

## Summary of the 2024 annual report

### First and second-cycle courses and programmes

SLU met its target of 12 600 full-time equivalent students (FTEs) for the 2022–2024 period, even though FTEs with direct government funding decreased by 130 in 2024 compared with 2023.

Just over 70 per cent of full-time students at SLU are women and just under 30 per cent are men. This applies to both first and second-cycle level.’

There were fewer qualified applicants for ’SLU’s programmes, particularly those at second-cycle level.’

In the international admission round, there was a decrease in the number of fee-paying students applying and being admitted to programmes. This can likely be explained through changes to eligibility assessments and the Swedish Migration ’Agency’s assessments of applicants’ intention to study.

In November 2024, SLU was granted the right to award the Degree of Master of Science in Engineering. Preparatory work for the new degree programme has begun.

SLU is one of nine higher education institutions involved in the Government initiative short courses for professionals specialising in the green transition. During the year, six courses for professionals have been developed within the framework of the initiative.

The expansion of the veterinary nursing and veterinary medicine programmes continued in 2024. By 2025, the veterinary nursing programme will be fully scaled up, followed by the veterinary medicine programme in 2028.

To strengthen the development of the subject and secure the internal skills supply, SLU has approved a ’second-cycle programme in veterinary nursing.

The need for study support for students with disabilities has increased by 50 per cent since 2020, and the increase is particularly high for the group with neuropsychiatric disorders.

Change in capital for the year: SEK -20 million.

### Third-cycle courses and programmes

In 2024, SLU admitted 135 doctoral students, slightly more than the previous year. Over the past five years, SLU has admitted an average of 114 doctoral students per year.

The number of active doctoral students over the past five years has varied between 566 and 606. Around 47 per cent of active doctoral students come from abroad.

Doctoral studentships are the dominant funding method, with 84 per cent of SLU's doctoral students being employed by the university. The number of students receiving scholarships decreased during the review period. The remainder have other forms of employment at SLU or with external organisations.

In 2024, 101.5 degrees were awarded. This number is the same level as in 2023, but higher than in previous years during the period presented.

Women are in the majority both in terms of the proportion of newly admitted doctoral students (69 per cent) and active doctoral students (59 per cent). Women were also in the majority among those who completed a doctorate (55 per cent).

Of the doctoral students, 86 per cent of women and 79 per cent of men were employed by SLU. When it comes to other forms of income, there are some differences between the sexes. However, it is difficult to draw any conclusions based on these differences, as they are small groups where a number of individuals may combine different funding types.

### Research

SLU's scientific publication output increased by 8 per cent between 2023 and 2024. Nationally, the number of published articles increased by around 10 per cent. In 2024, around 2 370 articles/reviews were published. The proportion of scientific articles that are among the 10 per cent most cited in their respective subject areas was slightly over 15 per cent.

In 2024, turnover in research and doctoral education totalled just over SEK 3 billion, with external funding accounting for 57 per cent. Payments from external funding bodies have increased by SEK 339 million to SEK 1.5 billion over the past five years. External funding comes largely from research councils and scientific foundations (SEK 765 million), of which Formas accounted for just over 40 per cent.

Interest in participating in the EU framework programme remains high. In 2024, SLU had 105 active projects within the framework programme, an increase from 2023. This increase was mainly associated with collaboration projects. In 2024, SLU participated in over 130 applications to the current framework programme, SLU being the coordinating party for 30, a significant increase from the previous year.

In 2024, a major strategic recruitment initiative – SLU Futures – was initiated, aiming to create future-oriented, strong academic environments in three thematic areas: sustainable crop production systems of the future, resilient ecosystems and One Health. Nine associate senior lecturers will be recruited as part of this initiative.

In 2024, the vice-chancellor designated a number of SLU infrastructures of particular importance. These are essential for fulfilling SLU's mission, and they must function well in terms of quality, finance and competence. SLU also participates in several national research infrastructures together with other higher education institutions.

In 2024, SLU reported on research carried out to strengthen food security and agricultural production capacity in the event of a peacetime crisis, heightened state of alert and ultimately war.

In 2024, SLU organised and hosted the 26th IUFRO World Congress (International Union of Forest Research Organisations) on the theme Forest and Society Towards 2050. There were 4 200 participants from 110 countries.

Change in capital for the year (research and doctoral education): SEK 8 million

## Environmental monitoring and assessment

The long-term financial trend shows an increase in external funding, reflecting the fact that SLU is in demand as a provider of environmental assessment.

SLU's environmental monitoring and assessment contributes to international and national sustainable development in many ways. This is described in SLU's sustainability report.

Environmental assessment staff participated in the IUFRO congress with a programme on forests, woodlands, species and landscapes. A translated version of a book on 100 years of forest statistics (the Swedish National Forest Inventory) was also launched.

SLU has been a member of the Geodata Council since 2024 and, together with other public authorities, has developed a strategy for how work with environmental information can be integrated into the Geodata Council.

SLU uses part of the grant for environmental monitoring and assessment to improve its development. During the year, several special initiatives were taken to expand environmental monitoring and assessment.

SLU is the public authority responsible for official statistics on the state and change of forests.

Change in capital for the year: SEK 9 million.

## Collaboration and innovation

A very high proportion of SLU's research, education and environmental assessment is carried out in collaboration with various public and private organisations and representatives.

In 2023 and 2024, the Swedish Higher Education Authority conducted a thematic evaluation of collaboration. Their evaluation team found that SLU manages the expectations that society and external actors may have of the university in a commendable way.

One third of SLU's scientific articles are co-published with researchers based in low and middle-income countries. Of these articles, 19 per cent are highly cited, which is higher than the average for SLU (15 per cent) and the world (10 per cent).

SLU has signed a university-wide cooperation agreement with FAO to further strengthen our long-standing collaboration. The agreement strengthens cooperation in critical areas such as sustainable agriculture, natural resource management and animal disease prevention.

The influx of innovative ideas from researchers and students is at a record high. The number of innovation projects that have produced demonstrable societal benefits, known as outputs, remains high.

## Staff

SLU had 3 261 full-time employees in 2024, an increase of 38 FTEs compared to 2023.

The number of full-time equivalent research and teaching staff has remained constant over the 2020–2024 period, with some variation.

The number of professors decreased by 22 FTEs over 2020–2024, corresponding to 11 per cent. The decrease is mainly due to the removal of the right to be promoted to professor in 2013.

In 2024, 56 per cent of SLU's 3 261 full-time employees were women and 44 per cent were men.

Among research and teaching staff, the gender balance has become more even over time; in 2024, the gender balance was even in these categories.

Among professors, 34 per cent were women and 66 per cent men.

The average sickness absence rate was higher than in 2023. Sickness absence has increased slightly in all age groups and among both women and men.

## Financial analysis

SLU reports a deficit of just under SEK -3 million for 2024. The balanced change in capital amounts to SEK 690 million, which gives a closing capital of SEK 688 million.

The university's finances remain strong. This is mainly in the research accounting area, where SEK 558 million or 81 per cent of the closing capital can be found. In addition, SLU has unspent grants of SEK 1 489 million.

Staff, premises and other operating costs have increased by 6 per cent, 5 per cent and 9 per cent respectively compared to 2023. The increase in staff costs is salary-related, while the increase in premises costs is generated by index-linked leases. The increase in operating costs is mainly due to consultancy fees and increased conference activities.

The university has strong external funding, with grant and contract payments totalling SEK 1.9 billion in 2024. Of SLU's external funders, Formas is by far the largest.