

SLU annual report 2020 – summary

Courses and programmes at undergraduate and Master's level

- In 2020, SLU had 4,216 full-time equivalent students (FTEs). This is an increase of 310 FTEs compared to the previous year. SLU is working in several ways to increase the number of students. To offer all students interested in our university a place, we now need increased funding.
- 2020 has been a challenging year for higher education due to the coronavirus pandemic. The transition to online teaching and examination has required significant efforts and has involved considerable changes for both students and teachers, as well as other staff at the university. Carrying out practical components and exams has posed a particular challenge.
- We had close to 1,100 new students registered on undergraduate programmes (not including those run in cooperation with other Swedish higher education institutions).
- 525 new students were registered on our Master's programmes in 2020 (including programmes run in cooperation with other Swedish higher education institutions), which means there has been a significant increase in the number of Master's students over the past five years.
- The equivalent of 132 FTEs were fee-paying students in 2020, an increase of just over 40 per cent compared to 2019.
- In 2020, SLU awarded a total of 1,130 degrees to 917 students.
- SLU is working actively to improve the quality of our courses and programmes. In 2020, we were the first higher education institution to have its quality assurance work approved as part of the Swedish Higher Education Authority's national quality assurance system.
- Gender equality and a diverse student population remained an important focus throughout the year. However, changes to the gender distribution were insignificant, with around 2/3 of the students being women and 1/3 men.
- Change in capital for the year: SEK -20 million.

Doctoral courses and programmes

- 107 doctoral students were admitted in 2020, only a handful fewer than in 2019. The last five years, an average of 113 new doctoral students have been admitted annually.
- During the same five-year period, the number of active doctoral students has decreased. SLU had 559 active doctoral students in 2020, compared to 614 in

2016. About 45 per cent of the active doctoral students have foreign backgrounds.

- Doctoral studentships are the most common form of funding, 78 per cent of the doctoral students are employed as such. The number of doctoral students with a research grant (19 persons) has dropped sharply during these five years. The remainder of doctoral students have other forms of employment at SLU, or with external organisations.
- 69 doctoral degrees were issued in 2020, unusually few. This is partly explained by lower admission figures 4–5 years ago, but factors such as parental leave and drop-outs also play a role. It has not been possible to assess how many doctoral students have postponed the defence of their thesis due to the coronavirus pandemic.
- Women make up the majority of doctoral students, both among newly admitted students (57 per cent) and active doctoral students (60 per cent). Of the doctoral students to have graduated, a majority (56 per cent) were men. On the whole, men and women fund their studies the same way.

Research

- The coronavirus pandemic has affected research at SLU throughout the year. Travel restrictions have made it more difficult to recruit. Lab work and fieldwork have also been hampered by physical restrictions. These restrictions will likely have long-term effects. A positive effect of cancelled conferences and less travel is that researchers have had more time for drafting scientific manuscripts.
- Our scientific publishing output (articles and reviews) increased by almost 4 per cent between 2019 and 2020. Nationally, the number of articles published remains more or less the same. In 2020, over 1,950 articles/reviews were published.
- In 2020, external funding represented 53 per cent of the total income for research and doctoral courses. Compared to 2019, external funding increased by SEK 32 million (3 per cent).
- External funding comes mainly from research councils and scientific foundations. Formas accounted for almost a third of the external funding.
- The interest in taking part in the EU Horizon 2020 framework programme is increasing. In 2020, 111 applications with SLU as a partner were submitted. The number of applications with SLU as the coordinating partner has increased, and in 2020 made up 30 per cent of the applications.
- Research teams at SLU have successfully competed for grants for two major research programmes in sustainable food systems where SLU coordinates the work done in cooperation between academia, businesses and interest organisations.
- Change in capital for the year (research and doctoral courses): + SEK 34 million.

Environmental monitoring and assessment (EMA)

- Despite the pandemic, field inventories, lab analyses and missions with the research vessel *Svea* have, on the whole, taken place as planned.
- Throughout the 2017–2020 strategy period, EMA has continued to reinforce the SLU brand, something which is obvious both from reporting in the media and a growing increase in the number of EMA assignments.
- Cooperation between EMA and research and teaching remains at around 30 per cent. In total, around 380 individuals are involved.
- In 2020, the first seven senior environmental assessment specialists were appointed.
- Through our environmental objective that requires EMA to provide open data, we continue to take work on open data forward. This objective has been strengthened and extended.
- SLU has also continued as a member of the national network *Smart miljöinformation* and the innovation event *Hack for Sweden*. One of the events during autumn aimed at making it easier for forest owners to reduce the damage done to forests by the spruce bark beetle.
- Change in capital for the year: + SEK 3 million.

Collaboration

- A collaboration qualifications portfolio has been designed and used in a pilot round.
- SLU continues to provide co-funding for the five-year programme for externally employed doctoral students in food (LivsID).
- The year also saw the close of Vinnova's five national K3 projects for collaboration development that SLU has participated in.
- Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, our collaboration for global development with e.g. Bolivia, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda progressed in 2020.
- An evaluation shows that SLU's 40 years of collaboration with Vietnamese stakeholders has increased research capacity and contributed to increased resource efficiency and reduced greenhouse gas emissions from Vietnamese agriculture.
- SLU Holding had a successful year with a record-high influx of innovation projects and excellent performance that has benefitted society. New investments have been made in six companies.

Personnel

- The number of employees increased by 370 full-time equivalents (13 per cent) during the period 2016–2020. Compared to 2019, the increase is 82 FTEs (3 per cent) to 3,155 FTEs. The average number of employees was 3,933.
- In 2020, research and teaching staff increased by 121 FTEs, or 7 per cent, compared to 2019.
- The number of professors fell by 24 FTEs during 2016–2020, which corresponds to 11 per cent. The reason for this decrease is that being promoted to professor is no longer a right.
- 55 per cent of SLU's 3,155 FTEs in 2020 were women and 45 per cent were men.
- Among research and teaching staff, gender distribution has become more even over time. In 2020, 49 per cent were women.
- 32 per cent of professors were women and 68 per cent were men. SLU has recruited 15 professors in 2020, 6 of whom are women.
- Average absence due to illness is on a par with the previous year's figures. There is still a relatively large difference between women and men in their absence due to illness.

Financial analysis

- SLU reports a surplus of SEK 17 million for 2020 and the capital brought forward amounts to SEK 430 million, giving a closing capital of SEK 447 million.
- The university's finances remain strong. This is mainly in research, where research grants (payments received) increased by SEK 360 million, or 80 per cent. In addition, SLU has unused grants of SEK 1,181 million, mainly within the reporting area research and doctoral studies.
- Depreciations have increased by SEK 27 million, 15 per cent, and the single largest cause for this are depreciations linked to the purchase of stables at Ultuna and the research vessel Svea. Svea was launched in October 2019 and 2020 was the first full year of depreciation.
- SLU's finances have been affected by the fact that it has not been possible to carry out some activities during the year. As an example, travel costs dropped by SEK 60 million (64 per cent) compared to 2019.