



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024



UMEA UNIVERSITY

## **UMEÅ UNIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT 2024**

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The cover features images representing two major conferences: 'Insight and Outlook', on Sápmi-related research, and 'Hurricanes and Scaffolding', on artistic research. Other images show Bildmuseet, an ALS protein (within which significant research advances were made during the year), some of the University's students, and the inauguration of new infrastructure at Humlab and the Environmental Archaeology Lab.

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# Foreword by the Vice-Chancellor

A high degree of academic freedom and departmental autonomy is essential for higher education institutions to carry out their assignments within research and education. During the year, Umeå University has had a particular focus on academic freedom with seminars and panel discussions. We have also had an internal focus on what our academic core values mean for everyone who works at the University. This has resulted in an updated toolkit for core value dialogues, with explanatory films and working materials.

At the same time, a number of wars and conflicts have been raging in our world, causing heartbreaking human suffering among civilians. Not least, the conflict in the Middle East has sparked debate, demonstrations and protests around the world – and also on Umeå University's campuses. Everyone's opinion counts, but it is also important that this is expressed respectfully so that students and staff, whatever their opinions, can feel safe and secure. The University's work and study environment must be safeguarded, and the best way to do this is by engaging in peaceful and respectful dialogue with each other.

One way to increase understanding between people is through Umeå University's extensive cooperation with other higher education institutions around the world. I myself had the privilege of visiting several universities in Japan during the autumn, as from this year Umeå University will be the Swedish coordinator for MIRAI and the mutual cooperation between Sweden and Japan, which includes ten Swedish and seven Japanese higher education institutions. MIRAI is an excellent example of how higher education institutions can work together at both national and international levels, creating the right conditions for students and researchers to advance science.

But no matter how much we collaborate and build bridges, there are still challenges to address. The current geopolitical and security situation has placed higher demands on the security work of higher education institutions and other public authorities and organisations,

including Umeå University. Being aware of security issues is extremely important, but so is academia's hallmark of achieving ground-breaking new knowledge by being as open as possible. The University has also established a Work Environment and Equal Opportunities Committee, which monitors developments within issues relating to preventive work to combat ill-health, accidents and discrimination, and strives to ensure equal work environment conditions.

In terms of our core operations – education and research – we are pleased to note that the allocation of external research grants has increased this year within a number of areas, and that many colleagues are taking seats on research councils and other important bodies. Umeå University has also received several major private donations during the year, further strengthening our research and demonstrating that the University is seen as an important part of society. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who has contributed towards new and important research through various donations. We have also seen the number of applications to study at Umeå University rise to new record figures. This is clear confirmation of the fact that the University offers attractive courses and study programmes.

Finally, if there is one thing I am certain I will miss from Umeå University when I leave my position as Vice-Chancellor at the end of January 2025, it is walking around the Campus Pond on a spring day when the surrounding lawns are packed full of students. The murmur of discussions in the spring sunshine, against the beautiful backdrop of the Campus Pond, represents the countless treasured memories and encounters that I will take with me from my years as Vice-Chancellor of Umeå University as we close the books for 2024.



Hans Adolfsson  
Vice-Chancellor



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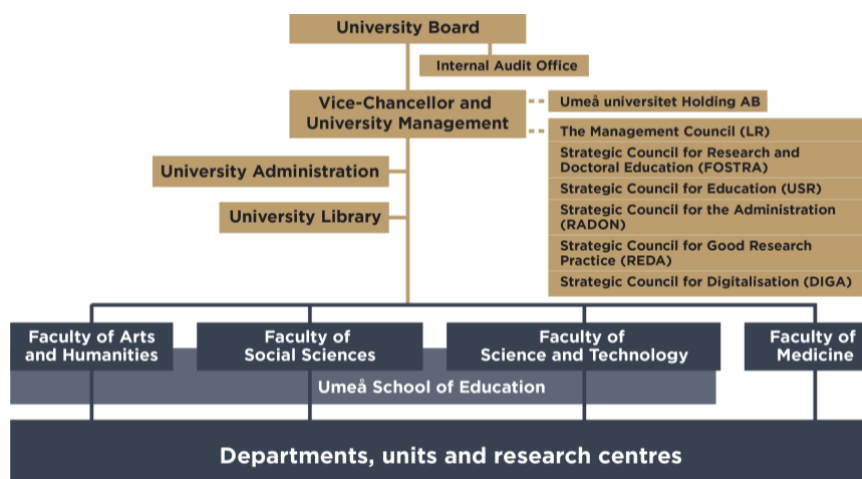
# About Umeå University

Umeå University is a broad university, and is one of Sweden’s largest higher education institutions with around 40,500 students and 4,600 employees. It offers a wide range of high-quality courses and study programmes, and carries out research within all fields of science and the arts. Umeå University is also the place where the groundbreaking CRISPR-Cas9 gene-editing tool was discovered – a revolution within genetic engineering that won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry.

The University has an international atmosphere, and its operations are based on academic core values. Our cohesive campuses make it easy to meet, collaborate and exchange knowledge, promoting a dynamic and open culture in which employees celebrate each other’s successes. Umeå University takes pride in offering a world-class teaching and research environment, and contributes towards new knowledge of global significance, driven and inspired by the sustainability goals of the 2030 Agenda. Here, creative and innovative research environments provide excellent conditions for tackling the future challenges faced by society. Through long-term cooperation with organisations, industry and other higher education institutions, the University contributes towards developing northern Sweden as a knowledge region. The societal transformation and major investments being made in northern Sweden create complex challenges, as well as opportunities. For Umeå University, this involves carrying out research on and amid a society undergoing transition,

and continuing to offer education for regions that need to expand quickly and sustainably. Campus Umeå and Umeå Arts Campus are located close to the centre of Umeå, and next to one of Sweden’s largest and best-reputed university hospitals. Education is also provided at a number of other locations, such as Skellefteå, Örnsköldsvik, Lycksele and Kiruna. Umeå University is home to the highly ranked Umeå Institute of Design, the environmentally certified Umeå School of Business, Economics and Statistics, and Sweden’s only school of architecture with an artistic specialisation. It is also home to Bildmuseet and Umeå’s science centre, Curiosum. Umeå University is one of Sweden’s five national sports universities, and has an internationally leading Arctic Research Centre and a centre for Sámi research, Várdduo – the country’s only established research unit for Sámi and other indigenous research.

Umeå University’s departments and units are organised within four faculties: the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Faculty of Science and Technology. These faculties have 38 departments, and there are also 19 centres and 15 units within the University. Umeå University currently has six schools and institutes. The faculties, the University Administration and Umeå University Library all provide important support functions for the departments, units, centres, schools and institutes at which the University’s education, research and public operations are carried out.



# Summary

In 2024, interest in higher education increased nationally, including at Umeå University. Several factors – such as large cohorts during the early 2000s, the current economic situation and rising unemployment – have had an impact on the number of applicants. The increase in the number of applicants for the University's courses and study programmes contributed towards the highest ever number of students at Umeå University in 2024, with more than 40,500 registered students. More and more students have registered for short-term studies, and the percentage of full-time students on distance learning programmes continues to increase, dominated largely by women.

Despite the increase in registered students in recent years, the number of degrees awarded in 2024 was largely unchanged compared with 2023 (4,588 degrees). One possible explanation may be that the increase in students has not yet been reflected in degrees awarded, or that students have completed their studies early as an effect of the pandemic. Umeå University has almost achieved the specific objectives for a number of vocational programmes within the areas of teacher and preschool teacher education and healthcare education set by the Government for 2021–2024. Decentralised healthcare training was expanded in 2024 to include the Midwifery and Biomedical Analyst programmes.

Work continued during the year to increase the volume of education at first- and second-cycle levels. The measures taken appear to have had a positive impact in terms of carrying out the educational assignment given to Umeå University by the Government in 2024. The volume of education corresponded to 17,407 full-time students in 2024, an increase of 2.0 per cent compared with 2023. This increase is primarily within the humanities. Despite the increase, the compensation for completed education at first- and second-cycle levels was almost SEK 36 million less than the allocated budget framework from the Government. This means that the University received a reduced income within direct government funding for first-cycle education, affecting the final financial results in 2024, and that the

University needs to repay approximately SEK 15 million to the Government.

In 2024, Umeå University was invited to join the European alliance EC2U (European Campus of City-Universities), and decided to accept. A final decision is awaited from the European Commission, and it is hoped that the University will join EC2U at the beginning of May 2025. During the year, the University launched an international student recruitment programme with a particular focus on students from the EU/Europe. The number of both outgoing and incoming exchange students increased in 2024, and has now surpassed the number the University had before the pandemic. The number of third-country students increased, reaching an all-time record of 378 students in 2024, with a growing proportion of women. The proportion who have participated in education as part of an exchange agreement also increased in 2024.

Within third-cycle education, the number of newly admitted and active doctoral students continued to grow in 2024. Two hundred and ten new doctoral students were admitted, which is the highest number since 2014. The total number of active doctoral students was 1,042. The number of doctoral degrees also increased, with a growing proportion of women. Following a pause of just over five years, third-cycle education in architecture has started again at Umeå University.

During 2024, several successful researchers were recognised and received research grants, donations, prizes and awards. Six researchers were named Wallenberg Scholars. Two researchers received an ERC Starting Grant, and one received the prestigious ERC Consolidator Grant. For the first time, a researcher at Umeå University was also awarded an ERC Synergy Grant. The total granted ERC (European Research Council) funding can thus be summarised as positive for 2024, and there are high hopes that further EU funding will be granted to researchers at the University in the near future, as not all the applications have been assessed yet. It is also pleasing to note that research grants received

continued to increase in 2024, following a marginal increase in 2023. As before, the Swedish Research Council is the University's provider of research grants. Umeå University received a generous donation during the year from Lennart Bondesson, an esteemed former professor at the Department of Mathematics and Mathematical Statistics. This donation will be managed by the Lennart Bondesson Foundation, and will be used to pay for travel grants, guest speakers and conferences.

One important metric of the University's research activity is the number of scholarly publications and their impact. Considering natural annual variation in the number of publications, the total number of author fractions decreased in 2022–2023 compared with the two previous years. The aggregated author fractions for 2024 are moderately larger than for the previous year. As in previous years, there is a backlog of publications which means that the number for 2024 is not yet complete.

In order to strategically develop good quality research at Umeå University, the investment in three prioritised research fields has continued during the year. These research fields are Learning and brain plasticity throughout the life span, Mastering microbial infections and Plant science for a sustainable green transformation of the Subarctic. They all feature a high degree of international quality, and they all have a clear link to societal benefits. The investment totals just over SEK 50 million during 2024–2029.

The average number of employees at the University was 4,006 people during 2024. The increase was slightly lower than during the previous year. This increase is reflected in several job categories. The highest increases were in the number of postdoctoral fellows, administrative staff and doctoral students. The proportion of female professors (full-time equivalents) has remained relatively stable over time, but rose by one percentage point to 34 per cent in 2024. In accordance with the Government's stated objectives, the University has continued to work towards an even gender balance in the recruitment of professors. During 2024, however, the proportion of women recruited decreased compared with previous

years, which may be partly due to the scientific fields within which recruitment took place. For the second consecutive year, there was an increase in the proportion of teaching staff with doctoral degrees among research and teaching staff in 2024.

Within the area of work environment and health, the University works systematically and in the long term to create good physical, organisational and social working conditions for staff and students. An employee survey was carried out during 2024, and the results showed a very positive trend at an overall level. The results within all areas surveyed (work climate, leadership, organisation, and vision and values) were the best since 2014 (the last comparable year), and showed a strong development curve for the areas of organisation and leadership in particular.

The University's work for a sustainable campus also showed positive results, with improved rankings over time in both the international Times Higher Education Impact Ranking and the QS Sustainability Ranking. Both systems compare the world's universities based on the UN's global Sustainable Development Goals. In the latter ranking, Umeå University climbed more than two hundred places compared with last year. This shows that the University's systematic environmental and climate work is producing results.

During 2024, several university-wide activities have been carried out within various security-related areas. For example, a number of measures have been taken to further enhance IT security, and assessment support for research in particular has been developed based on legal requirements for security protection.

2024 was also a year in which Umeå University achieved the objective of maximising the use of available resources to carry out high-quality education and research. The change in capital for the year was a planned deficit of SEK –237 million, and the University's total agency capital decreased to a total of SEK 581 million. The future direction is a tighter financial situation, within which the University will act responsibly to reduce the gap between costs and revenues.

Finally, we would like to thank Hans Adolfsson for his service as Vice-Chancellor of Umeå University, which ended on 31 January 2025. The University Board has proposed to the Government that Professor Tora Holmberg, currently of Uppsala University, should be appointed as the University's new Vice-

Chancellor with effect from 1 April 2025. The Government has decided to appoint Katrine Riklund as acting Vice-Chancellor from 1 February 2025 until further notice, and no later than until a new Vice-Chancellor assumes their position.



# Significant information<sup>1</sup>

|  | 2024           | 2023           | 2022           | 2021           | 2020           |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Education and research</b>  |                |                |                |                |                |
| Total full-time equivalents – students <sup>2</sup>                            | 17,931         | 17,585         | 17,699         | 18,004         | 17,476         |
| Cost per full-time equivalent (SEK thousand)                                   | 121.7          | 119.8          | 111.8          | 106.2          | 103.2          |
| Total number of annual performance equivalents <sup>2</sup>                    | 14,956         | 14,557         | 14,643         | 15,325         | 14,693         |
| Cost per annual performance equivalent (SEK thousand)                          | 146.0          | 144.7          | 135.1          | 124.8          | 122.8          |
| Total fee-paying students (FTEs) <sup>3</sup>                                  | 228            | 220            | 194            | 179            | 166            |
| Total newly admitted doctoral students<br>– of which women/men (%)             | 210<br>61/39   | 151<br>51/49   | 196<br>58/42   | 141<br>52/48   | 200<br>59/41   |
| Total doctoral students with some form of activity<br>– of which women/men (%) | 1,042<br>57/43 | 999<br>56/44   | 977<br>56/44   | 903<br>52/48   | 885<br>53/47   |
| Total doctoral studentships (FTEs)<br>– of which women/men (%)                 | 557<br>57/43   | 524<br>56/44   | 531<br>55/45   | 465<br>54/46   | 473<br>52/48   |
| Total doctoral students with doctoral grant (FTEs)<br>– of which women/men (%) | 0<br>–         | 0<br>–         | 0<br>–         | 0<br>–         | 0<br>–         |
| Average programme length for licentiate degrees <sup>4, 5</sup>                |                |                |                |                | 6.0            |
| Average programme length for doctoral degrees <sup>4</sup>                     |                | 8.3            | 8.2            | 8.2            | 8.0            |
| Total doctoral degrees<br>– of which women/men (%)                             | 142<br>57/43   | 127<br>51/49   | 98<br>45/55    | 121<br>51/49   | 118<br>46/54   |
| Total licentiate degrees<br>– of which women/men (%)                           | 2<br>0/100     | 2<br>50/50     | 0<br>–         | 2<br>0/100     | 6<br>33/67     |
| Total number of peer-reviewed scholarly publications <sup>6</sup>              | 1,171.5        | 1,163.3        | 1,197.0        | 1,258.3        | 1,237.8        |
| Cost per peer-reviewed scholarly publication (SEK million)                     | 2.8            | 2.6            | 2.4            | 2.1            | 2.1            |
| <b>Staff</b>   |                |                |                |                |                |
| Total full-time equivalents – employees<br>– of which women/men (%)            | 4,006<br>56/44 | 3,922<br>55/45 | 3,832<br>54/46 | 3,704<br>54/46 | 3,596<br>53/47 |
| Average number of employees<br>– of which women/men (%)                        | 4,627<br>56/44 | 4,559<br>55/45 | 4,372<br>55/45 | 4,211<br>55/45 | 4,121<br>54/46 |
| Total number of teachers (FTEs)<br>– of which women/men (%)                    | 1,702<br>50/50 | 1,645<br>49/51 | 1,526<br>48/52 | 1,475<br>48/52 | 1,452<br>47/53 |
| Number of teachers with a doctorate (FTEs)<br>– of which women/men (%)         | 1,465<br>48/52 | 1,406<br>46/54 | 1,346<br>46/54 | 1,319<br>46/54 | 1,300<br>45/55 |
| Number of professors (FTEs)<br>– of which women/men (%)                        | 310<br>34/66   | 312<br>33/67   | 308<br>33/67   | 299<br>33/67   | 303<br>32/68   |
| <b>Finances</b>  |                |                |                |                |                |
| Total revenue (SEK million), of which  | 5,407          | 5,159          | 4,977          | 4,823          | 4,645          |
| first- and second-cycle education (SEK million)                                | 2,317          | 2,211          | 2,135          | 2,136          | 2,014          |
| – percentage direct government funding (%)                                     | 78%            | 78%            | 80%            | 81%            | 81%            |
| – percentage from external revenue (%)   | 22%            | 22%            | 20%            | 19%            | 19%            |
| research and third-cycle education (SEK million)                               | 3,090          | 2,948          | 2,841          | 2,687          | 2,631          |
| – percentage direct government funding (%)                                     | 48%            | 48%            | 49%            | 52%            | 52%            |
| – percentage from external revenue (%)   | 52%            | 52%            | 51%            | 48%            | 48%            |
| Total costs (SEK million), of which  | 5,644          | 5,344          | 5,001          | 4,721          | 4,541          |
| – percentage staff   | 64%            | 63%            | 64%            | 66%            | 64%            |
| – percentage premises  | 10%            | 10%            | 9%             | 9%             | 10%            |
| Premises costs <sup>7</sup> per m <sup>2</sup> (SEK)                           | 2,384          | 2,224          | 2,022          | 1,999          | 2,090          |
| – percentage of adjusted total costs (%)                                       | 10%            | 10%            | 10%            | 10%            | 11%            |
| Balance sheet total (SEK million), of which                                    | 3,177          | 3,429          | 3,515          | 3,509          | 3,151          |
| – unused grants  | 1,152          | 1,203          | 1,192          | 1,149          | 1,015          |
| – annual change in capital   | -237           | -186           | -24            | 101            | 105            |
| – agency capital (incl. annual change in capital)                              | 581            | 817            | 1,001          | 1,023          | 921            |
| i) in first- and second-cycle education  | 310            | 391            | 469            | 493            | 433            |
| j) in research and doctoral programmes   | 248            | 405            | 512            | 512            | 471            |

<sup>1</sup> For information about dealing with historical statistical data, see the section *Documentation and data*.

<sup>2</sup> Excluding contract education and contracted courses.

<sup>3</sup> Excluding contracted courses.

<sup>4</sup> Semesters. Information for 2024 had not yet been reported when statistics were retrieved from Statistics Sweden.

<sup>5</sup> There are fewer than six degrees, so this information is not included in statistics retrieved from Statistics Sweden.

<sup>6</sup> Refers to author fractions regarding articles in journal/research title. Data for 2024 is preliminary. Data for 2020–2023 has been updated due to a backlog in registration of publications.

<sup>7</sup> Reported in accordance with SUHF's recommendations on premises costs in the part related to the compilation of premises costs; see Appendix 2 for the recommendations (REK 2014:1, reg. no. 14/069).

# EVENTS THIS YEAR

## Umeå Arts Campus becomes a global arena for artistic research



The name of the symposium was taken from Nora N. Khan's essay *Towards a Poetics of Artificial Super Intelligence*. Photo: Mattias Pettersson.

December saw a symposium on artistic research bring more than 200 researchers from 26 different countries to Umeå Arts Campus. The symposium was organised by the Swedish Research Council in collaboration with UmArts at Umeå University, and all of Umeå Arts Campus's departments and operations were involved in some way. *Hurricanes and Scaffolding: Symposium on Artistic Research 2024* provided a vibrant platform for critical and creative dialogue on artistic research.



## Umeå University joins European alliance

Umeå University will become the ninth member of the European Campus of City-Universities (EC2U).

"Today, being part of a European alliance is a matter of competition and quality for both education and research," says Cathrine Norberg, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Umeå University.

In particular, membership of EC2U means that students will have greater mobility opportunities and more choice, and that the University can be involved in and influence the European education landscape.



Janina Priebe, Docent and Associate Professor in History of Science and Ideas at Umeå University, was one of the keynote speakers and talked about transitions within forestry. Photo: Per Melander.

## Perspectives from many different angles

"Perspectives" can best be described as a combination of everything from a conference and a meeting place to a source of knowledge and a forum for discussion. The event was held on 22 November, featuring four keynote speakers, five panel discussions, six films and

live music, all of which gave the audience different perspectives on the theme of natural resources and sustainable development. There was also time for the participants - from the private sector, the public sector and academia - to come together for networking opportunities.

## Significant interest in conference on indigenous research

The Insight and Outlook conference on Sápmi-related research, organised by Várdduo - Centre for Sámi Research at Umeå University, drew participants from many different countries. The programme included 101 presentations and 29 sessions and workshops, as well as a popular joik concert with Jörgen Stenberg from Malå in Västerbotten.

"Várdduo's intention was to gather all Sápmi related research on a broad front - an opportunity to listen to the large volume of



Kristina Sehlin MacNeil. Photo: Hans Karlsson.

indigenous research being carried out in Sápmi, and I would say that we succeeded with this," explains Kristina Sehlin MacNeil, Docent in Sámi Studies and Deputy Director of Várdduo.

## AI Policy Lab becomes an important knowledge centre

AI brings both opportunities and challenges for society. A number of policies and regulations, such as the EU's AI Act, are currently being drawn up to address these. As a result, the AI Policy Lab was established at Umeå University at the beginning of the year.

Professor Virginia Dignum a leading world expert on responsible AI who has contributed to expert panels for the EU, UNESCO and the World Economic Forum, was appointed as head of research. The aim of the lab is to investigate how governance and policy structures can address the human and societal effects of AI.

"The AI Policy Lab will offer researchers from different faculties



at Umeå University the opportunity to apply for short-term scholarships and permanent employment to integrate ethical, legal and societal considerations into all phases of AI development," said Professor Virginia Dignum during the opening ceremony. "AI and the opportunities it brings should be used in a responsible manner, bringing benefits for humankind and society."

## Crespin's works fascinate Bildmuseet's visitors

Elias Crespin's mobile sculptures - which move slowly and gracefully in complex, precise formations, appearing to float freely in the air - have attracted great interest at Bildmuseet during the year. Elias Crespin's pieces, displayed in the exhibition Chronomorphosis,

invite reflections on form, space and movement. The exhibition was the first presentation of the artist's works in the Nordic region. The artist has a background in programming, and his fascination with mathematics and science forms a starting point for his art.



Elias Crespin, Chronomorphosis, view from the exhibition at Bildmuseet in 2024-2025. © With the permission of the artist and Bildmuseet. Photo: Malin Grönborg.

## Successful allocation of research funding in 2024

Summarising the autumn's allocation of research grants revealed that the University's researchers had been more successful than during the previous year, which will strengthen the University's research for many years to come.

"It is extremely pleasing that these positive results point towards increased allocations in several areas," says Katrine Riklund, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Umeå University.

The Swedish Research Council's grant for educational science was one of the biggest successes. Almost 14 per cent of the national research funding within this area was awarded to Umeå University, an increase of five percentage points from the previous year. This puts the University in second place after the University of Gothenburg.



ERC Synergy Grant recipient Stephan Wenkel. Photo: Mattias Pettersson.

## First ERC Synergy Grant award for Umeå

Stephan Wenkel, Professor at the Department of Plant Physiology, is part of an international collaboration between plant scientists that was awarded the EUR 10 million ERC Synergy Grant. The aim is to tackle one of biological science's most complex challenges: understanding how multicellular organisms form their intricate shapes.

"We will gain a deeper understanding of how proteins control plants' growth, potentially leading to new and innovative uses for biotechnology, within both plant biology and other fields," explains Stephan Wenkel.

## Strategic cooperation with Umeå Municipality on teacher training

“Our vision will form a basis for our ongoing collaboration and continued dialogues on what to develop together,” said Umeå School of Education’s Lars-Erik Lauritz when Umeå Municipality and Umeå School of Education agreed on a shared vision for strategic collaboration over the next ten years.

The strategy is based on developing forms for practical placements, taking proven experience and a scientific basis as the starting points. The ultimate goal is to increase the attractiveness of the teaching profession and to boost the number of qualified teachers.

## SEK 108 million from Wallenberg Scholars for basic research

Six of Umeå University’s researchers have been chosen to take part in the Wallenberg Scholars programme, which awards grants to Sweden’s leading researchers for free research whereby they can choose what they want to research. The recipients will share a total of SEK 108 million.

The six researchers include Virginia Dignum, Professor at the Department of Computing Science, David Wardle, Professor at the Department of Ecology and Environmental Science, and Felipe Cava and Oliver Billker, professors at the Department of Molecular Biology, all of whom are new to the programme.

Lotta Vikström, Professor at the Department of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies, and Lars Nyberg, Professor at the Department of Diagnostics and Intervention, have both had their inclusion in the programme extended.

## Umeå University is the first in Sweden to receive Healthy Campus certification

Umeå University is the first higher education institution in Sweden and the Nordic region to be certified as a Healthy Campus. This certification aims to promote the health and well-being of both students and staff, and is part of the University’s broader sustainability work.



## Umeå leaps up the global sustainability rankings

QS Sustainability Rankings is an annual ranking of the world’s universities that measures higher education institutions based on the UN’s global Sustainable Development Goals.

Umeå University climbed more than two hundred places compared with last year, to 214 in the world and 48 in Europe, out of a total of around 1,750 ranked universities.

## Double inauguration of important new infrastructure

The Environmental Archaeology Lab (MAL) and Humlab held a joint inauguration of brand new, important research infrastructure equipment funded by the Kempe Foundations. Near-infrared spectroscopy (NIR) equipment will be used for chemical characterisation of different materials at MAL, while motion capture equipment will be used at Humlab to capture individuals’ physical movements, either in whole or in part, and in certain cases even their facial expressions.

“Granting funding for equipment at Humlab and MAL, both based at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, brings opportunities for researchers within and across the boundaries

of research to collaborate, and to gather and visualise data in new ways,” said Alice Kempe, Chair of the Kempe Foundations, during the inauguration ceremony.



Alice Kempe, Chair of the Kempe Foundations, attended the double inauguration ceremony and gave a speech. Photo: Sandra Lundström.



Design student Yuchen Lan works on 'Moi!', her Red Dot-winning project which helps young people with cystic fibrosis. Photo: Yuchen Lan.

## Umeå Institute of Design tops the Red Dot ranking for the ninth consecutive year

Umeå Institute of Design has once again secured the top position in the Red Dot Design Ranking, an international award for excellent design that is presented each year by Germany's Design Zentrum

Nordrhein Westfalen. Umeå Institute of Design topped the ranking for the ninth year running, emphasising its leading position within design education at international level.

## Breakthrough for ALS research – new medication slows progression

A breakthrough was made in amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) treatment during the year. Researchers at Umeå University reported that the disease progression of a Swedish patient with a particularly aggressive form of ALS had been slowed down thanks to new gene therapy medication. After four years with the disease, the patient is able to climb stairs, get up from a chair, eat and speak well, and lead a socially active life.

“The fact that this patient is still able to climb stairs more or less unimpeded four years after contract-

ing the disease is actually something of a miracle,” says Karin Forsberg, a neurologist and researcher at the Department of Clinical Sciences. Together with senior consultant physician in neurology Professor Peter Andersen from the same department, she has carried out research on the pathogenic SOD1 protein and ALS.

“We don't know yet whether this medication has a similar effect on other forms of ALS disease,” adds Professor Peter Andersen. “Much more research is still needed - this is only the beginning.”



Illustration: Kären-Ann Hurri

## Violence against Sámi women – report draws attention on International Women's Day

How are Sámi women and girls affected by violence, and what support is available to them? Political scientist Jennie Brandén and her colleagues from the Lávvuo research group bridged key knowledge gaps and drew significant attention from the Swedish media on International Women's Day when they released their new research report at the Museum of Women's History in Umeå.

“We hope that the findings of our report will lead to change, and that the Government and other actors will take greater responsibility for combating violence against Sámi women,” says Jennie.

## Sweden's highest number of recognised or distinguished university teachers

Over the years, the University has appointed 376 recognised or distinguished university teachers, the highest number in Sweden. The model for educational qualifications at university level was first launched in 2013.

The aim is to contribute towards continuously improving quality within education, including by encouraging university teachers to achieve high levels of teaching expertise and by recognising and rewarding high levels of teaching expertise.

Forty university teachers who have demonstrated high levels of teaching expertise were appointed in 2024.

# Financial reporting

## Economic overview

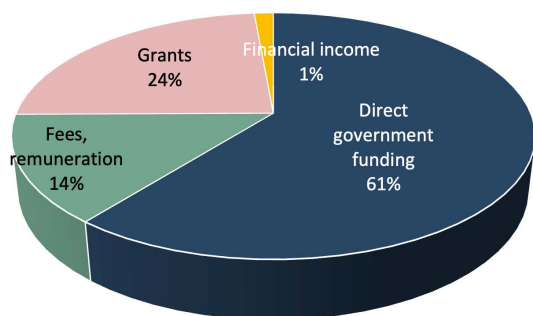
The following is a summary of Umeå University's income, costs and change in capital for 2024 compared with the period 2020–2023. The University's income increased by 16.4 per cent (2019–2023: 14.5 per cent) during the period 2020–2024, while during the same period costs increased by 24.3 per cent (2019–2023: 19.6 per cent). In 2024, revenues increased by SEK 248 million (+4.8 per cent) compared with 2023, while costs increased by SEK 300 million (+5.6 per cent). Increased costs are primarily a result of measures taken by the University to ensure that all available resources are utilised every year, although they are also a consequence of increased staff costs resulting from more employees and increases in salaries. During 2024, work began to reduce the gap between costs and revenues. See under *Annual change in capital* for more information.

**Table 46:** Income statement for the period 2020–2024, SEK million.

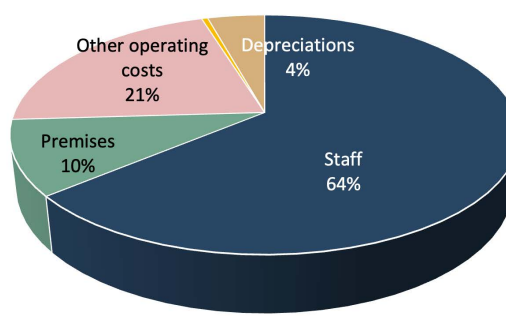
| <b>Economic summary,<br/>Umeå University in total</b> | 2020         | 2021         | 2022         | 2023         | <b>2024</b>  |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <i>Income</i>   |              |              |              |              |              |
| Direct government funding                             | 2,993        | 3,135        | 3,115        | 3,153        | <b>3,283</b> |
| Fees, remuneration                                    | 614          | 654          | 690          | 735          | <b>763</b>   |
| Grants  | 1,037        | 1,033        | 1,152        | 1,190        | <b>1,284</b> |
| Financial income                                      | 1            | 0            | 18           | 80           | <b>76</b>    |
| <b>Total income</b>                                   | <b>4,645</b> | <b>4,823</b> | <b>4,977</b> | <b>5,159</b> | <b>5,407</b> |
| <i>Costs</i>  |              |              |              |              |              |
| Staff   | 2,913        | 3,094        | 3,199        | 3,377        | <b>3,609</b> |
| Premises  | 463          | 447          | 471          | 529          | <b>570</b>   |
| Other operating costs                                 | 955          | 972          | 1,105        | 1,189        | <b>1,194</b> |
| Financial expenses                                    | 1            | 1            | 6            | 23           | <b>26</b>    |
| Depreciation  | 208          | 207          | 220          | 226          | <b>244</b>   |
| <b>Total costs</b>                                    | <b>4,541</b> | <b>4,721</b> | <b>5,001</b> | <b>5,344</b> | <b>5,644</b> |
| Operating result                                      | +105         | +101         | -24          | -186         | <b>-237</b>  |
| Change in capital for the year                        | +105         | +101         | -24          | -186         | <b>-237</b>  |

Income from direct government funding accounts for the largest percentage of revenue (61 per cent), which is unchanged compared with 2023. Income from direct government funding increased by SEK 130 million for 2024 (+4.1 per cent) compared with the previous year (2023: +1.2 per cent). This increase was the result of state indexing both for first- and second-cycle education and for research and third-cycle education, as well as a small increase in direct government funding for first- and second-cycle education. The increase in direct government funding is mainly due to more teaching places at second-cycle level and the Government's targeted initiative to increase the compensation amounts for science and technology. Income from direct government funding included a reduction of SEK 35.7 million since the University was unable to spend the allocated budget for first- and second-cycle education.

Income from grants increased by SEK 94 million (+7.9 per cent) for 2024 compared with the previous year (2023: +3.3 per cent), meaning that the percentage of total income increased by one percentage point to 24 per cent. In 2024, grant income in research and third-cycle education rose to a higher extent compared with the previous year, while grant income within first- and second-cycle education decreased during the same period.



**Diagram 14:** Division of revenue 2024, per cent.

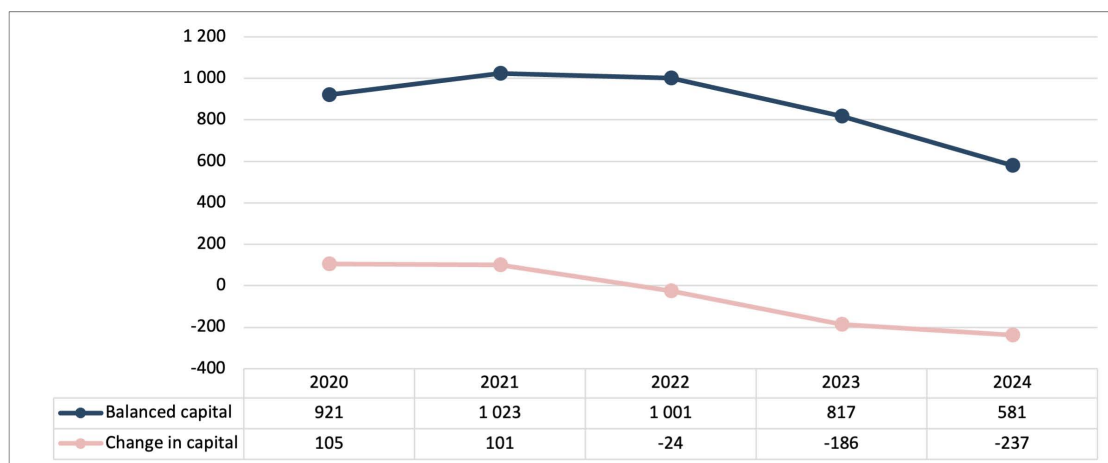


**Diagram 15:** Division of costs 2024, per cent.

Staff costs account for the largest percentage of costs. The percentage increased by one percentage point compared with 2023. Staff costs rose by SEK 232 million (+6.9 per cent) compared with the previous year (2023: +5.6 per cent). This increase is due to salary reviews, increased pension costs (+14.8 per cent) and the number of FTEs increasing by 84 FTEs or 2.2 per cent (2023: +90 FTEs; +2.3 per cent). The lower increase in the number of FTEs is marginal, while the increase in the number of fixed-term employees has stalled (-0.01 per cent), which is in line with the focus on reducing the gap between revenues and costs. Other operating costs also saw a significantly lower increase in 2024 compared with 2023, which has led to a drop in the proportion level in 2024. Between 2023 and 2024, operating costs only increased by SEK 5 million (+0.4 per cent). The percentage increase only relates to research and third-cycle education. Within education at first- and second-cycle levels, operating costs have decreased during the same period. Other cost categories remain at an unchanged proportion level in 2024 compared with 2023. Premises costs increased by SEK 41 million (+7.8 per cent). The rate of increase was slightly lower than in 2023.

### Change in capital for the year

The result for 2024 amounts to a deficit of SEK 237 million (2023: SEK -186 million). This is equivalent to -4.2 per cent of total costs in 2024 (2023: -3.5 per cent).



**Diagram 16:** Changes in capital during the period 2020–2024, SEK million.

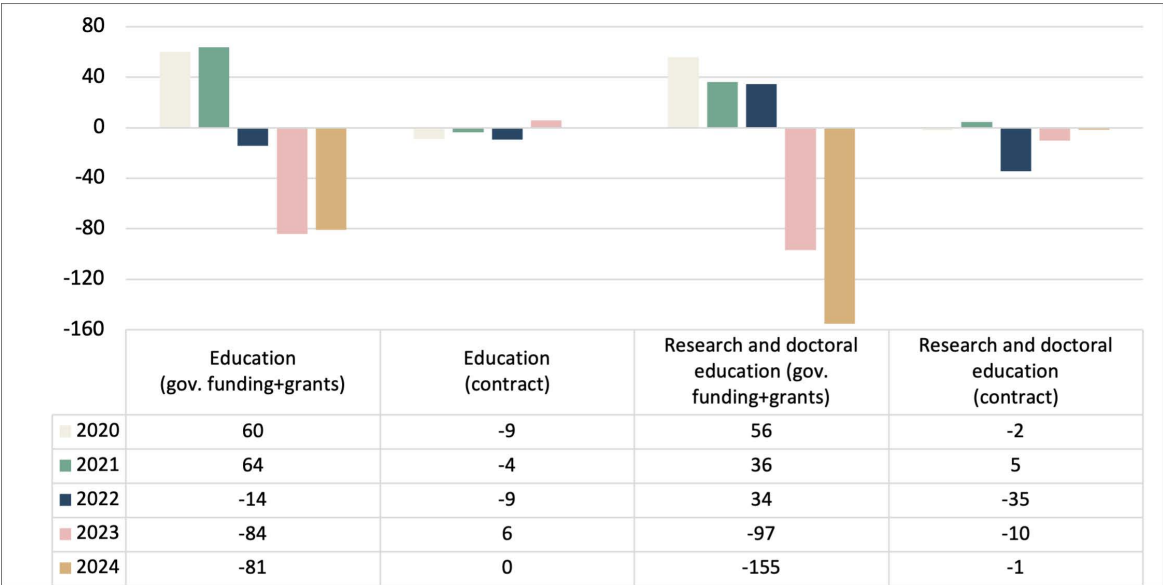
It is the stated goal of the University Board that, as far as possible, the University should utilise all available resources each year to conduct high-quality education and research. Several measures have been taken in recent years to ensure that this goal is achieved. In 2021, the University Board adopted the focus and scope for *Initiatives intended to support research and education* (totalling SEK 315 million for the period 2021–2025). The follow-up conducted after 2024 shows that all activities are ongoing and that the accumulated proportion of funds used has increased over time, and that 2024 was the most cost-intensive year during the period of the initiative, which has contributed to the negative change in capital. Another ongoing initiative during 2020–2024 was the research investment totalling SEK 135 million that the Vice-Chancellor approved in 2020. Overall, it is likely that the reduction in capital during the last three years is a result of these measures.

During 2024, Umeå University’s financial development was addressed in several dialogues. In September 2024, the Vice-Chancellor set benchmarks for the faculties, Umeå School of Education, Umeå University Library and the University Administration for the opportunity to use agency capital. These benchmarks were drawn up in order to achieve the target level for agency capital for the University as a whole. Furthermore, the decision includes that there should be no requirement ahead of 2025 for the faculty level to utilise agency capital, and that the use of grants received should increase in 2025. Additional measures that have been taken include the University Board’s decision in June 2024 to pause previous decisions for the period 2024–2025 on the discontinuation of annual positive financial results.

First- and second-cycle education had a total deficit of SEK –80.4 million, equivalent to –3.4 per cent of costs for this branch of operation (2023: –3.4 per cent). This deficit is entirely within state-funded education (SEK –80.8 million), and is partly due to the reduction in direct government funding caused by the University’s underproduction of first- and second-cycle education. Contract education reports a small surplus of SEK +0.3 million. Umeå School of Education and every faculty except the Faculty of Arts and Humanities reported deficits within first- and second-cycle education in 2024. After two years of deficits, the Faculty of Arts and Humanities reported a surplus in 2024.

Research and third-cycle education reported a total deficit of SEK –156.6 million, equivalent to –4.8 per cent of costs for this branch of operation (2023: –3.5). This deficit is split between SEK –155.1 million for state-funded research and third-cycle education and SEK –1.5 million for contract research. All faculties reported deficits for research and third-cycle education. For the second year running, Umeå School of Education reported a surplus in 2024.

**Diagram 17:** Change in capital per branch of operation during the period 2020–2024, SEK million.



**Balance sheet**

The University’s assets, equity and liabilities decreased by SEK 251 million in 2024 (2023: SEK –86 million), and as of 31 December 2024 amounted to SEK 3,177 million. The University’s interest account balance has decreased the most in terms of assets. This year’s balanced change in capital has had the greatest impact in terms of equity and liabilities.

Unused grants amount to SEK 1,152 million, a reduction of SEK 51 million compared with 2023. Agency capital had decreased to a total of SEK 581 million at the close of the year.



# Financial tables

## Income statement (SEK thousands)

|   | Note | Result<br>1 January 2024–<br>31 December<br>2024 | Result<br>1 January<br>2023–<br>31 December<br>2023 |
|---|------|--|---|
| <b>Operating income<sup>1</sup></b>                                 |      |  |   |
| Income from direct government funding                               | 1    | 3,283,341  | 3,153,269   |
| Income from fees and other remuneration                             | 2    | 763,302  | 735,112   |
| Income from grants  | 3    | 1,284,001  | 1,190,407   |
| Financial income  | 4    | 76,229   | 80,002  |
| <b>Total</b>  |      | <b>5,406,873</b>                                 | <b>5,158,790</b>                                    |
| <b>Operating costs<sup>2</sup></b>                                  |      |  |   |
| Staff costs   | 5    | 3,609,365  | 3,377,450   |
| Costs for premises  | 6    | 570,198  | 529,092   |
| Other operating costs   | 7    | 1,194,192  | 1,188,703   |
| Financial costs   | 8    | 25,745   | 22,752  |
| Depreciations and write-downs                                       | 9    | 244,391  | 226,454   |
| <b>Total</b>  |      | <b>5,643,891</b>                                 | <b>5,344,451</b>                                    |
| <b>Operating result</b>   |      | <b>-237,018</b>                                  | <b>-185,661</b>                                     |
| <b>Transfers</b>  |      |  |   |
| Funds received from the central government budget to finance grants |      | 40,412   | 39,557  |
| Funds received from public authorities to finance grants            | 10   | 103,463  | 111,236   |
| Other funds obtained to finance grants                              | 11   | 82,926   | 70,397  |
| Paid grants   | 12   | -226,801   | -221,190  |
| <b>Balance</b>  |      | <b>0</b>   | <b>0</b>  |
| <b>Annual change in capital</b>                                     | 13   | <b>-237,018</b>                                  | <b>-185,661</b>                                     |

<sup>1</sup> Operating income includes revenue related to the Ladok Consortium (see note 2).

<sup>2</sup> Operating costs include costs related to the Ladok Consortium (see notes 2 and 7).

## Income statement per branch of operation (SEK thousand)

1 January 2024–  
31 December 2024

|   | TOTAL<br>(SEK thousand) | First- and second-cycle<br>education    |                       | Research and third-cycle<br>education |                      |
|---|-------------------------|---|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
|   |                         | First- and<br>second-cycle<br>education | Contract<br>education | Research<br>and doctoral<br>education | Contract<br>research |
| <b>Operating income</b>                                       |                         |   |                       |                                       |                      |
| Income from direct government funding <sup>1</sup>            | 3,283,341               | 1,814,381                               | 0                     | 1,468,960                             | 0                    |
| Income from fees and other remuneration                       | 763,302                 | 201,497                                 | 214,736               | 237,743                               | 109,326              |
| Income from grants  | 1,284,001               | 48,351                                  | 0                     | 1,235,650                             | 0                    |
| Financial income  | 76,229                  | 38,020                                  | 1                     | 38,205                                | 3                    |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>5,406,873</b>        | <b>2,102,249</b>                        | <b>214,737</b>        | <b>2,980,558</b>                      | <b>109,329</b>       |
| <b>Operating costs</b>  |                         |   |                       |                                       |                      |
| Staff costs   | 3,609,365               | 1,449,020                               | 57,080                | 2,040,465                             | 62,800               |
| Costs for premises  | 570,198                 | 267,473                                 | 44,545                | 254,730                               | 3,450                |
| Other operating costs   | 1,194,192               | 369,447                                 | 108,746               | 672,401                               | 43,598               |
| Financial costs   | 25,745                  | 12,647                                  | 2                     | 13,034                                | 62                   |
| Depreciations and write-downs                                 | 244,391                 | 84,415                                  | 4,059                 | 155,025                               | 892                  |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>5,643,891</b>        | <b>2,183,002</b>                        | <b>214,432</b>        | <b>3,135,655</b>                      | <b>110,802</b>       |
| <b>Operating result</b>                                       | <b>-237,018</b>         | <b>-80,753</b>                          | <b>305</b>            | <b>-155,097</b>                       | <b>-1,473</b>        |
| <b>Transfers</b>  |                         |   |                       |                                       |                      |
| Funds from the central government<br>budget to finance grants | 40,412                  | 0                                       | 0                     | 40,412                                | 0                    |
| Funds from public authorities to finance<br>grants            | 103,463                 | 21,405                                  | 0                     | 82,058                                | 0                    |
| Other funds obtained to finance grants                        | 82,926                  | 3,142                                   | 0                     | 79,784                                | 0                    |
| Paid grants   | -226,801                | -24,547                                 | 0                     | -202,254                              | 0                    |
| <b>Balance</b>  | <b>0</b>                | <b>0</b>                                | <b>0</b>              | <b>0</b>                              | <b>0</b>             |
| <b>Annual change in capital</b>                               | <b>-237,018</b>         | <b>-80,753</b>                          | <b>305</b>            | <b>-155,097</b>                       | <b>-1,473</b>        |

<sup>1</sup> Income from direct government funding for first- and second-cycle education includes remuneration for ALF and TUA agreements.

## Balance sheet (SEK thousand)

| ASSETS   | Note | 31 December<br>2024 | 31 December<br>2023 |
|--|------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Intangible fixed assets</b>                                   |      |                     |                     |
| Balanced expenditure for development                             | 14   | 200,066             | 187,875             |
| Rights and other intangible fixed assets                         | 15   | 5,071               | 4,821               |
| <b>Total intangible fixed assets</b>                             |      | <b>205,137</b>      | <b>192,696</b>      |
| <b>Tangible fixed assets</b>                                     |      |                     |                     |
| Expenditure for improving other's property                       | 16   | 163,193             | 159,190             |
| Machinery, inventory, installations, etc.                        | 17   | 441,159             | 437,610             |
| <b>Total tangible fixed assets</b>                               |      | <b>604,352</b>      | <b>596,800</b>      |
| <b>Financial fixed assets</b>                                    |      |                     |                     |
| Shares in wholly or partly owned companies                       | 18   | 18,914              | 17,914              |
| <b>Total financial fixed assets</b>                              |      | <b>18,914</b>       | <b>17,914</b>       |
| <b>Inventory</b>   | 19   | <b>2,029</b>        | <b>2,025</b>        |
| <b>Current receivables</b>                                       |      |                     |                     |
| Receivables  | 20   | 42,043              | 38,485              |
| Accounts receivable with other public authorities                |      | 99,718              | 132,101             |
| Other current receivables  |      | 236                 | 339                 |
| <b>Total current receivables</b>                                 |      | <b>141,997</b>      | <b>170,925</b>      |
| <b>Accruals and deferrals</b>                                    |      |                     |                     |
| Prepaid expenses   | 21   | 169,655             | 154,639             |
| Accrued grant income   |      | 224,934             | 215,693             |
| Other accrued income   |      | 18,708              | 2,732               |
| <b>Total accruals and deferrals</b>                              |      | <b>413,297</b>      | <b>373,064</b>      |
| <b>Settlement with the state treasury</b>                        | 22   | <b>-179,545</b>     | <b>-143,825</b>     |
| <b>Cash and bank balances</b>                                    |      |                     |                     |
| Balance in interest-bearing account with the Swedish Debt Office | 23   | 1,946,213           | 2,218,047           |
| Cash and bank balances   | 24   | 25,091              | 1,057               |
| <b>Total cash and bank</b>                                       |      | <b>1,971,304</b>    | <b>2,219,104</b>    |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>  |      | <b>3,177,485</b>    | <b>3,428,703</b>    |

## Balance sheet, continued (SEK thousand)

| <b>CAPITAL AND LIABILITIES</b>                  | <b>Note</b> | <b>31 December<br/>2024</b> | <b>31 December<br/>2023</b> |
|---|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Agency capital</b>                           | 25          |                             |                             |
| State capital                                   |             | 22,570                      | 21,363                      |
| Balanced change in capital                      |             | 795,628                     | 981,289                     |
| Change in capital as per income statement       |             | -237,018                    | -185,661                    |
| <b>Total agency capital</b>                     |             | <b>581,180</b>              | <b>816,991</b>              |
| <b>Provisions</b>                               | 26          |                             |                             |
| Provisions for pensions and similar obligations |             | 36,402                      | 33,395                      |
| Other provisions                                |             | 30,344                      | 31,943                      |
| <b>Total provisions</b>                         |             | <b>66,746</b>               | <b>65,338</b>               |
| <b>Debts, etc.</b>                              |             |                             |                             |
| Loan with the National Debt Office              | 27          | 671,615                     | 634,319                     |
| Other long-term liabilities                     |             | 69                          | 71                          |
| Current liabilities to other public authorities | 28          | 130,646                     | 124,480                     |
| Accounts payable                                | 29          | 156,152                     | 203,128                     |
| Other current liabilities                       | 30          | 78,167                      | 53,349                      |
| <b>Total debts, etc.</b>                        |             | <b>1,036,649</b>            | <b>1,015,347</b>            |
| <b>Accruals and deferrals</b>                   | 31          |                             |                             |
| Accrued costs                                   |             | 270,056                     | 246,337                     |
| Unused grants                                   |             | 1,152,106                   | 1,203,262                   |
| Other prepaid income                            |             | 70,748                      | 81,428                      |
| <b>Total accruals and deferrals</b>             |             | <b>1,492,910</b>            | <b>1,531,027</b>            |
| <b>TOTAL CAPITAL AND LIABILITIES</b>            |             | <b>3,177,485</b>            | <b>3,428,703</b>            |

### **CONTINGENT LIABILITIES**

|                                     |    |                             |                             |
|-------------------------------------|----|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Other contingent liabilities</i> | 32 | <i>SEK 45.8<br/>million</i> | <i>SEK 44.8<br/>million</i> |
|-------------------------------------|----|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|



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