require parental support most."

"Parents tried to ensure support by providing everything that was necessary, but the pace of parents' lives is already tense and they do not have the time or appropriate knowledge to help with the study work."

"There was an opportunity to train colleagues in the use of various programmes and the use of websites, as well as parents had to be consulted."

Availability of technologies and digitalisation

51% of the pupils and 34% of the parents admit that they do not lack the technological tools to continue distance learning. The most frequently mentioned missing technologies for both parents and pupils are a computer and a stable internet connection, which should be taken into account, when planning the next academic year. 24% of the teachers also admit that they lack a stable internet connection. However, teachers admit that the provision of access to digital learning resources and software that their pupils can use in the learning process is more important. 30% of the teachers indicated that their pupils lack access to digital learning resources such as e-books, ready-made online explanations and exercises.

Since the beginning of the emergency situation, many different figures have been voiced about the number of families that lack technological tools for learning. The most frequently discussed issue was the provision of minimum technology - at least one device (computer, tablet, smartphone) with an internet connection should be available in the family to receive and send information, to communicate by audio or video call mode. In this process, MES, local governments, companies and organisations have helped to ensure that a smart device and internet connection are available to almost all families. However, this has not helped to resolve all the problems that are associated with technological tools.

For example, there are families, where the computer, tablet, or smartphone may need to be shared by several people. The screen of the device may be too small to comfortably read long texts. The device may lack a physical keyboard, a webcam, a microphone, or speakers, which also delays involvement in the learning process.

During the evaluation of the possibility of conducting the 9th grade exams online, the National Centre of Education and MES, in cooperation with Edurio, conducted a survey to find out what technology equipment is available to 9th grade pupils. The survey found that only one third of ninth grade pupils have the technological ability to take the exam from home. The equipment required for online exams is equivalent to that required for a modern learning process, where a pupil can communicate online with others and perform a variety of interactive tasks on a computer. To take exams distantly, pupils need a computer that is less than 10 years old (to ensure the required performance), an internet connection suitable for video transmission, a webcam, a microphone and headphones or speakers. Although the minimum provision of technology is available to almost all families, optimal technology is only available to 30% to 50% of families.

The most frequently mentioned drawbacks in the use of technology include different platforms, where one can search for assigned tasks, complete tasks and provide answers, as well as the lack of digital, interactive teaching materials and teacher explanations.

Pupils:

"I would like to see more homework that can be done on a computer in the learning process in the future."

"Several teachers had very well-prepared systems, homework could be easily submitted at a convenient time, the evaluation of the teacher could be seen as soon as the work was corrected, as well as free communication with the teacher and other classmates about the particular work was ensured."

"Almost exclusive reliance of the school on the own initiative of the teachers, without creating centralised systems, resulted in slightly chaotic conditions, which involved keeping track of everything that happened on 6 or 7 different platforms, so hopefully the school management will be more involved in trying to centralise different processes, without relying on the competence of individual teachers."

Teachers:

"I learnt to use several digital tools (Zoom, Webex, Microsoft Teams) that I will continue to use in the future."

"I was able to use technologies more widely to diversify lessons; for example, pupils could watch the programme "Tava klase" (Your class), work along, do the homework that was offered."

"I tried a few lessons online. Very interesting!"

"Teachers greatly improved their computer skills, learnt about new platforms and realised how important the digital environment was."

Parents:

"We did not experience any shortages. We have everything we need for an online lesson, but none of the teachers offered us any of this."

"I think that younger teachers perfectly managed to teach the new subject matter to pupils in different way; for example, by embedding the subject matter to be learnt into presentation files (including by placing links to different types of educational films). Learning platform uzdevumi.lv - is very useful for learning the subject matter, because, in the event of mistakes, the ways to find correct solutions were clearly explained. Foreign language learning platforms with different types of tasks that involve listening, reading and sentence construction tasks were also used more intensively. In any case, during this period, pupils were essentially forced to learn different opportunities provided by IT technology."

"The child learnt with the help of the phone alone and I took all printed material from my work. If the distance learning process is continued, our family will have to buy all technical equipment, which is not cheap at all and this will be an additional burden on our family budget."

"Suddenly, during the test, which involved a time count, the electricity cut out, and if you do not do it in time, the rating is lower. And then there is the fact that one pupil has an online test in violin, and the other in mathematics, but there are only two rooms in the apartment and they are next to each other."

Psychological well-being and security

Communication with the class teacher

One of the most striking things about the results of the survey is how different the communication of pupils with their class teachers was. 34% of the pupils report that during distance learning, the class teacher or other school staff did not contact them individually about how they were doing and how they felt, or did so less than once a month. Parents also say that 17% of the pupils talked to the class teacher individually on the phone or by video call less than once a month or never, and another 25% of the pupils only corresponded with the class teacher. In the pupil survey, 19% of the pupils admitted that they only corresponded individually.

28) How often, during distance learning, did you talk individually to your class teacher or other school personnel about how you are managing and feeling (for example, by phone, online meeting or video call)?

10,195 answers

Every day or almost every day	977 (10%)
Once a week	1905 (19%)
Once every 2 weeks	1059 (10%)
Once a month	849 (8%)
Less than once a month or never	997 (10%)
We only corresponded	1940 (19%)
I had individual communication	2468 (24%)

Average	Positive answers
3.2	50%

Respondents: pupils

Powered by **Edurio**

Distance learning mainly took place in a digital environment and the survey included questions on security in this environment. In Latvia, 5% of the pupils admit that they have been harassed or ridiculed by other pupils in the digital environment and 5% of the pupils admit that they have been harassed or ridiculed by teachers in the digital environment. 11% of the teachers admit that they have been harassed or ridiculed in the digital environment by pupils or parents during distance learning.

During an emergency situation, the work of teachers differed significantly from usual, but there are more teachers, whose feelings regarding the distance learning process are generally positive rather than negative. 46% of the teachers admit that their feelings about distance learning are very positive or more positive than negative. About 1/3 of the teachers say that feelings are neutral, and 23% that they are very negative or more negative than positive.

52) In general, what are your feelings about the distance learning process?

4,665 answers

Very positive	292 (6%)
More positive than negative	1869 (40%)
Neutral	1430 (31%)
More negative than positive	984 (21%)
Very negative	90 (2%)

Average	Positive answers
3.3	46%
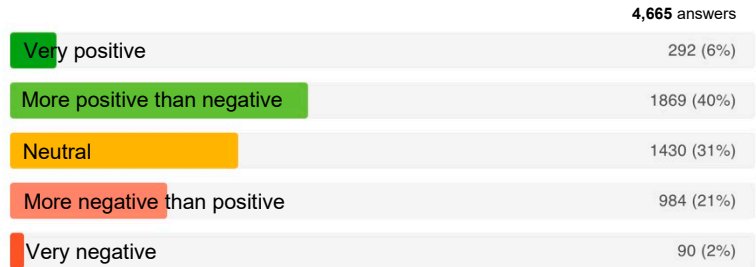
Respondents: teachers

Powered by **Edurio**

Although we see positive trends in this area in general, it should be noted that, in general, almost ¼ of the teachers have negative feelings about this period and there are educational institutions, where the overall attitude of the teachers is negative. There are educational establishments, where more than 70% of the teachers have indicated that their feelings are very positive or more positive than negative, however there are also educational establishments, where the proportion of this group of teachers is below 20%.

Proportion of teachers at the educational institution who answered that their feelings about the distance learning process are generally very positive or more positive than negative
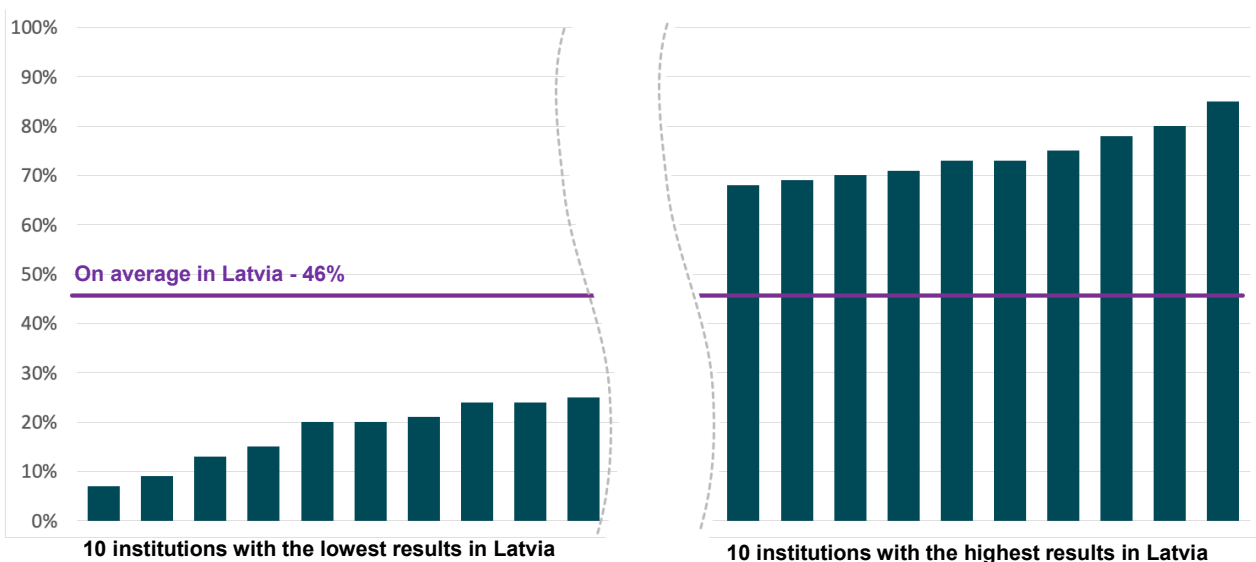
On average in Latvia - 46%

10 institutions with the lowest results in Latvia

10 institutions with the highest results in Latvia

Each column demonstrates the results from one educational institution.
This graph includes the educational institutions, where at least 10 teachers completed the survey.
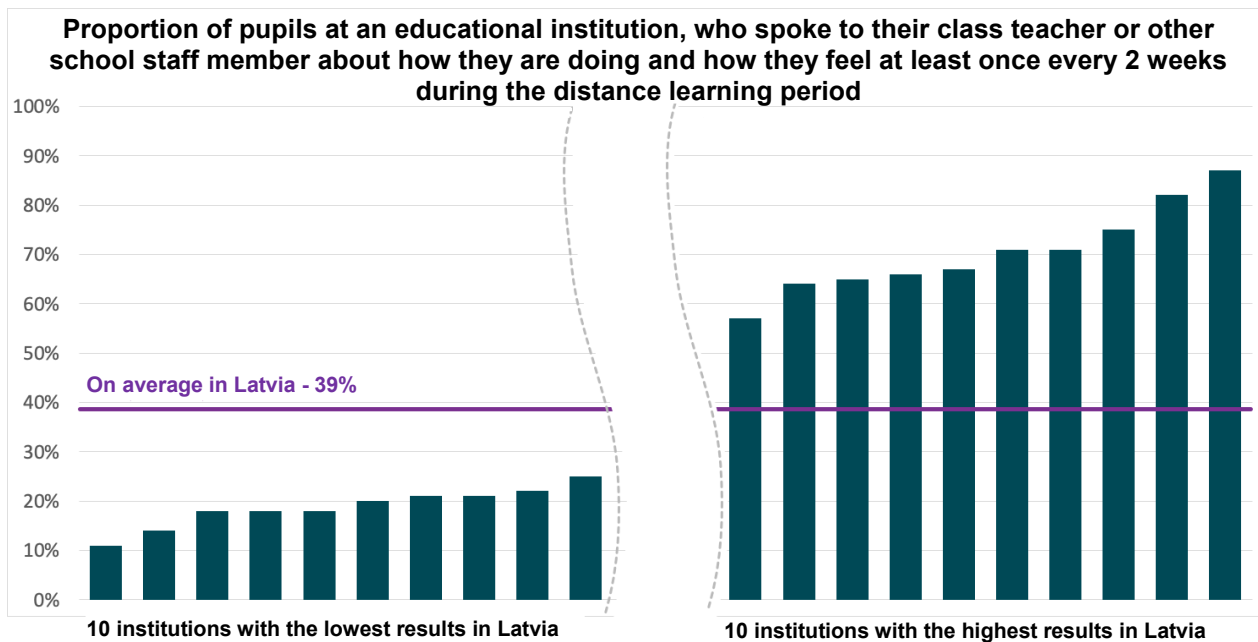
Teacher survey conducted by the **Ministry of Education and Science** and **Edurio**

Proportion of pupils at an educational institution, who spoke to their class teacher or other school staff member about how they are doing and how they feel at least once every 2 weeks during the distance learning period

On average in Latvia - 39%

10 institutions with the lowest results in Latvia

10 institutions with the highest results in Latvia

Each column demonstrates the results from one educational institution.
This graph includes those educational institutions, where at least 20 pupils completed the survey.

Teacher survey conducted by the **Ministry of Education and Science** and **Edurio**

Pupils:

"The class teacher did an immeasurable amount of work to ensure our convenience in the distance learning process, as well as asked us to write in our diaries every day how we felt, what caused difficulties, what was easy; he read them at the end of the week, as well as asked how we were doing at least once a week."

"The class teacher only called me 2 times during those 2 months, because something was not submitted."

Teachers:

"There was nothing complicated about this distance learning work. Several responsibilities took more time to complete, but nothing seemed too difficult or complicated to me. However, I did not like the distance learning process, because I want to do my work at school, in face-to-face contact with pupils and their parents. I get more joy and satisfaction about what I have done during the face-to-face training process, because sitting at the computer is a heavy routine job; I prefer a more creative environment, movement."

"I would never want to work remotely again. It was very difficult. My back was in pain from sitting too long. Working hours were too long."

Parents:

"The class teacher was in contact all the time, so I managed to resolve incomprehensible issues related to the teaching process and communication with other teachers operatively."

"For most of the parents, this has been a difficult time. (...) I would like to emphasise once again that this is really difficult, because the parents were not given any relief at work or otherwise. Plus, the children were at home alone. (...) We need to not only think about learning achievements, but also about other aspects.

Many children have depression because they lack live communication so much. It is difficult for adults, let alone for children."

"During distance learning, the evenings that we used to spend in the family all together, in non-study and non-work related activities (cooking together, playing board games, watching a movie) turned into a nightmare when we had to catch up with the studies too; we were just talking about school, about what has been done and what has not, and why, the pupil had to separate from the rest of the family with one of the parents by closing the door of the room door to ensure that we could start learning the lessons that the pupil could not do during the day."

Differences at different educational institutions

The experience of distance learning has differed significantly for pupils from different schools of Latvia. The study load of the pupils, the forms of learning, weekly and daily lesson plans, as well as other elements differed considerably.

There were schools where all or almost all pupils spent much more time than when studying in person, and there were schools where only 10% of the pupils spent much more time studying. There were schools, where more than 3/4 of the pupils contacted the class teacher or another member of school staff personally at least once every 2 weeks about how they were doing and how they were feeling, and there were schools where less than 1/4 of the pupils were doing so. There were schools where teachers jointly developed curricula and assignments, sent them jointly to pupils for the entire week, and there were schools where each teacher planned and sent assignments separately. The learning process of 11% of the pupils was mostly uniform and 10% of the pupils had a mostly diverse learning process. 3% of the pupils took all lessons online and 22% of the pupils did not take any lessons online. 5% of the parents helped their children with learning for more than 6 hours a day, while 10% of the parents said that their children did not need help and 20% of the parents helped children with learning for less than 1 hour a day.

The experiences of teachers regarding distance learning were also very different. There are educational establishments, where more than 70% of the teachers indicated that their feelings were very positive or more positive than negative regarding distance learning, however there are also educational establishments, where the proportion of this group of teachers was below 20%.

The proportion of parents at an educational institution who are convinced that their child has acquired new skills and competences through distance learning is growing
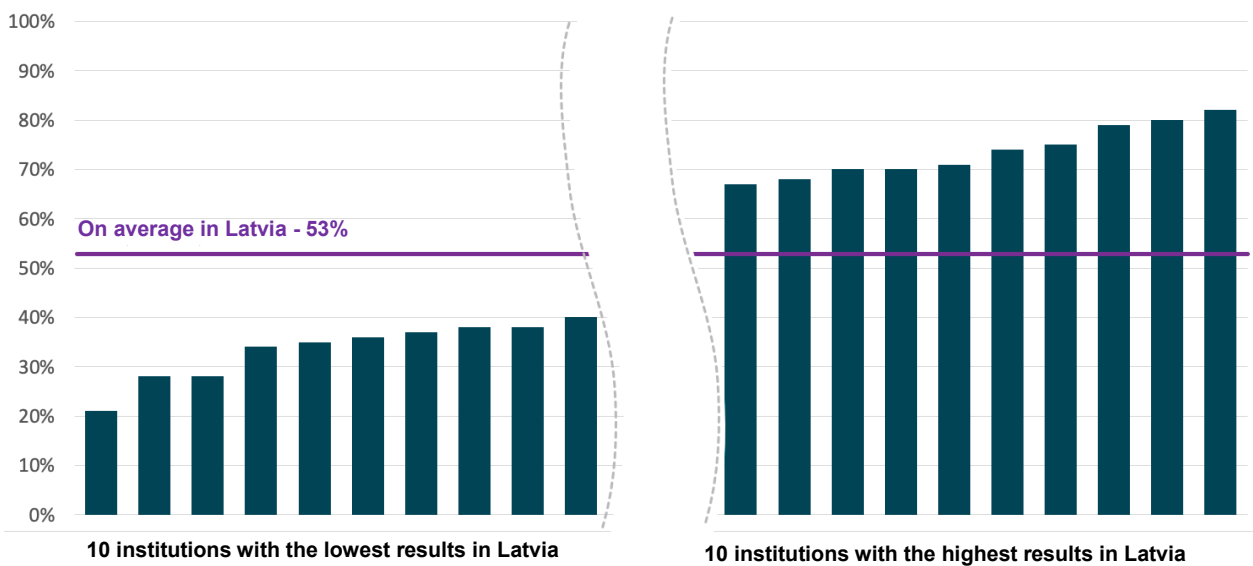
On average in Latvia - 53%

10 institutions with the lowest results in Latvia

10 institutions with the highest results in Latvia

Each column demonstrates the results from one educational institution.
This graph includes the educational institutions, where at least 20 parents completed the survey.

Parent survey conducted by the **Ministry of Education and Science** and **Edurio**

Pupils:

"I studied at my own pace (that is, faster than at school), tasks with the assessments (pass/fail - not much time needs to be spent on such tasks) are given at once and, by doing them, I learnt a lot; the learning was much faster than when you first use tasks for training and then start performing the "real" ones."

"I would not object to continuing in the same spirit, if there could be a certain day, when I could go to school in person, because the contact with teachers, who are very understanding, accepting and welcoming on a daily basis, was still lacking. I can discuss any questions that I have with any teacher of our school. But in fact, even in a remote process, we were provided with all of this. I liked it. Everything was good"

"In brief, it seems to me that all of this was very poorly thought out and planned. Now, when we should all support each other most, I had a very specific feeling that the school and the education system were trying to put special pressure on us with the amount of work assigned and, sometimes, the cool attitude towards pupils."

"Thank God it all ended. It is foolish to work on an assignment for 10 hours just to get a copied message from the teacher, which she sends to everyone. Then the question arises, was it really worth doing this work? Plus, the teachers just dumped the tasks on us, like waste; you are doing one task, and five more tasks are already piled up, which makes you stressed."

Teachers:

"I learnt to use new tools, got to know new platforms, I am less afraid of news in the profession."

"New repositories of teaching and methodological tools, websites have been acquired. IT skills have been improved. The curriculum content was the curriculum, which is useful in preparing for the implementation of the new teaching approach, in the new academic year."

"When face-to-face learning resumes, I want to forget this remote process forever"

"My educational institution did not introduce anything. The teachers themselves fought as much as they could."

Parents:

"Teachers competently and meaningfully planned their day-to-day teaching work. It was positive that each day was dedicated to a specific subject or learning tasks of two subjects were integrated, always emphasising the result to be achieved at work. The daily work was formulated concisely and precisely, drawing the children's (first grade pupil) attention to the most important competencies, task conditions, laws or other successful preconditions for the performance of the work. The assignments of the school day are always sent in a timely and accurate manner."

"Some teachers managed to implement remote teaching, i.e. conduct lessons online, provide consultations, but not all teachers can be compared according to the same criteria."
"The approach to the organisation of the learning process needs to be improved. Teachers had too different opinions on the communication with pupils (one of them made entries in the e-classroom, the other sent assignments by e-mail, the third gave the assignments online). Both the child and the parents were confused."

"THE SCHOOL DID NOT IMPLEMENT ANYTHING AT ALL. WE ONLY LEARNT THE PHONE NUMBERS OF THE TEACHERS"
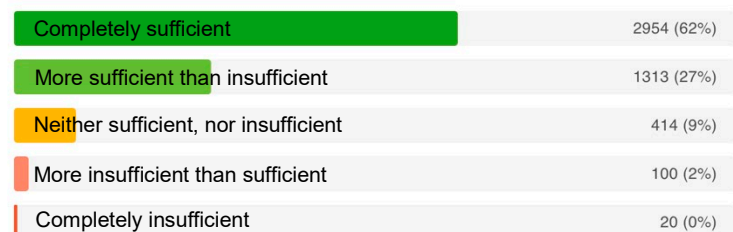
Management support

Almost all teachers indicate that management support during the implementation of distance learning was absolutely sufficient or more sufficient than insufficient - this was indicated by 89% of teachers. 62% of the teachers indicated that the support provided by the management was completely sufficient.

For teachers, the most useful measure of management support was the provision of communication and information (47%), methodological support (44%), as well as encouragement and feedback (35%).

9) How sufficient was the support provided by the management of the educational institution during the implementation of distance learning?

4,801 answers

Completely sufficient	2954 (62%)
More sufficient than insufficient	1313 (27%)
Neither sufficient, nor insufficient	414 (9%)
More insufficient than sufficient	100 (2%)
Completely insufficient	20 (0%)

Average	Positive answers
4.5	89%

Respondents: teachers

When asked what support was most lacking from the management of the educational institution, 63% of teachers answered that the management provided everything that was necessary. The two most important things that were missing were methodological support (development of a common approach and recommendations for the implementation of the teaching process), which was noted by 11% of teachers, and the provision of IT tools, which was indicated by 10% of teachers.

Teachers:

"The school management very skilfully informed teachers and parents of children about everything that was new, conducted weekly surveys of teachers and parents, teachers received consultations of IT specialists. The meetings of the Methodological sectors of the school, individual talks with the parents of children, etc. were conducted."

"I really liked the way the school management had come up with a system for working remotely."

"We need to continue to develop a common plan for each week to be sent to management. It is easier to create integrated lessons, if such a plan is present, because you know what other teachers are planning and what adaptation you can implement."

"Teachers planned their own distance learning work themselves; the institution could only provide technical support."

"The institution has not introduced anything new, except for meticulous inspections of e-class registers. I would like to separate "introduced" by a teacher from "introduced" by the institution. More or less, every teacher "introduced" as much as they could."

What can we learn from distance learning?

Key benefits

Teachers mention learning digital tools as the main professional benefit.

Most teachers mention the acquisition of digital, IT tools as their most significant professional benefit from the distance learning period (55%). This is followed by finding and using various digital learning materials (16%), self-developed learning materials (8%), general professional benefits (5%), planning benefits (5%) and the use of other, new working methods (5%). For many teachers, the distance learning period was an incentive to explore the opportunities available on multiple digital platforms. They point out that they will continue to make more use of these platforms, as well as digital materials in face-to-face training to diversify teaching methods. Different digital platforms are also good support for task differentiation. Parents also mention the meaningful use of digital tools and platforms as one of the most important things to be considered, when planning what should be done when learning resumes in person. All those platforms, where tasks can be performed dynamically and feedback on the errors received immediately, are highly appreciated. Parents also point out the possibility of continuing the use of online conferencing tools, such as *zoom*, as a very valuable tool to organise various meetings - consultations for children or even parent meetings! Parents would also appreciate it if teachers could continue to create digital teaching materials (worksheets, lesson plans in the form of videos or presentations), as this could help those who are forced to be absent from school for various reasons or simply want to repeat the material.

Pupils:

"A great helper is the *uzdevumi.lv* portal, which I really appreciate and would like to continue using during studies, because there are no contradictions in the tasks and they are well explained."

"If possible, I would like us to learn the new topic with the help of videos and the uzdevumi.lv portal in the future; however, the traditional methods - tests and tests on paper should not be forgotten either. I would like the school system to also use online lessons; for example, when the quarantine ends, the children could learn online for 2 days a week, thus motivating the pupils and developing great learning joy."

Teachers:

"I learnt to use several digital tools (Zoom, Webex, Microsoft Teams) that I will continue to use in the future."

"The hours spent on the zoom video conference were a new experience and challenge, but they were enjoyed by me, as well as the pupils."

"I mastered new ICT, created video presentations, started using virtual laboratory works."

Parents:

"Exceptionally well-developed materials are available at *Soma.lv*. The young people of today perceive new information very differently from previous generations. The most effective and memorable material is that in video or presentation form. We used *uzdevumi.lv* for children as a training base, even before the emergency, but it could be continued as a mandatory requirement for all children. It accustoms children well to accuracy, because the "corrector" of the work is an algorithm, not artificial intelligence or a human being."

"Teacher-created videos on the subject are a perfect helper for the pupils. For example, in mathematics, an example is shown first, then the solution is demonstrated (with an audio explanation). My child pushed pause to figure out this example himself, then continued to watch again to compare what the teacher had written and listened to what was being told."

"Tavaklase.lv. It would be a very useful teaching aid. My child has difficulties with mathematics, but thanks to the way the teachers of tavaklase.lv explained the topics, the child found the learning to be easy and quick."

"Provide more homework at uzdevumi.lv and soma.lv. They were always performed first and with joy. It is the digital age."

Possibilities of digital tools in supplementing and enriching the learning.
The use of digital tools in the learning process, including face-to-face learning, and the development of digital skills of pupils are an integral part of learning in the 21st century. In order to understand the vision of pupils on how to continue using the technologies started during the distance learning process, even when the studies are resumed in person, the pupils were offered various options, where digital tools were part of the learning process, while supplementing and enriching it. There were 5 options marked by more than 1/3 of the pupils and they are as follows:

- In addition to face-to-face lessons, structured learning materials with online assignments are also available in each subject, where you can study if you have not been at school or want to repeat (45% of the pupils)
- A few days a month or per semester, pupils can choose to do independent work from school or from home (43% of the pupils)
- During the lessons, some pupils study with the teacher, while others work with independent tasks on computers, tablets or smartphones (42% of the pupils)
- During lessons, a pupil who completes work sooner or needs to repeat it individually, does so by using computers, tablets or smartphones (34% of the pupils)

- Pupils read the new content independently or listen to it in video format as homework, but do the tasks not at home, but in the classroom, with the help of a teacher (34% of pupils)

Pupils:

"Teaching work at secondary schools could be organised in a way that is similar to university studies, with one day for independent learning, where the pupil can choose themselves; where it is more convenient, this day could also be used for consultations, thus, pupils should not have to sit at school and wait for consultations until late in the evening, since there would be a separate day for this."

"I wanted to use this section to emphasise how much I support the idea that pupils read the new material independently and ask questions and complete tasks in person. In my opinion, it would be much more productive, efficient and it would teach pupils to act on their own, plan their time and be responsible."

"Since the SPA specialist has to learn various massage techniques, the video materials filmed by the teacher were very useful. Usually, when we work in person, the videos are not filmed and often what we do in the classroom is forgotten if it is not repeated in the nearest future."

Various opportunities for improving the daily work provided by the teleworking and learning process have been identified.

Some teachers in the surveys expressed a desire to continue the use of elements tested in distance learning in various forms, especially in cases, where pupils are unable to attend school due to poor health or in the event of teacher absence. Some teachers would like to continue remote consultations occasionally, and the work of the project week could also be implemented remotely. Proposals included regular distance learning days, especially for senior pupils (for example, specific days or weeks of distance work, or mixed face-to-face lessons for pupils who need them and remotely for those who are able to organise their own learning). A very large proportion of teachers welcomed remote meetings - teachers' meetings, parents' meetings, in-service training courses, which help saving time, are more constructive and focused. Although collaboration is most often associated with direct contact, distance learning provided an experience of close collaboration between teachers, with parents and pupils, and many teachers would like to maintain this.

Some parents and pupils also think that it would be worth considering the possibility of continuing to provide distance learning opportunities for pupils with a certain degree of regularity. For example, one day per week, or per month. This would not only help children develop planning and independence skills, but would also be a good way to promote learning outside of school premises. In addition, such distance learning would provide an opportunity for children, who are absent due to illness or other reasons, not to miss school. Especially children of parents who have improved their performance during distance learning, because they have felt better psychologically at home, emphasise that such a regular opportunity to learn remotely would help their children to feel good in the long run.

Pupils:

"If a pupil is ill, then during their absence, they would be sent lesson work materials, tasks that were completed during the lesson, task answers with explanations. I would also like to have a possibility of having zoom consultations for all children, because the situation where the school ends at 1:00 p.m., but the consultation starts at 4:00 p.m., is very inconvenient for some pupils that live far from school."

"I would like to continue distance learning, because more time is allocated for the performance of the tasks than during a lesson. For me, it was especially useful in subjects, where creative writing had to be done, in Latvian and English. There is no pressure to complete the work within 40 minutes."

"The idea of implementing a distance learning process, such as a few days a month or 2 days a week, seems very good. I enjoyed learning myself because sometimes I do not feel motivated in the school environment. Not because the school is unable to provide an environment conducive to the learning process, but because it is early in the morning and pupils who are more sleepy than I am are able to create a generally unfavourable mood in the learning process. Meanwhile distance learning is capable of teaching a great deal, as it turns out that some classmates do not even know where they should look for additional information on the internet, which seems to be an obvious skill in the 21st century. You can also learn time management, which is one of the most important and necessary skills during a lifetime. In general, I think that changing the environment from time to time is even healthy and very interesting."

Teachers:

"Distance learning could also be used during the absence of teachers."

"To organise remote learning for at least 2 months a year, such as November and March, because it allows pupils to indulge in self - directed teaching. Pupils can successfully learn everything in a calmer environment."

"To organise lessons remotely (recorded video lessons, prepared materials - presentation, assignments) in cases when a teacher is on a training courses or ill. To continue the development of self-directed learning in pupils."

"Discussions of various issues remotely with colleagues could be continued."

Parents:

"If a child is ill and there are outstanding tests - let them complete the tests online, at uzdevumi.lv or otherwise, because our experience shows that after a long-term illness, as the child returns to school, his school day will be significantly extended while catching up, and the stress level increases, which creates the basis for a new disease. In our family, however, after this distance learning period, we have decided to continue learning remotely even when it resumes in person."

"During the absence of the child (illness, travel), to find an opportunity of learning in this format remotely."

"To organise parents' meetings only in zoom. To introduce at least one day a week as a distance learning day, where a pupil does a certain amount of independent work, does research or writes essays, or tests a theory in practice."

"To regularly develop distance learning practices. Children learn to plan their time, take responsibility, communicate in accordance with 21st century requirements - To continue to teach remote communication to children - to use various tools, to communicate in writing. In general, to teach a child to communicate respectfully and adequately."

What to do next?

Many schools introduced different timetables for distance learning (block lessons, assignments for the entire week) and teachers worked more closely together to plan curricula and used digital planning tools to define lesson goals, outcomes, and the receipt of feedback for their lessons - many teachers, parents and pupils would also like to continue this in their daily studies.

There are many answers to the question that was asked to pupils regarding what helped them to be successful at distance learning. More than half of the pupils noted that they were helped to learn by their family (56%), the fact that they could sleep longer (54%), that they could use the internet (54%) and that they could plan their daily routine (50%). Secondary school pupils had less need for family help - family was mentioned by 32% of secondary school pupils, in contrast to 65% of primary school pupils.
For high school pupils, the most important help was in being able to plan their daily routine (63%), the ability to use the internet (62%) and being able to sleep longer (62%). 54% of secondary school pupils noted that their friends helped with their studies, but only 40% of primary school pupils mentioned their friends.

Although our research shows that the experiences of teachers, pupils and parents during distance learning have differed a lot, both among different schools and sometimes even within the same school, we would like to highlight the good examples mentioned by respondents in the surveys. May they serve as a storehouse of inspiration and ideas for other schools as well!

Good examples

Curriculum for the week

A clear plan for the school week is highly valued in the survey of the parents. Often, these curricula also defined goals and achievable results that help pupils and parents understand the progress of the week. Parents say that it would be very valuable if they could have access to this, when full-time studies are

resumed again. This would help in planning the studies of the child, as well as reduce stress, as it would be clear at the beginning of the week what to do during the respective week.

Different tasks, cross-curricular link

Parents mention examples, where they highly appreciate the attempt of teachers to develop tasks that contain cross-curricular links, as well as other less traditional forms of learning - such as group work, project work, walking and exploring in the nature, practical tasks that are close to life, etc.

Differentiated learning

Many parents point out that distance learning was a very positive experience for their children with learning difficulties, which involved spending more time on tasks, receiving individual teacher feedback and parental help. Learning at their own pace and differentiation is also highly appreciated by pupils, who quickly cope with tasks. This practice should definitely be continued.

Capabilities of IT and digital platforms

Distance learning helped to learn new tools and platforms. Most pupils, teachers and parents indicate that they would like to continue using them both for teaching purposes (completing assignments, doing homework, watching/creating videos, etc.) but also for communication. For example, organising meetings of parents or teachers on the *ZOOM* platform, by informing them about current events in *WhatsApp* groups, etc. Schools that used a single platform, where the assigned, completed, evaluation and additional materials "converged", were also highly appreciated.

Independence of a pupil

Both teachers and parents in the surveys acknowledged that distance learning helped a lot in the development of pupils' independence. Pupils learnt to plan their own time - when to complete tasks, when to look for additional information required for learning, when to relax, when to communicate with teachers or classmates, etc.

Pupils:

"I liked distance learning more than full-time learning. During distance learning, I learnt information better and understood tasks better, mostly due to my slow learning pace. I need time to learn information and start performing or understanding tasks at all. At school, I did almost nothing that was assigned during the class, because I lacked time. By the time I had read everything and understood what I had read, the other classmates had already completed the task."

"Distance learning was a great way of teaching yourself to do everything on time and start planning your life."

"I would like teachers to send plans for each subject with assignments to be completed by a certain date in the future as well."

Parents:

"Scheduling your homework for a week and registering it in the e-class at least a week in advance - this is the way you can plan your time for the whole week and do your homework when there is time, instead of every night when it can be difficult because children have activities and other commitments."

"Homework was more creative than face-to-face training - this should be continued. The content of homework was reduced and this allowed the children to complete it more thoroughly. Finally we needed to use internet resources, and this is very positive, because children are finally beginning to realise that the internet does not merely serve an entertainment function. The striking thing was that the children were not stressed. Our teenager was much calmer, healthier, he slept better, was friendlier."

"The opportunity to search for information and conduct research themselves must be retained, which will help them to study. Spending less time on explaining new topics, but allowing the pupils themselves to obtain the basic information, while the teacher should be there to answer questions."

What should be changed?

What pupils lacked most were teachers' explanations

Most (51%) pupils indicated that one of the biggest challenges during distance learning was the lack of explanations from teachers. This role often had to be taken on by parents - the most common response from parents, when answering the question on the activities of supporting their child/children during learning that required the most time, was 'Helping to understand learning assignments'. This answer was noted by 70% of the parents. A large portion of parents (39%) noted that they helped children to complete the assignments.

Pupils:

"I lacked the explanations of the teacher, but over time, I adapted myself to understand new topics."

"All teachers gave several times more assignments than usual, without a clear explanation of how to complete these tasks."

"We did not learn new subject matter, we just received mykoob tasks and were left to do them as we pleased!"

"I study at a music high school, therefore general educational subjects did not present problems, but the specialty was a problem; I experienced a lack of the teacher's presence there, who could demonstrate how to do it exactly, because not everything can be done via the zoom application."

"Teachers only assigned worksheets or tests, but there were no video materials that could explain the subject matter. You might as well learn everything from books yourself, complete tests, which renders school useless as such!"

Pupils lacked motivation

41% of the pupils indicated that one of their biggest difficulties was a lack of motivation, and 29% said that it was more difficult to study alone.

Pupils:

"Lack of motivation, which, among others, is characteristic not only of distance learning..."

"There was no motivation, a routine set in."

"Sometimes laziness prevented me from doing something, since you knew you could sit on the couch and relax and do the work later."

"There was a lack of community (especially my classmates), sometimes I felt lonely."

"Sad, and no one was there to help most of the time."

"There was no discipline, and it was very difficult to discipline myself."

Not all families had the necessary technological equipment for studies

19% of the pupils indicated that one of the biggest challenges was the impossibility to print teaching materials, 16% - that the computer or tablet had to be shared with the family.

Pupils:

"Outdated computer, without a printer and a webcam."

"The internet was very slow when the whole family was working on computers."

"There was no access to Word, so all long texts had to be done in the email of e-class."

"Bad equipment. The microphone did not work, so I could not take part in the conversations."

Parents:

"The big disadvantage is that not all of the pupils have access to a computer, because there was homework that was difficult or impossible to do using a phone or a tablet."

"Problems were caused by computers without the appropriate applications. It should be remembered that there are families, where children are brought up by one parent and, therefore, they cannot afford to buy all the necessary equipment to ensure a high-quality learning process (computer, smartphone)."

"It should be taken into account that the internet and the computer may fail to work one day or may not be available (if not every family member has them) and the works may not always be delivered on scheduled time for technical reasons."

Prolonged use of the computer causes discomfort

Teachers mention spending long periods of time at the computer as the main challenge or difficulty in conducting remote learning process - this was noted by 79% of the teachers. 44% of the pupils noted the

discomfort of spending a lot of time at the computer as the biggest challenge, or anxiety related to the use of technology in the learning process.

Pupils:

"98% of the lessons at our school were conducted in the form of zoom conferences, which affected my eyes and gave me constant back pain. I think that if we had more independent work with books and notebooks, such a drawback would not exist."

"Throughout our childhood, we were told that you could only spend an hour at the computer per day, but now almost all of the training process is conducted at the computer, and I can say that it definitely lasted for longer than an hour."

"I spent a lot of time at the computer; now both my eyes and my back hurt."

"My eyesight deteriorated as I spent much more time at the computer than I used to."

Teachers:

"A lot of time at the computer. No matter how the teacher's time is planned, pupils do not always observe the deadlines for the submission of works. Feedback is important if the pupil receives it on time, not after several hours. As a result, the teacher inevitably is subjected to a large additional workload."

"Now I have to visit an ophthalmologist, because my eyes hurt! I am very tired! There is little time to relax, walk, I lack time for family; if I worked at school, everything would be different!"

Teacher overload and solutions for this

A large number of teachers in the surveys indicate that they had a higher workload during distance learning compared to the regular learning process and a higher overload, as well as a significant number of teachers have no idea how to reduce the workload. Meanwhile, the other part of teachers talk about the accumulation of distance learning experience, which helps to streamline processes and make learning more efficient. This points to the support that school management and teachers can provide to each other by streamlining the organisation of teaching work and showing the resources available at different levels to relieve the work of the teachers. The suggestions made by teachers will also be useful in organising face-to-face teaching.

> **At the national/educational sector level,** teachers would save time with a large-scale repository of high-quality digital materials and tasks - in all areas, different levels of tasks that teachers could supplement and adapt to their needs. The development or adaptation of new teaching materials was ranked among the top 3 most time-consuming activities required for conducting remote teaching - this was noted by 60% of the teachers. An opportunity for automatic task correction and the creation of an overview of the pupils that have completed the tasks would be essential. Teachers find it more difficult to create their tasks on the existing platforms, errors occur during the correction thereof, and there are no tasks in some areas.

> **At school level,** an agreement on access to learning is required - the use of a common planning system, a platform for communication and the submission/receipt of assignments, provision of

feedback, as well as an agreement on what quality teaching means, including how to provide feedback to pupils - how often and to what extent it must be provided. Teachers also talk about the need for consultative support.

At the individual level, many teachers cite the lack of boundaries between work time and private life as one of the biggest challenges and recognise that it is up to them to set the time and way of communicating with pupils and parents.

Teachers:

"After completing the distance learning process, I conclude that it would have been better, if I had personally set the limits of how late people may call me. I think it would have been good if mass media, from time to time, published a reminder to pupils and parents not to forget that the teacher is also a human. As well as a reminder to teachers that they have working hours during distance learning as well. Educators are enthusiasts who tend to get too excited about their work. It can lead to burnout."

"The time spent developing or adapting new materials can decrease with more experience. So - time could help here."

"When teaching geography to the 7th grade according to the new programme, it took a lot of time to select and develop the study material, because there are no textbooks."

"Especially the development of new systems, so that poor users of low-cost "computer zoos" (tablets with Android, Macs, etc.) could work in a standard environment."

"Development and invention of works so that they can be done with the resources available to children..."

"In order to ensure the understanding of pupils in their subjects, I made explanatory videos on the defined topics, which provided a comprehensive theory to understand the main ideas, as well as I created explanatory videos for the assignments, based on which the pupil was able to resolve the tasks of homework assignments."

Providing feedback and correction of the works was a challenge for teachers

Providing remote feedback to pupils and correcting pupil submissions were two of the three most time-consuming activities for teachers while conducting remote learning, as 59% of teachers marked each of these activities.

Pupils:

"It would be great, if there was a way to get feedback from the teacher quickly. Sometimes, it was the case that I found the answer on the internet while waiting for the reply. The moment of raising your hand in class and getting a quick answer from the teacher is lacking."

"Some teachers opened the submitted works very late and then you do not know if you understood the task correctly, whether the teacher received it at all and, if something was not right, it is much harder to correct if a long time has passed."

"No unified system for assigning tasks was developed and there was no feedback, such as a video call to discuss what had been done."

"In the last month, I could not gather the motivation to open the e-class at all and do something, and I think it was the same for the teachers, because at first I got feedback from almost every teacher, but maybe 1 or 2 teachers kept replying in May."

"I want to say a big thank you to all the teachers, who were able to explain all the tasks extensively and clearly! And it was very nice to receive feedback and to know that your work was not in vain!"

Teachers:

"This is their own fault - it was necessary to define a common format (or some fixed formats) for the submission of replies - the diversity of submissions made life slightly difficult, but it can be fixed."

"Repairing works in Paint took 10 times longer than in real life."

"At first [time was consumed], while correcting the works submitted by the pupils; later I created tasks for Uzdevumi.lv, which were corrected automatically. However, I was pleased to be able to explain to the children individually why they made a mistake and to enable them to do the task 100% correctly. It was a mutual pleasure."

"Mostly due to the fact of editing works on the subject (Latvian language and literature). It was very difficult to edit all the works by looking at the screen."

"It was difficult to do this - everyone had to be corrected separately, explanations had to be provided, my eyes were on the computer or phone screen all the time."

"For each piece of work submitted to the e-class, I wrote a reply letter with a comment about the work done."

"Sometimes, I had to answer the same question to each pupil individually."

There was a lack of a unified system of communication, receipt and transfer of tasks

Approximately half of the pupils (49%) received assignments from each teacher separately. When asked when teachers provided information about lessons and tasks to be performed and how, most pupils replied that each teacher sent their assignments in the morning on the day of the scheduled lesson (52% of the pupils noted this) or that each teacher posted their assignments in an electronic diary at different times (46% of the pupils).

Many pupils commented that, since the teachers did not cooperate with each other, pupils had different, disproportionate workloads in different subjects and overlapping deadlines.

From the teachers' point of view, the most important technologies that they lack for comprehensible management of the learning process remotely, if such is necessary, are:

- access to digital learning resources for pupils (30% of the teachers),

- stable internet connection (24% of the teachers),

- appropriate software for creating interactive learning tasks and tests for pupils (23% of the teachers),

- integrated/unified online learning management environment at school for teaching and communication with pupils (22%).

Pupils:

"Again, I would like to emphasise that the amount of work was huge and sometimes it seemed like the teachers had not talked to each other about it. Work was assigned in a variety of formats, sometimes recorded somewhere, where you would never have looked for learning tasks."

"Each teacher came up with their own way of assigning homework; some typed them in MS Word and sent a file, others wrote directly in the e-class, and some teachers did not assign their homework for the whole week, but for a few days only, therefore it was very difficult to plan everything, because everyone gave assignments in their own way and it was especially difficult because, while you are at home, you cannot just sit at the computer for hours - there is house-work, responsibilities, and since we were at home - sometimes it was not possible to be at home when the teacher wanted to ask something to be answered at short notice."

"Although the works were posted in the e-class every day, it was impossible to mark the completed work, so something could be missed and the tasks were not evenly distributed during a day; there could be very few in a certain hour and very many in the next hour. It would be easier, if the plan for the entire week was known at the beginning so that you could plan your time."

"Sometimes it was not possible to really understand what the teacher was explaining or asking."

Pupils lacked opportunities for socialisation

Lack of socialisation is indicated as a risk during distance learning by both experts and respondents in the surveys - parents, teachers, pupils and school managers. Teachers remind of the importance of school in a wider context, including the development of socialisation and skills, especially for younger children and children with special needs.

The impossibility of meeting friends is one of the most difficult aspects for both pupils, who found it difficult to learn at a distance and pupils, for whom such a learning model was appropriate. Parents also point to concerns in this area and offer solutions - encouraging more zoom lessons and group work to facilitate communication between pupils, even during distance learning.

Pupils:

"I don't want to continue learning remotely because it is often very boring or sad because there is no social contact with other people or friends nearby."

"I would like to be able to perform works in any order in the morning, without having to go to school and get up early. But I would not want to be on distance learning, I would like to go to school and meet my friends, classmates and teachers instead."

Teachers:

"As school is not only a place for learning and acquiring knowledge, but also a developer of socialisation, communication and integration skills, full time face-to-face learning cannot be replaced by distance learning in the long run."

Parents:

"Online lessons where children can see their classmates and teachers must be organised, because it was the separation from their friends that was most difficult to tolerate."

"At the moment, I have a positive attitude towards the remote learning process, because my son has become calmer and there is no need for him to prove himself to be better, more stylish and richer.(...) All that is lacking is social and physical communication in person."