

Strategic plan 2007–2010

GÖTEBORG UNIVERSITY



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Strategic plan 2007–2010

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Foreword

Göteborg College was founded in 1891 from existing philosophy faculties. Since its conversion into Göteborg University in 1954 it has grown and developed at a rapid pace – particularly as further research and teaching activities were added. Today we are a university with great breadth and variety. Both research and teaching are characterised by versatility and quality, and large numbers of students apply for admission.

Since 2002, Göteborg University has been working on its identity, image and profile, as we are perceived by some, both internally and externally, to be a somewhat obscure university. Various surveys and analyses forming part of this identity and image work resulted in a number of basic values that characterise the university. The ongoing profiling was based on: size and situation, openness, commitment to the community, breadth and diversity, emphasis on the university's principal tasks and a sustainable community.

A strategic profile was worked out on the basis of this platform, and all sections then formed the basis for the objectives document adopted by the board in 2004 – Göteborg University 2010. This document replaced the previous vision from 1997.

The strategic plan for 2007–2010 is a way of putting the thoughts from the objectives document into concrete form and creating a basis for continued planning so that it will be possible to achieve the desired image of the university by the year 2010. The plan has been created from a shared perspective of activities. The vice-chancellor, pro-vice-chancellor, the faculties, university library, administration and students have all participated in this project.

We look forward with great confidence to being able to strengthen our position over the next few years as one of Europe's leading universities.

Arne Wittlöv

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

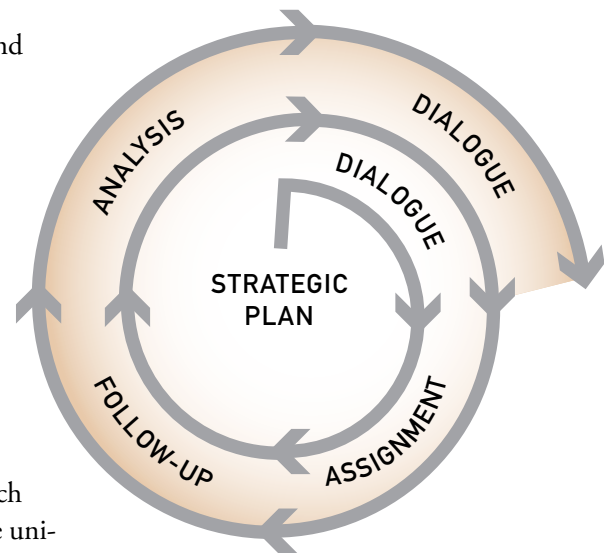
Why we have a strategic plan

The strategic plan is the basic document that will help us raise quality levels at Göteborg University in the period 2007–2010 and strengthen our competitiveness. The plan should be seen as a statement of direction for what we need to do over the next few years. What lies before us now is working on how this is to be done.

The world around us is continually changing and so too are the conditions for our activities as a university. We have analysed the development of our university over the past 10-year period (see page 22) in order to be able to assess the current situation and trends. An extensive analysis of contemporary society forms an important part of our future strategies.

The strategic plan will form a basis for an annual dialogue between the university management and the faculties, the university library and the shared administration. This dialogue will lead to annual assignments from the management, which in turn will lead to activity plans for all parts of the university. The various requirements for the activities should be reflected in the assignments. The assignments must be followed up and the results analysed as a basis for the following year's dialogue and assignment.

In order to be able to follow up and assess whether we are achieving our goals, we will work further on different forms of collegial quality checking and exchange of experience. We will also formulate various measures of success to enable us to check how the university is developing and make directional decisions and prioritise. Our prerequisites may change, but with strong and internationally competitive research activities and teaching, intensive cooperation with the world around us and effective support processes, we are prepared for anything.



Our values

Openness



Universities are independent institutions in the heart of the community. We meet the needs of the surrounding world best when our activities are free from political, ideological and economic interests and characterised by a critical attitude. The quality of our activities is fostered by a high level of integrity and a democratic internal organisation, and should be based on high ethical principles. The quality of the research and teaching is our most valuable capital and must be constantly nurtured and developed.

Our organisation is continually evolving in order to ensure a good working environment in which all employees and students, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion or other belief system, any functional disability or sexual orientation, are given the best opportunities to develop. Increased diversity among both students and employees contributes to a higher level of quality in our activities. An even gender distribution in all parts of the organisation is a matter of course for us.

A distinctive feature of universities is the many different staff and student groups. Our basic standpoint is that all groups are of equal value and should have equal opportunities to participate in activities. It is important for our students to be involved in the university's planning and decision-making processes and for everyone to be treated with mutual respect. By continually working on common values in accordance with the ethical platform, we make good use of experience and skills in order to contribute to the vision of a broad and open university, open to the surrounding world and involved in the development of society. Sustainable development is important to us; we always examine the social, economic and environmental consequences from a long-term perspective. This relates to both humans and natural resources and is based on an overall view of society's needs, requirements and problems.

Our vision

Göteborg University must have real contact with the world around it – welcoming, easily accessible and ready for courteous cooperation with different parties, also outside the academic world.

Our research and teaching should include important issues of the present and future and not give way when things become difficult or controversial. The research and teaching must be of a high quality and attract attention both internationally and regionally.

We must make a greater contribution to international research, while increasing benefit to the community. Both the excellence and breadth of the university's research should therefore be utilised, and cooperation between different disciplines should be stimulated. Together we must strengthen the quality of the research and teaching in order to improve our competitive ability.

Göteborg University must be an attractive, stimulating, creative and equal workplace, characterised by interesting encounters. It should always be what you do, and not who you are, that counts.

We must have creative study and research environments that encourage a critical attitude among students and employees, thus ensuring a positive influence on societal development. Our students should receive an education that provides excellent qualifications for their working life and an academic spirit that can enrich their lives.

An internationalised university provides conditions for discussion and development in the local community too. Constantly switching perspective between our little universe and the world as a whole expands the horizons of our research and ensures our students are capable of handling the challenges of the future.

It is a managerial responsibility but also a duty of each individual employee to make use of our excellence and breadth. We have the qualifications to become a leading European university.

We must strengthen the competitive ability of Göteborg University!

Summary of our objectives and strategies:

Research

Research at Göteborg University should be of such a high quality that it attracts increased international attention. We must improve the provisions for research of a high international standard and stimulate innovative research across subject, faculty and university boundaries. We must face up to the changed conditions for research financing and work towards increased awareness of our research.

Teaching

We must offer high-quality teaching that provides scope for personal development and lays the foundations for future employment both at home and abroad. The teaching must be open to all students – regardless of background – and be based on an overall perspective. The courses must be developed and teaching methods renewed. Work on recruitment, participation and follow-up must be strengthened.

Cooperation

We must improve and develop our dialogue and exchange with the surrounding world. We must actively contribute to democracy, adult education and ensuring our know-how is utilised. At the same time, we must

make use of know-how and experience from the world around us.

Staff

We must strengthen the attraction of Göteborg University as a workplace and improve the long-term supply of competence. Communication within the organisation must be improved, and the realisation of the value of the university as a whole needs to increase.

Organisation

We must develop and improve the decision-making and management organisation and strengthen the leadership. Göteborg University must adapt to future requirements, in order to increase the potential to compete for funds for research and for students.

Administration and finances

Administration and support processes must be more efficient. Through systematic environmental work we must also reduce our overall environmental impact.

Our little universe and the world as a whole



1

RESEARCH

Basic research and exploratory research are the basis for successful applied research and must therefore be prioritised. Research and teaching must interact for mutual growth. We will exploit the depth and versatility of our competence to strengthen our position as a research university.

OBJECTIVE

Research at Göteborg University should be of such a high quality that it attracts increased international attention. We must improve the provisions for research of a high international standard and stimulate innovative research across subject, faculty and university boundaries. We must face up to the changed conditions for research financing and work towards increased awareness of our research.

We must therefore:

Improve the provisions for research of a high international standard

- Support leading and unique research environments that are, or could become, image generators.
- Increase time for research through better coordination of duties and resources.
- Stimulate initiatives where researchers from different faculty areas work together.
- Develop indicators for quality of research and models for reprioritising between different research areas.
- Improve common infrastructure for research and create meeting places and workplaces for researchers/lecturers/students across the traditional boundaries.

Increase cooperation with the surrounding world and raise the profile of our research activities

- Develop types of strategic research partnerships with other centres of learning.
- Increase flexibility in researcher recruitment in order to stimulate mobility.
- Develop conditions for accepting researchers from other countries and stimulating increased international research cooperation.
- Strengthen the work of the university library in raising the profile of research.
- Stimulate the professionalisation of research communication with the surrounding world.

Many disciplines



2

TEACHING

Attractive high-quality teaching is a prerequisite for a competitive university. Göteborg University must continue to offer both breadth and depth in quality-assured teaching. Alternative forms of study must be expanded and student power strengthened.

OBJECTIVE

We must offer high-quality teaching that provides scope for personal development and lays the foundations for future employment both at home and abroad. The teaching must be open to all students – regardless of background – and be based on an overall perspective. The courses must be developed and teaching methods renewed. Work on recruitment, participation and follow-up must be strengthened.

We must therefore:

Develop the teaching

- Develop systems that facilitate combinations of subjects between basic level and advanced level and encourage interaction between different subjects.
- Form strategic teaching partnerships with other centres of learning.
- Create a policy for linking research to undergraduate studies.
- Develop indicators for quality of research and models for reprioritising resource allocation for undergraduate studies.
- Improve conditions for accepting more students from other countries and encourage travel and international teacher exchanges.

Renew teaching methods

- Introduce periodical educational in-service courses for all teaching staff.
- Increase the proportion of alternative forms of teaching within courses and study programmes.
- Contribute to skills for lifelong learning.

Strengthen recruitment, participation and follow-up

- Develop alternative types of recruitment and selection in order to increase the number of students from underrepresented groups.
- Systematically and periodically follow up on students' study and working environments and their first steps onto the labour market.
- Take active steps to ensure more even gender distribution.

Strengthen postgraduate studies

- Develop quality indicators for postgraduate studies and streamline follow-up.
- Improve the postgraduate studies organisation and postgraduate students' opportunities for receiving the appropriate teaching.
- Apply open admission to postgraduate studies, preferably with international advertising.
- Give all supervisors periodical training in supervision.
- Give all postgraduate students instruction in teaching methods, leadership and project management within the scope of their studies.

Wider recruitment



3

COOPERATION

High-quality research and teaching require openness, dialogue and interaction with the surrounding world. Effective cooperation generates good circles that provide knowledge for the world around us and an influx of new ideas and knowledge.

OBJECTIVE

We must improve and develop our dialogue and exchange with the surrounding world. We must actively contribute to democracy, adult education and ensuring our know-how is utilised.

We must therefore:

Strengthen and coordinate our contacts with the surrounding world

- Develop our participation in existing networks outside the university.
- Create strategic partnerships and improve communication with important key groups in the community by increasing the number of meeting places for different target groups.
- Instruct researchers in active participation in public debate, and provide them with support for communication.
- Create a university-wide structure that makes use of innovations and trains researchers/teaching staff, postgraduate students and undergraduates in entrepreneurship and provides them with knowledge on how to utilise innovations.
- Provide professional media support for management staff.
- Increase openness to the needs of the community and make use of ideas from the world around us.

Increase collaboration with trade and industry and the public sector

- Work towards having more trainee posts and thesis projects in organisations both outside and within the university and increase staff exchanges between the university and the wider community.
- Introduce and develop alumni activities within all faculties.
- Increase commissioned courses and commissioned research within the university's priority areas.
- Encourage and offer trade and industry and the public sector opportunities for lifelong learning for their employees.

Different perspectives



4

STAFF

A good working environment is the basis for an efficient workplace. Active, instructive and involved staff represent a guarantee of skilled contributions within research, teaching, cooperation and support functions.

OBJECTIVE

We must strengthen the attraction of Göteborg University as a workplace and improve the long-term supply of competence. Communication within the organisation must be improved, and the realisation of the value of the university as a whole needs to increase.

We must therefore:

Increase our attraction as a workplace

- Generate increased participation for employees of all categories.
- Work actively on requirements for non-discrimination.
- Coordinate and improve career paths and strengthen in-service training under the auspices of the entire university.
- Improve awareness of our university and understanding of its different components.

Improve our long-term supply of competence

- Work towards a simplified procedure for recruitment of teaching staff and researchers.
- Employ guest lecturers with a view to bringing in experience from other knowledge organisations and initiating international recruitment.
- Promote mobility for all staff, both internal and external.

Equal rights & equality



5

ORGANISATION

High-quality research, teaching and cooperation require a well-adapted organisation. Effective management and a clear and efficient organisational structure are necessary prerequisites.

OBJECTIVE

We must develop and improve the decision-making and management organisation and strengthen the leadership. Göteborg University must adapt to future requirements, in order to increase the potential to compete for funds for research and for students.

We must therefore:

Improve the decision-making and management organisation

- Clarify the management and decision-making organisation and stimulate administrative cooperation throughout the university.
- Carry out a review of faculty and departmental divisions.
- Develop an analysis of the surrounding world in order to facilitate strategic directional decisions.

Strengthen the leadership

- Make managerial requirements clearer, develop managerial support programmes and work with the management team.
- Try out advertising of academic manager appointments and extended terms of office and introduce management training as a requirement for all managerial posts.
- Develop the academic leadership programme.

Critical attitude



6

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCES

Effective administrative and financial support processes, together with good infrastructure, are essential for achieving high-quality teaching and research. Stable finances and long-term planning are a prerequisite for our activities.

OBJECTIVE

Administration and support processes must be more efficient. Through systematic environmental work we must also reduce our overall environmental impact.

We must therefore:

Streamline administrative and financial support processes

- Coordinate, standardise and consolidate our IT environment.
- Streamline purchasing coordination and procurement of common services.
- Improve support for competing for external funding and sales of commissioned courses.

Develop library activities

- Increase digitalisation of the university library's collections.
- Make the library easier to use physically and digitally.

Streamline provision of rooms

- Coordinate room planning and use of communal university premises.
- Examine models for decentralised imposition of room costs and extending charging for teaching premises.

Environment



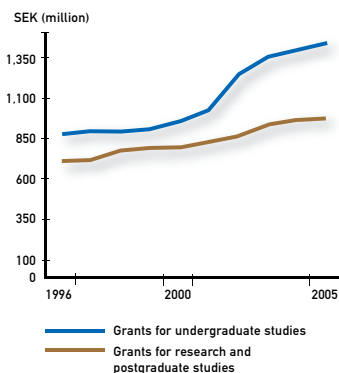


Fig 1. Grants for undergraduate studies and for research and postgraduate studies. Grants for specific commitments within undergraduate studies, as well as provisions for the Botanical Gardens, etc., are not included in the grant for research and postgraduate studies. Costs are in current prices.

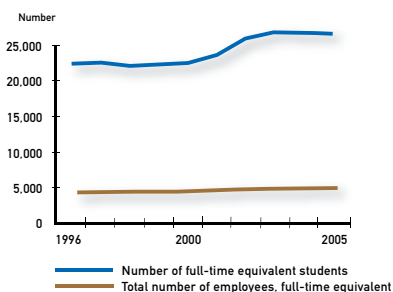


Fig 2. The number of full-time equivalent students and the number of employees.

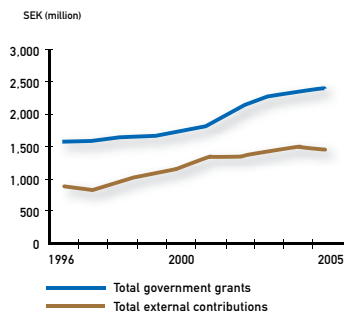


Fig 3. Government grants and external contributions.

Göteborg University 1996–2006

Göteborg University has grown rapidly over the last few decades. Various research and teaching units have gradually been integrated into the university, and the number of students has increased. In just the last ten years the overall turnover on the debit side has increased by just under 50 per cent – from just over SEK 2.9 billion in 1996 to 4.2 billion in 2005.

Expansion has primarily occurred within undergraduate studies. Consequently, the government grant for undergraduate studies has risen relatively sharply, while the grant for research and postgraduate studies, price and salary recalculation excepted, has hardly changed at all.

One prominent factor for Göteborg University is the sharp rise in the number of full-time equivalent students as a result of the increased grants and commissions from the Government. External funding also increased up to the start of the 2000s. The number of employees (measured as full-time equivalent employees), on the other hand, has only increased marginally. This has resulted in there being fewer employees relative to the number of students and the extent of the external funding.

Research

Up to the mid-90s, government grants were clearly the main source of finance for research and postgraduate studies. However, these grants did not increase in line with costs and are now only equivalent to the costs for postgraduate studies. Göteborg University is therefore, like other centres of learning, heavily dependent on external funding from research councils, research foundations and other sources of funds for research. This external funding increased greatly

up to the start of the 2000s, particularly from private Swedish research foundations but also from research councils. Over the last few years this increase has slowed and has even been replaced by a certain degree of decline. Figure 4 shows how the external contributions are distributed by provider.

We have had some success in competing for EU grants, both nationally and internationally. Income from international sources constitutes around ten per cent of external research funding, but has increased considerably in recent years.

Research financiers, and public and business leaders have been interviewed about the image they have of Göteborg University. They feel that there are areas with very high-quality research, but that the university as a whole is not distinguished by a clear research profile. It can also seem difficult to get an overview of Göteborg University, as it is so large and complex. Those interviewed would like to see increased cooperation between different subject areas and would also like more personal contact with those at the top.

Teaching

The increased student numbers are mostly among undergraduates. This is a consequence of political investments in higher education in Sweden. Göteborg University has been the country's largest centre of learning in terms of student numbers for several years, and in the last five years alone numbers have increased by 20 per cent. Studies show that new students think our teaching is very good. Göteborg is also regarded as an attractive student city, which contributes to the increase in applications.

The average age of students has been increasing for a number of years, and a relatively large proportion of our students have children. The average age of first-year students of medicine or science is around

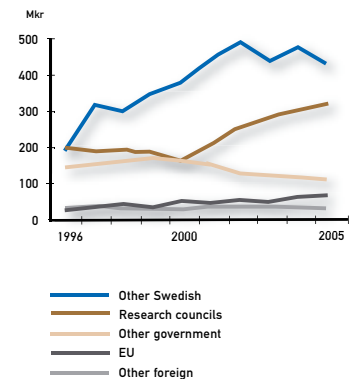


Fig 4. External grants, distributed by contributors.

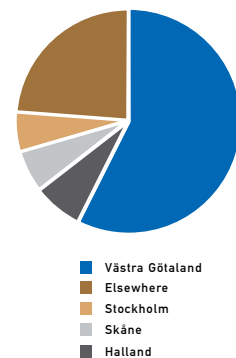


Fig 5. Which counties do our students come from?

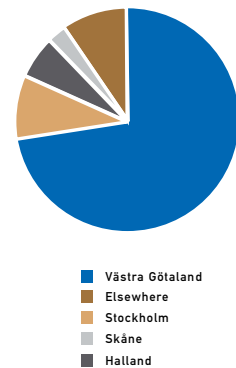


Fig 6. In which county are they registered four years after their degree?

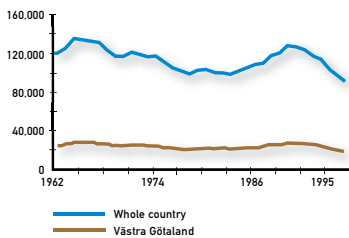


Fig 7. The number of applicants should be viewed in relation to the size of the population of young people. The diagram shows the birth rate, for Västra Götaland where most students come from, and for the whole country.

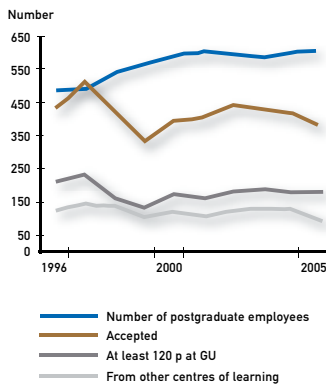


Fig 8. The trend in the numbers accepted and the number of employees on a postgraduate appointment.

24, while for social sciences and teacher training it is around 27. Our catchment area is primarily Västra Götaland, but students also come from Halland, Skåne and the Stockholm region. After completing their studies a clear majority remain in Västra Götaland and a significant number move to the Stockholm region.

Although we receive a lot of applications relative to the number of places available, as at other centres of learning, we saw a reduction in the total number of applications at the start of the 2000s. The high number of applications during the second half of the 1990s was probably strongly linked to the high birth rate at the end of the 1960s and in the early 1970s. A forecast based on the birth rate indicates that the number of applications for our courses will decrease somewhat over the next couple of years and then increase again 2009–2012. The number of applications is expected to reach its highest level around 2015–2018 and then go down again. Figure 6 shows the birth rate, for Västra Götaland where most students come from, and for the whole country.

However, the link between the number of applicants for places at the university and the number of those that actually begin is a complex one. The number of new students at the university increased during the second half of the 1990s by over 1,500 per year, and during the period 2001–2005 the increase was close to 700.

Despite the fact that the number of potential students in 2006 was as high as for 2005, the number of applications has continued to decrease. It is likely that the formulation of the student-funding system and the labour market is having a strong impact on the influx of students.

Postgraduate study reforms in 1998 altered the pattern of doctoral admissions. Due to the need for financing, fewer postgraduates were accepted, particularly in the humanities and social sciences. After something of a revival, admissions have again begun to decline, as well as the

numbers from other centres of learning. The number of postgraduate appointments increased sharply at the end of the 1990s, after which the increase slowed.

Cooperation

We have a long tradition of excellent cooperation with the community around us. Göteborg University is one of Sweden's foremost higher education institutes when it comes to sharing research and we work actively on educational and demographic issues for the general public. However, there is increased demand for us to develop our teaching and be capable of creating innovations based on our research.

Commissioned research and commissioned teaching currently represent only a small portion of our activities. Alumni activities are in progress and are a future possibility for strengthening contacts between the university and the surrounding world.

We have several premises that are used as meeting places between ourselves and the surrounding world. However, awareness of the full breadth of our research and teaching is limited, both within and outside the university, and should be boosted in order to increase scope for cooperation and improving our image.

Staff

The university has 5,200 employees, equivalent to around 4,650 work years, and over the last ten years this has increased slightly. This rise is primarily due to increased undergraduate teaching, which is also reflected in the fact that numbers have increased most among research and teaching staff. Changes within the various staff categories are shown in figure 8. The total salary cost per permanent employee has gone up by almost 30 per cent over the same period.

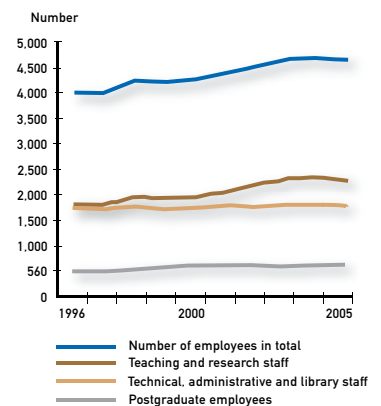


Fig 9. Changes within the various staff categories

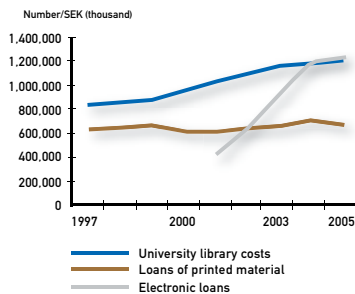


Fig 10. The trend in different types of loan and university library costs.

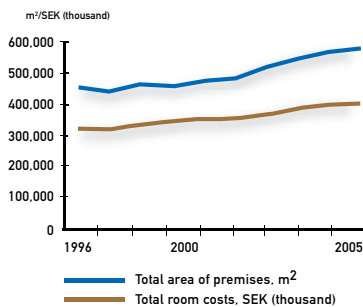


Fig 11. The total area of the university's premises has increased by 24 per cent since 1996 and the total room cost by 28 per cent calculated in current prices.

People born in 1950 or earlier are clearly overrepresented. Large numbers of staff departures are therefore expected in the next ten years. The regular working environment barometer, where all employees are asked about their work situation, shows that the university's employees are very happy, although there are psychosocial problems in some environments. Illness figures are lower than the national average. However, employees point out that duties have increased more rapidly than numbers of employees, and there is some anxiety about our increased dependence on external funding. The working environment barometer also shows that the management organisation and participation at different levels are not felt to be functioning optimally.

Infrastructure

The university library is the national library for social science and for women's studies, men's studies and gender research. The library consists of units located within different subject areas, and the task of the library is to "serve and promote scientific research and development, teaching and advanced studies at Göteborg University". The work of the library currently involves handling two parallel distribution systems – one for printed publications and one for electronic documents.

The total area of the university's premises has increased by 24 per cent since 1996 and the total room costs by 28 per cent, calculated in current prices. This increase is lower than the increase in staff costs. During this period the proportion of total costs represented by room costs has gone down from 16.2 per cent to 13.8 per cent. The cost per square metre has risen by 3 per cent during the period studied. The room situation is complex, in part due to joint utilisation of rooms with external units. In the last few years, students have put forward requests for an increase in the number of workstations, including computer stations.

The last ten years have seen major changes within IT support, and various solutions and systems have been chosen. However, staff and finance-administrative systems have contributed to improved coordination between the computer environments in individual departments.

Debate





Debate



Equal rights & equality



Critical attitude



Openness



Different perspectives



Environmental thinking



Contact with the surrounding world



Wider recruitment



Many disciplines



Our little universe and the world as a whole

