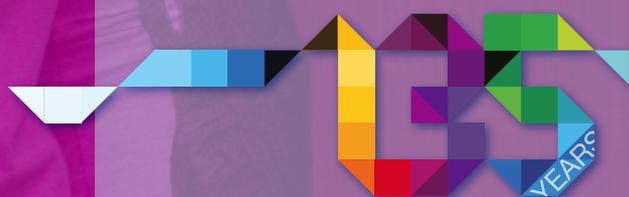


ANNUAL REPORT 2015



VU  **VRIJE
UNIVERSITEIT
AMSTERDAM**

LOOKING FURTHER





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KEY FIGURES

	2013	2014	2015
Number of students	23,648	23,686	22,961
Number of staff at end of year*	4,849	4,638	4,558
Number of FTEs at end of year*	3,766	3,673	3,615
Academic staff FTEs at end of year*	2,299	2,263	2,196
Support staff FTEs at end of year*	1,467	1,410	1,419
Ratio academic staff/support staff FTEs	1.57	1.60	1.55
Average age of academic staff	38	38	38
Average age of support staff	45	46	46
Ratio M/F	54% / 46%	54% / 46%	54% / 46%
Number m2 Operational Consultative Platform	370,690 m ²	370,690 m ²	372,641 m ²
Number of faculties	12	11	10

*= VU Amsterdam including related parties excluding VU University Medical Center Amsterdam



01

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Professor J.W. Winter, Chairperson
Professor V. Subramaniam, Rector Magnificus
Ms M. H. T. Jansen, Vice-chairperson

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 VU Amsterdam – a special university

The business of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (hereinafter: VU Amsterdam) is contributing to making a better world – a world that focuses strongly on justice, humanity and individuals' responsibility for one another and for the world. Through its teaching and research, and its efforts to find solutions to current and future social problems, VU Amsterdam wants to make a contribution to society. We recognize the importance of having a philosophy of life and imbuing it with meaning.

VU Amsterdam has a very special character and has always occupied a central position in society. The way in which we express this social involvement changes in focus and form. At present the focus is on themes such as academic development, community service, diversity and gross academic value, but also questions relating to the current social issue of refugees and access to higher education regardless of origin. In these times, too, VU Amsterdam, due to its special nature, wishes to be a role model for others and to inspire young people to make their contribution to an inclusive society.

1.1.2 Academic development

VU Amsterdam aims to educate its students to become responsible academic citizens who take up a useful position in society. Academic development plays an important role in this effort. Every academic must be capable of approaching things in a scientific manner – looking and thinking, communicating, working together in a team and, as an individual, being able to make choices and decisions in a responsible way. Issues such as academic integrity and ethics, interpretation, existential questions and world views play a key role in this. Every student should develop these general academic skills during his or her studies, and for this reason academic development forms part of every Bachelor's course at VU Amsterdam.

For a university that wishes to serve society, it is fitting that there should be many opportunities for students to engage in community service. This teaches students to use different backgrounds and perspectives in analysing complex social issues. For example, there are students who do research into questions raised by stakeholders from the university's wider environment, such as the City of Amsterdam, youth care services or legal aid. Students also get the chance to do socially and academically relevant voluntary work. In the coming years we are going to increase the opportunities for students to do community service.

1.1.3 Democratization, transparency and bureaucracy

2015 was a turbulent year for Dutch universities. Protests by students and lecturers led to a social and political discussion about how the academic system should be organized. This debate is also taking place within VU Amsterdam and plays a role in giving direction to the university's change agenda, with the most important subjects being increasing transparency, democratization and participation, and reducing unnecessary bureaucracy.

During a public debate on 30 March 2015, students put forward the idea of conducting a survey among university staff and students about the concerns that exist in the academic community. This suggestion was welcomed by all parties – the Executive Board, the employee participation body and action groups. The online survey was coordinated and drawn up by all parties together and deals with the matters that continue to be frequent subjects of national discussion, such as the fixation on graduation rates, teaching and research, participation, democratization and human resources policy. The results of the survey will provide reference points for pursuing the discussion further. The survey will be carried out among students and staff in spring 2016.

Alongside this initiative, the Joint Assembly has set up a VU Amsterdam Democratization Committee.

In 2015 there was also a call for more attention to be paid to promoting trust and responsibility. VU Amsterdam wants soft controls – intangible factors that influence behaviour and appeal to staff in relation to their job performance – to be framed more explicitly and to become part of the quality assurance system. In 2015 the university worked on enhancing soft controls and framing them more explicitly in four areas:

- By HRM in leadership paths for deans, directors and support staff at managerial level;
- By Centre for Teacher Education in courses for lecturers and shortly through the VU Amsterdam version of the Educational Leadership course for directors of studies, directors of education, and portfolio holders for teaching;
- By the Administrative Affairs department in the inspiration sessions in which the Executive Board holds informal meetings with employees who are not involved in programmes emanating from HRM. Central topics are the academic climate, accountability and the dialogue between interested parties about performance and risks;
- By the Executive Board by discussing communication and informal consultation/contacts within units in the Periodic Consultations and Administrative Consultations.

In addition to improving services, VU Amsterdam also wants to make efforts to reduce internal bureaucracy. In 2015 an initiative was launched to examine where quality assurance of education can be achieved with a lighter touch. This concerns specifically the assessment policy, in particular the assessment dossiers and policy on the mid-term reviews of degree programmes. Both instruments are felt to be too bureaucratic and to involve a lot of

work, although they are definitely seen to be useful and necessary. A group of lecturers is considering, among other things, the questions of how midterm reviews and the preparation of assessment dossiers can be made to be seen as an opportunity rather than a burden, how these instruments can be employed to improve teaching and be experienced less as a monitoring instrument, and how the process can be arranged more conveniently and efficiently.

This initiative is a direct result of one of the inspiration sessions, as they are known. In 2015 the Executive Board held such sessions with groups of VU Amsterdam employees, with the aim of discussing what inspires and motivates VU Amsterdam staff and what fails to do so.

In addition to the reduction of bureaucracy in education, the 'Kafka button' was introduced. With this button on VUnet, staff members can report examples of what they judge to be unnecessary bureaucracy or unintentionally contradictory regulations.

1.1.4 Gross Academic Value

What is, for us, really the purpose of the university? How do we see our role and our responsibility? And how do we determine whether we are in fact delivering the goods? During the Opening of the Academic Year in 2015, Jaap Winter introduced the concept of 'Gross Academic Value'. This was prompted by the widespread disquiet at the university about how we make our choices, which are mainly based on quantitative parameters such as student numbers and numbers of PhDs awarded and publications. At the university we should be concerned by more than just the numbers – we should also be interested in the quality and the meaning of our teaching and research for society. Defining Gross Academic Value as being that which a university should deliver to society aims to provide a response to the quantitative university, the 'learning factory'

that is run only – or principally – on the basis of measurable marks and output. A task force was set up in 2015, consisting of student representatives, researchers and other staff, which has the task of elaborating the concept of Gross Academic Value for VU Amsterdam and providing it with a number of parameters to show whether we actually deliver Gross Academic Value. The group will then examine the question of whether and how we can take more account of this Gross Academic Value in the university's organization and policymaking. The contours of the framework should have been defined by the start of the 2016-2017 academic year.

1.1.5 Room for refugees

VU Amsterdam has the largest number of refugee students of all Dutch universities and it has a long history of working and caring for refugees. VU Amsterdam sees in this an important role and a great responsibility for itself, based on the view that refugees can enrich our country and our university and make them stronger. Even before the current influx of refugees, VU Amsterdam worked on behalf of academics in need. VU Amsterdam offers refugees the chance to do courses in Dutch as a Second Language, offers a transition programme for prospective Bachelor's students or offers academics the possibility of spending some time at VU Amsterdam through the Academic Freedom project (in cooperation with Scholars at Risk). This is all done in harmonious cooperation with UAF, the Refugee Student Foundation. The University Student Council (USR), together with the VASVU (foundation year for international students), VU-NT2 (Dutch as a Second Language) and the UAF, has organized a buddy project in which refugees are guided through the academic world by Dutch students, in order to make them feel welcome at VU Amsterdam.

In order to deal properly with the current influx of refugees, VU Amsterdam is cooperating closely with local part-

ners such as the City of Amsterdam. Together they are working to ensure a rapid, well-organized and lasting transition of refugees to education and training, employment or business creation. Together with the Dutch employers' forum VNO-NCW, the Randstad Group, the Amsterdam regional training centre ROC, the Projob recruitment agency, VU Amsterdam, TINK and the University of Amsterdam/Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (UvA/HvA), the City of Amsterdam has arrived at an action plan that aims to:

- a. Start language teaching and recognition of qualifications as quickly as possible;
- b. Gain an understanding of the qualifications and talents within the group as well as the vacancies at the company level as early as possible. This will increase the chances of making a rapid and suitable match between status holders and employers;
- c. Encourage entrepreneurship with partners by means of an accelerator programme;
- d. Ask the Government for room to experiment.

In 2015 the Dutch Minister for Education, Culture and Science, Mariëtte Bussemaker, visited VU Amsterdam to see how refugees were getting on at our university and how they were progressing in learning the language and integrating into society.

1.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN

At the end of 2014 VU Amsterdam drew up a new Strategic Plan for the period 2015-2020.

The Strategic Plan is mainly being developed within the faculties and the service departments. In summer 2015 all units were asked to indicate in their annual plans – based on their own ambitions, policy plans and context – in what way they want to contribute to and elaborate on the university-wide ambitions. This involves the ambitions and objectives for 2016 (annual plan)

as well as those for 2020 (long-term perspective).

The plans of faculties and service departments have been the subject of discussions during a number of consultation sessions at VU Amsterdam. In October 2015 a first strategic conference was convened in order to discuss this subject with the Executive Board, the deans and the directors of the service departments. During this conference the drivers for the priority areas Internationalization and Talent were also identified.

Such conferences will also be organized in 2016 (spring and autumn), as part of the Planning & Control cycle. Implementation of the Strategic Plan will be an explicit part of the agenda at these discussions. In addition, in autumn the individual annual plans will be discussed with the relevant faculty or service department and the Executive Board during the Administrative Consultations. This process will also look at the extent to which the whole Strategic Plan is covered by the individual plans.

In 2015 work was done on optimizing the Planning & Control cycle, which aims at greater harmonization of the financial, administrative and education cycles. This has produced an integrated plan for 2016, which also considers the times at which monitoring and adjustment of the Strategic Plan's implementation will take place.

1.3 PROFILE THEMES

The way in which science relates to society, and vice versa, is constantly changing. Contemporary social issues are increasing in complexity and require a more multi-disciplinary approach. The researchers and professionals of the future must be able to cooperate with others beyond the boundaries of their own specialist fields. Academic endeavour is increasingly being challenged to justify its role

in society. As a university, we need to ask ourselves how we should deal with this development. How can we integrate scientific and technological developments into our culture as a university, and what does this mean for people, their values and identities?

Over the coming years, VU Amsterdam will be focusing particularly on strengthening the link between science and society. As part of its work analysing social issues and searching for solutions, the university has identified four themes, which are described in the VU Strategic Plan 2015-2020: Governance for Society, Human Health & Life Sciences, Connected World, and Science for Sustainability.

By focusing its teaching and research activities on these four themes, VU Amsterdam is creating a clearer profile for students, researchers, businesses, funding agencies, government bodies and other (knowledge) partners. The profile themes are based in part on the identity of the university and its core values. These themes not only make us more distinctive as an institution, but they also encourage cooperation across the boundaries of academic disciplines. The profile themes will be examined in more detail in Chapter 6.

1.4 PRIORITY AREAS

The three priority areas – Diversity, Talent and Internationalization – were also taken up in 2015. The appointment of Prof. Karen van Oudenhoven-van der Zee as Chief Diversity Officer put the priority area Diversity firmly on the map. In order to establish the other priority areas equally firmly, deans were also sought for Internationalization and Talent. Talent is represented by the dean of the Faculty of Law, Prof. Willem Bouwens, and Internationalization by Prof. Albert Feilzer.

1.4.1 Diversity and inclusion

VU Amsterdam aims to grow into a community that serves as a model for

a society that responds to differences with trust, values these differences and makes active use of them. This forms the basis for social stability and innovation. We want to be an inclusive learning and working environment which, precisely due to the presence of these differences, encourages creativity and talent development.

Diversity is a major theme in VU Amsterdam's Strategic Plan 2015-2020. The basic principle of VU Amsterdam is for all students to encounter aspects of the diversity of their own fields during their studies. Moreover, we think it is important that our lecturers are well-prepared for dealing with diversity among their students. We take this into account in our range of programmes for our academic staff, and we want to develop it further.

The university is developing activities in the areas of new registrations, academic progression and transition to the job market. A lack of integration into employment of highly-educated young people with a migration background continues to be a stubborn social problem and VU Amsterdam wants to work actively with employers to reduce this disadvantage. A Diversity Task Force has been launched by three universities (VU Amsterdam, Leiden University and Erasmus University Rotterdam), which aims, in cooperation with other stakeholders (government, employers, educational institutions and expertise centres), to increase the professional integration of highly-educated young people with a multicultural background.

The development of a university-wide Community Service programme is linked to the diversity programme. The Community Service programme puts students into contact with social and cultural environments that are new for them.

In spring 2015 a diversity scan was carried out to ask whether the HR policy of the various units of VU Amsterdam

creates favourable conditions for promoting diversity among staff and students. The scan showed that although VU Amsterdam has a clear vision of diversity and many employees agree that diversity fits in with what the university stands for, it is not always equally clear at faculty and service department level which value is actually represented by diversity. We still have some way to go in this regard.

Activities in 2015:

- Community Service conference on 2 December 2015
- Multicultural 'international fair' as part of VU Amsterdam International Day on 26 November 2015
- Theme afternoon on Quality in Diversity on 15 December 2015

In December the European Union's High Level Group (HLG) on Education and Training visited VU Amsterdam. During this meeting of 70 (national) representatives of the 28 EU member states, ahead of the Netherlands taking over the Presidency of the Council of the EU from 1 January 2016, the European agenda in relation to education was examined and the priorities discussed. VU Amsterdam explained its diversity policy during the visit. The working visit provided input for the HLG's substantive discussions later in the programme, in which the Dutch agenda with respect to education was considered and the priorities for the EU Presidency of the Netherlands were discussed.

Also in 2015, VU Amsterdam maintained close cooperative relationships with the University of California, Los Angeles and various universities in South Africa. We have joined forces with ECHO, an expertise centre in the area of diversity in (higher) education and the job market. Through our connections with other stakeholders in society, we are developing initiatives to support the access to employment of ethnic minority students. In this context we seek to cooperate with organizations from our environment,

such as the city, the police, healthcare institutions, businesses and the Refugee Student Foundation, UAF.

1.4.2 Internationalization

VU Amsterdam is a leading Dutch university that structures its internationalization goals by being attractive to foreign students and by encouraging our students and staff to look beyond their borders. The university's international character and multicultural signature contribute to the quality of teaching and research, and to the significance of VU Amsterdam for its immediate and wider surroundings.

In line with its objectives in the area of diversity, VU Amsterdam is growing ever closer to having an international culture and environment, where students and staff feel at home and seek to interact with others. The campus is a meeting place for people of many different cultures, nationalities and backgrounds. In order to be an attractive university for all students, lecturers and researchers throughout the world, VU Amsterdam wants to increase its international visibility. The international profile of degree programmes is being refined and full advantage is being taken of the attractiveness of the programmes. As a result, VU Amsterdam also offers Dutch students an international learning environment and both the Dutch and international job markets benefit from our expertise in research and teaching.

For decades VU Amsterdam has contributed to knowledge-sharing with developing countries, among others, maintaining long-lasting relationships with South Africa and Indonesia – countries that have been adapting to new circumstances throughout their history. VU Amsterdam enters into institutional relationships with organizations in these countries, for example through research Master's programmes that fit in with our profile themes.

VU Amsterdam encourages its academic staff to join strategic partner-

ships. In addition, the international mobility of students, PhD students and other employees is promoted and supported. International experience prepares students for an international career and the quality of research at VU Amsterdam benefits from the intensive international cooperation.

The implementation of this vision, laid down in the Strategic Plan 2015-2020, is being further elaborated under the direction of the dean for Internationalization, Prof. Albert Feilzer. The following elements at least should play a role in this:

1. Creating an international campus
2. Engaging in international partnerships
3. Priority country policy
4. Stimulating international mobility
5. Using the added value of the 'Amsterdam' brand

International campus

Internationalizing the campus, internationalizing the whole of VU Amsterdam – from its buildings to its programme of study – is the greatest challenge in the area of internationalization. The project plan for this was drawn up in 2015, with the following elements:

- Creating the 'truly international classroom', really 'using' the international composition of the cohorts and, in that context, moving from tolerance of international diversity to embracing it fully.
- Internationalization of the programmes of study.
- An increase in the number of English-language study programmes – both Master's and Bachelor's degrees – where this is appropriate in view of the programme of study and students' future professional fields.
- Language and Communication.
- Human Resource Management.
- International services.

International partnerships

In 2015, too, VU Amsterdam worked on increasing its international visibility by entering into partnerships with repu-

table parties and/or expanding such partnerships further. This was the case with Beijing University of Technology, Renmin University of China and UCLA, among others. In addition, in 2015 the university began to set up a European network of strong research universities that focused explicitly on diversity and inclusion.

In 2015 cooperation began with Beijing University of Technology as part of Smart Cities research. In the area of Political Science and Business Administration the university also cooperated with Renmin University in Beijing. Links with UCLA were strengthened in order to exchange knowledge and experiences in the area of diversity. In addition to the many partnerships of faculties with teaching and research colleagues from other countries, international partnerships were also initiated with Amrita University and the University of East Anglia.

Focus countries

The number of focus countries was limited to two in 2015 – South Africa and Indonesia. In South Africa the relationship network is well-developed and of decisive importance for VU Amsterdam. In Indonesia there are the beginnings of a network that has the potential to grow into a fully-fledged network with respect to teaching and research.

International mobility

Promoting the international mobility of students is primarily a faculty task in which the VU Amsterdam international office plays a crucial role for all faculties as regards central support for faculties and students. In 2015 incoming diploma mobility (first-years, excl. re-enrolments) rose by more than 30% from 585 students in 2014/2015 to 779 students in 2015/2016, while outgoing credit mobility (exchange) rose by more than 40% from 413 students in 2014/2015 to 582 students in 2015/2016. The presence of increasing numbers of international students on campus is an important driver of further internationalization.

Amsterdam

VU Amsterdam is increasingly taking advantage of its Amsterdam location. Amsterdam has a very good reputation with respect to tolerance, culture and the job market. Affiliation with this strong reputation can be to the advantage of VU Amsterdam. This is also true of cooperation with the University of Amsterdam and the greater emphasis on this cooperation. In 2015 VU Amsterdam particularly played the 'Amsterdam card' strongly when promoting its summer schools. The result was an increase in student numbers of more than 200%.

1.4.3 Talent

We challenge our students to develop their talents as far as they can and to extend their horizons. Our talent policy does not focus solely on the small group of students who are extremely motivated and perform exceptionally well: we challenge all students to achieve their best possible performance.

In consultation with the University of Amsterdam, the Honours Programme for excellent students has been further developed. Under the direction of Prof. Willem Bouwens and in consultation with the faculties, more instruments will be developed in order to offer excellent students sufficient scope for development and a challenging environment. Within this context, it has been considered how to improve the possibilities for students to graduate in two studies and/or combine study with top performances in sport and/or music. Finally, 2015 saw preparations for the launch of the small-scale and selective interdisciplinary Bachelor's degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics. The programme will start in September 2016 and is meant for talented international students with a wide set of interests.

For talent policy focusing on VU Amsterdam staff, we refer you to Chapter 7.

1.5 INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE AGREEMENTS

In the 2014 institutional audit VU Amsterdam received the assessment 'positive with conditions'. On Tuesday 19 April 2016, the Ritzen Committee visited VU Amsterdam again on behalf of the Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) to determine whether VU Amsterdam had fulfilled the conditions. The Committee ultimately announced that it had arrived at a positive assessment and would advise the NVAO to adopt this assessment.

The organization was of the opinion that VU Amsterdam had been able to maintain the dynamism observed in 2014. It awarded VU Amsterdam the distinction of 'transformative university' on the evidence of the revitalized culture of openness and transparency, and the sharing of good practices. There were compliments for what had been achieved in recent years, including a good system of midterm reviews and subsequent management based on the reviews, an extensive risk-management instrument and the implementation of a governance model with clear choices in the organizational structure. The Committee also reacted positively to bottom-up initiatives to improve teaching quality.

In 2012, VU Amsterdam made agreements with the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science with regard to the performances the university was to achieve at the end of 2015 in terms of Academic Success, Quality, and Excellence, in addition to a number of support measures that VU Amsterdam would implement. Last year, VU Amsterdam once again made great progress toward meeting these agreements, in particular with respect to performance and the University Teaching Qualification. The Bachelor's performance rose from 62.0% at the benchmark to 77.6% in 2015, while University Teaching Qualification increased from 24% in 2011 to 61% in 2015. Only the result for the indica-

TABLE 2: PERFORMANCE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN VU AMSTERDAM AND THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SCIENCE WITH REGARD TO THE SEVEN OBLIGATORY INDICATORS: BENCHMARK IN 2011 AND RESULT IN 2015

Category	Indicator	Benchmark 2011	Result 2015	Objective for 2015 (agreed with Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science)
Academic success	Bachelor's degree in three/ four years	62.0%	77.6 %	75.0%
	Dropouts	18.0%	19.2 %	15.0%
	Course switch	7.0%	5.4 %	7.0%
Quality and excellence	Excellence	7.6%	10.0%	10%
Measures	Lecturer quality (University Teaching Qualification)	24%	61%	60%
	Intensity of teaching	16%	0%	0%
	Indirect costs	20.7 %	18.1%	19.7%

tor 'dropouts' showed a deterioration, from 18.0% to 19.2%. Section 4.3 will provide further information on the progress of the performance areas.

The performance agreements with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science comprise seven obligatory indicators for all universities, which are supplemented with optional agreements for each institution. Within the framework of the final assessment, budget-related consequences may be connected to the results achieved for the seven obligatory indicators for the budget year 2017. This does not apply to the results achieved with regard to the optional indicators.

Table 2 features an overview of the seven obligatory indicators for VU Amsterdam. The corresponding definitions and data sources are specified in Table 3 in section 4.3. Table 4 provides an overview of the two optional indicators on which VU Amsterdam has made agreements with the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.

Table 2: performance agreements between VU Amsterdam and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science with regard to the seven obligatory indicators: benchmark in 2011 and result in 2015.

1.6 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

In 2015 VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam evaluated the complaints procedure of 2014 and made a number of changes, resulting in a new complaints procedure which was approved by the Staff Council in December 2015. The function of ombudsman has been dropped from the new procedure and, instead of an ombudsman, confidential counsellors for academic integrity have been appointed for each cluster of faculties (Arts, Sciences, Social Sciences, and Medicine). In addition, the permanent Academic Integrity Committee was expanded from three members to five. There is a duty of confidentiality for the complainant and the respondent during the proceedings and account is taken of the split-up of VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam. From now on, complaints may only be submitted to the Executive Board of VU Amsterdam. It is no longer possible to make a complaint completely anonymously: a complainant who wishes to remain anonymous to the Executive Board and the Academic Integrity Committee must at least be known to one of the confidential counsellors.

In 2015, ten cases that varied in nature and scope were submitted to the Aca-

demically Integrity Committee. Nine cases were prompted by a complaint, while one case concerned an ad hoc investigation. All the complaint-related cases submitted to the Academic Integrity Committee in 2015 were admissible in the sense that they fulfilled the formal requirements of the complaints procedure. A number of cases were judged to be unfounded with regard to VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam, because they did not appear to come under the academic responsibility of VU Amsterdam and/or VU University Medical Center Amsterdam. For a number of other cases, proceedings continued into 2016. In summer 2016 the Academic Integrity Committee will issue its formal annual report for the period July 2015 to end-June 2016.

1.7 REORGANIZATION

In 2015 VU Amsterdam completed the reorganization of its operations management, which had been carried out over a number of years. The improvements represent major progress toward providing cost-efficient services to staff and students. Over the next few years efforts will have to be made to help people become accustomed to the concept of self-service, downscaling

and increasing digitalization of services. Also in 2015, a phased evaluation was begun of the reorganization of the various disciplines. These evaluations will continue until mid-2016 and on the basis of the results, improvement measures will be taken where it is necessary or desirable.

1.8 SPLITTING UP OF THE VU-VUMC FOUNDATION

The year 2015 was also marked by the splitting up of the VU Amsterdam-VU University Medical Center Amsterdam (VU-VUmc) Foundation, a project that has had a major impact. On 1 January 2016, following an intensive period of decision-making, preparation and new measures, VU Amsterdam continued as the VU Foundation and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam as the newly-founded VUmc Foundation. The split-up will be explained in more detail in Chapter 3.

1.9 CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

The VU Amsterdam campus wishes to provide an open, hospitable and internationally attractive working and living environment where students, lecturers and researchers can excel. People meet each other on the campus and the campus inspires people and invites them to work together. The VU Amsterdam campus is a place where diversity is welcomed and talent can be developed. In addition to offering modern teaching and research facilities for staff and students, attention is also paid to providing sufficiently attractive facilities, public and otherwise, on campus. Attention is also paid to the international resonance of the campus. The campus must be made more attractive to our international guests, students and foreign staff. VU Amsterdam is giving shape to its internationalization ambitions on the campus, among other things by installing English-language signage and corresponding symbols, creating

sufficiently attractive public facilities, providing on-campus residential and visitor accommodation, continuing the generous opening hours, and creating sufficient meeting places on campus. Living on campus, and in particular student accommodation, is part of the VU Amsterdam Campus programme. Physical space has been reserved for this. As planned, from phase 2 VU Amsterdam will have the work carried out in cooperation with a selected party or selected parties. The first possible location is on Campusplein. In the living and working environment on campus, room will also be made for diversity by taking account of specific target groups (an 'open' campus). The various meeting places on campus must also be socially safe during the entire period that they are open.

1.10 PARTNERSHIPS

In a number of areas VU Amsterdam joins forces with other organizations and (knowledge) institutions, thus reinforcing the joint scientific results, the power to attract national and international talent, and our role as partner for businesses and non-profit organizations.

Amsterdam Academic Alliance

The Amsterdam Academic Alliance (AAA) is a collaborative venture between the University of Amsterdam, VU Amsterdam and the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences. This collaboration is based on content and is driven by the wishes of students and staff, and by the requirements that are currently set for good teaching and research.

In common with the University of Amsterdam, VU Amsterdam has used its profile budget to support this collaboration. Chapter 6 describes in detail this collaboration and the results achieved.

Regional Cooperation

Amsterdam is the preeminent knowledge city, with two universities, two

teaching hospitals, four universities of applied sciences and dozens of research institutes. VU Amsterdam cooperates closely with regional partners (local government, industry and knowledge institutions), among other things in solving problems of large cities and metropolitan areas.

VU Amsterdam fulfils an important function as a regional training institute. It is not only a training institute in the classic sense, but it is also involved in Life-long Learning, the transition between secondary and higher education and university (Pre-university), and between university and the job market. Also with regard to letting scientific knowledge flow back into society, contributing to social developments (such as Community Services) and strengthening the regional economy (such as the Amsterdam Economic Board), VU Amsterdam provides an important stimulus to the region.

Cities of Amsterdam and Amstelveen

VU Amsterdam cooperates closely with Amsterdam and Amstelveen on issues such as dealing with refugees, student accommodation, valorization and internationalization. It participates in the Amsterdam Economic Board, which has as its mission to sustainably strengthen welfare and wellbeing in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Region. The business world, public authorities and knowledge institutions work together on the Board in the area of innovation and economic growth. On the Amsterdam Economic Board, VU Amsterdam, together with the University of Amsterdam/the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, heads the theme Talent for the Future; two-thirds of the children who are now starting primary school will eventually have jobs that do not yet exist. This means that the Amsterdam Metropolitan Region has to adapt increasingly quickly to the changing job market. With the metropolitan challenge Talent for the Future, the Board is anticipating the fourth industrial revolution. The aim is for the Amsterdam

Metropolitan Region to be transformed within 10 years into the most adaptable job market in Europe. Together with Chris Heutink (Randstad), Jaap Winter is the standard bearer of the Talent for the Future challenge.

Joint activities

On 12 May 2015, VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam/Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences organized the annual Spring Dinner with the Executive Boards of both universities and the Mayor and Executive Board of Amsterdam. Participants discussed the impact analysis of the universities, cooperation on the Amsterdam Economic Board, and the international profiling of the Amsterdam region. This meeting acted as a catalyst for drawing up a joint valorization plan.

On 14 April 2015, the Executive Board of Amsterdam made a working visit to VU Amsterdam, which provided a good opportunity for the Board to become acquainted with the high-quality research conducted at VU Amsterdam.

Also in 2015, on 9 October, the symposium Knowledge for the City (Kennis voor de Stad) took place, organized by the City of Amsterdam, in cooperation with VU Amsterdam, the University of Amsterdam and the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences. Following previous successful symposia, this Knowledge for the City centred on innovation in tackling the problems of large cities and metropolitan areas. This refers to innovation and modernization in the areas of health, mobility, the circular economy, sustainable data and the use of robots, and the impact that these developments will have on the city and its inhabitants, companies and visitors.

In 2015 VU Amsterdam regularly joined the City of Amsterdam and Amstelveen in international delegations, for example to India, China and South Africa. Contacts were initiated and strengthened with Amrita University and Amity University, among others.

VU Amsterdam also strengthened links with the City of Amstelveen (Mayor and Executive Board) in 2015. The two boards met on 13 January 2015 and discussed student accommodation, internationalization, attracting talent, and sustainability.

Cooperation with business and industry

In 2016 the new OI2 building was opened. This is a state-of-the-art research facility housing diverse research groups that collaborate on seeking answers to the big medical questions of today and of the future. A special feature is that space is also given to Mylab, a concept according to which space is made available for collaborative work with partners from outside the academic field – that is to say from industry – or to accommodate spinoffs, for example.

Cooperation within ARCNL led to interesting new projects in 2015, such as the cooperation with ASML and Tata Steel, and the EUV Plasma Dynamics research led by, among others, Wim Ubachs, which studies hydrogen molecules with the help of lasers. Ubachs received an ERC Advanced grant for this research project in 2015.

Regional impact

In December 2014, VU Amsterdam, together with the University of Amsterdam, had an Impact Analysis carried out. This analysis showed that the two universities, VU Amsterdam and University of Amsterdam, including the two University Medical Centers, have a gross added value of €13 billion. For every euro invested, the universities generated €4.46. They also provide 136,200 jobs. For every job created directly by the universities, 5.94 indirect jobs are generated in the Dutch economy. It was also shown that the two universities have invested €265m in local projects.

1.11 RESULT

The result to be published is -/- €7.3m. That is €4.7m better than the budgeted loss of -/- €12.0m and €11.5m better than in 2014. This result is made up of an ordinary result of €0.7m, of incidental income of €2.5m resulting from the sale of Kaupthing bonds and of incidental expenditure as a result of restructuring operations management, supplementary allocation for reorganization provision and non-recurring implementation costs of -/- €10.5m in total. The normalized ordinary result for VU Amsterdam for 2015 was positive: €1.3m. The results are covered in more detail in Chapter 11.

1.12 CONCLUDING REMARKS

It is the staff and students who make our university. The Executive Board thanks all employees of VU Amsterdam for the commitment that they showed last year in contributing to delivering excellent teaching and research. The Executive Board is especially grateful to all staff for this.

Professor J.W. (Jaap) Winter,
Chairperson
Professor V. (Vinod) Subramaniam,
Rector Magnificus
Ms M. H. T. (Marjolein) Jansen,
Vice-chairperson



02

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERVISORY BOARD

Introduction Days

INTRODUCTION

In 2015 the Supervisory Board of the VU-VUmc Foundation supervised the Executive Board of VU Amsterdam and the Board of Directors of VU University Medical Center Amsterdam. The Supervisory Board of the VU-VUmc Foundation also supervised the Board of the VU-VUmc Foundation, which comprises the members of the institutional boards – the Executive Board of VU Amsterdam and the Board of Directors of VU University Medical Center Amsterdam. Furthermore, the Supervisory Board provided the Executive Board and the Board of Directors with solicited and unsolicited advice. With this report the Supervisory Board renders an account of its supervision in 2015.

REVIEW OF 2015: SPLITTING UP OF THE VU-VUMC FOUNDATION

The year 2015 was an important year in view of the decision to split up the VU-VUmc Foundation. In consequence, 2015 was also the last year in which one single Supervisory Board oversaw both institutions and the joint foundation. Since 1 January 2016 there have been two separate Supervisory Boards, one for the VU Foundation and one for the VUmc Foundation. The Executive Board and the Supervisory Board decided to split the Foundation primarily because this gave the VU University Medical Center Amsterdam the possibility of making a wished-for alliance with the Academic Medical Center (AMC) in Amsterdam. In addition, this allows clearer and better organized governance. With regard to governance, an important consideration for the Supervisory Board was the fact that supervision of two such institutions – now large and complex – with the challenges that each of them faces separately, was no longer felt to be justified. Each institution needs its own Supervisory Board. The progress and modalities of the split and the formation of the VUmc-AMC alliance, as well as the decision-making involved,

were addressed in every meeting of the Supervisory Board in 2015.

Additionally, the Supervisory Board regularly discussed substantive files from the two institutions and the Foundation. These included the VUmc-AMC administrative alliance, the cooperation of VU University Medical Center Amsterdam with Amstelland Ziekenhuis en Medisch Centrum Slotervaart (Amstelland Hospital and Medical Centre Slotervaart), and the VU Amsterdam-University of Amsterdam partnership, as well as the financial and organizational situation in the two institutions and the measures taken and accreditations in the areas of education (NVAO) and care (Netherlands Institute for the Accreditation of Hospitals, NIAZ). The Supervisory Board also made sure it was fully informed about the water damage at VU University Medical Center Amsterdam following a burst water pipe on 8 September 2015.

In 2015 the Supervisory Board met on a monthly basis and also used its meetings to work out the specific substance of contemporary supervision. In this context, the Supervisory Board also assessed its own performance. Moreover, the meetings cycle with the board members and the consultation within the institutions was intensified and the Supervisory Board adjusted its own committee structure. Every meeting of the Supervisory Board is held in the presence of the Executive Board members, preceded by preliminary consultation by the Supervisory Board members alone.

VU AMSTERDAM

The Supervisory Board notes with appreciation that VU Amsterdam students, staff and the Executive Board have entered into a dialogue on important themes such as the changes within the operational management unit, the 'fixation on graduation rates', democratization and bureaucratization. VU Amsterdam strives for cooperation with the University of Amsterdam

where this is useful and desirable, while expressly allowing room for each university to preserve its own identity.

The Supervisory Board has closely and carefully followed VU Amsterdam's budget planning. This year the employee participation body had the right to vote on the main parts of the budget for the first time. VU Amsterdam was charged with arriving at a budget with a small positive result for 2016, while maintaining the objectives of the Strategic Plan 2015-2020, which was agreed in 2015. The course of this process and the eventual outcome have been discussed with the Supervisory Board, with the Supervisory Board asking the Executive Board about the feasibility of the budget presented and how it can be funded. In this process, the Audit and Accommodation Committee played an important advisory role for the Supervisory Board.

The Quality Committee of the Supervisory Board monitored progress in obtaining the Institutional Quality Assurance Audit (from the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders, NVAO), as well as fulfilment of the relevant conditions. An important theme here, including during consultation with the employee participation body, was the new internal governance model that was established by the Executive Board of VU Amsterdam in 2015.

In spring 2015 the Supervisory Board began the recruitment and selection process for the position of Rector Magnificus, in connection with the departure of Rector Magnificus prof. F.A. (Frank) van der Duijn Schouten. On 1 September 2015 he bade farewell at the opening of the 2015/2016 academic year and transferred the rectorship to the new Rector Magnificus, Prof. V. (Vinod) Subramaniam. The Supervisory Board also began the recruitment and selection process for a new Supervisory Board member, due to the departure of Ms B.J.M. (Bernadette) Langius. On 15 December 2015 the new Executive

Board member, Ms M.H.T. (Marjolein) Jansen, took her place on the Board.

In addition to the above-mentioned matters, the Supervisory Board also concerned itself with supervising VU Amsterdam's financial management (including approval of budget and financial statements), the functioning of the internal organization, including the employee survey at VU Amsterdam, ongoing cases with regard to integrity in scientific research, the media and public affairs strategy, and the assessment of the integrated accommodation expenses.

VU-VUMC FOUNDATION

In 2015 the Supervisory Board of the VU-VUmc Foundation oversaw, at Foundation level, cross-institutional matters that concerned the Foundation as a whole. In 2015 decision-making for the planned splitting-up of the VU-VUmc Foundation took some time and attention, in particular the more complex subjects that the split involved, such as the joint infrastructure of VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam, the shared VAT requirement, and the division of the (one-off) costs of the split between the two institutions. In this process the Supervisory Board has expressly concerned itself with preserving the bond and the joint activities of VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam after 2016. This bond continues to exist as the shared identity in the VU Association, the special nature of the institutions, the interconnections between teaching and research, and the joint campus development on de Boelelaan in Amsterdam.

In autumn 2015 the Supervisory Board also decided on the organization of the Supervisory Board of the VU Foundation and the Supervisory Board of the VUmc Foundation as of 1 January 2016. The corresponding regulations and profiles were also determined.

The decision to split, as taken by the Board of the Foundation, has the approval of the VU Association and the Supervisory Board; on 11 December 2015 the split received final approval and the necessary documents were signed.

Identity

The Supervisory Board is pleased to note that the theme of identity and the special nature of the institutions are very much alive and were regularly the subject of discussion in 2015, including through initiatives from the Association.

The Supervisory Board fully supported the Executive Board in its wish to include in the preamble to the VU-VUmc Cooperation Agreement, which came into force on 1 January 2016, an extensive passage describing the special nature of the institutions. The Cooperation Agreement states that VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam are recognizable, as far as their identity is concerned, as a special institution with corresponding governance, social impact and accountability, and inspiration that guides its day-to-day activities.

GOVERNANCE AND COMPLIANCE

The Supervisory Board acts in accordance with the Code of Good Governance for Universities, as it was laid down in 2013. This means, among other things, that this annual report provides extensive accountability and indicates how the code is complied with. Since the beginning of 2014, the Supervisory Board has worked with its own, functionally independent secretary. The remuneration of the board members who have taken seats on the board since 2013 is in accordance with the provisions of the Executives' Pay (Standards) Act.

In connection with the status of special institution, and the related fact that VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam together form part of a single legal entity, the governance

of VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam diverged in 2015 in the following respects from that which applies by virtue of the law on public institutions:

- The Supervisory Board, which monitors both institutions and the Foundation, has seven members;
- Appointment and reappointment of the members of the Supervisory Boards is only possible with the prior approval of the Members Council of the VU Association;
- Due to approval by the Members Council, an adjusted process has been agreed with the employee participation body of VU Amsterdam for the appointment of the Supervisory Board member who has the particular confidence of the employee participation body, in which the Supervisory Board and employee participation body work together to arrive at a nomination to the Members Council.

VU University Medical Center Amsterdam endorses the UMC Governance Code, which is derived from the governance code covering the entire care sector. The UMC Governance code has been in effect since 2008 and describes the rules for good governance and supervision for care institutions.

Since 1 January 2016, following the split-up, VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam, as separate foundations, each have its own Supervisory Board. These new Supervisory Boards have five members each and are composed of the current Supervisory Board members, with three of the members sitting on both Supervisory Boards.

COMPOSITION OF SUPERVISORY BOARD OF VU-VUMC FOUNDATION

The principle of independence is respected by the Supervisory Board. During 2015 the Supervisory Board was composed in such a way that its members were able to operate

independently and critically in relation to one another and in relation to the Executive Board and the Governing Board. The composition of the Supervisory Board was stable and did not change in 2015.

Ms J.P. (Jacqueline) Rijdsdijk was reappointed for a second term on 1 January 2016.

Committees of the Supervisory Board

Audit and Accommodation Committee

In 2015 the Audit and Accommodation Committee advised the Supervisory Board regarding the 2014 financial statements of the institutions and the Foundation, and the 2016 budgets (including risk section and treasury plans) of VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam. There were comprehensive discussions with the institutions and the external auditor about the reports with regard to the interim findings for 2015. A great deal of work was done within VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam on control and on improving management information. At the same time it is clear that the desired target level has not yet been reached.

In addition to advising on the documents belonging to the Planning & Control cycle, the Audit and Accommodation Committee was intensively involved in a number of complex matters relating to finance and accommodation. This concerned first of all the split-up, for which the Committee assessed the financial documentation that had been drawn up as the basis for the Proposal for a Split-up that was presented for inspection. The Committee also had an advisory role with regard to consultation with the banks about the future funding of the separate institutions VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam.

In autumn 2015 there was also discussion in the Audit and Accommodation Committee of the financial consequences of the water damage at VU

University Medical Center Amsterdam and the coverage of the various costs arising out of the existing insurance policies. The worsened underlying economic conditions and the reconsideration of the scope of the Imaging Center also came up for discussion. The Audit and Accommodation Committee advised the Supervisory Board on this matter.

At every meeting of the Audit and Accommodation Committee, members discussed the progress in improving the governance structure, the Planning & Control cycle and risk management within the VU-VUmc Holding. The Committee is happy with the steps taken by the board members of the Holding in this regard in 2015. As in previous years, the progress of campus development and investments in accommodation were included on the agenda of committee meetings every six months. In 2015 the relationship between investment and the necessary cuts within the institutions was a specific subject of discussion; the Executive Board of VU Amsterdam and the Board of Directors of VU University Medical Center Amsterdam have indicated that they consider use, necessity and alternatives for every investment.

The Audit and Accommodation Committee assembled in meetings three times in 2015 and held additional meetings a few times by means of conference calls. The minutes of these meetings are put on the agendas of meetings of the Supervisory Board.

Quality Committee

The Quality Committee gave advice in 2015 on the quality and safety of patient care and on the quality of teaching and research.

With reference to the quality and safety of patient care, the Committee monitored the introduction of the Electronic Patient Record and the preparations for this step at VU University Medical Center Amsterdam. The substantive and financial implica-

tions of the postponement of the GO Live start date were considered in the Committee and the Supervisory Board advised on this. The findings from the NIAZ audit (early 2015) were also on the agenda and in every meeting, progress made on the necessary improvement measures was discussed. The findings of various inspections by the Dutch Health Care Inspectorate were also examined. As well as the Audit and Accommodation Committee, the Quality Committee discussed the consequences of the flooding at VU University Medical Center Amsterdam, particularly from the point of view of patient care.

With reference to the quality of teaching and research, every meeting looked at the progress made in complying with the basic conditions and recommendations that arose from the Institutional Accreditation of VU Amsterdam by the Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) in 2014.

The Committee, established by the NVAO, will visit VU Amsterdam in spring 2016 to assess whether the university has fulfilled the conditions laid down in the context of the Institutional Quality Assurance Audit.

Academic integrity within VU Amsterdam is also an important topic in the Quality Committee, including the discussion of specific cases in which academic integrity appears to be under pressure. After being dealt with by the Committee, these cases are also always presented and discussed in the Supervisory Board meeting.

Furthermore, the Quality Committee gave a positive opinion on the evaluation made of professorship policy and the intention to arrive at a more structured approach to appointment and assessment relating to endowed chairs.

In 2015, the Quality Committee met four times. The minutes of these meetings are put on the agendas of meetings of the Supervisory Board.

Remuneration Committee

Since the beginning of 2014 there has been a Remuneration Committee set up by the Supervisory Board. The Committee consists of the members Rijdsdijk (chairperson), Kuijken (vice-chairperson) and Dijkhuizen (member).

Last year the Remuneration Committee was occupied with appointments and a number of subjects that recur annually, such as conducting the annual interviews with the board members. In addition, a number of regulations were established or examined anew, such as the regulation on Ancillary Positions and the Board Members' Expenses regulation.

The Remuneration Committee also worked on a number of matters relating to the terms and conditions of employment of the sitting board members.

VU Amsterdam saw the departure of Rector Magnificus Prof. F.A. (Frank) van der Duijn Schouten. He took up his post in May 2013 when the previous rector stepped down with immediate effect. In the last two years the university underwent a successful institutional audit, the educational vision was finalized and innovation in education was also given attention. The Supervisory Board is very grateful to Frank van der Duijn Schouten for his willingness to assist VU Amsterdam at a hectic time, and it is pleased with the results obtained. On 1 September 2015 Frank van der Duijn Schouten transferred the rectorship to the new Rector Magnificus, Prof. V. (Vinod) Subramaniam.

VU Amsterdam also saw the departure of Executive Board member Ms B.J.M. (Bernadette) Langius on 15 December 2015. She had said that she did not wish to be considered for reappointment. The Supervisory Board thanks Bernadette Langius for the great amount of work that she has done for VU Amsterdam, in particular as regards the major reorganization of operations management.

On 15 December 2015 the new Executive Board member, Ms M.H.T. (Marjolijn) Jansen, took her place on the board, making the Executive Board of VU Amsterdam complete once again.

In the recruitment processes there was frequent consultation with employee participation at VU Amsterdam, due to the desire for greater involvement. A model was chosen in which the Joint Assembly (Staff Council and University Student Council) had two representatives on the Selection Committee that reduced the longlist of candidates to a shortlist. Furthermore, the Joint Assembly took part in the Selection Advice Committee and there was the right to prior consultation in relation to the planned appointment. For the appointment of the rector there was an academic session at which a broad range of representatives from all the faculties and from the student body had the opportunity to meet the prospective rector and to reflect on his nomination with the Supervisory Board. This was a positive experience for all involved.

Due to the complex regulations in the Executives' Pay (Standards) Act (WNT), for the appointment of the Executive Board members and the terms and conditions of employment, an external lawyer was asked to advise the Super-

visory Board on applying the WNT. Although not obliged to do so as special institutions, in 2015 VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam acceded to the request from RTL Nederland under the Government Information (Public Access) Act to inspect the boards' expenses claims for 2013 and 2014. The intention is to increase transparency on this point still further in 2016, among other things by publishing information about it on the websites of VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam.

At VU Amsterdam an investigation was launched in 2014 by the Education Inspectorate into the termination arrangements of the board members Ms R.M. Smit and Prof. L.M. Bouter, who stepped down in 2013. The Supervisory Board cooperated fully with the investigation. In 2015 the Inspectorate indicated that – following a small supplementary payment – there had been no irregularities.

SUPERVISION BOARDS IN 2016

From 2016 there has been a VU Foundation Supervisory Board and a VUmc Foundation Supervisory Board. The Supervisory Boards are composed as follows:

Supervisory Board of VU Foundation

Name	Position
Mr W.J. (Wim) Kuijken	Chairperson, member of Remuneration Committee
Mr H.J.J. (Herman) Dijkhuizen RA	Chairperson, Audit and Accommodation Committee
Prof. E.C. (Eduard) Klasen	Chairperson, Quality Committee
Mr J.L. (Jan Louis) Burggraaf	Member of Audit and Accommodation Committee
Prof. A.T. (Annetje) Ottow	Chairperson, Remuneration Committee

Supervisory Board of VUmc Foundation

Name	Position
Mr W. (Willem) Geerlings	Chairperson, member of Remuneration Committee, member of Quality Committee
Mr H.J.J. (Herman) Dijkhuizen RA	Chairperson, Audit and Accommodation Committee
Prof. E.C. (Eduard) Klasen	Chairperson, Quality Committee
Mr J.L. (Jan Louis) Burggraaf	Member of Audit and Accommodation Committee
Ms J.P. (Jacqueline) Rijdsdijk	Chairperson, Remuneration Committee

Each Supervisory Board has its own secretary, who is independent from the Board.

REMUNERATION OF SUPERVISORY BOARDS

Remuneration of the Supervisory Boards is lower than the maximum amounts given in the Executives' Pay (Standards) Act (WNT).

Contacts with the institutions

VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam

Supervisory Board members who enjoy the particular confidence of employee participation bodies, are nominated by the Client Council or are contact persons have, at various times, held formal and informal discussions and consultations with (members of) the employee participation bodies. As a rule, a number of Supervisory Board members are present at the meetings of the Members' Council of the VU Association – four times in 2015. In addition, members of the Supervisory Board have individual meetings with people within the institutions and with groups, for example deans, directors, division chairpersons, the Staff Assembly, etc. They carry out working visits and are present at important events for the institutions, such as the opening of the academic year and the Dies Natalis (Foundation Day). Twice a year, Supervisory Board members also attend the meetings of the chairpersons of Supervisory Boards of universities and of the Presidents' Consultations of the university medical centres.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Supervisory Board thanks the board members and all members of the institutions for their commitment and achievements over the past year. The Supervisory Board has immense respect for the way in which the core processes education, research and patient care have been carried out with great dedication. In turbulent times, such as during the student unrest at VU Amsterdam and the flooding and resulting damage at the VU University Medical Center Amsterdam, the institutions acted professionally and with commitment.

It was a year in which there was also a lot of hard work done on the split-up of VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam, but it is precisely the outstanding way in which this splitting up process was achieved by board members and employees that is evidence of existing and lasting shared involvement.

25 May 2016

Supervisory Board of VU Foundation

Mr W.J. (Wim) Kuijken, Chairperson
Mr H.J.J. (Herman) Dijkhuizen RA
Prof. E.C. (Eduard) Klasen
Mr J.L. (Jan Louis) Burggraaf
Prof. A.T. (Annetje) Ottow





03

ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

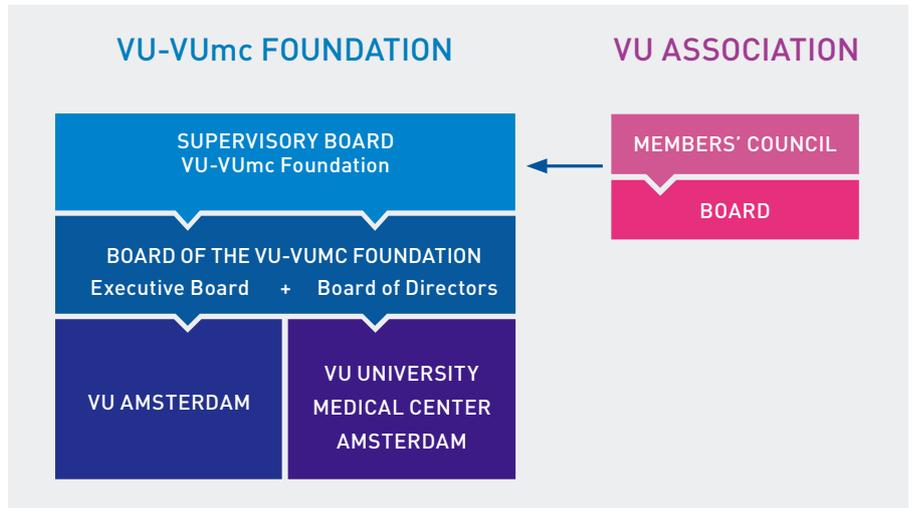
3.1 LEGAL STRUCTURE

The institutions of VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam operated jointly under the auspices of the legal entity, the VU-VUmc Foundation, for the last time in 2015. The Board of the Foundation consisted of the members of the VU Amsterdam Executive Board and the VU University Medical Center Amsterdam Board of Directors. The members of the Foundation's Supervisory Board, which also served as the Supervisory Board of each of the institutions, were appointed by the Members' Council of the VU Association. The governance structure is described in the figure below. The VU-VUmc Foundation was the legal entity for the purposes of relations with external financiers and the Tax and Customs Administration, among others. VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam therefore constituted a single entity within the Foundation, which also meant that the risks of each of the institutions affected the other institution and the Foundation as a whole. The financial statements and annual reports of the two institutions must therefore be read in conjunction with each other. Immediately after the end of the year under review, on 1 January 2016, VU University Medical Center Amsterdam was split off from the VU-VUmc Foundation and placed under the auspices of a separate VUmc Foundation, while the VU-VUmc Foundation continued as the VU Foundation.

3.2 SPLITTING UP OF THE VU-VUMC FOUNDATION

Background to the split-up

The decision to split up the VU-VUmc Foundation was made for two reasons: to create a better governance structure and greater strategic flexibility for both institutions. The complexity of managing a legal entity comprising two different types of institutions with different objectives was too great to allow for optimal internal supervision of both



institutions. The envisaged greater strategic flexibility is relevant in the context of partnerships formed by VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam with other parties. One such partnership is the alliance between VU University Medical Center Amsterdam and the Academic Medical Center (AMC), regarding which the Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM) stipulated the condition that VU University Medical Center Amsterdam should be transferred to a separate legal entity.

The basic principle was that the split-up would occur 'as is', meaning that the two institutions had to be split up without any material changes in assets and liabilities or organizational changes, that there would be no negative consequences for the core activities of VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam and that any structural additional costs ensuing from the split-up would be kept to minimum. The first of these provisos was departed from in a number of instances, i.e., with regard to the organization of the audit function, the Occupational Health, Safety & Environment department and the operation of the energy company, which was transferred to a separate company with effect from 1 January 2016.

Programme for the split-up of the VU-VUmc Foundation

In 2015, a programme was carried out to prepare the decision on the split-up of the VU-VUmc Foundation and for the

actual implementation of that decision. The programme consisted of fifty separate projects under the supervision of a dedicated project team.

The participatory bodies, the Members' Council of the VU Association and the Supervisory Board were all intensively involved in the decision-making process. Their advice was positive, subject to a number of observations, which were adopted wherever possible. On 26 October, the Proposal for a Split-up was laid for inspection at the Chamber of Commerce for a period of 30 days. At the end of this period the district court issued a declaration of no objection. The Board of the Foundation adopted the definitive decision on the split-up on 11 December.

For this decision the approval of the relevant banks was secured, a risk assessment was performed with respect to the contracts and permits and the tax implications were identified and measures were taken after a review by external tax and legal advisors. The split-up took effect on 1 January 2016, whereupon the name of the VU-VUmc Foundation was changed to the VU Foundation and the VUmc Foundation was formed. The following business activities, together with the associated assets, were transferred to the VUmc Foundation and will consequently no longer be carried on under the auspices of the VU Foundation: patient care under the Care Institutions Accreditation Act (WTZi), medical scientific research and medical training.

This disentanglement of the activities was completed on 1 January 2016.

Emphasis on continuing joint activities

In addition to the decision-making process and the measures taken to effectuate the split-up, special emphasis was placed on the activities and endeavours that would continue to be carried out jointly by VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam following the split-up, such as the Faculty of Medicine, the development of the campus and the medical library.

Since 1 January 2016, the VU Association has been the legal entity behind VU Amsterdam, VU University Medical Center Amsterdam and special institutions within the meaning of the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act. This change was formal in nature and did not cause any alteration in the practical relationship between the VU Association and the two institutions. VU Amsterdam, VU University Medical Center Amsterdam and the VU Association are also linked through various joint activities.

Arrangements relating to cooperation in education and research and the joint activities of VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam are laid down in a Cooperation Agreement. Separate agreements have also been concluded between the VU Foundation and the VUmc Foundation on matters such as the exchange of personal data, the Grants Desk, Innovation Exchange Amsterdam (IXA) (the valorization office), the valorization of intellectual property, while a Radiation Covenant (to which BV Cyclotron VU is a third party) has been concluded for the entire campus, containing agreements pertaining to the permit granted under the Nuclear Energy Act.

3.3 ORGANIZATION

This section contains information about the various tiers of management in VU Amsterdam's organizational structure. VU Amsterdam has ten facul-

ties, including medicine (which falls under VU University Medical Center Amsterdam) and ACTA (a joint faculty with the University of Amsterdam), as well as eight service departments. The new governance model took effect in June 2015. The model clearly describes the structures, processes, roles and responsibilities of the separate tiers of management. The structures and processes are designed in such a way as to encourage individuals to assume responsibility in an open relationship with colleagues. This implies, among other things, that powers are delegated to the lowest possible level in the organization and are clearly defined. There must be a balance between steering and regulation on the one hand, and the scope to accept and assume personal responsibility on the other.

Supervisory Board

The VU Foundation has a Supervisory Board, which also functions as the Supervisory Board of each of the institutions. The Supervisory Board appoints and dismisses the members of the Executive Board and monitors the design, implementation and enforcement of the quality assurance system. The university's Strategic Plan, budget and financial statements must be approved by the Supervisory Board. The Supervisory Board has an Audit and Accommodation Committee, a Quality Committee and a Remuneration Committee.

Executive Board

VU Amsterdam is managed by an Executive Board consisting of three members: the chairperson, the Rector Magnificus and a vice-chairperson.

Faculty Board

The teaching and the practice of science are organized by the faculties. Each faculty is managed by a Faculty Board. Each Faculty Board has no fewer than three and not more than four members. The members are appointed by the Executive Board. The dean of the faculty chairs The Faculty Board and has ultimate responsibility for the faculty's performance.

College of Deans

The university has a College of Deans. The college consists of the deans of the faculties, and is chaired by the Rector Magnificus. The College of Deans is the Doctorate Board as referred to in the Higher Education and Research Act. The College of Deans makes decisions on academic matters, such as the Doctorate Regulations, matters relating to PhD programmes and honorary doctorates.

Directors of Service Departments and management team

At the head of each service department is a director. The director chairs the department's management team. The members of the management team are appointed, suspended and dismissed by the director of the department subject to the approval of the Executive Board.

Consultation with employee participation bodies

VU Amsterdam has a system of joint participation in decision-making. Participation at the central level is exercised by the Staff Council and the University Student Council, as well as the Joint Assembly, which is made up of the members of both those bodies. These bodies derive their powers from the Works Councils Act and from VU Amsterdam's own regulations concerning employee participation, which are based on the Higher Education and Research Act.

The University Student Council has nine student members. It organizes meetings with the affiliated student associations on its own initiative. Employee participation at faculty level is exercised in the Subcommittee and the Faculty Student Council, as well as in the Joint Assembly of the two bodies. Every service department has a Subcommittee. The Staff Council lays down the powers to be exercised by the Subcommittees in its decisions. In the context of the exercise of employee participation at faculty level, the Faculty Board is normally represented at meetings by at least the dean and the relevant portfolio holder.

3.4 LIST OF FUNCTIONS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE SUPERVISORY BOARD OF THE VU-VUMC FOUNDATION

(status on 31.12.2015)

Name	Position	Took office on	Term
Mr W.J. Kuijken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairperson Member of the Remuneration Committee 	01.01.2014	1
Mr H.H.J. Dijkhuizen RA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vice-chairperson Chairperson of the Audit and Accommodation Committee 	01.03.2013	1
Prof. E.C. Klasen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vice-chairperson Chairperson of the Quality Committee 	06.09.2013	1
Ms J.P. Rijsdijk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairperson of the Remuneration Committee Member of the Audit and Accommodation Committee Area of focus: VU University Medical Center Amsterdam 	01.01.2012	2
Mr J.L. Burggraaf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member of the Audit and Accommodation Committee Area of focus: VU Amsterdam 	06.09.2013	1
Mr W. Geerlings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member of the Quality Committee Area of focus: VU University Medical Center Amsterdam Nominated by the Client Council 	01.03.2013	1
Prof. A.T. Ottow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member of the Quality Committee Area of focus: VU Amsterdam Nominated by the VU Joint Assembly 	01.09.2013	1

3.5 OVERVIEW OF MEETINGS OF THE SUPERVISORY BOARD AND ATTENDANCE

Period: 1.1.2015 - 31.12.2015

Regular meetings of the Supervisory Board of the VU-VUmc Foundation:

Number of meetings	Board members present	% attended
7 and 6 conference calls*	W.J. Kuijken	100
	H.H.J. Dijkhuizen	92
	E.C. Klasen	100
	J.P. Rijsdijk	100
	J.L. Burggraaf	92
	W. Geerlings	100
*for a brief discussion of a specific subject	A.T. Ottow	92

Audit and Accommodation Committee:

Number of meetings	Board members present	% attended
3 and 2 conference calls*	H.H.J. Dijkhuizen	100
	J.P. Rijsdijk	100
*for a brief discussion of a specific subject	J.L. Burggraaf	80

Quality Committee:

Number of meetings	Board members present	% attended
4	E.C. Klasen	100
	W. Geerlings	100
	A.T. Ottow	75

Remuneration Committee:

Number of meetings	Board members present	% attended
1 and 5 conference calls*	J. P. Rijsdijk	100
	W. J. Kuijken	100
*for a brief discussion of a specific subject	H.H.J. Dijkhuizen	100

Other meetings:

Meeting	Number
VU-VUmc Supervisory Board with the AMC Supervisory Board	2

3.6 LIST OF ANCILLARY POSITIONS OF MEMBERS OF THE SUPERVISORY BOARD OF THE VU-VUMC FOUNDATION

Status on 31-12-2015

Mr W.J. (Wim) Kuijken (1952),

chairperson

Main position: Delta Commissioner.

Ancillary positions: Chairperson of the Supervisory Board of De Nederlandse Bank N.V.; member of the Supervisory Board of the Stadgenoot housing association; member of the Advisory Board of the Hoge Veluwe National Park Foundation; chairperson of the Police Act Evaluation Commission; dean of the Netherlands School of Public Administration's Learning Network; member of the Executive Board of the Klaartje Dormits-van den Berg Foundation.

H.H.J. (Herman) Dijkhuizen RA (1960),

vice-chairperson & chairperson of the Audit and Accommodation Committee

Main position: Chief Financial Officer of NIBC Bank N.V.

Ancillary positions: member of the Supervisory Board of Unicef Nederland; board member of the National Fund for 4 and 5 May; board member of the Steun Emma Foundation.

Prof. E.C. (Eduard) Klasen (1949),

vice-chairperson and chairperson of the Quality Committee

Ancillary functions: Advisor to the Executive Board of the Leiden University Medical Center; emeritus professor of Management of Health Research at the University of Leiden; chairperson of the Strategic Advisory Board of TNO Healthy Living; chairperson of the System Failure Committee of the Netherlands Organization for Health Research and Development (ZonMw); chairperson of the Supervisory Board of the Dutch Heart Foundation; chairperson of the Medical Delta Steering Group; chairperson of the Personalized Medicine Committee of the Netherlands Organization for Health Research and Development (ZonMw); chairperson of the Supervisory Board of the

Netherlands Institute for Health Services Research (NIVEL); chairperson of the Supervisory Board of Wilhelmina Hospital Assen; member of the Supervisory Board of the Healthy Aging Network Northern Netherlands.

Mr J.P. (Jacqueline) Rijdsijk (1956),

chairperson of the Remuneration Committee

Positions: Chairperson of the Supervisory Board of the Triodos Fair Share Fund; chairperson of the Supervisory Board of the Triodos Green Fund; member of the Advisory Board of Airbus Defence and Space Netherlands; chairperson of the Supervisory Board of VeerStichting Leiden; external member of the Audit Committee of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations; member of the Supervisory Board of Royal Cosun; member of the Supervisory Board of Deloitte Nederland.

Mr J.L. (Jan Louis) Burggraaf (1964)

Main position: Partner at Allen & Overy LLP.

Ancillary positions: Non-executive member of the board of De Persgroep S.A.; member of the Supervisory Board of the Christelijke Hogeschool Ede (CHE); chairperson of the Executive Board of the Save Cheruto (Get It Done) Foundation.

Mr W. (Willem) Geerlings (1950)

Positions: Member of the Supervisory Board of the Netherlands Institute for Health Services Research (NIVEL); member of the Evaluation of Legislation Committee of the Netherlands Organization for Health Research and Development (ZonMw); chairperson of the Executive Board of Rijnmondnet; member (ad interim) of the Executive Board of the Admiraal De Ruyter Hospital.

Prof. A.T. (Annetje) Ottow (1965)

Main position: Dean of the Faculty of Law, Economics and Governance of the University of Utrecht.

Ancillary positions: Non-governmental advisor to the International

Competition Network; editor of Tijdschrift voor Toezicht; member of the Scientific Board of the Florence School of Regulation - European University Institute - Florence; non-executive director of the British Competition and Markets Authority (CMA); member of the Supervisory Board of the Legal Aid and Advice Centre (Juridisch Loket).

3.7 LIST OF ANCILLARY POSITIONS OF MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE VU-VUMC FOUNDATION

Status on 31-12-2015

Name	Ancillary positions
Prof. J.W. (Jaap) Winter (1963)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of the Supervisory Board of Randstad Holding N.V.* • Member of the Supervisory Board of Koninklijke Concertgebouw N.V. • Member of the Amsterdam Economic Board (q.q.) • Professor at the University of Amsterdam • Member of the Supervisory Board of the Van Gogh Museum <p>*= the income received is donated to VU Amsterdam's fund for scholarships for students</p>
Mr W.J. (Wouter) Bos (1963)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairperson of the Executive Board of the Giovanni van Bronckhorst Foundation • Chairperson of the Executive Board of BOSK, the association of people with a physical handicap • Columnist for De Volkskrant newspaper
Prof. F.A. (Frank) van der Duyn Schouten (1949)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairperson of the Supervisory Board of Fontys University of Applied Sciences • Chairperson of the Supervisory Board of Jongbloed BV, Heerenveen • Chairperson of the Supervisory Board of Wartburg College, Rotterdam • Chairperson of the National Board of Governors of the Foundation for Christian Philosophy <p>Professor F.A. van der Duijn Schouten retired on 1 September 2015.</p>
Prof. V. (Vinod) Subramaniam (1967)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor at the University of Twente (until August 2016) • Board member of the Netherlands Physical Society • Visiting professor at the University of Konstanz and Senior Fellow of the Zukunftskolleg (until October 2016) • Member of the Physics Advisory Board at the Lorentz Center in Leiden (until December 2015) • Member of the FOM/v Committee for the Minerva Prize, a programme designed to encourage more women to practise physics in the Netherlands • Board member and secretary of the Biomolecular Chemistry study group within the NWO's Chemical Sciences division (until November 2015) • Head of NanoNextNL's Nanoscale Biomolecular Interactions in Disease programme • Head of the FOM Institute's A Single Molecule View on Protein Aggregation programme <p>Prof. V. Subramaniam joined VU Amsterdam as Rector Magnificus on 1 September 2015.</p>
Prof. W.A.B. (Wim) Stalman (1951)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chairperson of the Supervisory Board of Amstelland Zorg BV • Chairperson of the Supervisory Board of the Training Programme for General Practitioners and Geriatric Specialists • Member of the Supervisory Board of the Leidsche Rijn Julius Health Centres Foundation • Board member/treasurer of the Electronic Health Records Amsterdam Foundation (q.q.) • Member of the Advisory Committee on primary mental health care of the Dutch Association of Mental Health and Addiction Care (GGZ) • Board member of the Dutch Clinical Trial Foundation (q.q.) • Member of the Supervisory Board of Hospice Curia (q.q.) • Chairperson of the Board of the Training Programme for Hospital Physicians (Stichting Opleiding Ziekenhuis Geneeskunde) (q.q.) <p>Prof. W.A.B. Stalman retired on 1 March 2015; the ancillary positions marked q.q. therefore lapsed from 1 March 2015.</p>
Prof. J. (Hans) Brug (1963)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice-chairperson of the consultative group on Nutrition and chairperson of the permanent committee on Nutrition of the Dutch Health Council • Member of the external Advisory Committee on Health, Safety and Sustainable Nutrition of the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) • Member of the Supervisory Board of the Netherlands Nutrition Centre Foundation • Member of the Editorial Board of the scientific journals: American Journal of Health Promotion, OA Epidemiology, International Journal of Behavioural Nutrition & Physical Activity • Member of the consultative group for the Horizon2020 Health, Demographic Change and Wellbeing programme • Member of the Advisory Board of the Leibniz-Institut für Präventionsforschung und Epidemiologie – BIPS GmbH <p>Prof. J. Brug joined the Executive Board of VU University Medical Center Amsterdam on 1 January 2015.</p>
Ms B.J.M. (Bernadette) Langius (1960)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of the Supervisory Board of the Dutch National Opera & Ballet • Member of the Supervisory Board of Plan Nederland • Member of the Supervisory Board of Van Lanschot Bankiers • Member of the Supervisory Board of IBM Nederland** <p>**As of 1 October 2015</p> <p>Ms B.J.M. Langius stood down as a member of VU Amsterdam's Executive Board on 15 December 2015.</p>
Ms M.H.T. (Marjolein) Jansen (1970)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice-chairperson of the SAIL Amsterdam Foundation <p>Ms M.H.T. Jansen joined VU Amsterdam's Executive Board on 15 December 2015.</p>
Prof. C.H. (Chris) Polman (1958)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of the Independent Data Monitoring Committee for a number of international trials relating to multiple sclerosis • Member of the Supervisory Board of the Board of Educational Healthcare Programmes (via the Netherlands Federation of University Medical Centres, NFU)

The Supervisory Board has approved the board members' ancillary activities. A fixed protocol governs the approval process and any agreements made.



04

TEACHING

Weekend van de Wetenschap

In 2013, VU Amsterdam compiled its improvement plans for teaching in one single Education Agenda. The agenda specifies the general teaching objectives and desired results, and also details which measures are being implemented in order to achieve these results. It is updated annually with priorities for the coming calendar year. The Education Agenda has been allocated a total budget of €39 million, most of which has been designated to the faculty teaching performance plans and part to projects across VU Amsterdam. In evaluating the instrument Education Agenda Autumn 2015, we established that the instrument worked well and that both separate faculties and those across VU Amsterdam have made significant improvements to the quality of teaching and academic success. A clear indicator of this is provided by the National Student Survey, which produces a score of students' general opinions on degree programmes. This score increased from 3.8 to 4.0 over the last three years, thereby reaching the target value set by VU Amsterdam itself.

4.1 PHILOSOPHY ON EDUCATION

Traditionally, universities have had the ambition to educate in particular young people, but also others, who will shape tomorrow's society. VU Amsterdam is eager to honour this tradition. The teaching objective of VU Amsterdam therefore goes beyond just looking to achieve indicators of performance in figures. Instead, our aim is and will remain the following: to foster talent by educating academic professionals who are able to think independently and reason in an academic fashion; who are able to solve problems and conscientiously apply academic knowledge; who are able to critically analyse others' views and connect areas previously thought unrelated; who are aware of their own presuppositions and those of others; who are prepared to take on and delegate responsibility; and who are able to provide leadership within a

TABLE 1: NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY, STUDENTS' OPINIONS ON DEGREE PROGRAMMES

	2013	2014	2015
	Mean	Mean	Mean
Your degree programme in general	3,8	3,9	4,0

society characterized by a high degree of dynamism, diversity, complexity and internationalization. In short, VU Amsterdam wishes to educate people to become engaged and conscientious academics who are able to continuously explore and push their own capabilities.

4.2 INSTITUTIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AUDIT

4.2.1 Review of Institutional Quality Assurance Audit

In 2014, VU Amsterdam passed the Institutional Quality Assurance Audit (ITK). However, this was under certain conditions. In 2015, a great deal of effort was invested into fulfilling these conditions.

The Institutional Quality Assurance Audit encompasses five norms. The first two norms – the Philosophy on Education and the translation of this philosophy into policy – received a positive review. The Committee set a number of conditions for VU Amsterdam if it is to achieve a positive review for the remaining three norms: insight into results, improvement policy, and the organizational and decision-making structure.

4.2.2 Outcome of audit

Alongside setting three preconditions for achieving the Institutional Accreditation, the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) provided points of advice and a number of recommendations. In the spring of 2016, VU Amsterdam must

demonstrate that it has met the preconditions. To this end, a plan of action has been drawn up with respect to the conditions and recommendations set by the Committee. This plan will be implemented within the framework of the Education Agenda. The preconditions connected to the Institutional Quality Assurance Audit are:

- To carry out an evaluation of the programme of study in all degree programmes and conduct a midterm review for degree programmes that are halfway through the duration of the accreditation.
- To assign a clear place to risk detection in the Educational Quality Handbook, teaching policy and teaching practices.
- To establish an organizational and decision-making structure and introduce this across the institution.

The recommendations from the NVAO are:

- To further elaborate on the Philosophy on Education and lay down any reviewing of the vision in a more formalized process.
- To continue to pursue the streamlining of the teaching schedule and control cycle in a critical fashion.
- To clarify the use of soft controls.
- To achieve a substantial increase in staff reviews.

Finally, the NVAO furnished two pieces of advice:

- To improve the support given to students with a disability.
- To ensure that the correct management-related information is available at all levels.

4.2.3 Implementation of plan of action for preconditions

This plan will be implemented as part of the Education Agenda. The Education Agenda 2015 includes the following desired results for 2015:

- All degree programmes have introduced evaluations of the programme of study by the end of 2015.
- Degree programmes halfway through their accreditation as of September 2014 have conducted a midterm review.
- Risk detection has been assigned a clear place in the Educational Quality Handbook.
- VU Amsterdam's organizational and decision-making infrastructure has been established and agreements have been made with regard to the institution-wide implementation of this as of September 2015.
- A formal process has been designed for periodic reflection on or adjustment to the Philosophy on Education.
- The teaching schedule and the scheduling and control cycle have been streamlined and their bureaucratic burden has been reduced.
- The use of soft controls has become a well-defined component of the quality assurance system.
- The number of staff reviews, and reporting on these, has increased substantially.
- The structure of the support given to students with a disability has been improved.
- The correct management-related information is available at every level in the organization.
- The Institutional Quality Assurance Audit report (preconditions and recommendations for the Committee) is ready in preparation for the visit in March 2016.

An internal audit was carried out in the autumn of 2015 by order of the Executive Board. This internal audit had three objectives:

- To assess to what extent the conditions of the NVAO are fulfilled.

- To provide input into a report to the NVAO with regard to the conditions.
- To serve as a midterm review of the Institutional Quality Assurance Audit.

The results of this internal audit will provide insight into the results achieved in 2015. The digital questionnaire for programmes of study is available and used by faculties in order to evaluate their programme of study. This internal audit demonstrated that almost all degree programmes have carried out an evaluation of their programmes of study. However, this does not apply to the Bachelor's programme Dentistry.

The implementation of the midterm reviews had an alternative set-up. The first round of midterm reviews, involving fourteen degree programmes, was started in 2014 and finalized in 2015. The second round of midterm reviews, involving twelve degree programmes, was started at the beginning of 2015 and finalized in September 2015. The summer of 2015 was an occasion to evaluate the instrument together with various parties concerned, and a reviewed plan was established by the Executive Board. As of September 2015, activities have been proceeding according to the reviewed plan. A new round of thirteen degree programmes is currently under way.

The risk detection in teaching note was confirmed and included in the Educational Quality Handbook. Signalling risks has also become a fixed component of the planning and control cycle.

The management model has been confirmed and implemented. A limited number of faculties have been granted permission for components of the Executive Board's management model for a transitional period.

No separate process has been designed for periodic reflection on or adjustment to the Philosophy on Education. Instead, this will be conducted

as part of the institutional plan, which will be subject to an evaluation halfway through its duration. Additionally, the Philosophy on Education was given a more concrete form in the spring of 2015. A number of current and former participants in the Educational Leadership course took the initiative to provide a practical interpretation of a number of important themes derived from VU Amsterdam's core values and the most recent version of the institutional plan. This concrete version of the Philosophy on Education was confirmed by the Executive Board in May 2015. The goal is that, annually, each subsequent class of participants in the Educational Leadership course discusses the concrete version of the Philosophy on Education and updates this where necessary.

A first step was made towards streamlining and harmonizing the plan and control cycle for teaching and finances. An evaluation took place at the beginning of 2015 and resulted in a number of modifications in terms of for example the scheduling and preparation of the Inter-Board Consultative Platform between the Executive Board and faculties and service departments. The preparation of the Inter-Board Consultative Platforms is now carried out in a more integrated fashion and the formats of the various cycles are better coordinated.

The first initiatives with regard to soft controls have been launched within VU Amsterdam. The Executive Board has had an inventory carried out in order to assess what the faculties are already doing in terms of soft controls. The results of this will be discussed with the deans at the end of September 2015.

During the VU Amsterdam Inter-Board Consultative Platform (VUIBCP), the deans expressed their commitment to the objective of ensuring that 80% of the annual interviews are conducted and recorded, and undertook to actively pursue this. This subject was then entered on the agenda of the

Inter-Board Consultative Platform and measurements were taken at different times. These measurements demonstrated that, in 2015, the number of annual interviews conducted and recorded had ultimately risen to 53%.

The support given to students with a disability was evaluated and, where applicable, agreements were made with faculties regarding improvements to this support.

An important point of interest in 2015 was making available the right management-related information. However, this has not yet produced the desired effect. MIVU contains good information that meets the majority of performance agreements, both at the institution level and the faculty and degree programme level. However, the institutional plan also specifies other indicators that are not regularly measured and are not part of MIVU. The majority of the faculties acknowledge that the provision of information has improved over the past few years, but also indicate that they are still not fully satisfied.

All the above information serves as input for the report to the NVAO in preparation for the Committee's visit in April 2016. This report ought to be complete by 15 March 2016.

4.3 PERFORMANCE AGREEMENTS WITH THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SCIENCE

In 2012, VU Amsterdam concluded agreements with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science with regard to the performances the university is to achieve at the end of 2015 in terms of Academic Success, Quality and Excellence, in addition to a number of support measures that VU Amsterdam will implement. Last year, VU Amsterdam once again made great progress toward meeting these agreements, in particular with respect to aca-

demical performance and the University Teaching Qualification. The Bachelor's performance rose from 62.0% at the benchmark to 77.6% in 2015, while the University Teaching Qualification increased from 24% in 2011 to 61% in 2015. Only the result for the 'dropouts' indicator showed a deterioration, from 18.0% to 19.2%. The following sections will provide further information on the progress of the performance areas.

The performance agreements with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science comprise seven obligatory indicators for all universities. These indicators are supplemented with optional agreements per institution. Within the framework of the final assessment, budget-related consequences may be connected to the results achieved for the seven obligatory indicators for the budget year 2017. This does not apply for the results achieved with regard to the optional indicators.

Table 2 features an overview of the seven obligatory indicators for VU Amsterdam. The associated definitions and data sources are specified in Table 3. Table 4 provides an overview of the two optional indicators regarding which VU Amsterdam has concluded agreements with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.

Table 3 features the underlying definitions of the individual performance agreements with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. Table 3: Definitions and data sources for the seven obligatory indicators within the framework of the performance agreements between the VU Amsterdam and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science

Explanation of the agreement on the number of Bachelor's degree programmes: To reduce the current offer of Bachelor's degree programmes by at least ten degree programmes for which new and current students are no longer able to enrol as of 1 October 2015. To achieve a reduction via timeta-

ble-neutral conversion at the Faculties Arts, Sciences and Social Sciences.

4.3.1 Academic success

The performances agreed on for success rates and dropouts were ambitious. In light of this, VU Amsterdam has been making great efforts to improve performances as of 2012. Teaching that activates student learning has been introduced across VU Amsterdam and students are encouraged to study independently. All degree programmes now offer at least twelve contact hours, with fourteen contact hours in the first year. Many degree programmes have introduced a tutor system, as part of which lecturers assume a supportive tutoring role for a small group of students. The Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences has been granted permission to increase the standard of the negative recommendation on continuation of studies to 48 credits so as to increase the success rates of first-year Bachelor's students. Alongside this, five faculties (Medicine, Law, Behavioural and Movement Sciences, Social Sciences and Economics and Business Administration) experimented with another set-up for the introduction period for first-year students, with the objective of making the transition from high school to university easier and helping students to find the most effective approach to studying at the beginning of their degree programme.

A Student Analytics survey was carried out with the help of external experts in order to acquire a greater understanding of the factors explaining the reasons for academic success and dropouts. The results of this survey were used to better coordinate the whole chain of new registrations, students progressing through the programme and graduates and to offer proactive support to students who are at a greater risk of dropping out. It is apparent that the provision of improved support to students should start before university, and it was with this in mind that the Pre-University

TABLE 2: PERFORMANCE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN VU AMSTERDAM AND THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SCIENCE REGARDING THE SEVEN OBLIGATORY INDICATORS: BENCHMARK IN 2011 AND RESULT IN 2015

Category	Indicator	Benchmark 2011	Result 2015	Ambition for 2015 (agreed on with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science)
Academic success	Bachelor's degree in three/four years	62.0%	77.6%	75.0%
	Dropouts	18.0%	19.2%	15.0%
	Course switch	7.0%	5.4%	7.0%
Quality and excellence*	Excellence total cohort 2014	7.6%	10.0%	10%
	Measures			
	Lecturer quality (University Teaching Qualification)	24%	61%	60%
	Intensity of teaching	16%	0%	0%
	Indirect costs	20.7%	18.1%	19.7%

*The definition used for the benchmark is based on the total number of students enrolled in the cohort in question. This definition is in accordance with the performance agreements between VU Amsterdam and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. At VU Amsterdam, the Honours Programme starts in the second year. The definition used internally, therefore, is based on the number of participants among those re-registering after their first year. In the first case, the benchmark is 7.6%. In the second case, it is 10.4%. Applied to the 2014 cohort, the agreed 10.0% was achieved relative to total enrolments. The percentage was 13.3% of re-registrations after the first year. This represents a substantial improvement in both cases.

TABLE 3: DEFINITIONS AND DATA SOURCES FOR THE SEVEN OBLIGATORY INDICATORS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PERFORMANCE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE VU AMSTERDAM AND THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SCIENCE

Category	Performance indicators
Academic success	Bachelor's completion rate: The proportion of full-time Bachelor's students who re-enrol to the same institute after one academic year and who are awarded a Bachelor's degree at the same institute in the normal study period plus one year (C+1). <i>Data source: '1 cijfer HO'</i>
	Bachelor's course dropout: The proportion of the total number of full-time Bachelor's students (first year of higher education) who are not longer enrolled at the same higher education institute after one year of studying. <i>Data source: '1 cijfer HO'</i>
	Switch of Bachelor's programme: The proportion of the total number of full-time Bachelor's students (first year of higher education) who after one year switch to another degree programme at the same institute. <i>Data source: '1 cijfer HO'</i>
Quality and excellence	Participation in excellence tracks: Proportion of students in excellence tracks (including honour's programmes) of the total number of students. This includes the VU Amsterdam proportion (50%) of first-year AUC students added to the yearly intake in the honours excellence programme. <i>Data source: institutional administration, '1 Cijfer HO'</i>
Measures	Lecturer quality (University Teaching Qualification) The proportion of lecturers (WP) with a basic teaching qualification within the total number of lecturers (WP). This relates to all teaching academic staff as of lecturer two level employed permanently or temporarily for two years or longer and equal to or greater than 0.4 FTE. <i>Data source: SAP-HR</i>
	Intensity of teaching: The proportion of full-time Bachelor's degree programmes with fewer than twelve hours of scheduled contact hours and other structured hours (hours per week) in the first year. <i>Method/data source: according to a more detailed description by the Dutch Review Committee for Higher Education and Research (RCHOO), assuming 40 teaching weeks and EER/study guides as a source.</i>
	Indirect costs Generic overhead workforce as a percentage of the total workforce. This used the method as present in the report 'benchmark overhead Universiteit en Hogescholen' ('benchmark overhead for Universities and Colleges of Higher Education') by Berenschot 2011. <i>Data source: SAP-HR</i>

TABLE 4: PERFORMANCE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN VU AMSTERDAM AND THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, CULTURE AND SCIENCE REGARDING THE SEVEN OBLIGATORY INDICATORS: BENCHMARK IN 2011 AND RESULT IN 2015

Category	Indicator	Benchmark 2011	Prognosis for 2015 ¹	Ambition for 2015 (agreed on with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science)
Quality and excellence	Institutional audit	-	Institutional audit passed	Institutional audit passed
Measures	Bachelor's degree programmes	50	44	40

¹ The Ritzen Committee visited VU Amsterdam in April 2016 and will provide positive advice to the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders. The definitive report by the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders is expected in June 2016.

College was established. The Pre-University College is a collaboration between VU Amsterdam and 23 schools from the region and prepares high-school students from 4 VWO (fourth stream pre-university education) for a successful transition from school to university.

This effort is paying off, as demonstrated by the development in academic success in previous years (see diagram 5). Over the past years, the number of students switching degree programmes within the institution oscillated between 7% and 8% and decreased to 5.4% last year. The Bachelor's success rate showed a spectacular increase from 54% in 2008 to 77.6% in 2015. This upturn is the result

DIAGRAM 5: DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS FROM 2008 TO 2015

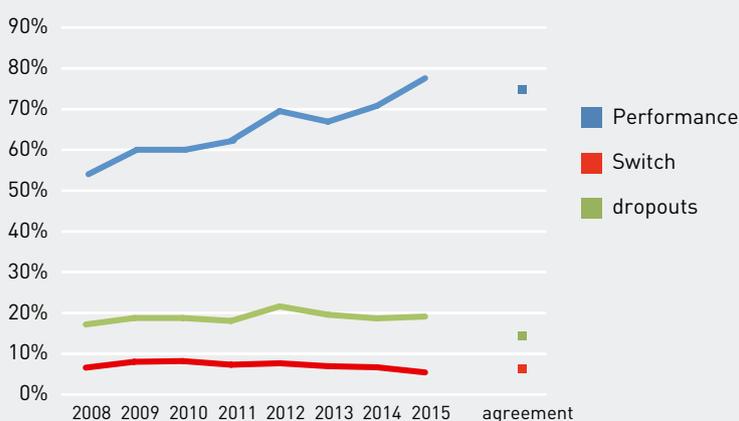


TABLE 6: DROPOUTS OF VU AMSTERDAM TOTAL AND VU AMSTERDAM DISCIPLINE HEALTH OF COHORT 2014

	cohort 2014		
	VU Amsterdam, total	VU Amsterdam, Health (excl. Academic Centre for Dentistry Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam)	Other (VU Amsterdam) (incl. Academic Centre for Dentistry Amsterdam [ACTA] and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam)
New registrations for 2014 KPI cohort (certain)	2590	618	1972
Proportion of those entering a degree programme at VU Amsterdam	100.0%	24.0%	76.1%
Percentage of those reregistering at VU Amsterdam in 2015	80.8%	70.7%	84.0%
Percentage of those reregistering at another higher education institution	14.5%	26.1%	10.9%
Dropout percentage from higher education institution	4.7%	3.2%	5.1%
Dropout percentage from VU Amsterdam	19.2%	29.3%	16.0%

TABLE 7: DROPOUTS FROM THE DEGREE PROGRAMME AND SELECTIVITY IN FIRST YEAR²

Cohort	Dropout after one year	Dropout after two years	Dropout after three years	Selectivity in first year
2007	24%	31%	33%	71%
2008	27%	33%	34%	78%
2009	27%	34%	36%	75%
2010	25%	31%	33%	77%
2011	29%	34%	34%	86%
2012	27%	31%	32%	82%
2013	25%	29%		
2014	25%			

² Total dropout from the degree programme, including course switch within the institution

of more intensive programmes that focus more on students' own personal input and responsibility as well as the improved support given to students. The dip in 2013 can be explained by the abolishment of the measure regarding students who exceed the set study term. The number of Bachelor's students graduating according to schedule rose sharply when this measure was introduced in 2012, only to decrease after that stimulus disappeared. Fortunately, VU Amsterdam's own policy remained constant and effective, and it was ultimately possible to achieve a higher success rate than agreed at the time.

Dropouts after one year increased last year and do not meet the agreed target value of 15%. The first important explanation is that, knowing student financing would cease in 2015, many VU Amsterdam students from the 2014 cohort did not take a gap year and probably began a university degree programme with little prior thought. As far as this is concerned, the point in time at which student financing was abolished was unfortunate: had it been abolished as early as September 2014, there would have been fewer dropouts from the 2014 to 2015 cohort.

A second related explanation is that the most significant group to drop out of VU Amsterdam were those students who had registered for a study programme with limited enrolment and, after attending a programme temporarily until a place became available on the programme of their first choice, were accepted onto the study programme of choice and therefore left. This group is particularly large in the Health degree programme, for which VU Amsterdam has twelve degree programmes and is the national market leader in this respect.

The new registrations in these degree programmes (excluding the heavily oversubscribed courses for Medicine and Dentistry³) account for 24% of the total VU Amsterdam cohort 2014 (see Table 6). Across VU Amsterdam, the

number of those from the cohort 2014 reregistering was 80.8%, whereas this proportion was much lower, at 70.7%, for Health degree programmes. Dropout rates were 19.2 and 29.3% respectively, showing significantly higher dropout rates for Health degree programmes. Further analysis showed that, of the students dropping out of this specific group of degree programmes, 26.1% no longer registered at VU Amsterdam after one year and instead registered at another higher

education institution and so did not drop out of higher education altogether. Excluding this group, only 16% dropped out of the VU Amsterdam cohort 2014, bringing this very close to the performance agreement value of 15%. Although we try to make students who actually wish to follow a degree programme for Medicine or Dentistry aware of the consequences of their choice and the possible alternatives by providing targeted information and good matching, this group remains

DRAGONS' DEN FOR YOUNG, SUSTAINABLE ENTREPRENEURS

Every year, between 40 to 50 MSc students participate in the course Sustainable Energy Assessment as part of the MSc degree programme Environmental Resource Management (ERM). An important learning objective of this course is to demonstrate to students that it is primarily entrepreneurs who have the task of achieving a transition to a sustainable energy system. However, the classic method involving lectures and academic literature is inefficient for this target group. A suitable way of providing students with a deep understanding of sustainable entrepreneurship, and to really enable them to explore the context in which sustainable entrepreneurs find themselves, is to place them in the shoes of these entrepreneurs. Added to this, the majority of students are familiar with the television programme 'Dragons' Den' and appreciate the competitive nature of this. It therefore requires very little effort to support the students in reaching the desired level, as they are intrinsically motivated to go that extra mile. In the end, the business pitches are presented to real entrepreneurs in front of an audience comprising all participating students. As the students are motivated to set themselves apart from their fellow students in a positive light, they must harness their creativity and innovativeness. The straight-talking 'Dragons' urge participants to think like real entrepreneurs, thereby creating a very valuable and unique experience for students. The winning team gains access to VU Amsterdam's ACE Business Incubator, in which Prof. Enno Masurel supervises the team in implementing their business plan, if this goes ahead.

The Dragons' Den-based set-up results in a high success rate in many ways. Following the introduction of the Dragons' Den model, students' performances improved for the subject Sustainable Energy Assessment. We also notice that the students have a better appreciation for the subject; the Dragons' Den aspect is often highlighted as the major attraction in the ERM degree programme. This appreciation was also demonstrated by the choice of thesis topics by ERM students: entrepreneurship showed a rise in popularity. A welcome adjunct to the Dragons' Den-based set-up is that the Dragons are increasingly using the event to headhunt talent for their own companies. For instance, ten ERM students have secured employment at companies or institutions at which the Dragons are owners or advisers. In conclusion, it can be said that the participating Dragons are becoming increasingly enthusiastic about this collaboration between the business community and the academic world. They also sense a real need to use this format to convey their lessons to the following generation.

³ These are not courses followed temporarily until a place becomes available on the course of one's first choice

problematic. Abolishing student financing would provide a long-term solution to this, given that courses followed temporarily until a place becomes available on the course of the student's first choice would become costly.

A positive development is that the first year is gaining a greater selective function. Thanks to more intensive support and strict requirements, including negative recommendation on continuation of studies, that are present in the first year, students can quickly find out whether the degree programme is right for them and may choose, if necessary, to stop their degree programme early. In cases in which the first-year dropout rate from a degree programme has not decreased, it has increased in the second and third years (see Table 7). The selectivity of the preliminary year increased from 71% for the 2007 cohort to 82% for the 2012 cohort.

4.3.2 Quality and excellence

With 10.0% of the total cohort⁴ registering in the excellence programmes, we have achieved the growth target for enrolment in these programmes⁵. In consultation with the University of Amsterdam, the Honours Programme for excellent students has been further developed. Alongside this and following the Strategic Plan 2015-2020, one of the deans was appointed Dean of Talent who, in consultation with the faculties, is to develop more instruments in order to offer excellent students sufficient scope for development as well as a challenging environment. Within this context, considerations have been made as to how to better enable students to graduate in two studies and/or combine study with top performances in sport and/or music. Finally, 2015 saw preparations for the launch of the small-scale and selective interdisciplinary Bachelor's programme in Philosophy, Politics and Economics. The programme will start in September 2016 and is designed for talented international students with a wide set of interests.

Section 4.2 elaborates on the Institutional Audit and the measures arising from this. Alongside the measures implemented in order to meet the prerequisites of the Institutional Audit, more measures were implemented in 2015 so as to strengthen the system for quality assurance with regard to teaching. For example, in addition to general inter-board consultative platforms between the Executive Board and Faculty Boards, the biannual portfolio holders meetings between the Rector Magnificus (as portfolio holder for teaching in the Executive Board) and the Faculty Boards have received a structural character. These meetings were an occasion to discuss the annual teaching reports and plans of the faculties. In addition to this, there was a focus on the state of the study programme accreditations and the midterm reviews using the so-called accreditation portrait. In conclusion, the progress of the faculty performance plans was an integral part of discussions.

4.3.3 Measures

VU Amsterdam invests in the quality of its lecturers. Not only does it do this through the University Teaching Qualification, but also through a Senior Teaching Qualification track for senior lecturers and by offering the Educational Leadership course to supervisor positions such as Directors of Studies, Directors of Education and portfolio holders for teaching. As a result, 61% of the staff currently have a University Teaching Qualification (1% more than the agreed 60%), 95 lecturers are STQ certified and 33 lecturers have passed the Educational Leadership course. The Teaching Performance Framework, established by the Executive Board, demonstrates that teaching is an essential element in the academic career of the teaching staff at VU Amsterdam.

VU Amsterdam values intensive teaching with sufficient contact hours. Established in November 2016, the university-wide Bachelor's and Mas-

ter's programme guidelines lay down that all Bachelor's study programmes at VU Amsterdam offer at least twelve contact hours per week in the second and third academic year and fourteen contact hours per week in the first year. These guidelines are included as a general part in the format for the Academic and Examination Regulations of all degree programmes.

VU Amsterdam considers it important that students should be able to study a wide variety of subjects in a flexible manner. One of the possibilities for this is to offer extensive Bachelor's programmes. The agreed measure to offer more extensive Bachelor's programmes via timetable-neutral conversion, while at the same time reducing the number of Bachelor's programme labels from 50 to 40, contributes to this (also see paragraph 4.4.1).

Over the past years, VU Amsterdam has carried out a large-scale reorganization in its operations management. Aside from professionalizing and digitizing operations management where possible, a third underlying objective was to reduce the percentage of indirect costs. This figure was at 18.1% at the end of 2015 (the proportion of the number of FTEs in general overhead positions⁶ in the total number of VU Amsterdam FTEs at the end of 2015).

4.4 PROFILING TEACHING

Alongside performance agreements, VU Amsterdam also concluded profiling agreements with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The profiling agreements in terms of teaching are:

- To restructure the educational components of the Bachelor's programmes
- To specialize teaching

The Review Committee chaired by Van Vught held a midterm review of

⁴ And 13.3% of those re-registering after their first year

⁵ Also see page 31

⁶ Excluding support for teaching and research

the profiling agreements in 2014. The Committee confirmed that VU Amsterdam has achieved sufficient progress in realizing its ambitions in terms of profiling teaching.

4.4.1 Restructuring the educational components of the Bachelor's programmes

The restructuring of the educational components of the Bachelor's programmes is taking place in two respects:

- By making the structure of the degree programmes uniform
- By broadening the degree programmes, partly through a reduction in the number of Bachelor's programme labels in Arts, Sciences, and Social Sciences.

The faculties introduced this structure after the Executive Board established the Bachelor's degree programme guideline at the end of 2013, which included guidelines for the structure of degree programmes. All degree programmes have an academic core of at least 24 credits, and all degree programmes fit within the academic year and are comprised of six-credit modules. The major-minor structure was introduced in all degree programmes. A faculty can apply for an exception from elements of the guideline if a specialist area necessitates this. The Executive Board accepted a limited number of justified exceptions in 2014 and 2015. For example, the degree programme in Medicine may organize the courses in the academic core in such a way that it fits in with the programme's learning pathways.

The introduction of this structure across VU Amsterdam enables students to study flexibly and attend courses outside their degree programme or faculty.

Students can also study a wider range of subjects thanks to the launch of two new, broad Bachelor's degree programmes in the field of humanities in 2013: 'Literature and Society'

and the Dutch-taught 'Media, Kunst, Design en Architectuur' (Media, Art, Design and Architecture). These two degree programmes were created by timetable-neutral conversion, whereby eight existing Bachelor's degree programmes were converted into two new, broad Bachelor's degree programmes.

The restructuring of the educational components within the framework of the collaboration between VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam was continued in 2015. In 2016, this collaboration will result in a number of joint degree programmes both at Bachelor's level (Chemistry and Physics and Astronomy) and Master's level (Chemistry, Computational Science, Computer Science, and Physics and Astronomy). It will also mean that these joint degree courses take place at just one location on one of the campuses, i.e. either Science Park Watergraafsmeer or the campus of VU Amsterdam. Although there have been delays to the development of joint courses due to the temporary fall-through of the joint Amsterdam Faculty of Science, the three science faculties – Earth and Life Sciences and Sciences at VU Amsterdam and the Faculty of Science at the University of Amsterdam – are still actively developing joint teaching.

A third intended restructuring involving the conversion of three classic social sciences degree programmes – Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology, Political Science and Sociology – to form the broad Bachelor's programme Social Sciences has not been implemented. A peer review demonstrated that the existing specialization in social sciences was too far removed from the original specialist areas, potentially jeopardizing the accreditation of the new, broad Bachelor's programmes to be created. The faculty is now looking to achieve this extra scope by participating in the extensive Bachelor's programme in Philosophy, Politics & Economics, which begins in September 2016. As the science faculties opted for joint degrees instead of converting Bache-

lor's programme labels, and the Social Sciences broad Bachelor's programme did not go ahead, the number of Bachelor's degree programmes offered did not decrease from 50 to 40, but to 44.

4.4.2 Specialization of teaching

If students are able to structure their Bachelor's programme flexibly, it is important that there be a greater degree of flexibility in terms of access to Master's programmes. The agreement is that faculties have reassessed their Master's portfolio and modified this where necessary prior to September 2017. One of the options in this respect is to make Master's programmes more flexible so that students in employment are able to combine study and work. Although the pilot submitted by VU Amsterdam to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science was not accepted, a number of faculties will nevertheless investigate how they can make their Master's programmes more flexible in due course.

The vision for postgraduate education was fine-tuned during preparations for a new Strategic Plan. Last year, quartermasters from the Faculty of Economics and Business Studies, the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Faculty of Law investigated the possibility of combining the existing programmes with executive and other postgraduate education in the profile theme 'Governance for Society' and whether there is a market for new courses to be redeveloped. The conclusion was that there is a clear market for this. 2016 will see the launch of a follow-up project, involving the organizational implementation of this teaching, preferably in a Governance School of VU Amsterdam.

4.5 PRE-INVESTMENT IN QUALITY IMPULSE TO EDUCATION

The national agreement is that, in 2015 to 2017, higher education institutes are to pre-invest an annual sum of €200 million from their own resources in

GFS: SOCIAL ISSUES REQUIRE MULTIDISCIPLINARY EDUCATION

Dialogue with society has revealed that directors and those in managerial positions in all sectors of the public domain are confronted with an ever more complex society in which the boundaries between organizations are less clearly cut and existing instruments, systems and governance structures hinder rather than help. Within this context, they are asking VU Amsterdam for a 'refuge' in which they have a free space to explore the underlying social currents, issues and developments. This refuge will take them out of their daily context; it will offer them lucid analyses, overviews and perspectives from science so that they can learn about other perspectives and enlarge the scope of their actions accordingly.

With this theme as a focal point, the postgraduate departments of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Faculty of Social Sciences and the Faculty of Law are developing programmes that are not geared towards providing answers, but towards providing participants with the necessary skills to develop their own answers and strategies so that they are better able to weigh up multiple perspectives. Central to this is the task of unifying the instrumental and human elements. As it stands, the first element tends to overshadow the second. Degree programmes with a multidisciplinary approach are therefore needed to rectify this imbalance. Examples of this include the Leadership Quest and Public Leadership programmes set up by the Zijlstra Center (Faculty of Economics and Business Administration) and developed together with the Faculty of Social Sciences.

The Leadership Quest programme aims to discover and systematically make accessible the latent experiences, knowledge and insights in the day-to-day activities of organizations and practitioners. To this end, participants will be members of an academic society for a period of three years, during which they are offered an academic context and infrastructure that uses systematic, practically oriented research to enable them to acquire new knowledge and insights in the field of leadership and leadership development, and make these accessible and public.

Society relies heavily on leadership, meaning that supervisors of public and non-profit organizations find themselves increasingly in the limelight. As a society, we expect them to carry out public tasks such as health and well-being, education, housing and safety in a sustainable manner while creating public values – all within a context of dwindling available resources. The Public Leadership postgraduate programme aims to strengthen participants' qualities as leaders. On completing the course, they feel inspired and better able to inspire others. They are able to give meaning to their actions as well as to those of their organization and their team. They are able to tackle complex issues effectively, demonstrate versatility and commitment and have extended the range of approaches at their disposal. Furthermore, they have been able to enrich their knowledge of finances and are able to more effectively link this to the public value(s) that their organization is striving to create. Participants see complexity and continuous change as a given.

measures aiming to improve the quality of education, in anticipation of the additional resources from the revenues from the student loans that will be made available to that end from 2018. Proportionally, this will mean that VU Amsterdam must make an annual investment amounting to approximately €7 million. The actual investments on VU Amsterdam are much higher than the proportional share. The overview below provides information of the pre-investments in 2015.

Explanatory notes per component:

Quality of education

This concerns the deployment of resources within the context of VU Amsterdam's Education Agenda. In 2015, faculties spent the resources available on:

- Intensifying education and providing better support to students by employing mentors, tutors and junior lecturers.
- Reforming Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes through better scheduling, introducing learning pathways, and introducing a new concept of teaching and teaching methods.
- Supporting the reform by expanding digital support to teaching, including web lectures, use of video material, redesigning the digital learning environment and digital tests.
- Professionalizing lecturers, both generally and in terms of new teaching methods and concepts.
- Improving academic success through matching, decentralized selection, improved support, improved assessment policy, improved support on student work placements and in thesis-writing and improved support for tricky subjects.

In 2015, the central budget for other projects was spent on:

- a. Improving the transition from pre-university education to university education and providing improved support to students

- Collaboration with secondary schools in pre-university college.
 - Expanding the integrated introduction pilot to nine faculties.
 - The academic success project that aims to better coordinate information, matching, introduction and support to students, provide students with more personal support more quickly, and get together researchers at VU Amsterdam to analyse the potential factors for academic success and how we can respond to these.
 - The professional integration project that aims to better manage the transition from studying to the job market.
- b. Increasing the social participation of students and degree programmes
- Developing community services that students can perform as a component of their degree programme.
- c. Professionalizing lecturers and study advisor
- Offering training in University Teaching Qualification, Senior Teaching Qualification and the Educational Leadership course for lecturers.
 - Supporting the network of lecturers who have attended training, with the aim of exchanging best practices.
 - Teaching awards for best lecturers and most innovative teaching projects.
 - Developing and offering a professionalization track for study advisors.
- d. Improving teaching support
- Tendering for and implementing the use of new digital learning environments and supporting lecturers in this.
 - Simplifying, harmonizing and better supporting logistics in education, i.e. timetables and room allocation.
 - Compiling teaching dossiers as part of which all the relevant documents for quality assurance for each degree programme can be stored in one document management system.

PRE-INVESTMENTS IN VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM
QUALITY IMPULSE 2015 -2016

(amounts in millions of EUR)	Completion 2015	Budget 2016
Quality of teaching		
Faculties' Education Agenda	5.2	4.5
Education Agenda for remaining projects	3.0	1.7
Programme costs of Education Agenda	0.5	0.5
Subtotal for quality of teaching	8.7	6.7
Teaching-related research		
Increase to funding for VUSAM Master's	6.5	6.5
Subtotal of university-related research	6.5	6.5
Modern infrastructure/learning environment		
<i>Buildings component</i>		
<i>Investment in NU.VU</i>	20.3	52.7
Teaching proportion (30%)	6.1	15.8
<i>Investment in O/2 Building</i>	34.0	11.6
Proportion of teaching (0%)	0.0	0.0
<i>Continuation of Main Building</i>	14.0	4.0
Teaching proportion (15%)	2.1	0.6
<i>Continuation of Faculty of Medicine building</i>	1.7	14.0
Teaching proportion (15%)	0.3	2.1
<i>Component: investments in Study and Teaching Support (STS)</i>		
Investments in STS programme	0.0	0.9
<i>IT investments proportion</i>		
<i>IT investments in NU.VU</i>	0.0	3.5
Teaching proportion (30%)	0.0	1.1
<i>Replacement of infrastructure</i>	0.0	3.6
Teaching proportion (15%)	0.0	0.5
Subtotal for infrastructure/learning environment	8.4	21.0
Total pre-investments	23.6	34.2

Research with a teaching orientation

In establishing the budget for 2015, it was decided to release €6.5 million as extra financing for Master's degree programmes by increasing the funding of Master's degrees. Improvements to the financing of the Master's degree programmes are part of the policy of the institution and aim to strengthen the link between teaching and research, in particular in Master's degree programmes.

Infrastructure and learning environment

In view of the investments made in infrastructure (buildings and IT) in the NU.VU Building, the prediction of a 30% proportion of teaching is based on the estimate that the investment will make a direct contribution of 30% to the modernized teaching infrastructure and learning environment. In view of the investments made in the Main Building and the Faculty of Medicine building, the assumption is

that the investment of 15% will make a direct contribution to the modernized teaching infrastructure and learning environment. The specific investments in the Study and Teaching Support programme, including digitizing the learning environment and the support for quality assurance, will be allocated in their entirety to education.

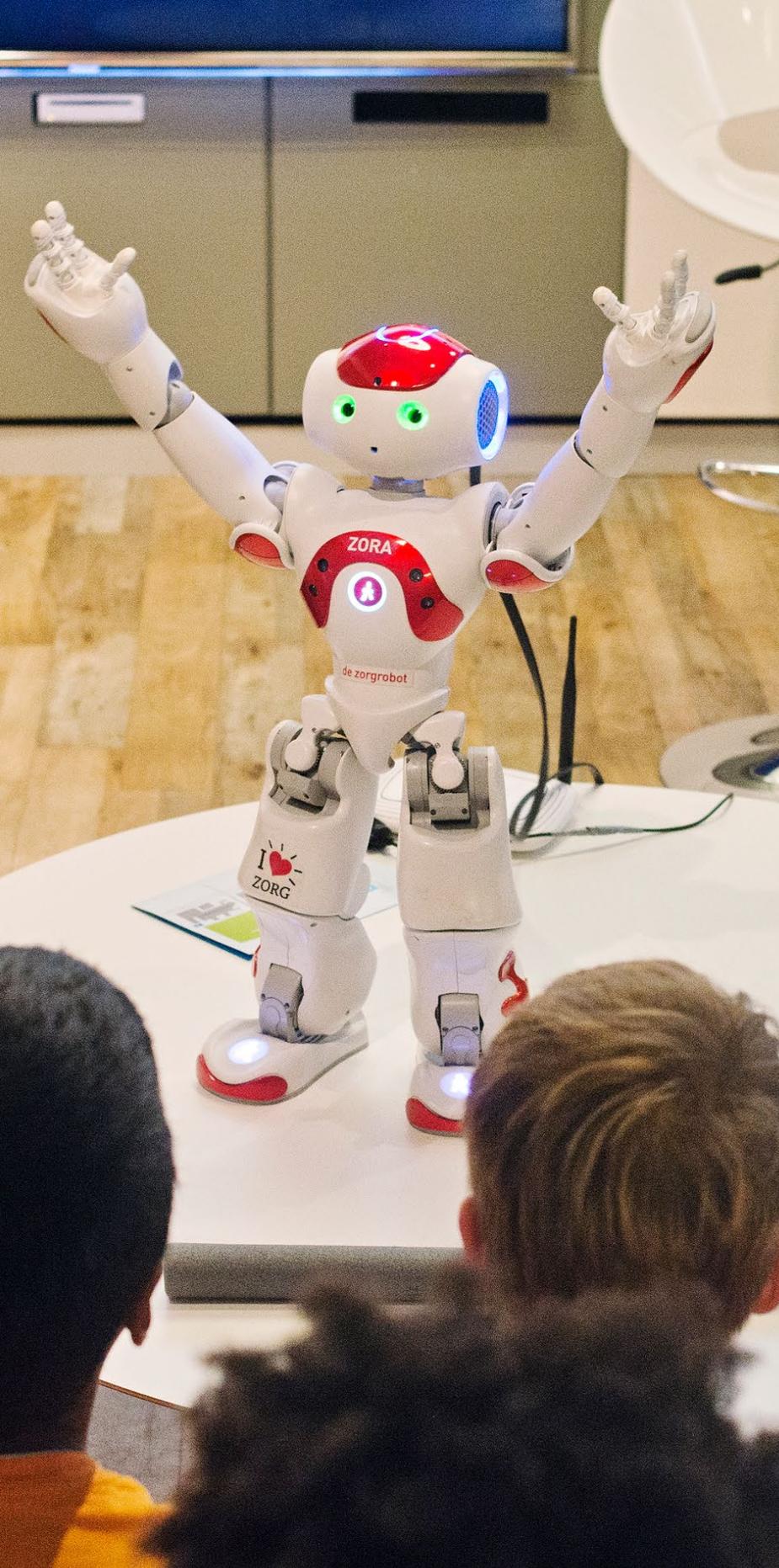
4.6 STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT FUND

VU Amsterdam has set up a Student Financial Support Fund on the basis of Article 7.51 of the Dutch Higher Education and Research Act. This article specifies the 'qualities' on the basis of which a student may become eligible for financial support. VU Amsterdam has not added any other categories to this. The Regulations of the Student Financial Support Fund lay down which student is eligible for financial support under which circumstances. A committee was established in order to assess applications according to the Regulations and then advise the Executive Board on whether or not to grant compensation.

The scope of the fund amounts to €1 million. This amount is not related to the first funding; rather, it is based on a multiannual average of established needs. If the fund is not exhausted in a given year, then the remaining money will be redirected to the general resources.

By law, the University Student Council (USR) has a right of consent in the policy that forms the basis of the Regulations of the Student Financial Support Fund and its related rules regarding the start, duration and amount of financial support.





05

RESEARCH

5.1 RESEARCH AGENDA AND TOP SECTORS

Dutch National Research Agenda

The Dutch National Research Agenda was presented on 27 November 2015 as a further development to the Research Agenda. This gave rise to various routes that will be further developed in 2016. The four profiles at VU Amsterdam dovetail perfectly with the routes chosen by the Dutch National Research Agenda. In particular the routes *Hersenen, cognitie en gedrag* (Brains, cognition, and behaviour); *Verantwoord gebruik van Big Data* (Responsible use of Big Data); *Logistiek en Transport* (Logistics and Transport); and *Veerkrachtige en zinvolle samenlevingen* (Flexible and meaningful societies) complement the Agenda. VU Amsterdam nominated researchers in this and other fields in order to shape the content and development of the routes.

Top Sectors

In 2015, too, various projects were launched within the Top Sectors. For instance, researchers at the NeuroScienceCampus are working in research focusing on the effects of a green hospital environment on patients and hospital visitors. In addition to this, Johannes de Boer was awarded a Technology Foundation STW grant in order to conduct research into early diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease in the High Tech Top Sector within LaserLab.

5.2 QUALITY

Research organization

High-quality research at VU Amsterdam mostly takes place in interdisciplinary research institutes. Research is carried out in very different disciplines in order to identify solutions for social and scientific problems. In 2015, two

new research institutes were added to the existing stock: the Institute for Societal Resilience (ISR) and the Institute for Brain and Behavior Amsterdam (IBBA).

Our researchers also collaborate outside VU Amsterdam with other knowledge institutes and with public and private partners. These external cooperative arrangements strengthen our research and contribute towards its quality. In collaboration with social partners, we can arrive at the core of academic and social problems.

VU Amsterdam also participates in national research schools (onderzoekscholen) at which in particular course-based education is offered to PhD students.

Awards and distinctions

In 2015, ten researchers received an Innovation Incentive (five Venis, three Vidis and two Vicis) and nine researchers had their research funded thanks to grants from the European Research Council (three Starting Grants, four Consolidator Grants and two Advanced Grants). An exceptional development is that, in 2015, a total of sixteen Marie Skłodowska-Curie individual fellowships were awarded – a striking increase when compared to previous years. There were eleven awards from the 2014 round of Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions and another five individual fellowships were awarded from the 2015 round.

In 2015, the Rector Magnificus called on the researchers to participate in committees that assess requests. This is an educational and useful academic service as well as an important contribution by researchers to the academic world inside and outside VU Amsterdam.

Rankings

In 2015, VU Amsterdam achieved a good score in the most important international rankings. The table below shows the position of VU Amsterdam

TOP RESEARCH AT VU AMSTERDAM OBTAINS TWO VERY COMPETITIVE NWO LARGE INVESTMENT GRANTS

Netherlands Twin Register: research into the interaction between genome and the environment

Dorret Boomsma first set up the Netherlands Twin Register (NTR) at VU Amsterdam back in 1987. The NTR is an extraordinarily valuable collection of data on the behaviour and health of more than 87,000 twins and multiple births and their families. It has produced hundreds of publications on the interplay between heredity and environmental influences in complex human characteristics. Thanks to the Twin Register, we now know that ADHD in children is not the 'fault' of the parents. Boomsma's work and that of her colleagues has provided a wealth of knowledge on how genetics influences health and behaviour, and more recently shed light on the genes that govern these areas. The award of the NWO Large Investment Grant ensures that this data collection may be enriched and remain accessible for the research community.

PAN: Portable Antiquities of the Netherlands

Using metal detectors, individuals can search for metallic archaeological objects in fields or on construction sites. While these findings are very valuable to professional archaeologists, they are very rarely able to access them. Portable Antiquities of the Netherlands (PAN), led by Full Professor Nico Roymans from VU Amsterdam, will use the awarded NWO Large Investment Grant to ensure that these findings are made available to scientists, inheritance experts and urban and rural planners via an online database.

in the ARWU/Shanghai Ranking, Times Higher Education Ranking, QS University Rankings and Leiden Ranking 2015, followed by the same information in 2014 as a frame of reference.

VU Amsterdam scores particularly well in the rankings that in relative terms assign the greatest value to quantitative data. In comparison, VU Amsterdam occupies a lower position in the rankings that percentage-wise use a great amount of qualitative data such as satisfaction surveys amongst a random sample of researchers and employees within the institution. This calls for VU Amsterdam to focus further on its external profiling in 2016. The use of the name 'VU Amsterdam' internationally ought to be part of this.

VU Amsterdam occupies higher place in the top 100 in 2015 - 4th position in the Netherlands and 98th in the global rankings.

In 2015, VU Amsterdam occupied 4th place in the ranking of the best Dutch universities according to the Academic Ranking of World Universities 2015 (ARWU), better known as the Shanghai Ranking. In the worldwide university ranking, VU Amsterdam occupies 98th place. VU Amsterdam thereby retains its position nationally and moves up slightly from position 100 to 98 internationally.

As VU Amsterdam currently has no Nobel Prize or Field Medal winners within its ranks, which is an important indicator in the Shanghai Ranking, we attribute the score in particular to the performance of the academic staff.

Times Higher Education (THE) Ranking

In 2015, VU Amsterdam dropped eighteen places to 154th position in the Times Higher Education Ranking. VU Amsterdam nevertheless retains a position within the top 200 universities internationally.

After the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany, the Netherlands is the most widely represented country in the prestigious Times Higher

POSITIONS OF DUTCH UNIVERSITIES IN 2015 (ARWU, THES, QS, LEIDEN RANKING – SOURCE VSNU [ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITIES IN THE NETHERLANDS])*

	ARWU world top 500 (2015)	THES world top 800 (2015)	QS world top 900 (2015)	Leiden top 750 PP (top 10%) (2014)
Utrecht University	56	62	94	77
University of Groningen	75	74	100	120
Leiden University	82	67	95	53
VU University Amsterdam	98	154	176	64
Radboud University Nijmegen	101-150	125	177	97
University of Amsterdam	101-150	58	55	81
Wageningen University	101-150	47	135	93
Erasmus University Rotterdam	151-200	71	126	85
Delft University of Technology	201-300	65	64	148
Maastricht University	201-300	88	169	110
Eindhoven University of Technology	301-400	176	117	94
University of Twente	301-400	149	188	102
Tilburg University	*	201-250	293	252
Open University	*	*	*	*

* Sorted by position on the ARWU ranking and alphabetical order

POSITIONS OF DUTCH UNIVERSITIES IN 2014 (ARWU, THES, QS, LEIDEN RANKING – SOURCE VSNU [ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITIES IN THE NETHERLANDS])*

	ARWU world top 500 (2014)	THES world top 800 (2014)	QS world top 900 (2014)	Leiden top 750 PP (top 10%) (2014)
Utrecht University	57	79	80	77
Leiden University	77	64	75	53
University of Groningen	82	117	90	120
VU University Amsterdam	100	136	171	64
Radboud University Nijmegen	101-150	140	147	97
University of Amsterdam	101-150	77	50	81
Wageningen University	101-150	73	151	93
Erasmus University Rotterdam	151-200	72	90	85
Delft University of Technology	201-300	71	86	148
Maastricht University	201-300	101	118	110
Eindhoven University of Technology	301-400	144	156	94
University of Twente	301-400	200-225	212	102
Tilburg University	401-500	276-300	367	252
Open University	*	*	*	*

* Sorted by position on the ARWU ranking

Education World University Ranking. The ranking is based on thirteen performance indicators, distributed over five broad indicators with various weighting factors. Within the five indicators, VU Amsterdam scores particularly well in terms of citations from scientific publications. The teaching and research indicators are partially based on academic reputation, questionnaires and data supplied by universities.

QS World University Ranking

In 2015, VU Amsterdam dropped five places in the QS World University Rankings to 176th – five positions lower than in 2014. In the sub-ranking of various subject areas, Psychology achieved a remarkably high score at position 39. This is in contrast to the positions 51 to 100 for other subject areas within VU Amsterdam.

The QS World University Rankings is an annual ranking of universities internationally. Universities are ranked according to the quality of higher education, the academic research within the institutions and other factors. In addition to the most influential rank-

ings, notably the Shanghai Ranking and the Times Higher Education World University Rankings, the academic world focuses on the QS Ranking. Around forty percent of this ranking is weighted on the reputation of the institutions according to 75,000 researchers. The other indicators include the staff-student ratio (20%), average number of citations per member of staff (20%), reputation amongst employers (10%) and the number of international members of staff and students (10%).

Leiden Ranking

In 2015, VU Amsterdam occupied the third position nationally after Leiden University and Utrecht University, and occupied second place in 2014. In the period between 2010 and 2013, VU Amsterdam generated 6,587 publications (national range of between 2,141 and 8,947), with 14.2% of these publications belonging to the top ten per cent of publications.

Independent quality inspections

In 2015, seven independent quality inspections took place as well as a number of disciplinary inspections:

Technical Mathematics, Mathematics, Computer Science, Economics, Business Administration, as well as a number of independent quality inspections from interfaculty research institutes: Research Institute for Culture, History and Heritage (CLUE), Oncology Graduate School Amsterdam (OOA), MOVE Research Institute Amsterdam, and Neuroscience Campus Amsterdam (NCA). Aside from the quality inspection by the interfaculty research institute CLUE, all inspections were prepared according to the new Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP). CLUE specifically did not do this in order to more effectively relate to the previous midterm review carried out. Academic Centre for Dentistry Amsterdam (ACTA) finalized the inspection, and the self-evaluations by Economics and Business Administration, Technical Mathematics and Computer Science, and MOVE were presented to the Inspection Committees. The definitive reports from Economics and Business Administration, Technical Mathematics and Computer Science, and MOVE will follow in 2016. The experiences with the new SEP are positive.

GRAVITATIONAL WAVES OBSERVED 100 YEARS AFTER EINSTEIN'S PREDICTION

Gravitational waves arise after an extremely powerful event in space. The first measurement of gravitational waves confirms an important prediction by Albert Einstein's general theory of relativity from 1915 and opens a new window into the cosmos. The gravitational waves were observed on 14 September 2015 at 10.51 AM Dutch time by both detectors at the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory (LIGO) in Livingston (Louisiana) and Hanford (Washington) in the United States.

Dutch researchers are closely involved in this groundbreaking discovery. As members of the LIGO Scientific Collaboration - Virgo Collaboration (LVC), physicists from the National Institute for Subatomic Physics (Nikhef) and VU Amsterdam and astronomers from Radboud University made crucial contributions to the validation of the measurement and the data analysis of the gravitational waves, and they also participated in the astrophysical interpretation. Jo van den Brand, Full Professor in Astrophysics and Particle Physics at VU Amsterdam, explains, 'The measurement is fantastic: the signal captured is so clear that you can see it in the data with the naked eye. A surprising aspect of this discovery is that the black holes that have merged are much heavier than the black holes we know in binary stars in our Milky Way.'

The University Monitoring Committee has also modified its working method according to the new SEP. The midterm review is no longer obligatory, with the exception of the recently established institutions or if the Executive Board decides on the basis of an external quality inspection and on advice from the University Monitoring Committee that a midterm review is desirable. All self-evaluations and advisory reports will be presented to the University Monitoring Committee for advice. In this way, the University Monitoring Committee has acquired a significant role in reflecting research at VU Amsterdam and the research organization as a whole. In addition to this, the University Monitoring Committee provides solicited and unsolicited advice on the organization, policy and quality of research at VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam.

5.3 VALORIZATION

In 2014, VU Amsterdam opted for a set of indicators on the basis of the Framework for Valorization indicators of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU). 2015 was the first year in which VU Amsterdam reported to the VSNU regarding the results.

While the set of indicators focuses on quantitative measuring, VU Amsterdam explicitly opts for a qualitative description of the impact and social relevance of research results. Indicators were chosen in close consultation with all faculties and those choices were based on the faculty valorization strategies that were developed in 2014.

VU Amsterdam believes it is important to provide entrepreneurship training to students and employees, as students and researchers who are entrepreneurs contribute to society with their skills. Within this context, we are investigating policies based on incentives for the development of entrepreneurship and we are looking at the ways in which external parties are involved in the development and implementation of entrepreneurship education. For example, energy company NUON is involved in entrepreneurship education in Business Administration. The indicator is the number of employees and students following a course in entrepreneurship. VU Amsterdam also offers postgraduate continuing education of outstanding quality. Various professional groups benefit from current scientific knowledge. This concerns the way in which knowledge circulates between lecturers and participants. Aside from being a type of knowledge exchange, it is also a source of revenue.

Patents and licences are good indicators of the creativity and entrepreneurialism of researchers and students. As part of this, VU Amsterdam is looking at the numbers of new patent applications submitted as well as the new licence agreements, as these shed light on the actual use of applied knowledge. The spin-offs are also counted, as well as the number of innovations, products

ONE DROP OF BLOOD SOON TO BE SUFFICIENT FOR CANCER DIAGNOSIS

Researchers at the VUmc Cancer Center Amsterdam (CCA) have developed a pioneering technique to detect cancer in its early stages using only one drop of blood. Researcher Prof. Tom Würdinger explains, 'It is important to diagnose and treat cancer as early as possible. The new technique with which we are able to "read" cancer in blood plays a significant role in this and can hopefully save lives.' Researchers published the discovery at the end of October 2015 in the renowned scientific journal *Cancer Cell*.

This method enables researchers to identify the type of cancer and the location of the tumour. He calls the test developed by him and his team a 'right-or-wrong' test. Patients who are referred by their doctor in the future can take this relatively inexpensive test and have the results within one week. If the result is positive, further research can be performed in order to confirm the result. Würdinger expects the test to be available for the first patients within five years.

He recently sold his company ThromboDx to the American listed company Illumina and is continuing work on the test there. The test ought to become cheaper, more accurate and more accessible so that it can be marketed in a few years and replace other screening tests.

and services that result in actual use. For example, attention should be paid to the development of technologies, apps, games, helplines, online tools, protocols and guidelines, therapies and other products or services developed on the basis of scientific knowledge.

A good indicator of collaboration and knowledge exchange between universities and society can be found in the structural collaboration of academics with social organizations in the form of memberships and Advisory Committees, relevant managerial positions and memberships of Supervisory Boards. Additionally, focus is being directed on external financing for research, whereby researchers and social partners collaborate in particular projects receiving indirect and contract funding, as well as on projects receiving funding from government agencies, which involve collaboration with social organizations such as STW grants and Top Sectors. The pre-seed and proof-of-concept funds are counted as a second indicator. These are pre-investments by valorization funds for research into the technical and commercial viability of products.

Lastly, VU Amsterdam has opted to measure output results of social dissemination, including knowledge diffusion via interviews; appearances and articles in all sorts of media, blogs, websites; publications in professional journals; talks and meetings for a broad public; and contributions to exhibitions. That said, VU Amsterdam not only believes it important to publish results of scientific research on social media and otherwise. In order to make this available to a broad public, it also values the extent to which scientific knowledge is accessible in Open Access. This is why we are looking at the extent to which articles from journals are available in Open Access. VU Amsterdam actively promotes Open Access and is discussing this with publishers of scientific journals in order to make articles freely available in their databases (golden open access). Additionally, VU Amsterdam is ensuring that as many of its own scientific publications as possible are published by setting up the online VU-DARE (Digital Academic Repository of VU Amsterdam [green open access]).

5.4 DOCTORATE REGULATIONS

The Article of the new Doctorate Regulations, which lays down that all PhD students at VU Amsterdam are entitled to follow a good-quality programme, came into force on 1 April 2015. While the programme is based on strengthening scientific knowledge and methods, focus is also being directed on transferable skills, i.e. the skills that are useful when the PhD student opts for a career in society after completing their thesis.

The new Doctorate Regulations includes provisions on Joint and Double PhD degrees. Since 2010, the law allows for PhD students to be co-supervised with institutions for scientific research in the Netherlands and abroad. It is not always a simple task to conclude these agreements, as there are large differences in terms of criteria, programmes, PhD ceremonies and diplomas. VU Amsterdam has established model agreements for various scenarios that aim to co-supervise one or more PhD students and enable them to obtain their PhD at VU Amsterdam and the partner university.

Graduate Schools

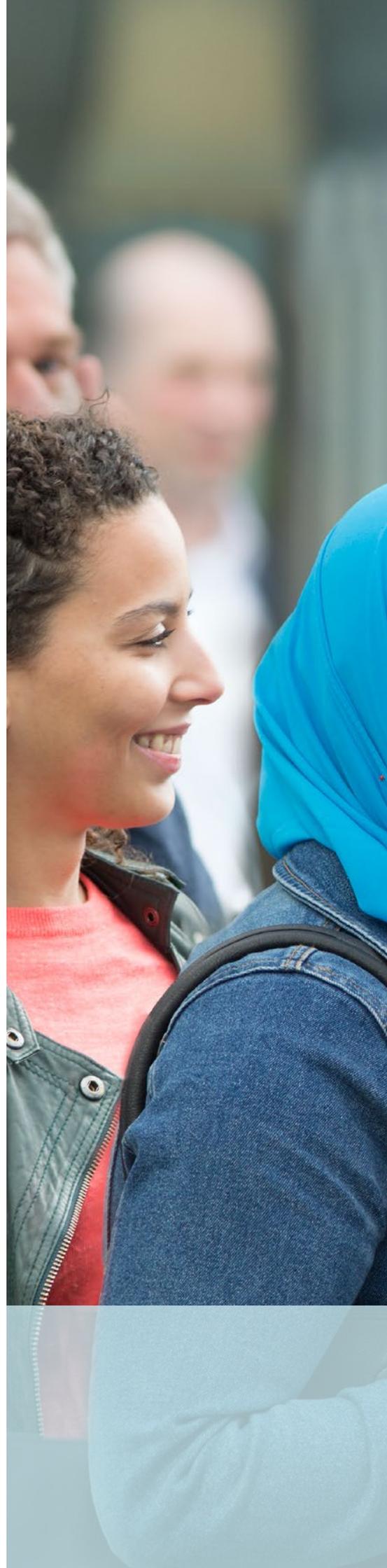
In establishing the Training and Supervision Plan, Graduate Schools have been set up so as to be able to coordinate the range of courses and programmes and provide good support to PhD students. In 2015, it was still not possible to open up all trainings and courses offered to PhD students within the various faculties on one website. This will be an important consideration for 2016. However, a positive start has been made on this and collaboration is taking place. Additionally, a pilot has been launched for an online training entitled 'Academic Integrity'.

Research schools

The National Research Schools play an important role in offering outstanding programmes to PhD students. By joining forces with other universities and offering a programme within a certain discipline, it is possible to benefit from a broad, high-quality range of courses. VU Amsterdam is the leading institution of five National Research Schools: Graduate School Neurosciences Amsterdam Rotterdam (ONWAR), the Interuniversity Centre for Educational Sciences (ICO), Oncology Graduate School Amsterdam (OOA), the Dutch Research School for Information and Knowledge Systems (SIKS) and SENSE Research School for the Socio-Economic and Natural Sciences of the Environment. Discussions began in 2014 regarding the financing of Research Schools by the universities that are the leading institutions. All Research Schools of which VU Amsterdam is the leading institution have concluded effective agreements regarding financing.

5.5 PROFESSORSHIP POLICY

Since 1 September 2015, it has been the task of the Executive Board to decide on the appointment of professors. Previously, the Rectorium (Committee of Rector and Vice-Rectors) was authorized to do this. Professors play a very important strategic role in terms of research at VU Amsterdam, and it is of crucial importance to the Executive Board that they be able to manage this. An evaluation of the existing professorship policy began at the end of 2015 and ought to be finalized in the spring of 2016. Considerations during the revision and other evaluations concern the minimum scope of an appointment as professor, the position of the professors occupying an endowed chair and the advisability that each faculty possess its own professorship plan.





06

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROFILING AGREEMENTS

In 2011, VU Amsterdam concluded performance and profiling agreements with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The profiling agreements include the establishment of competence centres, the collaboration between VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam, quality improvement in research and valorization. This chapter will describe the profiling agreements and the results achieved since 2012.

6.1 PROFILE OF VU AMSTERDAM

Agreements concluded

The profile of VU Amsterdam will be determined according to four large themes.

VU Amsterdam's broad range of teaching and research responds to contemporary social issues. In order to better highlight this, VU Amsterdam has chosen to profile itself with four recognizable profile themes. The profile themes will be implemented according to content. VU Amsterdam's interdisciplinary research institutes play a considerable role in shaping the profile themes. In 2015, deans headed work aimed at developing profile themes. As this content is leading, the emphases vary for each theme. Efforts are being invested in each theme to prepare an anniversary conference.

Human Health & Life Sciences

VU Amsterdam is combining fundamental, translational, and applied research through the theme 'Human Health & Life Sciences'. Additionally, it is collaborating with academic and other partners in the city as well as the sports and health sectors in order to make a unique contribution to the international and national agenda on health and life and provide solutions to contemporary issues concerning health. There are seven faculties and seven research institutes involved in this theme. In 2015, efforts were made to expand the multidisciplinary and translational teaching and research programmes, as well as to broaden, deepen and strengthen the Bachelor's and Master's programmes of study and honour's programmes within this theme. Where possible, Bachelor's degree programmes have been made even more flexible in order to enable progression through the programme to several Master's programmes, reduce the dropout rate and increase degree completion rates.

Connected World

As part of Connected World, researchers and students are studying the effects of globalization and digitization from a cultural and historical, economic, social, legal and ideological perspective. Conversely, researchers are using technology to study the present and the past and interpret these from various contexts. Five faculties are in-

involved. In 2015, efforts were under way to prepare the Anniversary Conference for Connected World, a Gravitation proposal, and to strengthen public-private collaboration with IBM. Work was also done to develop multidisciplinary study programmes, including the new study programme in Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) and the minor in Digital Humanities.

Governance for Society

The ambition of Governance for Society is to use our free and independent academic position to make a profound and fundamental contribution to social governance issues so as to foster a better world. Seven faculties are involved in this theme. Last year, quartermasters from the Faculty of Economics and Business Studies, the Faculty of Social Sciences and the Faculty of Law investigated the possibility of combining the existing programmes with executive and other postgraduate education in the profile theme 'Governance for Society' and whether there is a market for new courses to be redeveloped. The conclusion was that there is a clear market for this. 2016 will see the launch of a follow-up project, involving the organizational implementation of this teaching, preferably in a Governance School of VU Amsterdam.

Science for Sustainability

In order to guarantee the well-being of our planet and its inhabitants in the long term, it is essential to use the Earth's natural resources and services sustainably and to make this use climate-resilient. Moreover, it is essential that we increase our understanding of how we can achieve the necessary changes in human and social behaviour that contribute to the formation of a sustainable society. Within this theme, we are connecting fundamental scientific knowledge of sustainability with knowledge of implementing changes in society. With this in mind, Science for Sustainability focuses on the entire chain of fundamental research, applied research and concrete application. Three faculties are involved in this

Connected World	Governance for Society
Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Theology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Faculty of Sciences	Faculty of Theology, Faculty of Humanities, Faculty of Social Sciences, Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Faculty of Law, Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences
Human Health & Life Sciences	Science for Sustainability
VU University Medical Center Amsterdam, Academic Centre for Dentistry Amsterdam (ACTA), Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences, Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences, Faculty of Sciences, Faculty of Theology, Faculty of Humanities	Faculty of Sciences, Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences, and Faculty of Economics and Business Administration

theme. An anniversary conference on this theme was held in 2015. A university-wide minor in Sustainability has been developed as well as a Master's or minor in Sustainability together with the University of Amsterdam. The various options for Joint Degrees have also been explored.

6.2 EXCELLENT SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND TEACHING IN AMSTERDAM

Profiling agreements concluded

- VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam have decided to give their collaboration a more concrete form with a view of both achieving a qualitative leap from a scientific perspective and benefiting Dutch economic policy and the Amsterdam region.
- A major objective of the 'AAA plan' is to increase revenues from external financing for the benefit of research.
- Amongst other areas, the possibility of integrating the two universities' faculties of science is being explored within the framework of the AAA.

The collaboration between the University of Amsterdam, VU Amsterdam and Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences is content-based and has been prompted by the desires voiced by the teaching and research community itself. The reason for this is clear: students, lecturers and researchers do not want to be hemmed in by organizational borderlines, especially not in science.

In 2012, the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam decided to form cooperative arrangements in a number of scientific fields so as to function at an outstanding level or come to function at an outstanding level. Twelve 'AAA initiatives' were launched in 2015 and ten 'AAA fellows' were appointed as part of these initiatives. This collaboration is funded with resources from the profiling fund.

The collaboration between VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam is already bearing fruit: a large number of external research grants have been secured and collaboration with the business community has been strengthened. Researchers involved in the AAA initiatives have obtained seven ERC Starting Grants, two ERC Consolidator Grants, four Veni, three Vidis, and one Vici. Researchers involved in the joint AAA initiatives 'Amsterdam Data Science' and 'Amsterdam Centre for Contemporary European Studies' (ACCESS) have obtained more than €7 million of NWO funds. The collaboration between Vrije University Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam focuses on strengthening the collaboration with businesses and industry. An important result of this is the establishment of ARNCL (Advanced Research Center for Nanolithography) in 2014 in collaboration with microchip manufacturer ASML, which is investing €2.5 million annually in this research centre. The researchers from Amsterdam Data Science work in very close collaboration with IQU, ORTEC, Qualcomm, Philips and other organizations.

Please refer to paragraphs 6.5 and 6.6 for a detailed description of the results of the AAA initiatives and the collaboration between the Faculties of Science at VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam.

6.3 QUALITY OF RESEARCH

Profiling agreements concluded

- Aim for a higher position than in the 2015 Leiden Ranking in terms of impact score
- Ensure the number of publications keeps pace with international trends
- Increase the proportion of independent quality inspections with a score of 4 from 70% to 100%
- Increase the proportion of independent quality inspections with a score of 4.7 from 14% to 20%

VU Amsterdam is one of the best universities worldwide, occupying 98th position in the Academic Ranking of World Universities 2015 (AWRU), or the Shanghai Ranking as it is better known. VU Amsterdam has risen two places compared to its 100th position in 2014. As VU Amsterdam currently has no Nobel Prize or Field Medal winners within its ranks, which is an important indicator in the Shanghai Ranking, the university attributes the score in particular to the performance of the academic staff.

In terms of the impact score in the Leiden Ranking in 2015, VU Amsterdam occupies 64th position worldwide, which is the same position as in 2010. VU Amsterdam generated 6,587 publications in the period between 2010 and 2013. It is therefore one of the most productive Dutch universities, which publish between 2,141 and 8,947 publications. 14.2% of these publications belong to the top ten per cent of publications worldwide. VU Amsterdam's share in the European Union's publication output increased from 0.70% in 2010 to 0.77% in 2015.

VU Amsterdam aims for outstanding research, which is verified by independent quality inspections. The first independent quality inspections took place in 2015 according to the Standard Evaluation Protocol (SEP). In the evaluations that were finalized in 2015, VU Amsterdam achieved an average score of 1.9 on a scale of 4 to 1 (with 1 being the highest score). The new SEP 2015-2021 applies alternative methods for independent quality inspections than those applied by the SEP in 2009-2015. The Likert scale from 1 to 5 has been replaced by a reverted scale from 4 to 1, which makes the SEP scores in 2010 and 2015 difficult to compare. Likewise, the new SEP from 2010 to 2021 emphasises qualitative descriptions as opposed to quantitative descriptions.

The following independent quality inspections took place in 2015 for the disciplines: Technical Mathematics, Computer Science, Economics, Business Administration, as well as for the interfaculty Research Institutes: Research Institute for Culture, History and Heritage (CLUE+), Oncology Graduate School Amsterdam (OGA), MOVE Research Institute Amsterdam, and Neuroscience Campus Amsterdam (NCA). The Academic Centre for Dentistry Amsterdam (ACTA) concluded the quality inspections, and the self-evaluations of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, the Faculty of Technical Mathematics and Computer Science and MOVE have been presented to the Review Committees. The definitive reports from Economics and Business Administration, Technical Mathematics and Computer Science, and MOVE will follow in 2016. The experiences with the new SEP are positive.

6.4 VALORIZATION

Profiling agreements concluded

- VU Amsterdam has developed an internal policy that aims to translate research into innovation.
- The university's staff policy will focus more on activities and performances in the field of valorization.
- Revenue from post-graduate executive education grew from €13 million in 2010 to €20 million in 2015.
- Entrepreneurship education will be strengthened and expanded via the Amsterdam Centre for Entrepreneurship (ACE), a joint initiative by VU Amsterdam, the University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences and InHolland University of Applied Sciences.
- To increase Open Access' share in publications to 40%.
- The Pan Amsterdam Technology Transfer Office is entirely operational.

Valorization policy

In 2014, VU Amsterdam opted for a set of indicators on the basis of the Framework for Valorization indicators of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU). 2015 was the first year in which VU Amsterdam reported to the VSNU regarding the results. While the set of indicators focuses on quantitative measuring, VU Amsterdam explicitly opts for a qualitative description of the

impact and social relevance of research results. Indicators were chosen in close consultation with all faculties and those choices were based on the faculty valorization strategies developed in 2014. These lay down how faculty valorization policies are to be implemented. According to the faculty annual plan, the progress of this will be assessed in the spring during an Inter-Board Consultative Platform between the Rector

TABLE: 2015 REPORT OF VALORIZATION INDICATORS OF VU AMSTERDAM AND VU UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER AMSTERDAM⁷

Category	Measurement	2015
Licencing	# new patent applications submitted	6
	# new licence agreements	12
	# spin-offs	4
Entrepreneurship	# pre-seed and proof-of-concept funds awarded and obtained	4
	Scope of pre-seed and proof-of-concept funds	€ 375,000
	# employees and/or students following a course in entrepreneurship	170
Postgraduate continuing education	Revenues in € for further training and instruction	€ 16,750,641
	# participants in further training and instruction (excluding VU Law Academy [VULA])	19.453
Collaboration	# collaboration agreements (externally funded research)	212
	# memberships of social Advisory Committees	472
	Scope in € in indirect and contract funding	€ 154,361,723
Dissemination	# output results from social dissemination	2449
	% of journal articles in Open Access	37%

⁷ The report on the valorization indicators is based on data from VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam. Where the text refers to measured values for the VU Amsterdam annual report, these only concern data from VU Amsterdam. These could therefore deviate from the data in the table.

Magnificus and the Faculty Boards on the subject of teaching and research. Valorization was included as early as April 2011 in the annual interview form as a component of the staff policy.

Postgraduate continuing education and further training

Alongside the education it offers to regular students, VU Amsterdam has a broad range of courses for professionals and other interested parties. By sharing scientific knowledge through postgraduate continuing education and further training, and thanks to the fact that professionals contribute case studies from practice, postgraduate continuing education at Vrije Universiteit contributes both to the professionalization of professional groups as well as knowledge circulation. A defining characteristic of postgraduate continuing education is its close connection to research and initial education. Various professional groups benefit from current scientific knowledge and other interested parties can also benefit from life-long learning at VU Amsterdam. VU Amsterdam sets high requirements for the quality of education and only associates its name with education that meets our strict criteria. Moreover, revenue from postgraduate continuing education and further training can be reinvested into research, thereby giving faculties a degree of financial scope for entrepreneurship. Revenue from postgraduate continuing education and further training grew from €13 million in 2010 to €16.46 million in 2015.

Entrepreneurship education

VU Amsterdam believes it is important to provide entrepreneurship training to students and employees, as students and researchers who are entrepreneurs contribute to society with their skills. Within this context, we are investigating policies based on incentives for the development of entrepreneurship and we are looking at the ways in which external parties are involved in the development and implementation of entrepreneurship education.

A good example of this is the collaboration with NUON, which is involved in entrepreneurship education in Business Administration. The indicator is the number of employees and students following a course in entrepreneurship.

In 2008, VU Amsterdam launched a programme for entrepreneurship education, CASE. Since 2012, VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam have been investing in this programme, which is very popular among students, via the Pan Amsterdam Amsterdam Center for Entrepreneurship (ACE) in expanding its range of entrepreneurship education. ACE is a collaborative arrangement between VU Amsterdam, the University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences and Amsterdam University of the Arts. Entrepreneurship education has been given an impulse at both Bachelor's and Master's level. The offer has been expanded since 2012 thanks to the addition of a joint Master's in Entrepreneurship (as of 2014/2015) and a minor 'Entrepreneurship 2.0' (as of 2016/2017). Alongside this, 2014 saw the launch of an International Summer School 'New Venture Creation and Entrepreneurship'. Since 2006, editions of the 'Rabobank/ACE Summerschool Ondernemerschap' (Rabobank/ACE Entrepreneurship Summer School) have been taking place on an annual basis. In 2015, 80 students were studying the Master's in Entrepreneurship. In the previous academic year, 30 students participated in the minor 'Entrepreneurship 2.0'. The 2015 edition of the Entrepreneurship Summer School attracted 35 students, and the International Summer School New Venture Creation and Entrepreneurship attracted 25 students.

Patents, licences and spin-offs

Patents and licences are good indicators of the creativity and entrepreneurialism of researchers and students. As part of this, VU Amsterdam is looking at the numbers of new patent applications submitted as well as the new licence agreements and successful

spin-offs, as these shed light on the actual use of applied knowledge. In the period between 2012 and 2015, the institutions that are associated with Innovation Exchange Amsterdam (IXA) – Academic Medical Center, University of Amsterdam, VU Amsterdam, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam – issued 114 licences, applied for 125 patents and established 27 new businesses. IXA is the Pan Amsterdam Technology Transfer Office.

Other forms of valorization

A good indicator of collaboration and knowledge exchange between universities and society can be found in the structural collaboration of academics with social organizations in the form of memberships and Advisory Committees, relevant managerial positions and memberships of Supervisory Boards.

Additionally, focus is being directed on external financing for research, whereby researchers and social partners collaborate in particular on projects receiving indirect and contract funding – as these involve collaboration with public and private partners – as well as on projects receiving funding from government agencies, which involve collaboration with social organizations. The pre-seed and proof-of-concept funds – pre-investments by valorization funds for research into the technical and commercial viability of products – are seen as a second indicator.

Lastly, VU Amsterdam has opted to measure output results of social dissemination, including knowledge diffusion via interviews; appearances and articles in all sorts of media, blogs, websites; publications in professional journals; talks and meetings for a broad public; and contributions to exhibitions. That said, VU Amsterdam not only believes it important to publish results of scientific research on social media and otherwise. In order to make this available to a broad public, it also values the extent to which scientific knowledge is accessible in Open Access.

Master's	Minor	Honours Programme	Courses	Summer schools	Extra-curricular activities
MSc	Minor Entrepreneurship 2.0	VU/ UvA Honours Programme Entrepreneurship	Introduction Entrepreneurship	New Venture Creation and Entrepreneurship	ACE GRIT-weekend
Entrepreneurship (VU Amsterdam-University of Amsterdam joint degree)	Minor 'Entrepreneurship 2.0'	VU Amsterdam/University of Amsterdam Honours Programme in Entrepreneurship	Introduction to Entrepreneurship	New Venture Creation and Entrepreneurship	ACE Grit weekend
MSc Management, Policy Analysis & Entrepreneurship in Health & Life Sciences	Minor in Entrepreneurship	VU Amsterdam/University of Amsterdam Honours Course in Social Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurship in Health and Life Sciences	'Rabobank/ACE Summerschool Ondernemerschap' (Rabobank/ACE Entrepreneurship Summer School)	ACE 'Let's Get Started' fair
Pre-master's in Entrepreneurship	Minor in Technology Entrepreneurship		Entrepreneurship in Data Science and Analytics Entrepreneurship in Human Movement Sciences 'De Ondernemende Tandarts' (entrepreneurship for dentists)		

	Benchmark	Real. 2012	Real. 2013	Real. 2014	Real. 2015	Total
Licences	10	23	31	24	36	114
Patent applications	11	34	31	25	35	125
New businesses	2	3	5	8	11	27

Open Access

VU Amsterdam is a fervent advocate of making research output accessible through Open Access publishing. In 2015, VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam achieved a percentage of Open Access publications amounting to 37%. The objective of 40% was almost achieved, and the long-term prognosis of 90% Open Access in 2025 remains a realistic objective. Further growth in the future will be achieved by implementing a new research information system (CRIS), including open-access policy, raising awareness amongst researchers of the importance of Open Access, concluding agreements with publishers to encourage publishing in Open Access, and promoting more small-scale and innovative open access initiatives.

Metis, the current research information system, will be replaced by the New Amsterdam CRIS project of VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam, together with the University of Amsterdam, Academic Medical Center and Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, which ought to produce a user-friendly system in 2017 with a significantly higher percentage of Open Access publications. At the same time, agreements were reached in 2015 and the beginning of 2016 with various publishers, including Elsevier, Springer and Wiley, in order to encourage publication in Open Access by concluding integrated deals, whereby subscription costs and article processing charges (APC) for hybrid journals are connected to one another in one agreement. Universities are working in close collaboration as part

of the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU). This impulse will be continued in the coming years.

Support of valorization: Innovation Exchange Amsterdam (IXA)

The Pan Amsterdam Technology Transfer Office was launched in 2014 under the new name 'Innovation Exchange Amsterdam' (IXA). It is IXA's mission to initiate collaborations in partnership with researchers, to make research results, knowledge and technologies available and suitable for innovation with a social impact, and to generate resources for research and education. This new name emphasizes the importance of stimulating research collaborations between the academic sector and external parties, including industry and public entities.

6.5 PROFILING AND COLLABORATION IN AMSTERDAM

AAA COLLABORATIONS AND RESULTS

#	AAA initiative	Main domain
1	Collaboration between Amsterdam-based faculties of science	Natural Sciences
2	Amsterdam Data Science	Sciences, Economics, and Humanities
3	Amsterdam Water Science	Natural Sciences
4	Solardam (Amsterdam Solar Energy Research Initiative)	Natural Sciences
5	Amsterdam Brain and Mind Project (ABMP)	Medical and Behavioural Sciences
6	Amsterdam Centre for Contemporary European Studies (ACCESS)	Social Sciences
7	Amsterdam Universities Business School (AUBS)	Economics
8	UMCA Alliance of PhD fellows	Medical sciences
9	Health MBA	Medical sciences
10	Humanities	Humanities
11	Law, Markets and Behaviour	Law
12	Sports & Movement	Behavioural and Movement Sciences

AAA objectives	Results
1. To attract talented students and researchers from around the world	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 AAA fellows appointed, all from abroad • 4 ERC Starting Grant winners among AAA fellows • 47 Postdoc positions created (32 filled) • 33 PhD positions created (32 filled)
2. To attract more competitive funds from Europe and other external sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 ERC Starting Grants, 2 ERC Consolidator Grants • 4 Veni, 3 Vidis and 1 Vici • Data Science: Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research, Humanities and Sciences • ARCNL: STW grant • AISS (Sport Science): ZonMw grant: • ACCESS Europe: Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research, Horizon 2020: Erasmus +, Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence, Marie Curie
3. To create a stronger core basis for the region for the benefit of business and creative industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founding of ARCNL with ASML • Collaboration with IQU, ORTEC, Qualcomm and Philips (Data Science)
4. To produce more and better-qualified graduates for the region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 joint degree programmes (Bachelor's in Chemistry and Bachelor's in Physics and Astronomy) • 4 Master's tracks (Data Science; Big Data Engineering; Law, Markets and Behaviour; and Sport Sciences and Coaching) • 1 MSc course (Biological Oceanography) • 2 minors (Digital Humanities and 'Prestatiepsychologie' [performance psychology])

Amsterdam's infrastructure of knowledge, science and research is unique in the Netherlands. Amsterdam has two large universities, with two large university medical centres. Furthermore, the city is home to Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences and some other universities of applied sciences,

a large number of national research institutes such as the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) and the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), as well as for example Sanquin and the Netherlands Cancer Institute (NKI). Together, these institutions have a body

of academic staff amounting to approximately 7,500 FTE. This figure rises to almost 10,000 FTE if one considers teaching staff from higher vocational and arts education. Thanks to this, Amsterdam occupies a special place when it comes to the profiling of Dutch universities. Even if a

subject is only studied or taught at a few locations in the Netherlands, Amsterdam will often be one of these locations. This creates many options for profile choices, while still covering a broad range of disciplines that are required in order to participate in large international projects and quickly respond to exchanges regarding social issues. In light of this, it was a logical step to form an Amsterdam Academic Alliance (AAA) that aims to strengthen the collaboration between and around the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam. By concluding performance agreements at the same time, the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam signed a declaration of intent to intensify this collaboration. Both academic hospitals had already done this back in September 2011.

The objective of each subfield is to unite the best of both worlds, with the most prominent objectives being the joint planning of research in fields in which both institutions can assist and strengthen each other, collaboration in Master's education and the formation of an integrated faculty of science. Since then, the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam have set up collaborative arrangements in various scientific fields in cases where these are or can become more than the sum of the parts and have the potential of achieving an excellent level. Twelve AAA initiatives have been launched in the time leading to 2015. The University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam have gathered selective resources from the profile agreements in the Amsterdam Academic Alliance

(AAA) fund, with a scope of €24 million for the years 2013 to 2016. They have formulated the following primary objectives under the AAA fund:

1. To attract talented students and researchers from across the globe.
2. To attract more competitive funds from Europe and other external sources.
3. To create a stronger core basis for the region in order to benefit business and the creative industry.
4. To produce more and better-qualified graduates for the region.

From 2013, resources from this Student Financial Support Fund have been allocated to initiatives of cooperating faculties and institutions that are contributing to these objectives. The allocated resources function as seed

ALLOCATION OF €24 MILLION TO AAA RESOURCES

Initiative	Faculties from University of Amsterdam	Faculties from VU Amsterdam	Other parties	Allocations in thousands of €					
				2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
AAA-Fellowships	AMC/FEB/ FNWI	FALW/FEW/ FEWEB/-VUmc			875	1,749	1,749	438	4,811
ABMP	FMG	NCA			30	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,030
ACCESS	FMG	FSW		500	500	500	500		2,000
AUBS	FEB	FEWEB		250					250
AWS - Amsterdam Water Science	FNWI	FALW			30	475	495		1,000
Data Science	FEB/FGw/ FNWI	FALW/FEW/ FEWEB/LET				1,023	1,023	1,023	3,069
Humanities	FGw	LET		234	548	399			1,181
Law	FdR	RCH		320					320
Collaborating faculties of science	FNWI	FALW/FEW		3,000					3,000
Solardam	FNWI	FEW	AMOLF/ECN			500	500		1,000
Sports & Movement	FMG/AMC/HvA	FBW/VUmc		117	117	117			351
Summer schools	UvA	VU				78			78
Tinbergen Institute	FEB	FEWEB				400			400
UMC MBA	AMC/FEB	VUmc		285	535	285			1,105
UMC PhD	AMC/FEB	VUmc		416	416	416	416		1,664
Total required				5,122	3,051	6,942	5,683	2,461	23,259
Total available				6,042	6,042	6,042	6,042	0	24,168
Remaining				920	2,991	-900	359	-2,461	909

funding for activities that then become part of the regular budget or themselves generate revenue. The table opposite specifies these collaborations and summarizes the results achieved.

The AAA Fellowship Programme was established as part of the collaboration within one of the AAA Fund initiatives with the aim to recruit international top researchers for a period of three years. Once the fellowship has expired, the candidates are included in the permanent body of academic staff and funded by relevant faculties or through funds they have raised themselves. Currently, ten top researchers have been attracted from abroad, of whom four have received an ERC Starting Grant. The ten fellows act as a connection in the collaboration set-up between the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam (see the text boxes in the following paragraph).

6.6 JUSTIFICATION OF AAA INITIATIVES

1. Collaboration between Amsterdam-based faculties of science

Since 1 January 2014, the joint faculties of science of the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam have been

assigned one dean, who was recruited from abroad. However, the initially intended complete integration of the faculties did not gain the approval of the consultation bodies, as the consequences for teaching were not clear cut and the direct added value of the collaboration was not identical for all subfields. In practice, the presence of a joint dean appears to provide sufficient impetus to expand the collaboration in areas that did generate added value. Thanks to support provided by the AAA fund, the Amsterdam-based faculties of science invested in strengthening Amsterdam's science landscape, joint research priorities, external collaboration relations and integrating education. This is done from four common areas: Fundamentals of Science, Science for Sustainability, Human Life Science, and Information Science. The University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam have decided to integrate a number of degree programmes and offer them as a joint degree. Thanks to this integration, degree programmes can be offered with a breadth and depth that would not have been feasible for both universities separately. The Bachelor's programme in Chemistry has been offered since 2013 and the joint programme in Physics and Astronomy has been offered since 2014. The number of students studying

Chemistry has risen from 160 in 2010 to 200 in 2016. The number of students studying Physics and Astronomy has risen from 300 in 2010 to 375 in 2016, making the programme currently the largest of its kind in the Netherlands. The Master's programme in Data Science will be launched in September 2016. It is expected that 50 Master's students will start the programme, half of whom from abroad. Alongside this, the two-year Master's track in Big Data Engineering will begin as of September 2016.

The science-related collaboration has also led to an increased degree of collaboration with the business community in the Amsterdam region. One of the most significant results is the establishment of the Advanced Research Centre for Nanolithography (ARCNL) with microchip manufacturer ASML in 2014. ARCNL is a research consortium of ASML and AMOLF. The centre carries out fundamental research into nanolithography, in particular the application of this in the semi-conductor industry. As a primary task, the centre focuses on the physical and chemical processes that are crucial to lithography that uses extreme ultraviolet light (EUV). At the end of 2015, ARCNL employed 6.3 FTE of senior researchers (group leaders and tenure trackers), 18.7 FTE of PhD students, and 4

AAA FELLOWS ATTRACTED

#	AAA-Fellow	From	Research area
1	Daniel Baumann	University of Cambridge	Astroparticle physics
2	Reinier Boon	Goethe University Frankfurt	Cardiovascular diseases
3	Jean-Michel Désert	University of Colorado	Exoplanets
4	Jan Engelmann	University of Zürich	Neuro-economics
5	Efstratios Gavves	KU Leuven	Computer vision by machine learning
6	Tom Grossman	TU Dortmund University	Organic synthesis
7	Frank Kleibergen	Brown University	Econometrics
8	Edan Lerner	New York University	Soft matter
9	Sebastiaan Luysaert	Laboratoire des Sciences du Climat et de l'Environnement (LSCE)	Sustainability
10	Bruno Reversade	Institute of Medical Biology Singapore	Reproduction & Development

FTE of postdocs. The centre has its own headquarters and an independent research infrastructure. ARCNL has recently received a grant from the FOM Institute's Industrial Partnership Programme (IPP) with the proposal 'Physicals for Nanolithography', and is

receiving a TKI allowance. It has been awarded a start-up subsidy from the City of Amsterdam and the Province of Noord-Holland, as the centre is considered a large asset for the region's knowledge economy.

The faculties of science have further

developed clustering in each of the four domains – Fundamentals of Science, Science for Sustainability, Human Life Science, and Information Science – in order to generate more critical mass both at the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam. VU Amsterdam, VU University Medical Center Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam are bringing research in human life science under one roof in the new OI2 building on Zuidas. The research groups in the field of Cell & Systems Biology based at the University of Amsterdam will move from Science Park to the OI2 building in the first quarter of 2016.

AAA financing has also given a strong impulse to the Chemical Biology Platform (CBP). The Platform efficiently connects chemistry with biology in order to identify chemical and biological instruments and new medicines. The CBP will move to the new OI2 building in March 2016.

AAA financing has made it possible to bring two international top researchers to Amsterdam, Garry Corthals and Michelle Camenzuli, and to acquire an advanced TripleTOF mass spectrometer, which has produced alliances with scientists and researchers in the Amsterdam region from Academic Medical Center (AMC), Netherlands Forensic Institute (NFI, CLCH), Netherlands Institute for Conservation, Art and Science (NICAS), Rijksmuseum, and Netherlands Cancer Institute (NKI).

2. Amsterdam Data Science

The AAA Data Science programme is an initiative of the faculties of Science, the faculties of Economics and Business Administration, and the faculties of Humanities at VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam. It focuses on intensifying the collaboration between the universities and other regional knowledge institutes such as Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences and the Academic Integrity Committee. In February 2015, the programme received funding for the use of new modelling and analysis methods that would give meaning to the sea of

EDAN LERNER

In collaboration with AMOLF, physicists from VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam have set up the Amsterdam Soft-Bio Initiative (ASBI). The close connection of biophysics to soft matter on the one side and experimentation to theory on the other enables us to research the collective behaviour of complex biological systems in a coherent manner. The expertise brought by Edan Lerner is the connecting link in the collaboration between the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam, in particular in terms of the valorization potential.

JEAN-MICHEL DÉSSERT

A collaboration was initiated between Earth Sciences (Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences), the Anton Pannekoek Institute for Astronomy (Faculty of Science) and SRON as part of the SRON's proposed headquarters at Amsterdam Science Park. Jean-Michel Désert is an expert in the field of exoplanets and is a crucial link in the collaboration.

TOM GROSSMANN

As of the 1 January 2016, Tom Grossmann has been appointed Professor of the new section of Biomimetic Synthesis for Molecular Complexity. Grossmann's research focuses on organic synthesis of complex molecular models and has got off to a flying start thanks to the recently awarded ERC Starting Grant. This new section creates a strong bridge from organic synthesis to molecular cell biology, microbiology and system biology.

SEBASTIAAN LUYSSAERT

Sebastiaan Luyssaert is an internationally renowned researcher in the field of modelling feedback between climate and forest ecosystems and sustainable land and forest management. His profile fits in perfectly with the Sustainability cluster of the collaborating faculties of science from VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam. Luyssaert's system approach encompasses a focus on biogeochemical circuits in soil, vegetation and atmosphere, with which he excellently connects the different sections of VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam.

DANIEL BAUMANN

Daniel Baumann's scientific work encompasses all aspects of cosmology. Thanks to this profile, Baumann fulfils an important bridging role between various renowned research groups: the String Theory group from the University of Amsterdam, the 'Donkere Materie groep' (Dark matter group) within the University of Amsterdam's competence centre GRAPPA, and the research programme 'Virgo', which is part of Nikhef and led by VU Amsterdam Full Professor Van den Brand. The ERC Starting Grant that Baumann took from Cambridge to Amsterdam is also testament to the fact that his arrival can strengthen the attraction of Amsterdam for both grants and talent in this subject area.

data surrounding us. Sixteen positions were created thanks to financing from the AAA fund in the form of eleven postdocs and five PhD candidates. Seven positions span scientific domain and three involve local industry in the form of IQU, ORTEC and Phillips. In 2014 and 2015, international candidates were attracted to take up positions as university lecturer, postdoc, and within tenure track positions. Researchers at Amsterdam Data Science have been closely involved in the development of the Data Science lesson programme for the joint University of Amsterdam-VU Amsterdam MSc Data Science track as part of the Master's in Information Studies starting in September 2016.

Amsterdam Data Science has received €1.2 million of external funding. The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research provided €750,000 of funding to the project 'Media Now', a collaboration of the University of Amsterdam, VU Amsterdam and the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, as well as €750,000 of funding to the project 'ReSearch', a collaboration of the University of Amsterdam, VU Amsterdam and Elsevier. The importance of data science research has been highlighted by the recent award of three grants from the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research to AAA Data Science researchers Maarten de Rijke (University of Amsterdam), Frank van Harmelen (VU Amsterdam) and Rens Bod (University of Amsterdam). Amsterdam Data Science attaches great importance to its collaboration with local industry and government. New projects have been launched involving players in the local industry such as IQU and Phillips, and a close collaboration has been fostered with the city government in the form of DataLab, which obtains data for use in experiments and visualizations.

3. Amsterdam Water Science

Amsterdam Water Science is an integrated knowledge centre of the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam which focuses on Water Science. It pro-

EFSTRATIOS GAVVES

The Informatics Institute has acquired a strong position internationally in the field of Intelligent Systems. The research it conducts is focused on language processing, computer vision, and autonomous systems and machine learning. The University of Amsterdam and Qualcomm have entered into an extensive, multi-annual research collaboration under the name 'QUVA-lab'. Within the AAA initiative 'Data Science', Gavves is expected to manage research and maintain substantive contacts with Qualcomm and grant providers as well as with relevant groups at VU Amsterdam's computer science department.

JAN ENGELMANN

A second AAA fellow within Data Science was approached in order to strengthen the collaboration between the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam within the field of neuro-economics. Jan Engelmann will contribute to the collaboration between the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam within the Tinbergen Institute – the joint graduate school of both universities' and EUR's faculties of economics – within its Behavioral and Experimental Economics Group.

vides a qualitative leap for research, education and business activity in the region. Four postdocs have been hired, one of whom is strengthening the collaboration with the Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute (KNMI). The subject of research concerns the modelling of extreme precipitation. Projects in the region have been initiated in close collaboration with Deltares, Waternet, district water boards, Rijkswaterstaat (Directorate-General for Public Works and Water Management) and Staatsbosbeheer. The research has two main subjects: research into interactions between sediment and water and the interaction between water and air. The new joint MSc course in Biological Oceanography will begin in the spring of 2016 and will be offered to students at the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam.

4. Solardam (Amsterdam Solar Energy Research Initiative)

The Solardam consortium is a collaboration initiative by the University of Amsterdam VU Amsterdam, AMOLF and ECN, and focuses on research into innovative uses of solar energy. A total of eight postdoc positions were created with AAA funding that was jointly applied for in 2015. Almost 200 candidates from around the globe ap-

plied for these positions. Four postdocs have been recruited and all postdocs benefit from combined supervision by researchers from the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam. An application for an 'NWO Gravitation' will be prepared in 2016.

5. Amsterdam Brain and Mind Project (ABMP)

Neuroscience Campus Amsterdam (VU Amsterdam) and the Amsterdam Brain and Cognition competence centre (University of Amsterdam) are collaborating as part of the Amsterdam Brain and Mind Project. Ten of the 33 internal proposals were selected on the basis of a review procedure with independent, international reviews and the recruitment process for international postdocs began in 2015. The postdocs will be appointed either at the University of Amsterdam or VU Amsterdam and will be a guest lecturer at the other institution. Alongside the joint research being conducted and the drastic intensification relating to setting up this programme, this has resulted in the submission of a joint Gravitation request with other research centres in the Amsterdam region. It has also led to the development of joint series of lectures, summer schools and courses.

6. Amsterdam Centre for Contemporary European Studies (ACCESS EUROPE)

Amsterdam Centre for Contemporary European Studies (ACCESS EUROPE) is a collaborative venture comprised of 140 researchers from five faculties of the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam. As of 2015, nine postdocs have been appointed of whom four have progressed to hold the position of university lecturer. In addition to this, the centre has attracted eleven international and leading visiting scholars who hold research seminars and provide PhD master-classes. In 2014 and 2015, researchers who were part of ACCESS Europe were awarded two ERC Starting Grants, two ERC Consolidator Grants, four Veni, three Vidis, and one Vici. The centre was also the recipient of funding from the European programmes: Horizon 2020, Erasmus + and Marie Curie and Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence. Since the start of January 2014, around 60 academic events and more than 50 public events have been organized, including two projects during the Netherlands' presidency of the EU in the first half of 2016.

7. Amsterdam Universities Business School (AUBS)

By means of the collaborative venture in the form of the Amsterdam Universities Business School (AUBS), the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam have been able to give their ambition of achieving extensive collaboration in post-doctoral and other business education segment a concrete form. Due to the collapse of the Duisenberg School of Finance (a third partner) for technical reasons, it was not possible to establish a new

joint education institution. Instead, the collaboration with the Tinbergen Institute has been continued and a number of honours tracks have been developed as part of the existing programmes.

8. UMC Alliance Fellows

Since signing the declaration of intent in September 2015, Academic Medical Center and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam have been developing an extensive collaboration between both academic hospitals in Amsterdam based on developments in the health-care sectors and scientific synergy. And why should Amsterdam have two separate academic hospitals? The long-term development of both hospitals' buildings is also fuelling this collaboration. The goal is to achieve a personal union of the boards and faculty deans and use this as an instrument to make the collaboration more effective. However, achieving this takes time. Firstly, VU University Medical Center Amsterdam had to become a legally separate entity from VU Amsterdam. This separation became effective as of 2016. Secondly, the various authorities such as the Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM) and The Dutch Healthcare Authority (NZa) had to give their assent to the collaboration. In the meantime, mergers and exchanges of specialisms within the hospitals are taking place. For their part, VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam have been encouraging the collaborating by means of the AAA fund and other methods. Eight PhD students have been recruited following a joint call for proposals by the Academic Medical Center and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam as part of establishing an alliance of research institutes. The PhD students

REINIER BOON

As of 1 January 2016, Reinier Boon has been appointed at VU University Medical Center Amsterdam's Department of Physiology. He is currently working in Frankfurt and Amsterdam so that he can effectively relocate his group to Amsterdam while maintaining fruitful collaborating with his colleagues in Germany. In 2015, two PhD students started in Germany thanks to Boon's ERC Starting Grant. In 2016, one postdoc and one PhD student will start in Amsterdam. From 1 January 2017, his entire group will be located in Amsterdam.

BRUNO REVERSADE

Bruno Reversade was appointed at the 'centrum voor Voortplantingsgeneeskunde' (centre for reproductive medicine) at the Academic Medical Center, as this is home to the competence centre of research institute alliance 'Amsterdam Reproduction & Development'. Reversade will continue to hold a partial appointment at his current institution in Singapore and aim to promote direct collaboration between Amsterdam and Singapore.

in this alliance will fulfil a bridging role between research conducted at the Academic Medical Center and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam. Alongside academic excellence, as assessed by external reviewers, the extent to which research proposals were able to strengthen the collaboration in the alliance was one of the assessment criteria. Four PhD students have been appointed at the Academic Medical Center and four at VU University Medical Center Amsterdam. All PhD students are active within joint research directions that are part of the recently formed alliance of research institutes.

FRANK KLEIBERGEN

Frank Kleibergen, Full Professor of Econometrics at Brown University in Providence, was appointed in order to give an impulse to the collaboration between the business schools based in Amsterdam. He works at the Tinbergen Institute, the joint graduate school of the University of Amsterdam's, VU Amsterdam's and Erasmus University Rotterdam's faculties of economics.

9. Health MBA

The Business Administration (MBA) programme in Healthcare Management involves the participation of students and employees from the Schools of Medical Sciences in a Special Track in Healthcare and Science Management, offered by Amsterdam Business School, with a view of making the collaboration between the Academic Medical Center and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam more concrete in the coming years. Commercial insight is not a fixed part of training given to university medicine professionals. The Business Administration (MBA) programme in Healthcare Management is a response to this lacuna and also provides participants with strong development possibilities at Master's level. The two-year MBA programme offered by the Amsterdam Business School has been modified according to the specific needs of the UMCs.

10. Humanities

From 2013, the faculties of Humanities at the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam have been intensifying their research and teaching collaboration on three areas, notably the Amsterdam Centre for Ancient Studies and Archaeology (ACASA), Heritage Studies, and Digital Humanities. Since 2012, Master's programmes have been jointly offered at ACASA. As of 2013, progress was made towards merging Bachelor's programmes at the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam, resulting in the joint offering of programmes as of the academic year 2016 to 2017. The contents of the research Master's in Archaeology offered by the University of Amsterdam have been modified, and the Master's itself has been converted into a joint Master's in Archaeology and Heritage studies, which will begin in 2017. As of 2013, the collaboration between both faculties in the field of Digital Humanities was given a concrete form by stimulating joint research and teaching and professionalizing employees in both faculties. Online forms of learning and the minor in Digital Humanities

have been developed for this purpose. An important initiative in this collaboration is the Centre for Humanities and Technology (CHAT), the public-private collaborate venture by the University of Amsterdam, VU Amsterdam, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences, and IBM, which aims to develop data technology for use on unstructured data.

11. Law, Markets and Behaviour

The Faculties of Law at the University of Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam have established a joint Master's programme in Law, Markets and Behaviour. This is a selective English-language Master's programme that assumes a multidisciplinary, three-pronged approach based on market, regulation and behaviour. The Master's responds to the need for ethical and sound leadership in the aftermath of the economic and banking crisis. Establishing and providing this joint Master's is part of the faculties' ambition to collaborate intensively in terms of post-initial and initial degree programmes that focus on the business services sector in Amsterdam (lawyer's offices, the judiciary, financial institutions, etc.) and draws heavily on the complementary focus areas within the faculties of both universities.

12. Sports & Movement

By establishing the Amsterdam Institute of Sport Science (AISS), VU Amsterdam, the University of Amsterdam, VU University Medical Center Amsterdam, Academic Medical Center and Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences have created a network institute that has been nominated by the Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development (ZonMw) as one of the three leading Dutch 'Sports Innovator Centres' by recommendation of Topteam Sport. The Sports Outpatient Centre has been created at the Academic Medical Center by VU University Medical Center Amsterdam and the 'Centrum voor Topsport & Onderwijs' (Centre for top athletes and education, CTO), the

latter being a collaboration of the City of Amsterdam, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and the 'Nederlands Olympisch Comité * Nederlandse Sport Federatie' (Netherlands Olympic Committee * Netherlands Sport Federation, NOC*NSF) Additionally, a new minor in 'Prestatiepsychologie' (performance psychology) and an MSc in Sport Science and Coaching have been developed. Entrepreneurship education has been strengthened thanks to a new venture lab and a sport, business and innovation boot camp for students and researchers. Finally, three special research groups were established and given teaching and research-related assignments that are geared toward AISS's objectives and further promote collaboration between higher professional education and university education.



07

QUALITY OF THE STAFF

7.1 VU AMSTERDAM'S POLICY ON TALENT

VU Amsterdam continued to invest in the development of the talents of its employees last year, focusing on activities designed to achieve the ambitions set out in the Strategic Plan 2015-2020 and in particular on measures and development activities aimed at further improving the quality of teaching and the professionalism of the operational staff. The new collective labour agreement (CAO) for the Dutch universities and the Work and Security Act also had an impact on the talent policy, primarily as a consequence of the reduction of the maximum period for which temporary contracts can continue from six years to between two and four years. To underline the importance VU Amsterdam attaches to the talent policy for its employees, the university appointed Willem Bouwens (the dean of the Faculty of Law) as Dean of Talent in 2015. The following results have been achieved.

Tenure track policy

A number of faculties at VU Amsterdam have agreements on tenure track and career development. Partly in response to the new collective labour agreement and in accordance with the new strategic plan, VU Amsterdam endeavoured to further encourage this trend in 2015 by drafting a framework for tenure track policy, under the guidance of the Dean of Talent. The framework requires every faculty at VU Amsterdam to formulate a tenure track policy for at least the transition from assistant professor grade 2 (UD2) to assistant professor grade 1 (UD1). Within that framework, faculties have the scope to take account of their unique characteristics, for example in terms of their position in the labour market. With this policy VU Amsterdam hopes to attract talented academics with the prospect of a long-term commitment to the university. The framework will be discussed further with the participatory bodies.

Incentives for leading talented researchers

VU Amsterdam's talent policy includes a number of programmes for top researchers that were successfully launched or continued in 2014, including the University Research Chair, the University Professorship, and the appointment of University Research Fellows and of professors with a teaching profile.

The University Research Chair was created to grant recognition to prominent researchers who are regarded as current or prospective leaders in their discipline. University Professors are exceptional academics who enjoy international renown and respect as leaders in their field of research. The University Research Fellowship is a programme established as a form of recognition for a select group of internationally renowned researchers at VU Amsterdam, who are able to reward a student of their choice with a fellowship bearing their own name. The professor with a teaching profile programme was launched in 2014 with a view to opening up the highest academic position of professor to researchers whose primary focus is teaching and who have an excellent track record in that field.

VU Amsterdam announced the following appointments and awards in 2015:

- Three excellent young VU researchers were awarded a University Research Chair.
- University Research Fellowships were awarded to 11 exceptional researchers and the students who will assist them in their teaching and research for a year.
- One faculty received a subsidy in 2015 to appoint a professor with a distinct profile in the area of teaching. Following the appointment of four professors with this profile in 2014, this brings the total number of appointments to five at the end of 2015.

Support programmes for talented researchers

VU Amsterdam offers an intensive programme of support and advice for researchers who are preparing research proposals for applications for a personal grant.

The Grants Desk provides advice to candidates applying for grants under national programmes such as:

- The NWO's Innovational Research Incentives Scheme, consisting of Veni, Vidi and Vici grants and Rubicon grants. In 2015, 54 Veni candidates, 35 Vidi candidates, 12 Vici candidates and 8 Rubicon candidates followed the support programme.

The Grants Desk also assists candidates for grants awarded by the European Commission such as:

- The starting, consolidator and advanced grants awarded by the European Research Council (ERC). In 2015, 15 candidates for an ERC starting grant, 2 candidates for an ERC consolidator grant and 10 candidates for an ERC advanced grant followed the programme.
- The Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships (MSCA-IFs). In 2015, 17 applicants for an MSCA-IF received support and advice.

Strategic programmes for researchers

The Training for Researchers strategic advisory group has been established to review the existing range of training courses for researchers and to make recommendations for any changes or additions that may be required to meet the needs of researchers and to achieve VU Amsterdam's strategic objectives. The members of the advisory group are its chairperson, Karen van Oudenhoven van der Zee (the dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences), professors and policymakers in the domains of teaching, research and talent development. In 2015, the advisory group wrote a report containing recommendations for the launch of new development activities for teaching staff that correspond with VU Amsterdam's strategic objectives and for measures

to improve the monitoring of the quality and coherence of programmes.

Professionalization of staff members in operations management

Major changes occurred last year in the service provision by the departments responsible for operations management at VU Amsterdam. For example, the organizational structure is being adapted to the ongoing harmonization and digitization of processes. Accordingly, many employees are having to acquire new knowledge and skills and are required to work in new teams. To sharpen the focus on the areas where improvements should be concentrated, four key competencies were identified: “accepting and delegating responsibility”, “focus and ability to achieve goals”, “learning and collaborating” and “binding people”. Accordingly, last year VU Amsterdam also invested in the professionalization of its workforce by organizing activities designed to promote collaboration between the various organizational units. For example, more than 200 employees took part in the workshop My VU Story, approximately 90 team leaders and coordinators attended a workshop on competence-driven coaching and 30 heads of operational departments followed a course in tactical management. In addition, all of the faculties and service departments organized programmes and activities dedicated to increasing the professionalism of their own units.

Impact of the new collective labour agreement and changes in labour law on talent policy

Maximum duration of successive temporary contracts reduced to two years

The Work and Security Act entered into force on 1 January 2015. This Act will gradually bring about a number of changes in labour law. The Work and Security Act took effect on 1 January 2016, introducing stricter rules regarding the maximum duration of temporary employment and the number of times a temporary employment con-

tract can be extended. The provisions on successive employment contracts in the collective labour agreement, which took effect on 1 January 2015, had already anticipated the new legislation. The changes will have a particularly profound effect for the careers of academic staff, and hence for VU Amsterdam’s policy on talent and the retention of talented employees. For example, it was formerly possible to conclude a temporary employment contract, including successive contracts, with teaching staff for a period of up to six years. Under the new law, the duration of a ‘chain’ of contracts is in principle limited to two years, although in the collective labour agreement that period is extended to four years for certain categories of teaching staff. However, longer temporary contracts may be concluded in isolated instances, for example a six-year contract for a tenure track.

Reduction of the number of academic staff with temporary contracts

The parties to the collective labour agreement have agreed to reduce the proportion of employees with temporary contracts – contracts for four years or less – to 22% for specific groups of academic staff (professor, senior lecturer, assistant professor and lecturer). At the end of 2015, 21% of the employees in this target group were employed on the basis of this type of short-term temporary contract. These contracts apply mainly for the lecturer grade 4 and the assistant professor grade 2 positions. A framework has now been drafted for tenure track policy for the assistant professor grade 2 position. In 2016, a policy will be formulated for providing temporary staff members in the lecturer grade 4 position with more counselling, training and career advice while they are teaching at VU Amsterdam in order to improve their prospects in the job market.

Transition payment

Since 1 July 2015, employees who are made redundant are entitled to a transition payment under the Work and

Security Act. The transition payment is smaller than the amount that redundant employees could be awarded on the basis of the sub-district court formula, but will have to be paid more often. Entitlement to the payment can arise when an employee has been employed for two years or longer and the initiative for terminating the contract of employment (or not extending a temporary contract) is taken by VU Amsterdam. In 2015, this led to unforeseen costs in projects for which temporary employees had been hired. Measures have been taken to mitigate the consequences of these changes, for example by providing clear information to employees and supervisors and adjusting procedures and systems.

7.2 DIVERSITY

Steady growth in the percentage of female professors

The measures introduced in 2009 to foster the promotion of talented female academics to positions as professors have borne fruit. In 2015, 20% of the professors at VU Amsterdam were women and the university had therefore met its target for that year. The number of female professors is still small in absolute terms. VU Amsterdam has therefore informed the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science that its target for 2020 is 25%. To achieve that goal, VU Amsterdam will persevere with its current policy. At the same time, the Fenna Diemer Lindenboom chair programme for talented female academics will be phased out and the possibility of establishing a new programme to attract female scientific talent will be explored. As of 31 December 2015, women occupied 54% of the senior management positions in the support staff.

Employees with a disability

The Participation Act, which entered into force on 1 January 2015, ensues from the social agreement concluded in 2013 and is intended to increase the number of people with a disability

entering the regular workforce. The intention is to create 125,000 jobs for disabled persons in the coming years: 100,000 in the private sector and 25,000 in the public sector and education. The Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) has agreed at national level that the universities will jointly provide an additional 122 jobs for disabled persons every year for the next 10 years. This means that VU Amsterdam will have to create 104 jobs for people with a disability over the next 10 years.

Although internal research has shown that it will not be easy for VU Amsterdam to accomplish this, in light of its social engagement and the importance it attaches to the diversity of its workforce, the university will endeavour to achieve that target. It has therefore been agreed that, at least in the first few years, the wage costs of employees with a disability who are hired by the service departments or the faculties will be paid centrally. The number of jobs for people with a disability at VU Amsterdam came to 9.1 in 2015.

7.3 HIGH PRIORITY FOR TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS

As in 2013 and 2014, measures to improve the quality of education and the teaching qualifications of university lecturers were a major priority for VU Amsterdam in 2015. One of the performance-related agreements made in 2012 with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science on this issue was that 60% of researchers would have a University Teaching Qualification by the autumn of 2015. VU Amsterdam had already reached this target in the spring of 2015. By the end of 2015, the percentage of lecturers with a University Teaching Qualification was 61%. The programme leading to the Senior Teaching Qualification continued in 2015, when lecturers could choose between two streams: educational specialist or educational leader. Participants in both streams obtain the same Senior Teaching Qualification

diploma, but the course content differs. In 2015, 51 employees obtained a Senior Teaching Qualification. In addition, the 17 participants in VU Amsterdam's second Educational Leadership course successfully completed the course. VU Amsterdam launched this course in 2013 to provide training and more challenging career prospects for lecturers who make an important contribution to improving the quality of teaching and innovation in education.

7.4 A CLEAR PICTURE OF TEACHING PERFORMANCE

The quality of the teacher determines the quality of the education. Teaching standards are maintained by providing proper training and good facilities for lecturers during their career in education and by assigning equal value to teaching and research. To facilitate the latter, in 2014 the Teaching Performance advisory group devoted itself to defining standards for teaching performance in the course of an academic career. The outcome of its deliberations is VU Amsterdam's Teaching Performance Framework, which sets out clearly defined teaching standards at four career stages - junior, medior, senior and expert - including the necessary qualifications. In this way, the framework supports the professional development of researchers in the domain of teaching. The Teaching Performance Framework was adopted in 2015.

7.5 LEADERSHIP

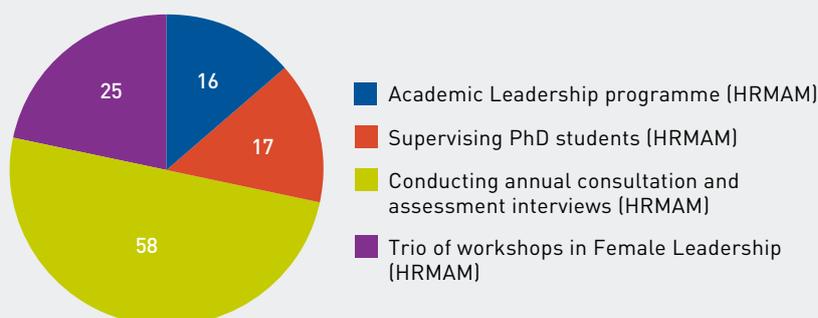
University-wide changes such as the new governance model and reorganizations in the operations management have created a greater awareness of how crucial effective leadership is for success in teaching and research. Considerable attention was devoted last year to dialogue and collaboration, a review of appointment procedures and the quality of management.

A number of new leaders were appointed or hired at the strategic level: two deans, two directors of service departments and three directors of operations. The updated remuneration policy was applied immediately in relation to the appointment of directors, subject to the framework of the Executives' Pay (Standards) Act (Wet Normering Topinkomens).

The instrument of the general staff review was also further refined last year with the development of a uniform procedure and relevant tools, thus creating a better insight into the size and quality of the workforce and how they match up to the anticipated changes.

In addition, a Management Benchmark was developed on the basis of University Job Classification profiles and VU Amsterdam's Leadership Profile. Directors of service departments have commenced a review of their tactical management and the Executive Board conducts annual appraisals of the deans and directors. General staff reviews are also conducted by a

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
number of participants per course



growing number of departments and faculties, although the practice needs to be encouraged further.

There was also investment in programmes to develop individual leadership skills, both at strategic and tactical level. The strategic programme concentrated on enhancing collaboration between organizational units, with the result that frictions are now discussed and addressed sooner. The intention is that the deans will shortly launch leadership programmes within the faculties in consultation with the Management Development department. The training programmes at tactical management level have led to greater awareness and university-wide commitment to the importance of leadership; the lively Personal Leadership network is a prime example of that.

The regular package of leadership and management programmes is currently

being reviewed and expanded in order to create greater cohesion in the training programme for supervisors at VU Amsterdam.

Despite the heavy investment in training for senior managers in the organization, VU Amsterdam is still not uniformly successful in reaching the managers of departments and teams, a group that will have an important role to play in achieving VU Amsterdam's ambitions in the coming years. Greater attention will have to be devoted to this group in the coming years.

7.6 TRAINING

VU Amsterdam again offered a wide range of courses and development activities for its staff members in 2015. The courses are generally well attended and rated as good or very good. Every course is devoted to a topic

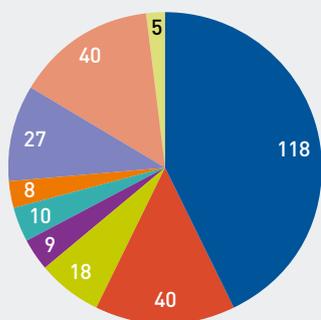
that either reflects strategic policy relating to internationalization (proficiency in English), cultural diversity (incorporated in the University Teaching Programme (UTP)), research and valorization, and teaching and/or that arises from trends such as digitization of education and the responsibility to guide talent.

The mentoring scheme, in which talented young researchers are paired with senior researchers, was organized for the third successive year in 2015. There were 41 couples last year, with each young talent receiving five coaching sessions.

A number of activities were organized specifically to help PhD students graduate successfully.

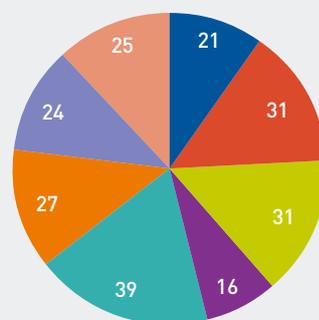
A lot of attention has been devoted recently to the quality of teaching. There is an extensive range of activities designed to enable lecturers to further develop their skills, including courses leading to qualifications such as the

EDUCATION
number of participants per course



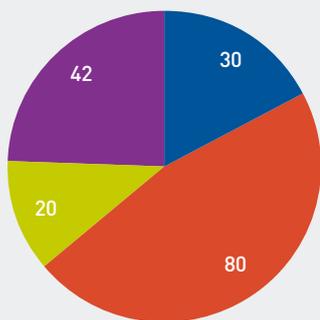
- UTQ short course/UTQ individual/UTP (UCGB)
- Senior Teaching Qualification (STQ) (UCGB)
- University Teaching Programme (TTP) (UCGB)
- Basic course in Design of Education (UCGB)
- Basic course in Implementation of Education (UCGB)
- Supervision and Assessment of Interns and Theses (UCGB)
- Basic course in Blackboard (SOZ)
- Video in Education (SOZ)
- Teaching in English (Taalcentrum-VU)

SUBSIDIES AND VALORIZATION
number of participants per course



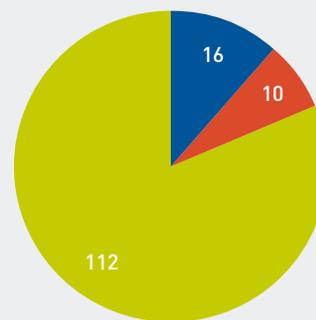
- Introduction in valorisation (IXA)
- How to valorise succesfully (IXA)
- The next step in valorisation (IXA)
- How to activate your network (IXA)
- How to collaborate with external partners (IXA)
- How to finance your idea (IXA)
- IP and Research Contract (IXA)
- Patent workshop (IXA)

PHDS
number of participants per course



- PhD success and personal efficacy (HRMAM)
- Writing a scientific article (Taalcentrum-VU)
- Presenting and pitching your research (Taalcentrum-VU)
- Scientific integrity – pilot (University Library)

PERSONAL SKILLS
Number of participants per course



- Dealing with the media (Taalcentrum-VU)
- Writing policy texts (Taalcentrum-VU)
- Finding and organizing information (University Library)

University Teaching Qualification and the Senior Teaching Qualification. For the first time, breakfast workshops were organized last year to raise awareness and increase expertise in relation to valorization. These workshops were attended by many researchers.

7.7 ANNUAL CONSULTATION AND ASSESSMENT INTERVIEWS

VU Amsterdam attaches great importance to the annual consultation and assessment interviews. These interviews provide an opportunity for the supervisor and employee to reflect on the results and activities of the past year and to make agreements about the employee's performance and development needs in the coming year. The subject received special attention in 2015, partly in light of the fact that interviews had been conducted and registered with only 32% of the staff members. Facilities have been arranged, such as extra training for supervisors in how to conduct an annual interview and support for supervisors and employees in handling the administrative aspects of the interviews. Although the substantial

rise in the number of annual consultation and assessment interviews that were conducted and registered to 53% in 2015 represents a great improvement, it is an issue that still demands attention. VU Amsterdam's target for 2016 is 80%.

7.8 CAREER ADVICE AND MOBILITY

VU Amsterdam's Centre of Expertise for Development assists employees in terms of career development, mobility and permanent employability within the university and elsewhere. It performs three activities.

Work-to-work supervision

As an employer, VU Amsterdam has an obligation to prevent involuntary unemployment as far as possible and to provide advice for employees, including temporary employees whose contract of employment is automatically expiring. In 2015, the university launched a pilot project in which every employee whose contract was due to expire was informed of the possibility of seeking advice. The assistance is arranged and provided by the Transition Organization, which organizes workshops and

is alerted to every vacancy that arises at other members of the alliance it has formed with other employers in Amsterdam. The workshops were attended by a total of 48 employees (19 support and management staff and 29 teaching staff) whose contracts were expiring.

Career advice

Employees with career-related questions can consult VU Amsterdam's career coordinator. The enquiry is first discussed during an intake interview, whereupon the employee can be referred to a suitable external career advisor. VU Amsterdam has concluded framework agreements with 10 external partners. The programmes offered by these partners have all been highly rated by the participants who followed them. The career coordinator was consulted by 105 employees in 2015, 55 of whom were referred to an external career advisor. In addition to the regular career guidance programmes, eight employees received assistance with their reintegration after illness, resulting in three employees leaving the university and positions being found for five employees for their reintegration outside their own working environment (including one outside the university).

Career orientation for PhD students

A pilot project in career orientation was launched in 2015 for 12 PhD students from all of the graduate schools. The programme will be evaluated before a decision is made on whether it will continue on a permanent basis.

the survey, special attention has been devoted to a number of aspects, including the administrative environment in the university, social safety, experience with digital work processes and the flexible working environment. The employee satisfaction survey will be repeated periodically.

7.9 EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION SURVEY

VU Amsterdam conducted a second employee satisfaction survey at the beginning of 2015. The first survey was carried out in 2012. As in the case of the earlier survey, the purpose of the survey was to systematically measure the experiences, expectations and opinions of the employees regarding their work at VU Amsterdam. In the 2015 survey special attention was devoted to the employees' experiences with respect to reorganizations and informal care. Every employee of the university was invited to take part in the survey, and the response rate was just over 57%.

Employees at VU Amsterdam are generally positive about the content of their work, the working environment and the working conditions. Exceptions to this are the supervisory tasks and career and development opportunities, about which employees are only moderately positive. With regard to working conditions, employees are positive about diversity and moderately positive about employee participation and internationalization. However, they are neither positive nor negative about the provision of information and the administrative environment in their faculty or department and are moderately negative about the administrative environment in the university, the reorganization at VU Amsterdam (only the support and management staff) and the flexible working environment. In terms of their perception of their work, the employees are satisfied, enthusiastic and engaged, but they do feel that the pressure of work is quite high. In response to the findings from





08

SUPPORT OF
PRIMARY PROCESS

Dies Natalis, Student awards

8.1 REORGANIZATION OF OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

Transition organization

As part of the New Business Operations Social Plan, VU Amsterdam formed a Transition Organization in 2013. The purpose of the Transition Organization is to help employees threatened with redundancy to find new work within the university or elsewhere and prevent (involuntary) unemployment as far as possible. In 2015, 23 employees from the service departments undergoing a reorganization who were threatened with redundancy were transferred to the Transition Organization. Nine of these employees moved to another job within the university or elsewhere after mediation by the Transition Organization or accepted a redundancy package. Since the start of the reorganization (1 May 2013), 145 employees threatened with redundancy have been transferred to the Transition Organization. At the end of 2015, 98 employees had found another job within VU Amsterdam or elsewhere through the mediation of the Transition Organization or had chosen to accept an individual redundancy package on the basis of the Social Plan.

Support for students

The focus in 2015 was on preparing for the reorganization of the Support for Students domain, the final stage in the reorganization of operations management. The reorganization plan and accompanying personnel plans were adopted at the end of 2014, with the reorganization set for 1 January 2016. The preparations involved formulating work packages for the gradual transition to a new organization and the execution of projects in the Study and Teaching Support (STS) programme designed to deliver products for the digitization of processes. Both components had to produce results in order to improve the quality of service provision with fewer FTEs in the support organization with effect from 1 January 2016. The results of the STS projects are reported in the following section.

The results of the work packages are described briefly below.

Structure for consultation on teaching support

The consultative procedures relating to teaching support were fleshed out on the basis of the established governance model. The procedures have been approved by the Executive Board.

Joint student services desk

In accordance with the reorganization plan for Support for Students, the student services desks in the faculties were abolished with effect from 1 January 2016. There is now a single student services desk in the hall of the main building. In addition to the physical desk, student services will be provided mainly by furnishing better information on VUnet and handling enquiries and requests from students online. There is a single front office and a close cooperation (also in the workflow) with back offices in the faculties and the Student and Educational Affairs department. This transition was carried out in stages during 2015, with each stage timed to coincide with the completion of the deliverables from the Digital Information Desk project.

Student guidance

As part of the Student Guidance work package, the chain of counselling activities (at faculty and university level) was analysed and a joint decision was made on which activities would be continued, which would be provided in a different form and which would disappear following the reorganization. This process yielded considerable insight into the similarities, but also the differences, between the services provided by faculties and the overlap between the activities of study advisors and student deans. The review of the tasks of the study advisors and student deans commenced at the end of 2015 and clear working arrangements will be agreed.

Structure of the examination office

It emerged in the course of 2015 that it would not be possible to modernize the

system of support for graduation and the awarding of diplomas in time to move the examination office to the Student and Educational Affairs department from 1 January 2016 as envisaged in the reorganization plan. The Executive Board therefore removed this element of the reorganization from the plan, with the approval of the Staff Council. It is still hoped that improvements can be made in the process over time.

Process management

In order to safeguard and gradually improve the work processes and the agreements that have been made on procedures, a process management system has been developed for the domain of teaching support. A detailed plan was in place at the end of 2015 and it will be implemented in 2016.

8.2 STUDENT SUPPORT

Study and Teaching Support

The facilities referred to in the Study and Teaching Support (STS) programme are in place and are being used by the students and staff members. Together with the new procedures, these facilities will help to improve the service. New facilities have been introduced for Matching, Digital Evaluation, Students with a disability, Registration for courses and Interview reports. Video in education will facilitate the wider use of video.

VUnet has been upgraded; with the implementation of VUnet 3.0 at the end of 2015 information and facilities are clearly displayed. The Digital Information Desk project has delivered new procedures and information pages for the most important processes used by students.

With a view to internationalization, processes have also been improved for national and international students. New facilities have also been created: the offer letter with which incoming international students can indicate which services (in relation to visas and accommodation, for example) they wish

to use and applications for scholarships for incoming and outgoing students. AscMe (academic structure and content management environment) is being used for queries about the academic structure and will be widely implemented in 2016.

All of these measures have significantly improved the services for students. In the background, Topdesk and Confluence are also running, the former to receive and forward enquiries and requests and the latter as a knowledge system for members of staff.

All of these facilities have been created with the close involvement of a great many employees. Students were also involved in various projects and tested the facilities. For each project, a pilot was carried out and a period was planned to remove any bugs after the facility went live. Nevertheless, the implementation of some facilities did not go off without a hitch. Various elements of the processes supported by the facilities have been harmonized. University-wide agreements have been made to improve the quality of service, increase the efficiency of the support structure or simplify the management. This policy will be continued in 2016, with regard to both the facilities that still have to be delivered and further upgrades initiated by the line organization.

Project DL021

This project involves the preparations for the tender for a new Learning Management System (LMS). A vision document has been written and approved by the portfolio holders for teaching. The University of Amsterdam was asked to cooperate in the joint preparation of the tender. This project will continue in 2016.

Education logistics project

The purpose of this project is to modernize and improve the process of planning teaching schedules and to prepare the tender procedure for a new application to produce timetables.

Institution-wide principles have been formulated and endorsed by the teaching portfolio holders. A list of requirements for the tender has been drawn up. At the end of 2015, it was decided that because of an anticipated lack of resources (both financial and in terms of manpower) the tender will only be organized in 2017, with 2016 being devoted to making improvements in the organization and the planning process.

Studying with a disability

Digital facilities have been created (see above) to enable applications to be handled more quickly and smoothly. In addition, the faculties were visited at the end of 2014 to monitor their compliance with the policy towards students with a disability. The report of the findings of the evaluation contained recommendations which were adopted by the Committee of Teaching Portfolio Holders. The conclusion of the report was that the policy has largely been implemented. Outstanding issues are being addressed mainly by the Communication and Marketing (C&M) and IT departments. The situation will be monitored again in 2016, and the policy will then be incorporated in VU Amsterdam's quality assurance cycle.

Expansion/optimization of VU-UvA interface

Service departments at VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam have expanded the interface for the exchange of data about students participating in joint programmes. The initial preparations have been made for the sharing of data for the new joint degree programmes of the science faculties. The interface is bidirectional and ensures that students who are fully registered have access to the facilities of VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam that are relevant for their studies.

VU Amsterdam Introduction Days

The Integrated Introduction pilot was repeated in 2015 with the faculties of Social Sciences, Economics and Business Administration, Behavioural and

Movement Sciences, Law and GNK. The integrated introduction consists of a varied programme of practical and social activities and a mix of activities organized centrally and by the individual faculties. The objective is to help participants to quickly feel at home in their programme and at VU Amsterdam and ensure they are properly prepared for the commencement of their studies. The programme was arranged in consultation with the relevant faculties, students, student associations and other departments. The participants and the faculties were enthusiastic about the programme. A higher percentage of students took part, and the proportion of first-generation students was also higher. The introduction period in the new style will be offered to all participants in 2016.

Foundation year for international students (VASVU)

The VASVU programme offers a year of education for prospective students who have followed a pre-university programme abroad but do not yet possess the necessary qualifications for immediate admission to a Dutch university programme. VU Amsterdam is the only Dutch university to offer such a programme. Around 50 participants attend the course annually, more than half of them refugees (50% from Syria). In the 2014-2015 academic year, 51 participants with a secondary education in another country prepared for the entrance exams for the degree programmes. Many VASVU students opt to study biomedicine, science or economics. In addition to lessons in a specific subject, a lot of attention is devoted to study skills, familiarization with Dutch society, computer skills and the practical aspects of admission (enrolment, local admission, matching, etc.). Simone Kukenheim, Amsterdam's alderwoman for education, visited the programme on 27 March 2015. Minister of Education, Culture and Science Jet Bussemaker visited the VASVU on 14 October. The participants played an important role in the programme for both visits.

Honours Programme

In 2015, 276 (in 2014: 239) second-year students started the Honours Programme. A total of 34 interdisciplinary courses (18 at VU Amsterdam, 16 at the University of Amsterdam) were offered. Students could also choose from 17 courses at Amsterdam University College (AUC). VU Amsterdam offered two additional courses in its programme for 2015: Letters of Mercy: The Dutch Maritime Empire of the 17th and 18th Century (Faculties of Humanities and Theology, in association with the Scheepvaartmuseum); and Robot Law (Faculties of Law and Sciences, in association with various institutes and lawyers). In 2015, 56 lecturers from VU Amsterdam were involved in providing the interdisciplinary courses. Important events in the Honours Programme were the Try Out Classes, the Graduation Event and the Extensus Spring Seminars. The master class given by Jan Rotmans entitled Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs in times of transition was also well attended by the Honours community.

As an experiment, first-year students who had arrived with good marks from secondary school were offered special courses in 2015. Only a few students availed of the option. It was therefore decided to adopt a different approach: first-year students will now be able to earn six credits for the Honours Programme in the second semester and will be able to choose from three courses at the University of Amsterdam and three courses at VU Amsterdam.

The collaboration between VU Amsterdam, the University of Amsterdam and Amsterdam University College in the Honours Programme was excellent. The VU-UvA Honours Committee met six times in 2015 to evaluate the quality of the Honours Programme and to initiate new courses. Regular meetings are also held to discuss administrative aspects and the procedures for enrolling for courses, Blackboard and the registration of marks are being streamlined.

Extensus, the student association of current and former Honours students, had around 500 members in 2015. It organizes numerous academic and social activities and provides a lively community for Honours students from VU Amsterdam, the University of Amsterdam and Amsterdam University College. In addition, the Honours Student Council conducts an annual survey of all Honours students about the quality of the courses and represents the interests of Honours students in the VU-UvA Honours Committee, where they can provide input about new courses and course evaluations.

Student guidance

In 2015, attention in this domain was devoted mainly to the reorganization of the support for students. Following the reorganization, training courses provided by the trainers and student career advisors that were open to students or could be attended by students on request of faculties are no longer being offered with effect from the 2015-2016 course year. The team of student career advisors has opted, with the support of the Committee of Teaching Portfolio Holders, to provide a range of online counselling services for students of VU Amsterdam. Students can explore future career opportunities and improve their employability skills at every stage of their studies via the university's online Career Centre. This instrument is available to every student from the end of 2015 and a survey will be conducted in a number of pilot faculties to determine whether it is an instrument that can usefully be integrated in the teaching.

Internationalization

The VU is among the 200 best research universities in the world. Although a great many reservations can be expressed about the various international rankings, this fact does give an indication of VU Amsterdam's standing and reputation. VU Amsterdam once again occupied a higher position (98) in the Shanghai Jiao Tong ranking in 2015 and also rated highly in the tables that are

based more on reputation, such as the Times Higher Education ranking (154) and the QS ranking (176). VU Amsterdam has traditionally occupied a higher position in rankings based on research performance (Jiao Tong and CWTS) than those based on reputation. Apart from the fact that this position creates international obligations, VU Amsterdam embraces the consequences of globalization and its increasingly important position in the world.

International Student Barometer

The annual International Student Barometer (ISB) gauges the opinions of international students. Once again, VU Amsterdam performed excellently in 2015 in terms of the quality of the teachers (including their proficiency in English) and the curricula. A growing number of students say they actively recommend VU Amsterdam. Areas of concern are accommodation, the campus and career services.

Student mobility

In terms of student mobility, 2015 was an excellent year as the following figures show:

- First-year enrolments in programmes taught in English: 33% higher at 779
- Outgoing exchange students: 41% higher at 620
- Paying semester students: 23% higher at 127
- Incoming exchange students: higher at 601
- Summer school participants: 215% higher at 205
- Immigration procedures: 24% higher at 839
- Housing mediation: 7% higher at 1,097
- Grants and scholarships awarded: 54% higher at 1,180

To make international students' time at the university a social as well as an educational success, the International Office organizes the introduction period for international students, promotes the creation of enduring social networks, trains 'ambassadors',

organizes introductory meetings with the business community and provides other career services.

Administrative missions

Three administrative missions were organized during the year: to India (22-27 March), Canada (27-29 May) and South Africa (5-9 October). VU Amsterdam received delegations from a number of countries, including representatives of the universities of Beijing (University of Technology), Tampere, Vilnius and Amrita and broader delegations from Indonesia, China, Bhutan and Ethiopia.

International projects

VU Amsterdam is engaged in a substantial number of long-term international projects. In 2015, it carried out ten international cooperation projects in the field of professionalization and capacity building in Indonesia, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe, Mali, Kenya and South Africa. A course on the internationalization of research was given at Chinese universities. VU Amsterdam is leading the Mastermind project in which, together with a number of other European universities, it is developing an alternative method of arranging admission to academic programmes. VU Amsterdam has had a summer school programme since 2014. In 2015, the programme attracted more than 200 participants and interest in the programme is growing strongly among both lecturers and students. A final project is the Study Abroad in Amsterdam programme, in which students from abroad can spend a semester studying at VU Amsterdam. This programme is also very popular with international students.

International campus

As part of VU Amsterdam's Strategic Plan 2015-2020, the International Office and the faculties are implementing the plans for the International Campus. This project is devoted to developing an integrated approach to the further internationalization of the university. There are four sub-projects: Interna-

tional teaching and learning, Language and communication, HRM and International services.

Structuring PhD tracks

Finally, the Structuring PhD tracks project was launched in 2015. The aim of this project is to significantly enhance the structure of VU Amsterdam's PhD programmes and raise their profile abroad in order to attract more talented students to the programmes.

Sport

VU Amsterdam's Sports Centre organized more than 25 sports for students and employees of the university and local residents in 2015. The centre collaborated with the Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences (formerly Human Movement Sciences) both in terms of athletic performance and research. The Sports Centre registered visits by 6,500 students, 1,300 employees and approximately 2,000 local residents in the course of 2015. The study into the possibility of spinning off the Sports Centre as an autonomous unit was completed in 2015. On the basis of the study, the Executive Board decided not to proceed with the spin-off. The Sports Centre will therefore remain part of the Student and Educational Affairs department. Work commenced on a major renovation of the Sports Centre, which is due to be completed in the summer of 2016.

Culture

The Griffioen Cultural Centre organized a great many events, including many theatrical productions, as well as hosted numerous courses and rehearsals of the university's music ensembles. The number of visitors and participants increased slightly and the level of satisfaction was higher. The productions for employees (organized with help of the funds allocated for staff activities) continue to attract large audiences and are well received.

The study into the possibility of spinning off the cultural centre as an autonomous unit was completed.

The conclusion was that the consequences of the future situation on the campus are still too uncertain to make a sound decision on the matter at this point in time. The issue may be addressed again at a later date. The study did show that there is considerable potential to increase the number of cultural activities on the campus and attract more visitors. A report was also published about the basic catering facilities that are required to create a successful nightlife venue for the staff and students of VU Amsterdam and other interested parties.

With a view to the relocation of the Griffioen Cultural Centre to a multi-functional space in the New University Building (in the middle of 2018), in association with Corporate Real Estate and Facilities (FCO) and the prospective film partner, Rialto, a study was conducted to determine the functional requirements the New University Building will have to meet in order to properly accommodate cultural events. The plans will be fleshed out and executed in the coming years.

8.3 INFRASTRUCTURE AND ICT

Modernization

Many of the changes proposed in the strategic plan depend on good ICT facilities. Much of the agenda for 2015 was devoted to completing projects connected with the reorganization of operations management. A number of major projects in the teaching domain were also completed in the Studying and Teaching Support programme, including the upgrade of VUnet. The IT department worked very closely with Corporate Real Estate and Facilities to facilitate the cooperation between VU Amsterdam, VU University Medical Center and the University of Amsterdam in the new O12 building.

Consolidation

Reliable IT services are essential for the primary process. The IT department started phasing out ageing infrastructure in 2015. It also made

improvements with a number of IT processes designed to allow the controlled implementation of changes, the handling of reports and applications, the management of projects, the placement of orders according to the university's standard procedure and knowledge transfer concerning properties under management.

Security

The legislation governing information security has been tightened up drastically in the last few years. Researchers are increasingly confronted with the fact that VU Amsterdam has to certify in writing that the ICT environment is properly secured. The new privacy legislation also requires a secure ICT environment; data leaks can not only cause damage to our reputation, but also lead to heavy fines. The IT department therefore launched the Security Operation Centre at the beginning of 2015, from where issues such as information security policy, tests for security leaks and reviews of projects, departments and systems are dealt with.

Start of three programmes

In anticipation of the annual plan for 2016, the IT department commenced three programmes after the summer of 2015. The purpose of the 'IT for a modern campus' programme is to develop new services, such as implementing the new digital workstation concept. The 'Modern IT infrastructure' programme will create the blueprint for the new infrastructure. The third programme will produce a review of the IT department's organization and processes under the title 'Professionalization of the IT organization'.

8.4 SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION

Essential commodity

Scientific information constitutes essential input for teaching and research. Internet is causing enormous changes in the field of scientific communication, with significant differences between disciplines in terms of the pace of

those changes. As a result, the role of the University Library also expanded further in 2015. Its core task is still to provide teaching and research with access to all the scientific content needed: books, magazines, databases and other materials, which are available, not exclusively but to a very considerable extent, in digital form.

Google only provides part of the solution for providing researchers, teachers and students with access to all the relevant scientific content. More is needed for content that is not freely available on Internet, and far more than can be achieved with the classical library catalogue. Preparations are underway to introduce a new system, to be put into operation in 2016, adapted to the requirements of the Internet age. The system chosen after a European tender procedure is OCLC's World-share Management System (WMS), an integrated system that not only enables users to search in the collection of VU Amsterdam's University Library and in materials for which access rights to digital files have been purchased, but also gives access to scientific content worldwide. The WMS is scheduled to go into operation in the spring of 2016.

The contribution to science and society

In addition to trained scientists, scientific information is VU Amsterdam's preeminent output. To make its envisaged contribution to science and society, scientific publications, increasingly including the associated research data, must be accessible to the fullest extent possible. Publishers and libraries have traditionally played an important role in this, but times are changing.

The systems the University Library has used up to now to register research output (Metis) and to store and make it available in full text format (VU-DARE) are outdated. A growing volume of research is not only multidisciplinary, but also multi-institutional, which calls for appropriate reporting possibilities. Together with VU University Medical Center Amsterdam, the University of

Amsterdam, the Academic Medical Center and Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, in 2015 VU Amsterdam made preparations for a new Amsterdam Research Information System, for which Elsevier's Pure system was jointly chosen after a European tender. The five partners will start using Pure at the end of 2016. In addition to major advantages in terms of user friendliness, the system will also allow reports to be produced not only for each institution but also across the institutions. The cooperation in this area between the institutions in Amsterdam marks an important step forward. For VU Amsterdam it also represents a significant improvement in the quality of the institution's repository VU-DARE, which will make our research output far more visible and easier to find and thus further the university's ambition of facilitating Open Access publishing by researchers.

Content-related products and services

The enormous increase in the volume of scientific information and research data, the importance of scientific integrity and new rules from both governments and providers of subsidies are generating a growing need for support in the creation, evaluation and dissemination of scientific knowledge (scholarly communication). We have observed very rapid growth in the demand for the products and services of the University Library, not only the courses in traditional information skills such as Searching for and finding literature and Reference manager, but also assistance with Research Data Management (RDM), advice about copyright and open access, courses on scientific integrity, assistance with geographic data applications, medical literature research and impact analyses. The reorganization carried out at the end of 2014 enabled the University Library to respond adequately to these changing demands in 2015.

Library as a place

There are locations all over the campus where they can work, individually

or in groups, but only the University Library provides students with a dedicated environment for working with scientific information. The university's libraries enjoy undiminished popularity among our students as the preferred venue for studying, both the University Library in the main building and the Medical Library in VU University Medical Center Amsterdam.

The Medical Library underwent a complete metamorphosis in 2015 because of the need to create a passage from VU University Medical Center Amsterdam to the future Imaging Centre. In the process, more than 50 additional places were created where the students can study. During exam periods, the occupancy rate of the libraries reached almost 100%.

Systematic efforts are being made to reduce the number of service desks in the library in the main building to make it possible to significantly expand the opening hours. The visibility of the University Library is another important area of attention. The service desk on the 9th floor was closed at the end of December 2015, reducing the number of desks to two. The recently refurbished Humaniora study room on the 9th and 10th floors will remain open, but with tighter control of access in order to safeguard the open collections. In 2016, all face-to-face services in the University Library's will be concentrated at a single location in the main building. This will temporarily be on the first floor immediately above the central hall. A more permanent and representative location for the University Library is planned in the more distant future.

8.5 CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT

Modernization of VU Campus

The modernization of the campus reached a number of important milestones in 2015. One of them was the completion of the OI2 lab at the end of the year. This building on the north side

of Boelelaan will house more than 750 top researchers from VU Amsterdam, VU University Medical Center Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam who will be collaborating on important scientific issues in the domain of Human Health and Life Sciences. Accordingly, OI2 will help to strengthen the knowledge infrastructure in the Amsterdam metropolitan region. As the construction of the building proceeded in 2015, the future occupants of the OI2 lab from VU Amsterdam, VU University Medical Center Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam were actively preparing for the move to ensure they can work properly in the new working environment.

The construction of the New University Building is also progressing well. The New University Building and the OI2 building will together replace two-thirds of the current Mathematics and Physics building. The New University Building will initially be occupied by science research groups (information scientists from VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam), students from every faculty and cultural facilities (such as the Griffioen Cultural Centre). As the construction proceeds, meetings will be organized with the various user groups to produce a conceptual design for the interior of the building. The Teaching Resources expert group is also involved in those discussions and makes an important contribution to them.

The upgrade of the Main Building entered its final phase in 2015. Important milestones in 2015 were the renovation of the restaurant and the surrounding seating areas, the relocation of the Faculty of Social Sciences, the completion of the relocation of the Faculties of Humanities and Theology, the expansion of the Forum for assemblies, education and formal meetings, and the relocation of the Administrative Affairs department. The Communication and Marketing Department (C&M) also moved into the OE wing of the Main Building. Communication and Market-

ing is the first department to leave the Atria office at VU Amsterdam's Uilenstede site. The installation of a new set of lifts to increase the capacity of the lifts in the Main Building commenced in 2015. The new lifts will be ready in the second quarter of 2016.

The renovation of the ground floor of the Medical Faculty building started in 2015. The public areas, including the new restaurant, study areas, a student services desk and space for student associations, are being modernized. At the same time, a master plan is being developed for the upper floors of the building, which will be upgraded in the coming years. In the context of the Education Agenda, the building will reflect trends in educational innovation (intensification, digitization, varied study areas, space to meet and knowledge exchange). VU Amsterdam is also investing in the technical infrastructure. The improvements will make the building more attractive and make it easier to find one's way around. Better use will be made of the available space.

For the final phase of the new replacement building for the science faculties planned for the Schoolwerktuinen site, the ambitions were set out in a document written in 2015 describing the vision and basic principles for the new lab. The site is temporarily being used as a garden (the Boeletuin) and as a car park. Construction of the new building could start in the middle of 2018 or in 2019. The current zoning plan allows for the construction of the new lab. There is also a distinct possibility of cooperation with alliances. VU Amsterdam is renovating the campus in stages, so that the plans can be revised along the way. Phase 1 is underway. The VU Amsterdam Campus Master Plan and investment programme are updated in the context of the Strategic Plan, taking into account any new developments in funding and student numbers. The plan is flexible. Improvements were made to the public space on the VU Amsterdam Campus in 2015. For example, new steps and

a platform were constructed on the Campus Square and the existing steps on the Boelelaan side of the Main Building were renewed. The preliminary work for the Botanical Garden also began last year, including the alterations to the entrance to the garden and the creation of replacement research facilities in the Mathematics and Physics building. The Botanical Garden Zuidas will be open to students, employees, patients and other visitors from the middle of June 2016.

Work on the expansion of the Sports Centre in Uilenstede commenced in 2015. Construction started in the autumn. The Sports Centre will have a second sports hall, a new gym with a sports lab and a health centre. The public spaces will also be designed in such a way that they can be used as a sports facility: the stairs are part of a special fitness course and there will be a climbing wall. The expansion will be completed in September 2016. The demand for space for sports activities has increased in recent years and it was decided to expand the facilities in order to meet that demand. The expansion will enable the VU Sports Centre to offer more for the athletes, associations and organizations that currently want to use the facilities.

The energy supply on the VU Amsterdam Campus will gradually be upgraded and made more sustainable in the coming years. An important milestone in relation to the energy supply was reached at the beginning of 2016 with the delivery of a new combined heat and power (CHP) plant.

Following the completion of the various projects, a number of service provision concepts were fleshed out and implemented in 2015. Examples include the Forum meeting centre in the Main Building, the location in the Symphony building where the Duisenberg Honours Programme (DHP) has been housed since September 2015, and the O12 building.

VU Amsterdam is collaborating closely with the University of Amsterdam on the implementation of the housing policy for the universities' cooperation in science subjects. In that context, a partnership is being formed with SRON. One aspect of that is the envisaged realization of the High Tech Instrumentation Facility (HighTIF), where NWO, SRON, VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam will collaborate with third parties, at the Amsterdam Science Park in Watergraafmeer. The government and the City of Amsterdam have both agreed to invest in the development of this facility.

Community and sustainability

As in previous years, VU Amsterdam played an active role in the Zuidas community with the campus. With partners in the Zuidas it has made an important contribution to the plans for the development of Zuidas DOK. Since 2015, VU Amsterdam has also been represented on the Board of the Green Business Club Zuidas, which has further intensified the cooperation between the teaching and research at VU Amsterdam and companies in the Zuidas through the exchange of knowledge about sustainable initiatives. In the next chapter, Sustainability, the results achieved in the field of sustainability in 2015 are examined in more detail. Via Hello Zuidas attention is devoted to the safety, the mobility, the liveliness of a clean and hospitable environment. VU Amsterdam is also helping to develop a new vision for Zuidas, for example in relation to its international positioning and the associated facilities and branding.





09

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is an integral part of teaching and research, operations management and accommodation at VU Amsterdam. The current sustainability policy is detailed in a number of documents, including the VU Sustainability Vision, the VU Amsterdam Campus Vision, the VU Real Estate Portfolio Strategy, the VU Energy Vision, the VU Procurement Vision and the VU Energy Efficiency Plan. The university's sustainability policy will remain a priority in coming years and is featured prominently in the new VU Strategic Plan 2015-2020, particularly in the Science for Sustainability profile theme. VU Amsterdam strives to maintain its position amongst the top 10 most sustainable universities worldwide. In 2015, VU Amsterdam placed third in the SustainaBul, a ranking of Dutch higher education institutions in terms of sustainability. As the second university in the rankings, VU Amsterdam also received the award for 'Most Improved University'.

9.1 SUSTAINABILITY WITHIN THE PRIMARY PROCESS

The 2015 implementation programme was drawn up in full consultation with various project groups. It addresses the subjects of sustainable purchasing and building layout, integrated communication strategy and the environmental barometer, BREEAM, and energy and water conservation. VU Amsterdam strives to translate its sustainability vision into a force for positive change by forging close ties with the community. Sustainable development involves achieving an ideal balance between economic interests (prosperity), ecology (planet) and social concerns (people). This ideal balance is not just of concern in the here and now, but also in the 'there and later', with relevance abroad (particularly in developing countries) and for future generations. VU Amsterdam aims to exercise good stewardship in all facets of the university community: research, education, operations management and accommodation.

Sustainability in education

When it comes to education, developments to the Science for Sustainability profile theme have primarily taken place within the science disciplines and as a result of closer cooperation with the University of Amsterdam's Faculty of Science. A large number of degree programmes have ties to the Science for Sustainability profile theme, including earth sciences, physics, chemistry, biology and environmental economics. In 2015, the Master's programme in Hydrology was repositioned to feature elements from both the sciences and the social sciences. Its principal theme is the hydrological system and its impact on society. In addition, VU Amsterdam offers a number of Bachelor's and Master's programmes that fall under the Sustainability profile, such as Earth and Economics (A&E), Science, Business and Innovation (SBI) and Environmental and Resource Management (ERM). Bachelor's students can take a minor in Sustainability, while for Master's students there is a Graduate School of Science for Sustainability.

Sustainability in research

Sustainability is an important theme within the area of research as well. Taken together, the various faculties at VU Amsterdam have considerable experience in building strong bridges between the different scientific disciplines, which in turn offers great potential for tackling complex social issues. The faculties of Earth and Life Sciences, Sciences, and Economics are particularly active in this regard. A great deal of multi-disciplinary research on the subject of sustainability has been brought together under the Institute for Environmental Studies (IVM). The IVM aims to contribute to sustainable development and environmental conservation both in the Netherlands and abroad, by means of scientific research and education. In 2015, VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam lent their support to two new research institutes centred around sustainability: Amsterdam Water Science (AWS), which focuses on

sustainable water management policies at the local, national and international levels, and Solardam, which aims to develop innovative new solar energy technologies.

9.2 SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS

Many of the current university buildings have become outdated. Over the next several decades, VU Amsterdam will gradually replace a number of these outdated buildings with new facilities, while other buildings will be renovated. VU Amsterdam imposes the highest requirements for sustainability on all existing buildings, new constructions and renovation projects. Existing buildings must comply with the BREEAM in-use standards at the level 'Good', while all new buildings and their surroundings must be designed and constructed to BREEAM 'Excellent' standards. In the coming period, the Knowledge District will become a sustainable area offering a pleasant environment for study, work and recreation and living.

New University Building (NU.VU)

Sustainable housing should embody the values of people, planet & prosperity, with an emphasis on energy conservation and the creation of sustainable, healthy buildings that last a lifetime. The New University Building will be sustainably built, with the aim of achieving a rating of 'Excellent' from BREEAM, an environmental assessment method that measures the sustainability of buildings. The designs for the New University Building have received the BREEAM Excellent certification.

Sustainability will also be reflected in the way the building is used. For instance, the design subtly encourages users to take the stairs, rather than the lift. Naturally, the lift capacity is more than sufficient and the lifts themselves are easily accessible for disabled users. The building is lit naturally using daylight. The design team centred their choices of building materials, colours,

and floor layouts around this use of sunlight. By taking into account the building's orientation with regard to the sun, they were able to design a building with minimal energy consumption. The New University Building's flexible design will allow it to adapt easily to changing functions over time, ensuring that it will have a long functional lifespan.

On 12 March 2015, VU Amsterdam signed the Sustainability Ambition Statement 2015-2020, along with the CEOs of 24 other businesses and organizations participating in the Zuidas Green Business Club. With this ambition statement, the signatories announced their commitment to promoting the sustainability of the Zuidas district and the business processes of the organizations located there. Since October 2015, VU Amsterdam has held a place on the Board of the Zuidas Green Business Club, thereby facilitating the sharing of information about sustainable initiatives and forging even closer ties between the university and the businesses located in the Zuidas district. In one example of this collaboration, VU Amsterdam students could carry out research assignments on behalf of Zuidas businesses.

9.3 SUSTAINABILITY IN OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

VU Amsterdam aims to make sustainability a priority in all operational management processes.

1. Green Office

In early 2015, Green Office VU was founded in close cooperation with VU Corporate Real Estate and Facilities. Green Office VU (www.greenofficevu.nl) provides students and staff with a shared platform for developing new sustainability initiatives in their own learning and working environments. It is an independent organization led by a team of students with support from the university. Green Office VU's mission

statement is: Making a sustainable and significant impact by empowering the VU community. Green Office VU also offers opportunities for participating in community service. A number of projects were started in 2015:

- Join the Pipe in the Main Building and the Mathematics and Physics building (W&N)
- Sustainability Day
- Earth Hour
- Meatless Monday

2. Energy

VU Amsterdam aims to achieve a 2% annual increase in energy efficiency. This will be accomplished by means of technological developments and by increasing awareness of energy conservation issues among students, staff and visitors. This goal was met and exceeded in 2015. The VU Energy Centre makes use of high-efficiency generators. VU Amsterdam plans to more fully harness the potential of renewable energy sources such as solar power and wind power in the future, and has taken this into account in campus development. The Energy Centre implemented a number of sustainability measures in 2015:

- *Introduction of an energy management system and improved energy monitoring:* VU Amsterdam ranks number 1 out of all Dutch universities in terms of energy efficiency;
- *Optimization of settings for heating, cooling and ventilation of buildings:* this is an ongoing process that will be further refined in coming years;
- *Sustainability awareness campaigns:* the following actions were taken to increase awareness on the topic of sustainability in 2015:
 - Knowledge Café on the topic of sustainability (*Kenniscafé Duurzaamheid*) was organized in order to facilitate the exchange of knowledge between staff members and guest speakers from both inside and outside the university;
 - Posters featuring information about Sustainability Day were hung in all the toilets on campus;

- Screens displaying information about the energy consumption of the various VU Amsterdam buildings were mounted around campus in order to make this information available to everyone.

3. Raw materials

VU Amsterdam is committed to sustainable purchasing practices. This means that the economic, social and environmental costs of goods and services are always carefully considered during the purchasing process. In the case of tenders, sustainability and social criteria are automatically taken into consideration, in accordance with the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) guidelines. VU Amsterdam's web shop also limits the range of items that faculties and service departments can order: all products must meet minimum sustainability levels and must be produced in countries that respect fundamental human rights.

4. Catering

When it comes to the range of foods offered by the catering services, VU Amsterdam places a high priority on sustainability. All university restaurants and lunch corners have introduced a new catering concept called 'Fair2Food', which emphasizes freshness and sustainability and is specially geared towards students. At least 40 percent of products offered under this concept must be certified organic and/or carry one or more certifications relating to sustainability. This is calculated as a percentage of the total purchase volume in a given year. Food served buffet-style is clearly marked with any certification labels that may apply. In addition, efforts are made to prepare meals in full view of customers whenever possible. Together with Green Office VU, the catering facilities have introduced Meatless Mondays, placing vegetarian meals at centre stage for one day each week. All hot drinks dispensers on campus feature machine learning software that tracks use throughout the day to determine peak usage times. After a

week-long learning period, the machines are then able to predict at which times of day they can go into stand-by mode. This predictive software was designed in such a way that the machine is constantly learning, which means that the stand-by intervals can change over time, depending on actual usage statistics.

5. Transport and mobility

Over the past several years, VU Amsterdam has taken steps to 'go greener' when it comes to commuter traffic and transport relating to university business and services. The university is currently working on improving facilities for cyclists by creating more bicycle storage spaces, lockers, showers, etc. In addition, the university hopes to encourage the use of electric vehicles by providing charging stations for electric cars and plug-in hybrids. The goal is to install a number of electric recharging stations in the new P1 car park as well.

6. Waste materials

VU Amsterdam separates waste into more than twenty different categories. In the future, plastics will also be separated from other refuse. The university continues to reduce waste by requiring suppliers to take back packaging after delivery and by insisting on the use of sustainable packaging materials. Students and staff can dispose of empty plastic bottles made from PET in one of the large, bottle-shaped recycling containers located at various points around the VU Amsterdam Campus. Keeping PET plastics separate from other types of plastics yields a much higher-grade material when recycled. The raw materials generated by recycling unsorted plastic waste are of inferior quality and are only suitable for low-value products such as paving stones, car bumpers, playground equipment and diaper filling.

7. Water

VU Amsterdam has been taking measures to reduce water consumption for some time. For instance, during renovations to toilet and shower facilities, conventional fixtures are being replaced with water-saving ones. In campus laboratories, water aspirators have been replaced with mechanical vacuum pumps. The university also carefully monitors wastewater quality and ensures strict adherence to chemical discharge norms. Chemical waste is prohibited from being discharged into drains or sewers and must instead be collected and managed as hazardous waste. VU Amsterdam supports student-led sustainability initiatives, and evaluates them before making agreements with students on how to proceed.

8. Environmental impact assessment

The very existence of the university and the activities that take place on campus inevitably have an impact on the environment. When it comes to sustainability policy, VU Amsterdam believes strongly in the importance of transparency. As such, the university publishes its ecological footprint each year and makes information about sustainability measures available. Usage statistics, performance indicators and carbon footprint calculations are all included in a report known as the Environmental Barometer Report. In order to make it easier to identify trends, data from the previous three years is also included in the report. Under the VU Integrated Sustainability Communication Plan, information about sustainability is communicated more frequently and more effectively to students and staff. Both groups have expressed approval of the plan, as it leads to a feeling of shared ownership and responsibility for sustainability on campus.





10 RISK MANAGEMENT



Risk management is an important concern at VU Amsterdam and forms an integral part of the administrative dialogue and of the planning and control cycle.

Risks are defined as events that arise from the inevitable uncertainties that every organization encounters in the process of pursuing and achieving its objectives. At VU Amsterdam, risks are not seen as something to be avoided at all costs, but rather as something to be managed. Dealing sensibly with risks is an important part of a controlled, deliberate approach to achieving objectives.

VU Amsterdam's risk management framework covers the following categories:

Culture and behaviour

Rather than implement a complex set of rules and procedures that only offer a false sense of security, VU Amsterdam greatly prefers to foster a culture in which people take responsibility for their own actions, trust each other and call one another to account when necessary. Risk management techniques facilitate dialogue about procedures and performance between different parts of the organization.

Strategic objectives

The university views risk as an event that can get in the way of achieving objectives. The formulation of clear objectives is therefore fundamental to risk management. VU Amsterdam's objectives are outlined in the Strategic Plan and in the annual plans.

Maintaining an open dialogue on risk

Highlighting and discussing risks relating to objectives, performance and control is an integral part of periodic administrative consultations between faculties and service departments at VU Amsterdam. During these consultations, the emphasis is on establishing a dialogue and on ensuring that faculty deans and programme directors are aware of their responsibilities. At VU Amsterdam, risk management is a

fluid, dynamic process rather than a strictly administrative matter.

Processes and procedures

Risk management is further ensured by a system of controls and audits. The annual plans of each unit contain sections describing potential risks that could arise during the planning and control cycle, and how to manage these risks.

Primary risk categories

VU Amsterdam divides risks into three main categories:

- Strategy risks, which relate to the pursuit of strategic goals
- Preventable risks, which arise within the organization and involve continuity and operational processes
- External risks, which are caused by events outside the university's control

Each risk category requires a different approach. In practice, risks may also involve more than one of the above categories; in these cases, the category may be assigned somewhat arbitrarily.

Developing risk management processes

The VU Risk Management Steering Committee advises on policy matters concerning risk management, as well as initiating and encouraging further developments. However, it is important to note that the responsibility for carrying out the risk management process ultimately lies within the departments themselves.

At this time, all VU Amsterdam units contribute to the risk management process by drawing up sections on risk in their annual plans and annual reports, as well as carrying out interim risk assessments. The quality of these contributions has been steadily increasing. In addition, within annual teaching reports and programme reports, particular attention has been paid to matters of risk management as they pertain to educational quality assurance. For project proposals regarding accommodation, IT, opera-

tions management, and other similar disciplines, the identification and control of risks has been embedded within standard procedures. Cooperation on matters of integrated safety management is organized internally by the Integrated Safety Management Committee (CIV).

Key considerations for the further development of risk management within the various units in 2016 include:

- Taking responsibility for initiating risk-control measures
- Focusing on potential risks instead of unchangeable facts
- Increasing involvement in risk analysis and risk control
- Thinking outside the box when it comes to identifying new risks
- Connecting risk management with other objectives and SWOT analyses
- Recognizing the links between risks for the university as a whole and risks within individual units
- Ensuring well-defined risk control measures and monitoring their effectiveness

To encourage these developments, in 2016 a follow-up training course will be organized for the unit business controllers, who play an important role in supporting risk management processes within their respective units. Later, in preparation for the 2017 annual plan, workshops will be held to teach management teams to identify and prioritize risks and to draft clear, well-defined sections on risk for use in their units' plans.

Current risk management priorities

After the close of the 2015 calendar year, interviews were conducted with the Executive Board and with deans and directors of all units in order to identify the most pressing university-wide risks. The interviewees then met to discuss and prioritize the risks that were identified during the interviews.

This revealed a number of shifts in emphasis as compared to the previous year. For example, fewer risks were

reported in the area of educational quality assurance due to targeted improvement efforts and an extra focus on risk management in this area. Reductions in risk levels were also reported regarding the quality of decision-making processes in general. However, a number of additional risks were identified in other areas, such as effective strategic decision-making and the ability to maintain control over ongoing change processes. In these difficult financial times, the ability to make effective strategic decisions is more important than ever. Revenue development has also emerged as a specific point of concern. When it comes to campus development, the emphasis has shifted from the ability to control planned investment projects to the development of highly flexible accommodation that can meet changing circumstances and needs over time. Risks relating to the provision of information within the organization and risks to IT infrastructure are receiving more attention as well, particularly when it comes to availability and security. Potential difficulties in cooperation between management, participatory bodies and the work floor, which were previously identified as a risk area, have diminished. This is largely due to an increased focus on fostering dialogue between participatory bodies, staff and active student groups.

The six most important points concerning risk management are currently:

- Long-term strategic plans (strategy risk)
- Organizational changes (strategy risk)
- Management and distribution of information (preventable risk)
- IT infrastructure (preventable risk)
- Allocation of government education expenditure (external risk)
- External funding for research (external risk)

Strategic analysis

The Executive Board and faculty deans are responsible for carrying out a number of strategic analyses. These

analyses allow them to make informed choices and provide financial leeway for accomplishing the goals set out in the VU Strategic Plan 2015-2020. The subjects of the strategic analyses are: (1) student enrolment, (2) IT facilities, (3) campus development, (4) collaboration with the University of Amsterdam, and (5) external income sources, including income from research. There is a strong correlation between these subjects and a number of the risks outlined above. The results of the strategic analyses are therefore crucial to the further development of risk control measures.

The following are 15 key university-wide risks and their accompanying risk-control measures.

STRATEGY RISKS

Long-term strategic plans

The academic environment is changing. Enrolment figures for Dutch students at VU Amsterdam are down, putting pressure on the university's share of government funding. VU Amsterdam has always dealt with financial ups and downs by dividing the available budget equally among the various faculties and then leaving each unit to determine its own priorities. In the current financial climate, this approach carries extra risk: individual units could potentially make decisions that can negatively impact the organization as a whole. This could, in turn, threaten the achievement of the objectives set out in the Strategic Plan.

Risk-control measures: After completion of the abovementioned strategic analyses, clear university-wide choices will be made that address the challenges facing VU Amsterdam in coming years. These choices will serve as a guide for the 2016-2020 long-term strategic plans. The results of this process will be made available in mid-2016.

Organizational changes

VU Amsterdam has had to initiate change processes within the areas of

operations management and educational organization, as well as faculty mergers and cooperative alliances. Some of these change processes have not yet reached completion. The internal organization is still coming to terms with the many changes that are taking place. This puts pressure on employees and creates tension. These pressures make it difficult to maintain an overview of the situation, thereby increasing the risk that employees will fail to maintain change processes or to course-correct when necessary.

Risk-control measures: The current leadership development programme, with its focus on culture, will continue. Special emphasis will be placed on the need for change in order to keep pace with developments in the outside world. Ongoing change processes will be concluded before introducing new ones. Any eventual changes or innovations will be smaller in scale and will primarily be organized in short cycles, by means of small, achievable steps.

Profile and brand identity

A number of VU Amsterdam's strong, high-profile teaching and research programmes are merging with those of other organizations, each of which has its own 'brand'. Examples include the ongoing collaboration between VU Amsterdam's science faculties and those of the University of Amsterdam, as well as the planned alliance between VU University Medical Center Amsterdam and the Academic Medical Center. This presents a potential threat to the identity and brand awareness of VU Amsterdam as a whole, which can, in turn, harm the position and the drawing power of the other, remaining faculties.

Risk-control measures: VU Amsterdam receives top marks for scientific research and education, as measured by international standards. In the future, the university will ensure that external communications more strongly emphasize the high quality of its teaching and research in the areas of the social sciences, humanities, natural sciences and medicine, both independently and within the context of its various collaborative efforts.

Flexible Campus Development

VU Amsterdam has initiated a programme for investing in accommodation and campus development.

This programme is based on student enrolment prognoses and also takes into account a number of complex interdependencies and third-party dependencies.

Stagnating enrolment rates and/or policy changes made by other parties can have a significant impact on campus development, causing a mismatch between development and actual accommodation needs. If this were to happen, there is a very real risk that accommodation expenditures might place too great a burden on VU Amsterdam's financial resources. *Risk-control measures: The accommodation programme includes a strategic component and a degree of built-in flexibility. Using the current forecasting system, it is possible to adjust the time needed to implement changes to between a minimum of four and a maximum of eight years, depending on the nature and scale of the changes. Improved flexibility with regard to campus development was one of the subjects of the strategic analyses described above. The specific measures developed as a result of these analyses will be included in the updated Master Plan for Campus Development, which will be published in mid-2016.*

Cooperation between VU Amsterdam and VUmc

Since officially demerging in early 2016, VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam now enjoy a greater degree of independence and strategic flexibility. However, with the planned alliance between VU University Medical Center Amsterdam and the Academic Medical Center, there are concerns that VU University Medical Center Amsterdam's administrative focus will shift towards this alliance and the optimal division of tasks between VU University Medical Center Amsterdam and the Academic Medical Center. If this happens, the close relationship between VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amster-

dam may be put at risk, along with the institutions' history of mutual cooperation, division of tasks, and synergy in teaching and research across a variety of disciplines. Diminished cooperation between VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam could also put the institutions' identities at risk, as well as creating risks for shared facilities and campus development.

Risk-control measures: Joint regulations have been drawn up to establish a framework for preserving the mutual cooperation and coordination between VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam after the official demerger. The most important elements of these regulations are: mutual administrative consultation, teaching and research, identity and the campus.

Cooperation between VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam

Over time, there has been a steady increase in the level of cooperation between VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam. The last few years in particular have seen the two universities grow closer through joint ventures such as the establishment of Amsterdam University College and the far-reaching collaboration between their respective science faculties, both of which are of great strategic importance. At present, a lack of insight into the University of Amsterdam's plans for further cooperation have led to uncertainty on the part of VU Amsterdam. Because of this, VU Amsterdam runs the risk of adopting a passive, 'wait-and-see' attitude, thereby delaying the development of new, strategic initiatives together with the University of Amsterdam.

Risk-control measures: VU Amsterdam's stance on future collaboration with the University of Amsterdam will be detailed in the ongoing strategic analyses. Fundamental to the formation of collaborative relationships with other organizations is VU Amsterdam's trust in its own strengths and quality. The goal of cooperation is to achieve significant added value for teaching and research. In addition, successful collaboration rests

on the shoulders of the researchers and students involved, who must respect one another as equals. Finally, it is imperative that VU Amsterdam's brand identity remains intact in the long run. Cooperation with the University of Amsterdam must not be allowed to hinder potential cooperative efforts with other institutions.

PREVENTABLE RISKS

Management and distribution of information

The reorganization of management led to a large number of personnel changes, changes in the organizational structure, and an overall reduction in the number of staff. To further complicate matters, the new systems and processes necessary for management and the distribution of information are not yet in place. In transition periods such as this, it is of utmost importance that information be distributed quickly and efficiently within the organization. If this does not happen, there is a risk that internal issues requiring swift intervention will not be recognized in time. This, in turn, can potentially cause damage to finances, personnel administration and the university's reputation.

Risk-control measures: The process of setting up the updated systems and processes will be continued until completion, with extra emphasis on maintaining clear lines of communication with personnel and ensuring the usability of reports. In addition, a number of areas for improvement have been identified: (a) the quality and distribution of operational control information, (b) the link between internal and external information, and (c) the frequency of information updates. These points will be included in a plan for improving information distribution, which will be centrally managed.

IT Infrastructure

VU Amsterdam's IT organization is closely involved in a large number of projects in a wide variety of areas. It has recently undergone a period of growth and centralization, followed by cutbacks. As a result, the quality of

IT support and its ability to keep pace with the latest developments are under pressure. This carries risks for the university as a whole, as IT is essential to virtually all processes throughout the organization. Other potential risks include information security (data theft, virus attacks, privacy violations) and communications (such as the VU Amsterdam web environment). Outdated IT infrastructure and applications also make the University less appealing to students and staff.

Risk-control measures: This point will be considered in depth during the ongoing strategic analyses. Particular attention will be paid to improving expertise levels within the IT organization, communication about current and future capabilities and clarity regarding the necessary budgetary framework. The IT director has drawn up a provisional innovation roadmap.

Support

VU Amsterdam's operations management system was outdated and expensive to maintain. The decision was made to innovate and reduce costs by limiting staff numbers and digitizing certain support services and administrative processes. At the same time, the range of self-services available to supervisors and personnel has been expanded. Due to the large number of changes that are being implemented simultaneously, this process involves a relatively long transition period. As a result, some staff members (particularly academic staff) may initially feel that the changes are detrimental and will result in an increased workload. These types of concerns can have a negative impact on job satisfaction and can undermine support for the changes being implemented.

Risk-control measures: Service departments and faculties must decide internally how best to deal with problems regarding the use of self-services. Effective communication with users is essential to this process. Priorities include identifying areas that still require improvement and making clear to users that digitization and the introduction of self-services are inevitable developments.

Internal cohesion within degree programmes

Academic staff members are experts in their respective fields, and most are also highly motivated lecturers. They think of themselves as independent professionals, and act accordingly. However, there is a risk that an exclusive focus on their own particular fields of research can cause academic staff to lose sight of their subject's relationship to the other subjects in the degree programme and to the programme as a whole. As a result, students may be dissatisfied by what they perceive as a lack of cohesion within their degree programme.

Risk-control measures: Under the new management model, the Programme Committees will ensure the internal cohesion of degree programmes and will identify any student complaints regarding consistency, overlapping content and intended learning outcomes. The Directors of Studies will facilitate dialogue between lecturers and will involve them in formulating the vision for their respective degree programmes and in determining how to best to put this vision into practice. This model will be evaluated to determine its effectiveness in safeguarding cohesion within degree programmes.

Compliance

Laws and regulations are being tightened across a wide variety of disciplines, and administrative and academic integrity are being held to ever-higher standards. Issues of integrity are also important to consider with regard to campus development. Responsibilities are often strongly decentralized, having been shifted towards faculties and service departments. Because of this, there is a risk that in certain areas knowledge of laws and regulations, integrity codes, etc. may be lacking, resulting in unintentional compliance failures.

Risk-control measures: VU Amsterdam has a strict policy regarding academic integrity and requires all new PhD students to sign a code of conduct on academic integrity established by the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU).

A compliance control programme has been implemented to address other risks. Recently, there has been a special focus on legal issues surrounding the tendering process, the hiring of external personnel and the enforcement of salary caps for top earners in the semi-public sector. The service departments possess the necessary expertise. Compliance with all laws and regulations surrounding the tendering process is carefully monitored. Staff members will be kept abreast of any regulatory changes that may occur and will be invited to provide input. In addition, controllers will increasingly work across different units. A project manager has been appointed for the 2016-2017 term in order to prepare for future EU legislation regarding privacy.

EXTERNAL RISKS

Allocation of government funding for education

Changing demographics and a shift in enrolment towards technical degree programmes, combined with insufficient improvement to academic success rates, have resulted in a decline in VU Amsterdam's share of government funding in recent years. The replacement of student grants with a system of student loans, as well as uncertainty about the future of funding for Master's programmes, have only served to increase concerns.

Risk-control measures: Strategies for managing this risk will be detailed in the ongoing strategic analyses. As part of the Student Analytics project, analyses concerning VU Amsterdam students' countries of origin, prior history and academic success will be intensified. This will allow targeted improvements to be made to student enrolment efforts (both in terms of quantity and quality) and, with the help of tailored study advice and supervision, to students' academic progress.

External research funding

Due to increasing pressures on government funding, together with the cost of providing an excellent education to a large student body, funding

for research at VU Amsterdam is under threat. With fewer resources available for research, the development of world-class researchers at the university could be hindered. This, in turn, may negatively impact the chances of attracting indirectly-funded and commercially-funded research.

At the same time, competition in those markets is increasing, which could lead to a decrease in the total amount of external research funding.

Risk-control measures: Means of expanding external sources of income for education and research will be discussed in the ongoing strategic analyses. Important areas of improvement include teamwork and team composition within the units, which are essential to the processes of acquiring funding, raising the university's profile and improving internal communication regarding colleagues' areas of expertise. Opportunities for increased collaboration with private parties in the areas of research and teaching will also be investigated.

Government policies

Universities are heavily dependent on the central government, both for budgetary reasons and for the complex system of laws and regulations concerning higher education. VU Amsterdam, like other universities, is therefore strongly impacted by political decisions and agendas, as well as economic developments, shifting political climates and sudden policy changes. This uncertainty is a threat to VU Amsterdam's ability to develop stable policies, and also puts the stability and predictability of the budget at risk.

Risk-control measures: Political developments and government policies are carefully tracked, both by VU Amsterdam itself and by the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU). When necessary, VU Amsterdam is prepared to share its own insights into the advantages and disadvantages of various policies with government policy-makers, either independently or together with other institutions. In this way, the university can reduce the risk of being caught unawares by potentially unfavourable policy deci-

sions. In order to minimize budgetary risks, VU Amsterdam is working to boost external funding for teaching and research, increase flexibility and efficiency with regard to university spending and strengthen its institutional resilience by means of positive operational results.

Integrated safety management

Universities are constantly being confronted by new social developments and security risks. VU Amsterdam is an open organization in which a large, increasingly diverse group of students, staff and other members of the university community come together to work and learn. The wide variety of viewpoints held by this group enriches campus discussions, but can also give rise to tensions. Another potential safety risk is posed by the use of hazardous substances when carrying out scientific experiments on campus. In addition, the university's dependence on ICT has increased strongly over time. Taken together, these risks present significant challenges to integrated safety management. They include risks to the physical and social well-being of people (students, staff, guests), risks to personal belongings, risks to data from business and research, privacy risks, risks to infrastructure and resources, risks to cybersecurity, risks to special collections, etc. Some of these risks arise from external factors (such as cybercrime, burglary or water damage), while others are caused by internal factors (such as the use of chemicals in laboratories). Whatever their cause, these risks can have an enormous impact, both at the personal level and on the university as a whole (education, research, library facilities, operations management, etc.).

Risk-control measures: Responsibility for the control and monitoring of security risks is divided amongst experts in each of the faculties and service departments. Together, these experts form the Integrated Safety Management Committee (CIV), which aims to encourage safety awareness throughout the entire VU Amsterdam community. The Committee's security vision, which was created

to provide guidance on matters of safety management, is actively promoted within the university community. It includes specific measures such as:

- *Awareness campaigns and workshops for students and staff*
- *Improving ease of access to the campus safety office and hotline for reporting incidents and accidents*
- *Creating an emergency plan for the Zuidas district, together with other partners in the area*
- *Revising VU Amsterdam's own emergency plan*
- *Identifying potentially unsafe situations*
- *Defining and implementing a strategic policy for information security*



11

FINANCES

Introduction Days

11.1 FINANCIAL CONTEXT

VU Amsterdam currently operates within a financial environment characterized by a decrease in funding from the central government (specifically, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science) and by an increase in competition from other institutions in the areas of education and research, both in the Netherlands and abroad. These issues are affected by the quality of the university's primary activities and its facilities. In anticipation of these developments, VU Amsterdam has already made significant investments in the following areas: education quality, maintaining its market share, increasing student enrolment, improving its competitiveness in the pursuit of external funding, investing in campus development, and improving facilities for students, researchers and staff at the university.

The specific actions taken by VU Amsterdam to achieve these ambitions in 2015 are outlined earlier in this report. In financial terms, these investments took the form of incidental expenditures on education quality using resources earmarked for the 2015 Education Agenda (approx. €8.7m), expenditures on projects to improve operations management (approx. €3.6m), and implementation costs relating to reorganizations (approx. €2.9m). Perhaps the most visible of the investments in campus development at VU Amsterdam is the new OI2 building, which offers research teams across various disciplines the opportunity to work together closely. Construction on the NU.VU building is also underway, as is the renovation of the Main Building.

11.2 2015 RESULT

In 2015, VU Amsterdam recorded a result of -€7.3m. This is €4.7m better than the projected loss of -€12m, and €11.5m better than the 2014 result. The result is comprised of an ordinary result of €0.7m, a non-recurring

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	2015 ACTUAL	2015 BUDGET	2014 ACTUAL
Total income	488,356	490,100	482,635
Total expenses	487,694	484,600	470,930
Financial income and expenses	38	-5,500	-8,001
Ordinary operating result	700	-	3,704
Operations Programme	-3,600	-7,000	-8,621
Reorganization provision/non-recurring implementation costs	-6,900	-5,000	-13,928
Income from sale of Kaupthing bonds	2,500	-	-
VU Amsterdam Result*	-7,300	-12,000	-18,845

*Note: the costs associated with the Operations Programme and the reorganization provision are recorded under expenses in the financial statements and the results analysis. They are primarily classified as staffing expenses. The non-recurring income from the sale of Kaupthing bonds is recorded under financial income and expenses in the financial statements. The result presented here corresponds to the result as recorded in the VU Amsterdam financial statements.

	2015 ACTUAL	2014 ACTUAL
VU Amsterdam Result	-7.3	-18.8
<i>Non-recurring items</i>		
Income from sale of Kaupthing bonds	-2.5	-
Operations Programme	3.6	8.6
Reorganization implementation costs	2.9	-
Reorganization provision (operations management)	4.0	8.2
Reorganization provision (FALW)	-	5.8
<i>Total non-recurring items w/ negative effect on result</i>	<i>8.0</i>	<i>22.5</i>
Ordinary operating result	0.7	3.7
<i>Positive non-recurring & exceptional items</i>		
Release of ineffective swaps	-3.8	3.3
Effects of rationalizing project administration	-1.9	-1.2
Update of outstanding student fees	-1.1	-
Increase in share premium due to partnership w/ parking company	-1.0	-
Total additional non-recurring items within faculties	-	-0.5
Calculation method provision for unemployment benefits	-	-2.1
<i>Total non-recurring & exceptional items w/ positive effect on result</i>	<i>-7.8</i>	<i>-0.6</i>
<i>Negative non-recurring & exceptional items</i>		
Costs relating to VU-VUmc Foundation de-merger	1.0	-
Lump sum payment coll. labour agreement (net effect)	1.3	-
Calculation method social security contribution for holiday allowance	1.1	-
Provision for transition payments	1.6	-
Provision for Centre for World Food Studies	1.7	-
Provision for Stichting PRO	0.2	-
Expenses VU-UvA joint programmes 2013/2014	0.3	-
Finalization of genetics department transfer to UvA	0.8	-
Pension compensation for high earners	0.4	-
Paid leave & benefits administration	-	1.5
Provision for employee anniversary benefits	-	1.1
<i>Total non-recurring & exceptional items w/ negative effect on result</i>	<i>8.4</i>	<i>2.6</i>
Normalized ordinary result	1.3	5.8

income totalling €2.5m resulting from the sale of Kaupthing bonds, non-recurring expenses totalling €3.6m for the reorganization of operations management, and additional non-recurring expenses resulting from a supplemental allocation to the provision for reorganization and one-off implementation costs totalling €6.9m.

In order to interpret the results accurately, they must be normalized, i.e. adjusted to exclude non-recurring and exceptional items. To calculate the ordinary result, non-recurring items relating to reorganizations were excluded first. The remaining non-recurring items were then filtered out in order to arrive at a normalized result. The table below lists the items that were excluded in order to arrive at the result. After adjustment, the normalized ordinary result is positive: €1.3m.

11.3 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ANALYSIS

In the statement below, the developments within the various income and expense categories are compared to the budget and to the actual 2014 figures. Please note: the statement below differs from the financial statements in that the non-recurring income from the sale of Kaupthing bonds is presented separately, as are the non-recurring expenses relating to the restructuring of operations management, reorganization provisions and one-off implementation costs. The majority of these are classified as staffing expenses, totalling €9.8m.

Income:

Government contribution and other forms of government contributions
Government contribution and other forms of government contributions

amounted to €302.6m. This is €4.3m higher than projected in the budget and is also, as expected, higher relative to 2014. This can be accounted for by the following:

- a €2.7m increase in volume-based funding for VU Amsterdam; this refers to the university's share of the increase in the Ministry of Education macro-budget (published in the 'voorjaarsnota 2015'), based on the forecasted rise in student enrolment;
- the allocation of an available wage increase (*loonruimte 2015*) amounting to €2.6m, of which €0.7m was allocated in the 'voorjaarsnota 2015' and €1.9m in the December 2015 supplemental wage increase allotment;
- a €0.5m credit for 'green education' granted in the 'voorjaarsnota 2015';
- an administrative correction (–€0.5m) concerning compensation

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	2015 ACTUAL	2015 BUDGET	2014 ACTUAL	DIFFERENCE FROM BUDGET	DIFFERENCE FROM 2014
Government contribution & other government contributions	302,567	298,300	291,755	4,267	10,812
Tuition fees, course fees & examination fees	47,282	45,300	43,228	1,982	4,054
Income from third parties	85,850	87,900	95,153	-2,050	-9,303
Other income	52,657	58,600	52,499	-5,943	158
Total income	488,356	490,100	482,635	-1,744	5,721
Staffing expenses	331,142	314,900	313,415	16,242	17,727
Depreciation	32,376	40,300	30,934	-7,924	1,442
Accommodation expenses	38,126	40,600	38,496	-2,474	-370
Other expenses	86,050	88,800	88,085	-2,750	-2,035
Total expenses	487,694	484,600	470,930	3,094	16,764
Financial income and expenses	38	-5,500	-8,001	5,538	8,039
Ordinary operating result	700	-	3,704	700	-3,004
Operations Programme	-3,600	-7,000	-8,621	3,400	5,021
Reorganization provision/non-recurring implementation costs	-6,900	-5,000	-13,928	-1,900	7,028
Income from sale of Kaupthing bonds	2,500	-	-	2,500	2,500
Result*	-7,300	-12,000	-18,845	4,700	11,545

*Note: the costs associated with the Operations Programme and the reorganization provision are recorded under expenses in the financial statements and the results analysis. They are primarily classified as staffing expenses. The non-recurring income from the sale of Kaupthing bonds is recorded under financial income and expenses in the financial statements. The result presented here corresponds to the result as recorded in the VU Amsterdam financial statements.

for the introduction of the Bachelor/Master system (note: the compensation itself was accounted for in a previous year).

Tuition fees, course fees and examination fees

Tuition fees, course fees and examination fees amounted to a total of €47.3m, which is €2m higher than budgeted. This is largely due to non-recurring income amounting to €1.1m from updating outstanding student fees, as well as an increase in income from institutional tuition fees (higher fees for non-EU/EEA students and those pursuing a second degree), which amounted to €0.5m. Income from tuition fees rose by €4.1m relative to 2014. In addition to the reasons outlined above, this rise is attributable to a 3.5% average increase in fees (in accordance with governmental regulations for statutory tuition fees) and, to a lesser degree, to an increase in student numbers of approximately 1%.

Income from third parties

Income from third parties amounted to €85.9m, a decrease of €9.3m from 2014. As predicted, the previous year's windfall was not repeated, and income in this area has returned to roughly the same level as in 2013 (€84.9m). The rationalization of the project portfolio during the reorganization of Project Control enabled projects to be completed ahead of schedule, leading to a positive effect of €1.9m. In total, income from third parties fell €2.1m short of budget.

Other income

Income from other sources rose slightly, up €0.2m relative to 2014. This category includes income from: rental properties (€13.8m), energy (€9.9m), secondments (€4.6m), dental treatment (€2.6m), and a variety of smaller sub-categories. The overall rise in income consists of the net effect of positive and negative entries for the different sub-categories. Income in this category was ultimately €5.9m lower than budgeted, largely due to

a shortfall in expected rental income resulting from delays in the completion of the OI2 building and the Short-Term Energy Investment Project (PKTI). The fact that these revenues are not a fixed part of the primary process also makes them difficult for units to forecast. Due to this uncertainty, revenue from items in the 'Other' category is budgeted conservatively, as are the associated costs.

Expenses:

Staffing expenses

Staffing expenses (including non-recurring expenses) rose by €7.1m from 2014. The specific sub-categories responsible for this rise are indicated in the table below.

Wages and salaries

Wages and salaries rose by €13.7m as a result of the new collective labour agreement (CAO) and an increase in staffing expenses within the Faculty of Medicine. On 1 January 2015, VU Amsterdam personnel received a 2% pay rise, with an additional 1.25% pay rise on 1 September 2015. In addition, all those who were employed by VU Amsterdam as of 1 September 2015 and remained employed through December 2015 received a gross lump sum payment of €500 (in the case of full-time employment).

Staffing expenses for the Faculty of Medicine rose by €9.9m from 2014 to a total of €46.5m in 2015. Expenses in this category can be attributed to the expenditure of government funding designated for medical teaching and research. Staff members are on the payroll of the VU University Medical Center Amsterdam and are therefore not included in the FTE figures listed in the table above. For more information, please see the financial statements.

Non-payroll staff

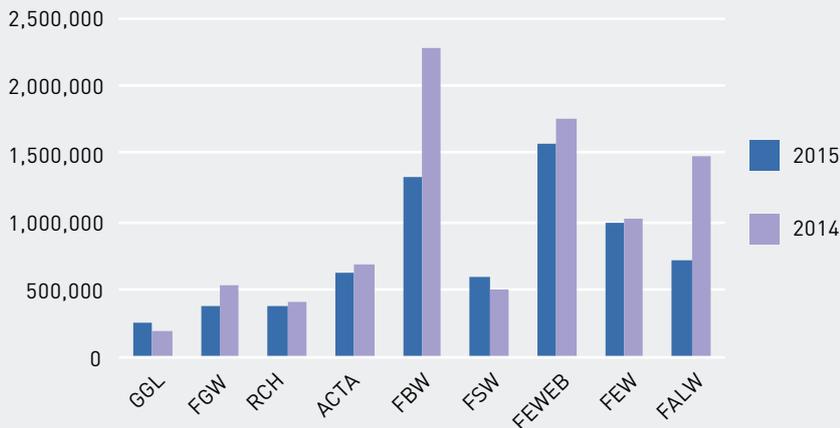
Non-payroll staff costs amounted to €29.4m in 2015, versus €26.1m in 2014. VU Amsterdam aims to keep costs for non-payroll staff to no more than 10% of total staffing costs. This norm was exceeded in a number of units. Increased expenditure in this area can be attributed to two main causes:

- Over the course of 2015, a number of ongoing projects reached a stage in which additional labour and/or expertise was required from sources outside the university;
- As a result of the reorganization of operations management departments and the uncertainties involved in this process, a number of VU Amsterdam employees chose to depart voluntarily. In anticipation of the reorganization, these positions were not filled immediately, but were instead temporarily occupied by external staff.

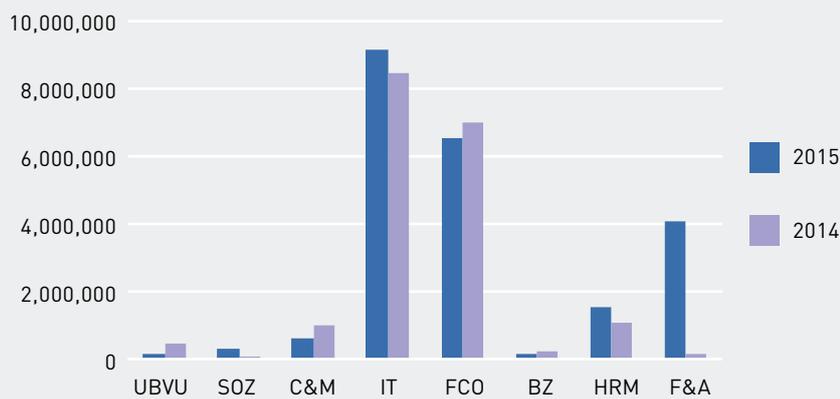
STAFFING EXPENSES	2015	2014	DIFFERENCE
Gross wages and salaries	250,062	236,349	13,713
Social security and pension contributions	48,278	50,785	-2,507
Non-payroll staff	29,381	26,136	3,245
Additions to staff related provisions	10,471	16,575	-6,104
Other staffing expenses	2,750	3,964	-1,214
Total	340,942	333,809	7,133

Average number of FTE	2015	2014	DIFFERENCE
Academic staff	2,230	2,244	-14
Support and management staff	1,414	1,437	-23
Total	3,644	3,681	-37

STAFF HIRES PER FACULTY



STAFF HIRES PER SERVICE DEPARTMENT



Within the faculties, the costs of hiring staff amounted to €6.9m. The bulk of this amount was spent to support the primary process, for example by hiring guests lecturers with ties to business and industry.

Within the service departments, hiring costs for staff amounted to €22.4m. The need for non-payroll staff was greatest in the departments of Information Technology and Corporate Real Estate and Facilities. Within the department of Information Technology, the extra staff were primarily occupied with university-wide operations projects. The IT-related aspects of these projects were handled by the Informa-

tion Technology department, regardless of the projects' departments of origin. Within the department of Corporate Real Estate and Facilities, the majority of the non-payroll staff were hired to work on the various construction and renovation projects that are currently underway at VU Amsterdam.

Additions to provisions

This category consists of additions to the following staff related provisions: reorganization and redundancy costs, transition payments, anniversary benefits, sabbatical leave, and own risk under WIA. Total additions in this category declined by €6.1m relative to 2014, primarily due to a decrease

in allocations to the reorganization provision (–€9.9m) and a decrease in allocations to the anniversary benefits provision (–€1.053m). In 2014, provisions totalling €13.9m were established for the reorganization of operations management and the Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences. At the end of the 2015 calendar year, the development of the provision for operations management reorganization over the course of that year was analysed. The analysis indicated that, based on the principle of legitimate expectation and on an individual assessment of expected expenses, an additional allocation of €4m was needed at the end of 2015. A similar individual assessment carried out regarding the provision for the Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences resulted in a small release from the provision. In 2014, an extra allocation to the provision for anniversary benefits was necessary due to updates to mortality tables and the adjustment of interest rates and inflation figures. These declines are offset by a newly created provision of €1.6m for transition payments, as well as a €2.4m increase in allocations to the provision for unemployment benefits due to increased eligibility for these benefits under the Non-Statutory Unemployment Regulation of the Dutch Universities (WW/BWNU). Transition payments replace earlier forms of compensation for termination of employment, which were awarded by a judge based on the sub-district court formula. The amount of the transition payment is lower than what would have been awarded by the judge, but will be paid out more often. VU Amsterdam is required to provide transition payments when an employee has been employed for two years or longer and when the contract of employment is terminated (or a temporary contract is not extended) on the university's own initiative.

Depreciation

Depreciation were €1.4m higher than in 2014 due to an increase in investments in 2014. These expenses were lower than budgeted due to delays in a number of construction and renovation

projects and to the postponement of IT-related investments as a result of the ongoing infrastructure modernization programme.

Accommodation expenses

Accommodation expenses amounted to €38.1m in 2015. This is roughly the same as in 2014 and is €2.5m lower than projected due to delays in a number of construction and renovation projects.

Other institutional expenses

Other expenses were €2.0m lower than 2014. This decrease was largely the result of a reduction in expenses relating to administration and management (–€1.0m) and miscellaneous general expenses (–€7.6m). This is offset by an increase in equipment and inventory costs (€3.3m), teaching and research costs (€1.0m) and allocations to other provisions (€1.2m). The increase in allocations compared to 2014 is primarily due to a release from the provision for expected losses in work for third parties made in 2014.

Financial income and expenses

Financial expenses amounted to zero, which is €5.5m lower than budgeted. A total of €7.3m in construction-related interest was capitalized. Due to changes in VU Amsterdam's planning of capital requirements as a result of delays in real estate investments, as well as a tightening of European Investment Bank (EIB) rules regarding the amount and timing of withdrawals, it was necessary to update the EIB drawdown schedule. The EIB requires that VU Amsterdam finance at least 50% of investments using the university's own resources. An update to the drawdown schedule was also prudent in terms of efficiency, to avoid borrowing unnecessarily large sums of money, over which interest must be paid. An ineffectiveness assessment carried out on the basis of the updated EIB drawdown schedule resulted in a €3.8m release of certain long-term liabilities, which accounts for the lower-than-expected financial expenses. Financial expenses

in 2015 were €7m lower than in 2014 due to the abovementioned release of €3.8m and to an extra allocation of €3.3m that was necessary in 2014.

BALANCE SHEET

Assets

Assets rose from €591m to €621m. This rise was primarily due to an increase in tangible fixed assets from €462m to €512m as a result of investments relating to the construction of the O|2 building and the renovation of the Main Building. Cash and cash equivalents decreased from €25m to €10m. For more information, please see the financial statements.

Equity and liability

On the equity and liability side, a decrease in equity was recorded due to the negative operating result. Long-term liabilities rose from €125m to €165m after the third and fourth tranches of VU Amsterdam's credit facility with the European Investment Bank were drawn down.

Foundation demerger is explained in greater detail in chapter 3 of this report. The remaining topics will be discussed in this section. VU Amsterdam's treasury policy is in accordance with investment and loan regulations for educational and research institutions.

Investments

As can be seen in the table below, VU Amsterdam invested a total of €85.8m in 2015. The largest investment category concerns building construction and renovation, particularly the O|2 building and renovation work on the main building. In order to realize these investments, VU Amsterdam drew down the third and fourth tranches of its loan facility with the European Investment Bank (EIB).

External Funding

In September 2013, VU Amsterdam established a loan facility with the EIB for a maximum of €230m in order to fund several campus investment projects. This loan can be used to finance the first half of a number of specific projects within VU Amsterdam's campus investment programme. The other half of the funds necessary for the projects comes from the university's own resources and from future cash flows. In 2015, two tranches totalling €43.55m were drawn down, bringing the total amount for four tranches to €141.55m. This amount will increase in phases over the coming years as further tranches are drawn down.

11.4 TREASURY

The primary developments relating to the treasury in 2015 concerned investments, external funding, risk management (derivatives) and obtaining banks approval for the demerger of the VU-VUmc Foundation into two separate entities: the VU Foundation and the VUmc Foundation. The VU-VUmc

INVESTMENTS	2015	2014
Land	-	16.8
Buildings	24.0	14.8
Buildings under construction	50.5	88.4
Inventory and equipment	4.0	4.5
Total tangible fixed assets	78.5	124.5
Software	7.3	9.9
Total intangible fixed assets	7.3	9.9
Total investments	85.8	134.4

Covenants

VU Amsterdam's loan agreement with the EIB contains four financial covenants that the university is required to observe. In 2015, VU Amsterdam remained well within the values stipulated in these covenants. The table below displays the values of the different ratios as per 12 December 2015 alongside the EIB norms.

Ratio	VU 2015	Norm EIB
Solvency	37.2%	>30%
Debt Service Coverage	1.9	> 1.3
Loan to Value	26.2%	<50%
Investments	ME 85.8	ME 143.4

The Dutch Inspectorate of Education uses three key financial indicators to assess risks to institutions' financial continuity. The following table shows VU Amsterdam's values for these indicators as of 31 December 2015 alongside the minimum threshold values as determined by the Inspectorate.

Ratio	VU 2015	Education Inspectorate threshold values
Solvency ¹	43.1%	> 30%
Liquidity (current ratio)	0.43	> 0.50
Profitability	-1.5%	0 ²

¹ The Dutch Inspectorate of Education calculates solvency by dividing equity (including provisions) by total assets.
² Profitability ratios that would cause the Inspectorate to request further clarification are: multiple years of negative values, two consecutive years below -5%, or -10% in the previous year.

The EIB covenants and Education Inspectorate's financial indicators are explained in more detail below. First, the four EIB covenants:

Solvency

At 37.2%, VU Amsterdam's 2015 solvency ratio is well above the EIB's minimum level of 30%. In the coming years, the securing of additional loan capital will inevitably lead to a decrease in the solvency ratio. However, this decrease in solvency is expected to stabilize at levels that remain above those mandated by external funding bodies. The solvency ratio is expected to begin increasing again from 2018 onwards.

Debt Service Coverage

The 2015 Debt Service Coverage Ratio was 1.9, which is well above the EIB

minimum of 1.3. Interest charges and repayments are due to increase over the next several years, which will cause a corresponding decrease in the Debt Service Coverage Ratio. However, this ratio is expected to remain safely above the EIB norm.

Loan to Value

In 2015, VU Amsterdam secured €41.55m in loan capital, resulting in a Loan to Value ratio of 26.2%. This is well under the EIB's maximum value of 50%. The Loan to Value ratio is expected to increase over the next several years as the university applies for additional EIB funding for further investments in campus development. According to current predictions, the Loan to Value ratio will climb no higher than 40%, which is well within the EIB norm.

Investments

Investments in tangible and intangible fixed assets may not exceed budgeted amounts by more than €20m annually. In 2015, VU Amsterdam's investments in this area totalled €85.8m, well below the maximum of €143.4m determined by the EIB.

The following are the financial indicators used by the Dutch Inspectorate of Education to monitor VU Amsterdam's financial position:

Solvency

Because the Inspectorate of Education includes provisions in its solvency calculations, the solvency ratio for VU Amsterdam as calculated by the Inspectorate is 43.1%; far above the minimum value of 30%. As described in the subsection on the EIB solvency covenant above, VU Amsterdam's solvency ratio is expected to decline over the next several years. However, it will stabilize at a level that remains above the Inspectorate of Education's threshold before increasing further after 2018.

Liquidity

At 0.43, VU Amsterdam's liquidity ratio currently falls below the Inspectorate's minimum threshold of 0.50. Liquidity is expected to continue to decline slightly over the next several years, before returning to levels above the Inspectorate's threshold in 2018. VU Amsterdam has access to a revolving credit facility and sufficient external funding, which provides the university with a comfortable liquidity margin in the coming years.

Profitability

Profitability dipped below the Inspectorate of Education's minimum threshold last year. It is important to note that this negative result was planned for, and that it was the result of a number of non-recurring costs relating to the reorganization of operations management. The reorganization process was completed in 2015. From 2016 onwards, VU Amsterdam expects to regain a positive budget result.

Interest rate risk

In the past, VU Amsterdam has engaged in a number of interest rate swaps in order to fix interest expenses incurred due to funding. In 2015, as in 2014, VU Amsterdam applied the valuation method known as 'cost-price hedge accounting' to its funding requirements. As described earlier in this report, these funding requirements have taken the form of a finance contract signed with the European Investment Bank in 2013.

In accordance with regulations relating to cost-price hedge accounting (DAS 290), VU Amsterdam identified the ineffective portions of its interest rate swap portfolio, and then reduced long-term liabilities in these portions by €3.8m, to €22m. More detail on this subject is provided in the VU Amsterdam financial statements 2015. VU Amsterdam strives to make optimum use of interest rate swaps, thereby minimizing hedge ineffectiveness and long-term liability.

11.5 CONTINUITY SECTION

Implementation of the Strategic Plan

In accordance with the new VU Amsterdam Strategic Plan 2015-2020, faculties and service departments have indicated in their respective 2016 Annual Plans and long-term perspectives for 2020 the ways in which they intend to contribute to and help shape university-wide ambitions. These documents also address the specific ways in which each faculty and service department plans to give shape to VU Amsterdam's shared profile themes and core areas. In 2016, the four profile themes and the three core areas will be more fully developed under the supervision of specially-selected deans.

Priorities for education in 2016

The top priority for education in 2016 will be to ensure that all requirements for the Institutional Quality Assurance Audit are met. A report will be submit-

ted to the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) in spring 2016, after which the Accreditation Committee will pay another visit to the VU Amsterdam campus. The results of a fourth internal audit will be available in early 2016. The data from this report will be used to demonstrate VU Amsterdam's compliance with requirements in its report to the NVAO. Aside from the institutional quality assurance audit, VU Amsterdam will continue to implement the measures agreed upon with NVAO in 2016. A third round of midterm reviews will be held, involving 37 degree programmes. In summer 2016, after the completion of the third round of midterm reviews, the tool used to implement the reviews will be evaluated and modified where necessary. Other measures include asking all recent graduates to fill out study programme evaluations, keeping better track of alumni after graduation using the VU Alumni Monitor, and continuing to develop tools for risk management in education. When using these tools, the university must also keep in mind the changes that are needed to the culture of quality and the importance of so-called soft controls.

The second priority for education in 2016 is improving students' academic success. VU Amsterdam will continue to support faculty measures designed to strengthen the quality of education and study advice, as well as to impress upon students the importance of taking personal responsibility for their studies. The university is currently implementing recommendations gleaned from research into student analytics and is striving to improve coordination and integration throughout students' careers, from registration all the way through to graduation. To aid in this process, VU Amsterdam will partner up with Deloitte to develop Student Analytics into a practical, evidence-based tool. During the development phase, preparations will be made to enable VU Amsterdam staff members to implement the tool independently starting in 2017.

Well-trained and highly motivated lecturers are crucial to students' academic success. For this reason, professional development for lecturers will remain an important area of focus. To accomplish this, VU Amsterdam will offer a course on Educational Leadership in 2016. Plans are also underway to develop a basic qualification for examination for lecturers (basiskwalificatie examinering). Implementation of the Teaching Performance Framework will continue as well, in close consultation with the various faculties. The third priority for education is increasing social involvement and commitment among our students and degree programmes. After taking stock of the existing community service activities undertaken within the various degree programmes, efforts are now underway to expand these activities to other programmes. On the basis of a successful pilot programme carried out last year among post-graduate students in the Governance for Society profile theme, the possibility of implementing that particular community service model in the other three post-graduate profile themes is being examined. Finally, the pre-university college initiative will undergo further development, as will collaboration with the University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences and InHolland University of Applied Sciences in the beta partners programme, designed to encourage interest in science and technology among secondary school students.

Priorities for Research in 2016

The top research priority for 2016 will be to improve organizational structure. The manner in which research is organized at VU Amsterdam, both within the specific disciplines and across the university as a whole, will be examined. Throughout this process, the structure and further professionalization of the Graduate Schools will also be taken into account. In order to achieve a transparent and effective structure, particular attention is necessary for the collaboration with the University

of Amsterdam, the organization of the Graduate Schools and the profile themes.

The second priority for research is quality assurance. In 2015, the five Amsterdam-based knowledge institutes came together to choose a cen-

tral research information management system following a European tender. The winning system, known as Pure, will be jointly implemented in 2016, and will be ready to generate reports in 2017. In 2016, an evaluation of VU Amsterdam's quality assurance protocol for research will also take place.

The third priority for research in 2016 is valorization and profiling. The profile themes will be further expanded and efforts will be made to increase the quality and scope of technology exchange with the other Amsterdam-based knowledge institutes under the banner of the Innovation Exchange

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE	ACTUAL	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
	2015	2016	2017	2018
Government contribution	302.4	295.6	294.8	295.9
Other government contributions	0.2	-	-	-
Tuition fees, course fees & examination fees	47.3	44.6	48.0	50.6
Income from third parties	85.8	84.8	85.1	85.8
Other income	52.7	54.8	59.5	62.5
Total income	488.4	479.8	487.4	494.9
Staffing expenses	340.9	317.4	311.9	307.0
Depreciation	32.4	44.2	51.7	56.7
Accommodation expenses	38.1	39.2	37.6	37.7
other expenses	86.8	70.3	72.4	79.1
Total expenses	498.2	471.1	473.7	480.5
Operation result	-9.8	8.7	13.7	14.4
Financial income and expenses	2.5	-6.7	-9.6	-10.4
Balance of exceptional income and expenses	-	-	-	-
Result	-7.3	2.0	4.1	4.0
BALANCE SHEET	ACTUAL	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
	2015	2016	2017	2018
ASSETS				
<i>Intangible fixed assets</i>	22.7	23.7	24.7	25.7
<i>Tangible fixed assets</i>	511.6	566.2	597.0	586.2
<i>Financial fixed assets</i>	5.9	5.4	4.9	4.4
Total fixed assets	540.2	595.3	626.6	616.3
<i>Inventory</i>	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
<i>Receivables</i>	70.8	70.8	70.8	70.8
<i>Stocks and shares</i>	-	-	-	-
<i>Cash and cash equivalents</i>	9.7	-	-	9.3
Total current assets	81.5	71.8	71.8	81.1
Total assets	621.7	667.1	698.4	697.4
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES				
<i>General reserve</i>	208.2	209.2	212.3	215.3
<i>Allocated reserves</i>	-	-	-	-
<i>Other reserves</i>	23.0	24.0	25.0	26.0
Total equity capital	231.2	233.2	237.3	241.3
Provisions	36.9	32.0	27.1	27.1
Long-term liabilities	165.0	198.7	228.4	240.4
Current liabilities	188.6	203.2	205.6	188.6
Total liabilities	621.7	667.1	698.4	697.4

Note: In 2016 (€13.8m) and 2017 (€12.6m), VU Amsterdam is expected to have a negative liquidity position. In accordance with regulations, this is recorded under 'current liabilities' using the existing revolving credit facility.

Amsterdam (IXA). The valorization strategies of VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam are primarily focused on encouraging collaboration between researchers and businesses in key valorization areas, using input from dedicated business developers. Together with the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), VU Amsterdam is currently developing a set of valorization indicators. In 2016, these indicators will be used to generate a report regarding the efforts made by VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam in the area of valorization and highlighting the results achieved thus far. The final priorities in the area of research are the PhD policies and professorship policies. In 2016, the registration process will be digitized and a new system, which replaces Prosys, will be implemented. A guide to the nomination of professors (*Hand-leiding voordrachten tot Hoogleraar*) will also be implemented, and the new Doctorate Regulations and the PhD training course will be evaluated.

Long-term perspective

VU Amsterdam's financial policy helps to determine its long-term perspective. The university's financial policy is characterized by the following:

- Structurally balanced budgets and ratios that meet the demands of internal and external auditors
- Positive operating results within all units
- The use of reserve assets must follow the guidelines set forth in the VU reserve policy
- Changes in revenue from government funding and tuition fees must be reflected in the budgets for teaching and research; in other words, a decrease in government funding means a decrease in the budgets for teaching, research and operations management
- Budgets for operations management and accommodation are determined by VU Amsterdam itself based on internal regulations, and are assessed regularly to ensure that

they conform to market values as compared to other, similar organizations

Starting in 2016, the budgeted operating result for VU Amsterdam will be positive once more. In order to improve VU Amsterdam's capital position and the associated funding ratios, a structural operating surplus of roughly 1.5% will be targeted.

Future developments in the various income and expenditure categories are outlined below.

Future developments in government contribution

In the section of the 2016 Annual Plan dealing with long-term predictions, a slight decrease in VU Amsterdam's share of government contribution was projected for the years 2016-2018. This predicted decrease was linked to an expected decrease in VU Amsterdam's market share, based on provisional funding data for 2017. Since then, an updated version of the funding data has become available in which it appears that the university's share in research funding is actually somewhat greater than was predicted.

Performance-based funding and profile funding were assumed, based on first-order approximations, to continue into 2017 and beyond. However, this depends on the results of a review of current performance agreements between the Ministry of Education and the Dutch universities. This review is, in

turn, based on the final report on current performance agreements, using the results for the 2015 financial year.

Student loans and pre-investments in boosting education quality

From 2018 onwards, it is presumed that VU Amsterdam will receive a proportionate share of the extra resources that will be made available for boosting the quality of higher education in the Netherlands (in accordance with the new student loan regulations). Based on current information, VU Amsterdam expects to receive a share of around €7m in 2018. According to the current schedule, this amount will gradually increase over the years that follow, until reaching more than €20m in or around 2024. Until the amounts and spending requirements for these resources are finalized, VU Amsterdam will reserve these funds strictly for their intended purpose. This means that the funds will be added to VU Amsterdam's central policy fund. The funds will amount to approx. €14m in 2016, €10m in 2017 and €17m in 2018 (including the portion allocated for student loans).

In the meantime, before the additional funds generated by the student loan system become available, the universities and universities of applied sciences have agreed to collectively pre-invest at least €200m of their own resources for improvements to education in the years 2015-2017. The costs associated with these pre-investments are included in the 2016 budget and the 2017 forecast. The amounts are indicated in the table below:

PRE-INVESTMENTS IN VU AMSTERDAM EDUCATION QUALITY 2015-2017 (in millions)	ACTUAL 2015	BUDGET 2016	PROJECTED 2017
Quality of education	8.7	6.7	8.7
Improvements to education-oriented research	6.5	6.5	6.5
Modern infrastructure and learning environment	8.4	21.0	13.8
Total pre-investments in education quality	23.6	34.2	29.0

Please note: As the 2017 Annual Plan and Budget have not yet been finalized, the figures for 2017 are subject to change.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS PER ACADEMIC YEAR	FINAL 2014/2015	FINAL 2015/2016	PROJECTED 2016/2017	PROJECTED 2017/2018	PROJECTED 2018/2019
Regular students (statutory rate)	22,206	21,446	21,765	22,522	22,409
Amsterdam University College	353	341	353	353	353
Pre-Master's programme	747	698	631	619	606
Institutional rate: non-EER	196	263	316	410	410
Institutional rate: 2 nd diploma	182	213	213	213	213
Total	23,684	22,961	23,278	24,117	23,991

CONVERSION TO FINANCIAL YEARS (4/12* T-1+ 8/12 * T)	FINAL 2015	PROJECTED 2016	PROJECTED 2017	PROJECTED 2018
Regular students	21,953	21,552	22,017	22,484
Amsterdam University College	349	345	353	353
Pre-Master's programmes	731	676	627	614
Institutional rate: non-EER	218	281	347	410
Institutional rate: 2 nd diploma	192	213	213	213
Total	23,443	23,067	23,558	24,075

TUITION FEES	ACTUAL 2015	FORECAST 2016	FORECAST 2017	FORECAST 2018
Regular students	1,921	1,959	1,999	2,039
Amsterdam University College	4,076	4,162	4,299	4,441
Pre-Master's (based on 45 ECs)	1,921	1,959	1,999	2,039
Institutional rate (average)	9,940	10,139	10,342	10,549

INCOME FROM TUITION FEES	ACTUAL 2015	FORECAST 2016	FORECAST 2017	FORECAST 2018
Regular students	42,171,073	42,230,074	44,003,936	45,835,725
Amsterdam University College	1,422,524	1,436,023	1,517,371	1,567,486
Pre-Master's programmes	1,403,611	1,324,138	1,253,339	1,252,678
Institutional rate (average)	4,082,138	5,003,954	5,793,021	6,574,659
Refunds	-3,931,417	-4,088,908	-4,175,926	-4,267,633
Non-recurring income	1,100,000	0	0	0
Other income (incl. contract education)	405,000	400,000	400,000	400,000
Margin	647,792	0	-750,000	-750,000
Total income	47,300,720	46,305,280	48,041,740	50,612,914

Future developments in tuition fees

A slight increase in the total number of registered students is expected in relation to actual figures for the 2015/2016 academic year. The following are the projected student numbers per year and the associated revenues from tuition fees. For the sake of clarity, all figures have been converted from academic years to financial years.

The following factors were taken into consideration when calculating the projected student numbers.

Under the supervision of a working group dedicated to improving enrolment, a tool was developed to help faculties make choices that will increase the quantity and quality of enrolment, as well as the number of students who successfully complete a degree programme. This will have the added benefit of increasing the amount of government funding received by the university. The tool consists of a dashboard that displays data about student enrolment and academic success, as well as the impact these figures have

on government funding. VU Amsterdam faculties can use this dashboard to aid them in making evidence-based policy decisions. In April, workshops will be organized in each of the faculties in order to further develop faculty-specific enrolment scenarios.

When considering the financial implications of these enrolment scenarios, a distinction must be made between the effects on tuition fees and the effects on government funding.

Changes to amounts and types of enrolment will have an immediate impact on income from tuition fees, while the effects on government funding will only be felt after several years.

This means that measures designed to impact enrolment in the 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 academic years may affect tuition fees in the budgetary period up to and including 2018, but that changes to government funding levels will only be noticeable from 2019 onwards.

In the 2016/2017 academic year, enrolment figures are expected to recover after experiencing a dip in 2015 (300 fewer first-year students; roughly 7% of Bachelor's programme enrolment) due to limitations on enrolment (*numerus fixus*) for the Health Sciences and Health and Life degree programmes. As of the 2016/2017 academic year, these programmes no longer place any limitations on enrolment. The financial effects of increased enrolment on VU Amsterdam's share in external education funding after 2018 will be analysed at a later date.

Through cooperation with the 50 most important 'suppliers' of secondary school (VWO) students, VU Amsterdam expects to achieve an increase in enrolment of around 500 first-year students (roughly 10% of Bachelor's programme enrolment) for the 2017/2018 academic year. When it comes to tuition fees, this increase in enrolment will have an impact on the 2017 and 2018 budgets; when it comes to VU Amsterdam's share in government funding, the impact will only be felt from 2019 onwards.

Within the enrolment scenarios, particular attention was given to measures to increase international student registration, including non-EEA students. For the purposes of this section on continuity, a conservative projection of 50 new non-EEA students in 2016/2017 (increasing income from tuition fees by €0.5m) and 150 new non-EEA students in 2017/2018 (increasing income from

tuition fees by €1.5m) was used, with additional costs to be specified in the future.

Another area that received particular attention is the optimization of the pre-Master's programmes through the use of best practices. Several of the faculties have successfully introduced higher fees for the pre-Master's programmes that cover the true cost of the programme. This practice will also be introduced in the remaining faculties. While this should have a positive effect on the university's finances, it has not yet been taken into account in budgetary projections.

Other enrolment scenarios and their potential financial consequences must be analysed further within the faculties, and will therefore be excluded from the 2017 and 2018 forecasts. While they could potentially have a limited effect on tuition fees in 2017 and 2018, these scenarios are primarily of interest for their potential to effect an increase in government funding from 2019 onwards.

The following are a number of assumptions on which the projections of student numbers and revenues from tuition fees are based:

- The introduction of the new student loan system will have a neutral effect on the number of students registering for a Bachelor's or Master's degree
- The admission requirements for the pre-Master's programmes will lead to a further decline in the number of pre-Master's students (-10% in

2016/2017, with a decrease of 2.5% in each of the following years)

- Student numbers will remain constant for the Netherlands as a whole
- Negative recommendations on the continuation of studies (BSA) and the rising cost of education will shorten the duration of studies for some students (-0.5% per year)

Future developments in income from third parties

According to conservative estimates, income from third parties is expected to stabilize at 2015 levels.

Future developments in other income

Income from other sources is expected to increase from 2017 onwards, largely due to a projected increase in rental income from new properties, such as the O|2 building.

The number of available FTEs for academic staff is expected to decline as a result of decreasing student numbers and reductions in government funding for teaching and research. If student enrolment were to stabilize or increase once more, then FTEs for academic staff should theoretically follow suit. However, this relationship is not quite as linear as it might first appear.

The decrease in the number of FTEs for support and management staff is in line with expectations, and is related to measures taken as part of the Operations Programme that began in 2010. A decrease in the number of FTEs also means a decrease in staffing expenses.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN FTE

	2016 projected	2017 projected	2018 projected
FTE Academic staff	2,216	2,164	2,143
FTE Support and management staff	1,403	1,351	1,338
Total FTE	3,619	3,515	3,481

Expected developments in staffing expenses include:

- A reduction in additions to the provision for the reorganization of operations management from €4m in 2015 to zero in 2016-2018
- Additions to the newly-created provision for transition payments, as well as the expenses included in operations in 2015 and the coming years, together totalling roughly €1.6m
- Additional expenses amounting to roughly €0.4m, resulting from compensation paid to staff members who earn more than €100,000 per year
- A decrease in non-payroll staff expenses from €29.3m in 2015 to approx. €14.6m in 2016 and €12.4m in 2017 and 2018, as ongoing operations management projects gradually wind down
- Increased staffing expenses resulting from Collective Labour Agreements

The categorization used in the table differs from that recommended in the *Regeling jaarverslaggeving onderwijs* (the Annual Accounts Regulations for the Education Sector). In distinguishing between academic staff and support staff, VU Amsterdam sought to analyse the data within the management framework employed by the university. Financial ratios for Management/Board and teaching staff are not registered. Current policies regarding external hiring, which aim to keep expenses for non-payroll staff to no more than 10% of total staffing expenses, will remain in place for 2016. In 2016, non-payroll staff expenses are budgeted at €14.6m. This represents 4.6% of total budgeted staffing expenses. In 2017 and 2018, this percentage will decrease to 4.0%.

Future developments in accommodation expenses and depreciation

Accommodation expenses and depreciation are expected to increase due to the ongoing investments in accommodation (O12 building, the Main Building,

NU.VU). Depreciation will also rise as a result of investments in the Operations Programme and the Education Agenda.

Future developments in financial income and expenses

Financial expenses are expected to increase due to the ongoing invest-

ments in accommodation (O12 building, the Main Building, NU.VU). The interest rate risk is hedged.

Future developments to financial covenants

EIB and bank consortium covenants
Included in the finance contracts

FIGURE 1: VU SOLVENCY RATIO 2015 – 2018

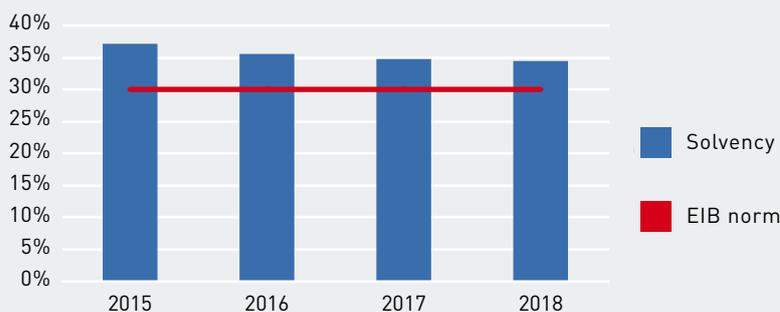


FIGURE 2: VU LOAN TO VALUE 2015 – 2018



FIGURE 3: VU DEBT SERVICE COVERAGE RATIO 2015 – 2018



signed with the European Investment Bank and other financial institutions were a number of quantitative covenants based on financial ratios. The following graphs show the three most significant financial ratios: the solvency ratio (37.2%), Loan to Value (26.2%) and the Debt Service Coverage Ratio (1.9).

These ratios are all expected to remain within the norms stipulated in the finance contracts for the period from 2015 to 2018. Future financial ratios were calculated on the basis of the long-term budget, in which future investments and budget cuts are outlined.

Financial indicators used by the Inspectorate of Education

The Dutch Inspectorate of Education uses three key financial indicators to assess risks to institutions' financial continuity. The following graphs show VU Amsterdam's financial ratios for these three indicators: solvency (43.1%), current ratio (0.42) and profitability (-1.5%).

The Solvency II ratio is expected to remain above the Inspectorate of Education's minimum threshold for the period from 2015 to 2018. At this time, the current ratio falls below the Inspectorate's minimum threshold of 0.50. Liquidity is expected to continue to decline slightly over the next several years, before returning to levels above the Inspectorate's threshold in 2018. VU Amsterdam has access to a revolving credit facility and sufficient external funding, which provides the university with a comfortable liquidity margin in the coming years. Profitability is expected to remain above the Inspectorate of Education's minimum threshold for the period from 2016 to 2018. In 2015, profitability was negative, as projected in the budget. This is largely due to expenses relating to the reorganization of operations management, which was completed in 2015.

Investments and accommodation policy

The buildings that make up the VU Amsterdam campus were built during the 1960s and 1970s, and have since become outdated and inefficient. In addition, the current real estate portfolio was assembled based on student numbers from the 1990s and was intended to support roughly 12,500 students. Since then, the student population has nearly doubled. In 2011, VU Amsterdam developed a master plan to transform the building complex into a unified campus. This process will involve investments totalling nearly €450m over the period from 2012 to 2022. The investment plan is subjected to an annual reassessment in order to incorporate new developments, including changing student numbers, new forms

FIGURE 4: VU SOLVENCY RATIO 2015 – 2018

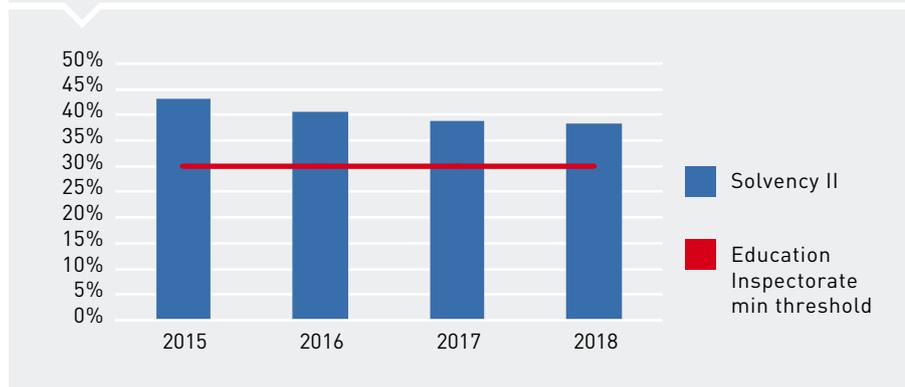


FIGURE 5: VU CURRENT RATIO 2015-2018

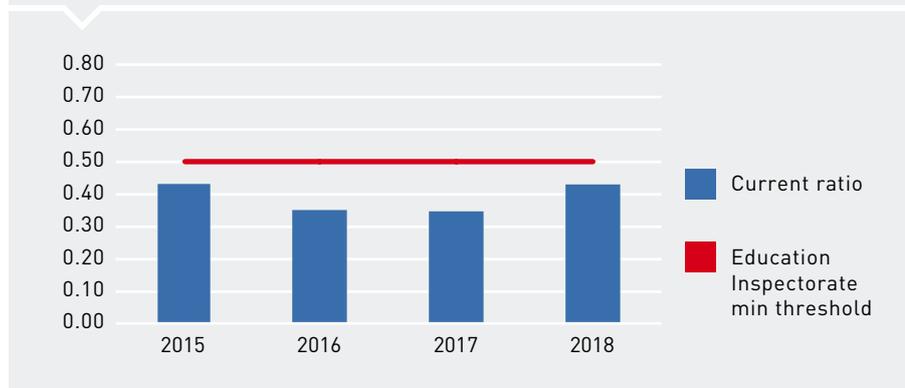
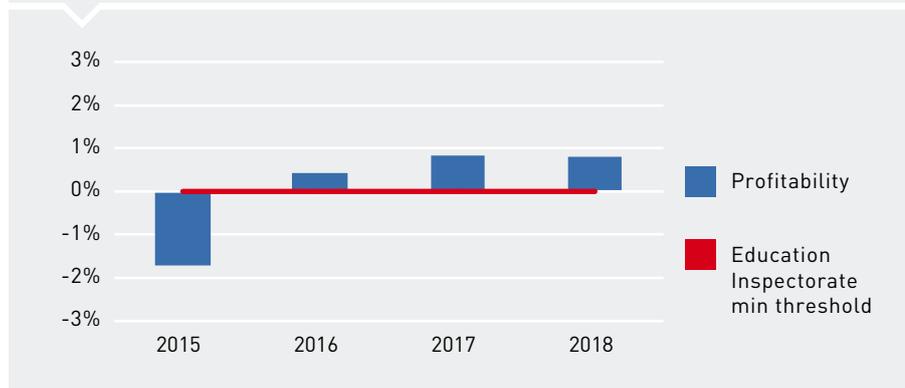


FIGURE 6: VU PROFITABILITY 2015 – 2018



of education such as distance learning, and collaboration with the University of Amsterdam and other educational institutions.

A large part of the €450m needed from 2012 to 2022 for the Campus Investment Programme will be financed using the university's own resources. To cover the remaining amount, VU Amsterdam has signed finance contracts with a number of banks for a total of €230m. According to current projections, VU Amsterdam will only need to draw a portion of this amount – roughly €125m – in order to finance campus investment. Furthermore, these loans will only come into play after 50% of the investments have already been financed using VU Amsterdam's own funds. During the construction process, there will be a reduction in the amount of available space on campus, and accommodation expenses will be set at maximum levels (approx. 14% of total costs) for an extended period. This increase in accommodation expenses will have to be compensated for, and financed by, a structural reduction in expenses relating to supporting processes. In order to achieve this reduction, VU Amsterdam has made substantial investments in operations management over the last several years.

The Campus Investment Programme is divided into a number of distinct phases with clear 'go/no-go' and 'on hold' moments. The university has carefully avoided entering into any commitments that could potentially trigger chain reactions of investment obligations that would last months, or even years.

In addition to the investments in campus construction and renovation, VU Amsterdam also invests in a number of related areas: research infrastructure (particularly within the faculties), improvements to the quality of teaching and research (within the service departments), and the replacement and/or expansion of IT facilities. VU Amsterdam has a long-term invest-

INVESTMENTS	ACTUAL	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET
	2015	2016	2017	2018
Land	-	-	-	-
Buildings	24.0	18.4	14.0	24.5
Buildings under construction	50.5	68.4	57.5	17.4
Inventory and equipment	4.0	12.0	11.0	4.0
Total tangible fixed assets	78.5	98.8	82.5	45.9
Software	7.3	1.0	1.0	1.0
Total intangible fixed assets	7.3	1.0	1.0	1.0
Total investments	85.8	99.8	83.5	46.9

ment budget that allows a great degree of flexibility and room to manoeuvre. Potential investments are critically evaluated on a case-by-case basis in terms of their utility, necessity, expected returns, amount and timing. From this broader perspective, and taking into account the available resources, a final decision will be made on whether or not to implement proposed projects.

The table above displays the most recent data on VU Amsterdam's investment budget (excluding investments in the Schoolwerktuinen location).

Investments in the Schoolwerktuinen location are not included in the figures shown here, as the final decision regarding this investment will only be made once funding has been arranged. The total cost of investment for this location amounts to €65.5m, of which €3.7m in 2017 and €14.3m in 2018. Decisions about planning and financing methods are expected to be made in 2016.

VU Amsterdam has introduced a number of control measures in order to monitor investments and construction costs:

- The Audit Committee was expanded by the Supervisory Board to become the Audit and Accommodation Committee in order to better supervise construction and renovation plans
- Participation groups will have their own Accommodation Committee so that they may be more closely

involved in accommodation plans

- A Treasury Committee was established in late 2015 and was tasked with submitting monthly liquidity reports to the Executive Board and Supervisory Board
- Investment decisions that involve entering into financial obligations are determined monthly, with the help of the Treasury Committee's reports; decisions about whether or not to invest are based in part on the amount of funding available

Additional reports

Risk management and risk control systems at VU Amsterdam

Risk management is an important concern at VU Amsterdam and forms an integral part of the administrative dialogue and of the planning and control cycle. This issue is discussed in more detail in Chapter 10 of this report. For the purposes of this section on continuity, the most important aspects of risk management will be outlined briefly below.

At VU Amsterdam, risks are not seen as something to be avoided at all costs, but rather as something to be managed.

Dealing sensibly with risks is an important part of a controlled, deliberate approach to achieving objectives. VU Amsterdam's risk management framework covers the following categories:

- Culture and behaviour: The university strives to foster a culture in which people take responsibility

for their own actions, trust each other and call one another to account when necessary.

- **Strategic goals:** The university views risk as an event that can get in the way of achieving objectives. The formulation of clear objectives is therefore fundamental to risk management. VU Amsterdam's objectives are outlined in the Strategic Plan and in the annual plans.
- **Discussions on risk:** Highlighting and discussing risks relating to objectives, performance and control is an integral part of periodic administrative consultations between faculties and service departments at VU Amsterdam.
- **Processes and procedures:** Risk management is further ensured by a system of controls and audits. The annual plans of each unit contain sections describing potential risks that could arise during the planning and control cycle, and how to manage these risks.

Primary risk categories

VU Amsterdam divides risks into three main categories:

- **Strategy risks**, which relate to the pursuit of strategic goals
- **Preventable risks**, which arise within the organization and concern continuity and operational processes
- **External risks**, which are caused by events from outside the organization

Each risk category requires a different approach. In practice, risks may also involve more than of the above categories.

The six most important points concerning risk management are currently:

- Long-term strategic plans (strategy risk)
- Organizational changes (strategy risk)
- Management and distribution of information (preventable risk)
- IT infrastructure (preventable risk)
- Allocation of government education expenditure (external risk)

- External funding for research (external risk)

The Executive Board and faculty deans are responsible for carrying out a number of strategic analyses. These analyses allow them to make informed choices and provide financial leeway for accomplishing the goals set out in the VU Strategic Plan 2015-2020. There is a strong correlation between these subjects and a number of the risks outlined above. The results of the strategic analyses are therefore crucial to the further development of risk control measures.

In total, 15 key university-wide risks have been identified. These risks and their accompanying risk-control measures are explored in more detail in Chapter 10 of this report.

11.6 TRANSPARENCY IN FUNDING

This section describes the ways in which VU Amsterdam deals with the topics set out in the memorandum issued by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science entitled Transparency in higher education funding in the Netherlands (Helderheid in de bekostiging van het hoger onderwijs).

- *Participation of university personnel in degree programmes:*
VU Amsterdam does not offer tuition assistance or reimbursement of tuition fees to staff members participating in an initial degree programme.
- *Outsourcing of CROHO-registered degree programmes*
 - VU Amsterdam did not outsource any registered degree programmes to private organizations or other institutions in 2015, either in full or in part.
 - VU Amsterdam does not offer modules within CROHO degree programmes in the form of 'learning paths' with separate certificates. Naturally, the university does offer

courses for non-student visitors, but these courses are not part of the standard programme of study.
- VU Amsterdam does not allow students to participate in degree programmes other than the ones for which they have registered.

- *Investment of public funding in private sector activities*
VU Amsterdam did not use any government funding for private sector activities in 2015. No public-private arrangements were made in the area of education.
- *Granting of exemptions*
At VU Amsterdam, the granting of exemptions is only possible on an individual basis, at the student's request. Exemptions are granted by the Examination Board on the basis of criteria stipulated in the Academic and Examination Regulations. Documentation can be found in student files.
- *Funding for foreign students*
At VU Amsterdam, foreign students may only register for a degree programme if they meet all registration criteria. Registered students are only eligible for funding if they fully comply with the laws and regulations on this matter.
- *Exchange students*
Foreign students who only participate in a portion of a degree programme will be enrolled as a contract student in accordance with the relevant university regulations.
- *Payment of tuition fees by someone other than the student*
Enrolment procedures at VU Amsterdam are in compliance with the relevant laws and regulations. Apart from grants awarded from the Student Financial Support Fund (profielingsfonds), VU Amsterdam does not use any government funding to reimburse students for tuition fees in any way. In the event that a student's tuition fees are paid

by a third party, this will be indicated on the authorization form provided by the student.

- *Grants awarded from the Student Financial Support Fund*

Student grants are awarded in accordance with laws and regulations concerning higher education. The specific situations in which a student may be eligible for a student grant include:

- Extenuating circumstances and/or exceptional talents. This can include circumstances beyond the student's control (force majeure) such as illness and family-related issues, as well as participation in sport and cultural activities at a national, international or professional level.
- Serving on the board of student associations and societies or other approved organizations.
- Serving in participatory and/or advisory bodies at VU Amsterdam (University Student Council, Faculty Student Council, Programme Committees, Introduction Committee, etc.).

The Student Financial Support Fund totals €1m and is currently underspent. In September 2015, the Student Financial Support Scheme was modified to incorporate a number of changes and new initiatives. These changes are expected to lead to an eventual increase in the amount of funds awarded. In

2015, grants from the Student Financial Support Fund were awarded to three non-EER students, amounting to a total of €1,581.

- *Custom programmes for businesses and other organizations*

In 2015, VU Amsterdam did not offer any custom programmes for businesses or other organizations.

- *Valorization*

The VU/VUmc office of the Innovation Exchange Amsterdam (IXA) is the valorization centre for VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam. IXA provides support and guidance to enterprising researchers who wish to generate societal and economic impact from their work, a process known as valorization. IXA can assist researchers in a variety of areas: negotiations, drawing up contracts, patenting and licensing inventions, founding a company and related activities such as carrying out market analyses, developing a business plan, etc. The results are accounted for by Ooijevaar Holding, a company affiliated with VU Amsterdam. More detail on this subject is provided in the VU Amsterdam financial statements. For the purposes of this section on transparency in funding, it is important to note that no public funds are used for private sector activities.

Category	Amount
Exceptional circumstances	127.539
Board membership	298.736
Participatory/advisory body membership	265.050
Total	691.325



12

FACTS AND FIGURES

12.1 FUNDING DATA

Enrolment

Student enrolment figures refer to the number of students still within their nominal study duration for whom government funding will be received in 2017.

There are three different levels of enrolment-based government funding, depending on the type of degree

programme: Low-level funding (L) for degree programmes in the humanities and social sciences, High-level funding (H) for science and engineering programmes, and Top-level funding (T) for medical programmes. These programmes are funded in a ratio of 1 : 1.5 : 3.

The table below displays the provisional number of government-funded

student enrolments for the 2017 budgetary year (based on the number of enrolments in the 2015/2016 academic year, as reported on 1 October 2015). For comparison purposes, the actual number of government-funded student enrolments for the 2016 budgetary year is shown alongside (based on the number of enrolments in the 2014/2015 academic year, as reported on 1 October 2014).

Faculty	Funding level	2015/2016 academic year (provisional)			2014/2015 academic year (actual)		
		BA	MA	Total	BA	MA	Total
Theology	L	43	55	98	56	48	104
Law	L	757	600	1,357	791	467	1,258
Humanities	L	300	193	493	351	227	578
Medicine	T	938	983	1,921	834	907	1,741
Medicine	H		70	70		64	64
Dentistry	T	137	177	314	132	187	319
Sciences	H	1,105	486	1,591	1,093	509	1,602
Earth and Life Sciences	H	1,362	695	2,057	1,613	765	2,378
Economics and Business Administration	L	1,403	916	2,319	1,489	939	2,428
Social Sciences	L	812	605	1,417	907	474	1,381
Behavioural and Movement Sciences	L	697	420	1,117	739	469	1,208
Behavioural and Movement Sciences	H	359	226	585	388	255	643
Amsterdam University College	H	332		332	333		333
Total		8,245	5,426	13,671	8,726	5,311	14,037
Enrolment per funding level							
Top-level funding	T	1,075	1,160	2,235	966	1,094	2,060
High-level funding	H	3,158	1,477	4,635	3,427	1,593	5,020
Low-level funding	L	4,012	2,789	6,801	4,333	2,624	6,957
Total		8,245	5,426	13,671	8,726	5,311	14,037

12.2 RESEARCH

OUTPUT 2015	Dissertations	Specialist Publ.	Scientific Publ.	Total
Faculties				
Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences	60	31	976	1,067
Faculty of Economics and Business Administration	27	224	387	638
Faculty of Sciences	47	4	701	752
Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences	47	93	875	1,015
Faculty of Humanities	13	33	274	320
Faculty of Theology	20	161	147	328
Faculty of Law	17	210	388	615
Faculty of Social Sciences	31	94	364	489
VU University Medical Center	165	290	3,089	3,544
Dentistry*	4	170	318	492
Total**	431	1,310	7,519	9,260

* Dentistry: 15 dissertations (11 UvA, 4 VU)
 ** The total is the sum of the figures for each faculty. Due to inter-faculty collaboration, it is possible that some publications (with the exception of dissertations) may have been counted twice.

FTE FOR RESEARCH IN 2015		Funding source		
Faculties	Government	Indirect	Commercial	Total
Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences	44.09	62.73	129.84	236.66
Faculty of Economics and Business Administration	82.97	21.21	29.08	133.26
Faculty of Sciences	119.57	105.5	78.24	303.31
Faculty of Humanities	38.07	39.2	17.87	95.14
Faculty of Theology	11.05	2.16	4.85	18.06
Faculty of Law	40.99	12.97	13.29	67.25
Faculty of Social Sciences	39.59	28.09	18.64	86.32
Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences	63.01	63.85	79.01	205.87
VU University Medical Center	253.98	108.17	343.68	705.83
Dentistry	38.6	4.95	28.1	71.65
Total	731.92	448.83	742.6	1,923.35

12.3 PERSONNEL

Absenteeism %	2015
VU:	2.8
Per unit	
1000 - Faculty of Theology	1.8
1300 - Faculty of Humanities	2.7
1400 - Faculty of Law	2.7
1600 - Academic Centre for Dentistry Amsterdam	6.2
2500 - Faculty of Behavioural and Movement Sciences	2.2
2600 - Faculty of Social Sciences	2.7
2700 - Faculty of Economics and Business Administration	1.7
2800 - Faculty of Sciences	1.3
2900 - Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences	2.2
4500 - VU Amsterdam Library	3.6
5000 - Executive Board	0.0
5200 - Centre for International Cooperation	2.7
5300 - Student & Educational Affairs	3.6
5500 - Communication & Marketing	3.3
5880 - Payroll bureau and centre	6.5
6000 - Information Technology	5.3
6600 - Corporate Real Estate and Facilities	4.8
7000 - Administration Office	4.4
7100 - HRM, Occupational Health, Safety and the Environment	6.0
7200 - Finance & Audit	6.9

Absenteeism statistics are registered centrally. In addition, VU Amsterdam occupational health physicians report in general terms on issues brought to their attention in the course of their practice.

General

From an occupational health perspective, it is worth noting that the various reorganizations continue to have an

impact on employee health. During occupational health consultations relating to sick leave and preventive care, employees speak of high workloads and uncertainty about their new roles and responsibilities.

Faculties

Within the faculties, occupational health physicians regularly see young researchers and lecturers who are

experiencing symptoms of a burnout or feel that they are at risk of a burnout. For researchers, deadlines are often reported as a major stress factor. Lecturers report having problems dealing with workloads that they perceive to be too high.

Service departments

In addition to the stress factors mentioned above, Support Services staff report that changes in management have led to instability and uncertainty within their departments.

Working conditions

Occupational health physicians have also received employee complaints about 'hot-desking' and flexible workspaces. The lack of a permanently assigned workspace can be a problem for some, and others report having difficulty concentrating due to office noise levels. VU Amsterdam also regularly receives employee complaints regarding the indoor climate of certain buildings.

Employees attending open consultation hours for issues relating to working conditions complain both of physical health issues, such as problems with their workstation layout or posture, and of mental health issues, such as work-related stress and symptoms of burnout.

Self-managed sick leave

A new model for dealing with sick leave, managed by the university itself rather than by third-party health and safety services, was introduced in 2015. In some cases, supervisors and staff still appear to be unsure of what is expected of them under this new model. As a result, employees needing to make use of sick leave may wait too long before approaching their occupational health physicians, or actions may be taken that are not in accordance with the Eligibility for Permanent Incapacity Benefit (Restrictions) Act. HRM and the Department of Occupational Health, Safety and Environment provide support and guidance to supervisors in fulfilling this role satisfactorily.

Staff Welfare Office

The Staff Welfare Office provides short-term counselling to employees who become, or are at risk of becoming, occupationally disabled due to psychosocial problems. The office also advises management on matters relating to this issue.

In 2015, 121 employees made use of the Staff Welfare Office's services, as opposed to 162 in the previous year. A total of 260 consultations took place (in 2014: 556).

34 employees (in 2014: 21) made appointments with the Staff Welfare Office after being referred by their supervisor or personnel consultant, and 78 made appointments after a referral by an occupational health physician (in 2014: 76). Five employees (in 2014: 53) got in touch with the Staff Welfare Office on their own initiative. A handful of employees were referred by the Career Centre, a confidential counselor or other means.

The problems reported include issues with the work itself (workload, job performance), working relationships (problems with cooperation and/or communication), working conditions (workstation layout, physical strain), employment terms and conditions, and

changes due to reorganization (positions being eliminated or revised).

In 23 cases, constituting 20.7% of employees with work-related problems, the Staff Welfare Office provided advice to the employee's management team (with or without consultation with the Social Medical Team).

Employees also came to the Staff Welfare Office with problems of a personal nature, including mental health issues, relationship problems, difficulties relating to work-life balance, financial difficulties, difficulties caring for ill or disabled family members, and social problems.

Risk inventory and evaluation (RI&E)

Risk inventories were carried out in two of the units in 2015. RI&E reports are designed to take stock of potential work-related risks. The first of the two risk inventories concerned the University Library, where there were concerns that certain tasks were too physically strenuous for library staff. The different sources of physical strain were systematically catalogued. Results will be available in the course of 2016.

At the request of the University Experimental Animal Center (UPC), the department of Occupational Health, Safety and the Environment carried out an additional RI&E focusing on potential allergens and on procedures to ensure a safe working environment. With the implementation of a new health monitoring system, the UPC aims to protect staff and other users by identifying potential allergy sensitization risks at an early stage.

Health and safety policy framework

As a result of increasing deregulation of health and safety legislation, VU Amsterdam decided to establish its own policy framework on the subject of health and safety. Both the existing legal framework and the current state of science and technology were taken into account. A draft of the framework was made available in 2015.

In this draft, VU Amsterdam outlines the primary ways in which the university works to ensure health and safety in each of a number of different areas. The draft also lists the most important points for supervisors and directors to consider and the ways in which these policy matters should be interpreted at the faculty level and across the university as a whole. Various parties, including the Staff Council's Committee for Safety, Health, Welfare and Environment (VGWM) and the Integrated Safety Management Committee, offered their feedback on the draft in 2015, in preparation for the official adoption of the policy framework, which is planned for 2016.

Ratio academic staff/support staff

A decrease in the total number of academic staff members from 2014 can be accounted for by decreases within three specific faculties: the Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences, the Faculty of Law, and the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. Within these three faculties, the decrease in academic staffing levels is the result of policy measures taken due to declines in revenue, or in anticipation thereof. In the Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences, a formal reorganization was necessary. The other faculties have begun taking steps to prepare for such an eventuality.

12.4 IN-HOUSE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

VU Amsterdam accident statistics in 2015

Introduction

Thanks to a combination of statistics compiled by the departments of HRM, Occupational Health, Safety and Environment (HRMAM) and data from the Syrus incident registration system, a more accurate overview of campus incidents is available for 2015 than for previous years. These incidents include matters of first aid, fires and social safety. More accurate incident reporting was also aided by the registration

of surveillance activities by campus security. HRMAM has access to Syrus, enabling a targeted analysis of fire-related and first-aid related incident registration. Syrus data has also enabled an analysis of social safety on campus for the first time.

Accidents reported by HRMAM:

31 in total, with 16 relating to first aid

Syrus incident registration:

164 accident/first aid

167 suspicious persons

18 threats

121 theft/burglary/vandalism

Academic Centre for Dentistry

Amsterdam (ACTA) reports:

23 first aid

15 needle-stick injuries

Serious accidents

While serious accidents are relatively rare, two incidents involving hazardous substances took place in close succession in 2015: a waste drum nearly exploded and a minute amount of an extremely toxic substance was released in one of the campus laboratories. In both cases, the In-house Emergency Response Team and the Operational Crisis team were called, as well as the fire department.

Based on available data, accidents do not appear to be a significant cause of absenteeism. Sadly, there was one fatality in 2015, when a staff member fell after becoming unwell. The incident was reported to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SZW). Another incident involved a visitor whose leg was broken after falling from the steps at the rear of the Main Building.

After questions arose regarding the use of the emergency number (112) in the case of serious accidents, it was decided that the VU internal alarm number should be dialled immediately after dialling 112 so that the campus operating centre knows to expect an ambulance and can provide access to secure areas if necessary.

Minor incidents

Minor incidents in which someone requires first aid or becomes unwell are more common. Campus security plays an active role in registering these incidents within Syrus and, when necessary, providing first aid or escorting injured parties to the VUmc Accident and Emergency Department or another destination. The majority of these minor incidents are not work-related and are not controllable or preventable.

Fires in waste bins are relatively common occurrences, though they are easily dealt with by campus security.

Emergencies caused by external factors

In the past year, two emergency situations arose that were caused by factors outside VU Amsterdam's control: a province-wide power outage and a burst water main on a public road near the Energy Centre and the Transitorium.

In both cases, the VU Operational Crisis Team, in-house emergency response team, and service department staff sprang into action, working tirelessly to minimize the damage to VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam.

Operational Crisis Team and Strategic Policy Team

The Operational Crisis Team (OCT) was mobilized four times in 2015, for flooding, a power outage and two incidents involving hazardous chemicals. The Strategic Policy Team (SBT) was not summoned at all in 2015, but was kept abreast of incidents when the OCT chairperson or in-house emergency response leader felt that was necessary.

All other incidents were handled by the in-house emergency response team and/or campus security.

In 2015, a 'table top exercise' was organized to help clarify the roles of Corporate Real Estate and Facilities,

Communication and Marking, HRMAM and the Executive Board in the event of a crisis. During the exercise, which involved simulating various emergency scenarios, the participants determined when the Strategic Policy Team should be notified, and what the Executive Board's role in this process should be.

Campus safety office and hotline for reporting incidents and accidents

In 2015, the campus safety office and hotline for reporting incidents and accidents expanded the types of incidents it handles to include those relating to social safety. The office also had its incident report form translated into English. These and other updates to the campus safety office and hotline were featured in the September 2015 edition of the personnel newsletter (VU-zine). Despite these new developments, however, there was no increase in the number of social safety-related incident reports filed in the year under review.



**SUMMARY OF
FINANCIAL
STATEMENTS 2015
VU AMSTERDAM**

This is a summary of the financial statements of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (hereinafter: VU Amsterdam) for 2015. The purpose of the summary is to provide a concise review of VU Amsterdam's results and other financial details for the general public. There are no generally applicable criteria for the presentation of this information in the Netherlands. The summary is derived from the complete financial statements for 2015 with the proviso that, in light of the purpose of the summary, the explanatory notes prescribed by the following sources are not all included: the *Regeling jaarverslaggeving onderwijs* (the Annual Accounts Regulations for the Education Sector), Part 9 of Book 2 of the Dutch Civil Code, Chapter 660 of the *Richtlijnen voor de jaarverslaggeving* (Dutch Standards on Auditing), the authoritative statements in the other chapters of the *Richtlijnen voor de jaarverslaggeving* (Dutch Standards on Auditing) and the *Wet normering bezoldiging topfunctionarissen publieke en semipublieke sector (WNT)*.

The external auditor issued an unqualified audit opinion on these financial statements on 17 June 2016. To form a sound judgment of VU Amsterdam's financial position and its results, this summary must be read in conjunction with the complete financial statements.

PRINCIPLES OF VALUATION OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AND DETERMINATION OF THE RESULT

GENERAL

Until 31 December 2015, VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam (VUmc) together constituted the VU-VUmc Foundation. Until that date, the VU-VUmc Foundation was the legal entity for the purposes of relations with other parties, including external financiers and the Tax and Customs Administration. VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam both operated under the

auspices of the VU-VUmc Foundation. The Board of the Foundation consisted of the members of the VU Amsterdam Executive Board and the VU University Medical Center Amsterdam Governing Board. VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam therefore constituted a single entity within the Foundation, which also meant that the risks of each of the institutions affected the other institution and the Foundation as a whole. The financial statements and management board reports of VU Amsterdam and VU University Medical Center Amsterdam should therefore be read in conjunction with each other for the period until 31 December 2015. The financial data of VU Amsterdam, VU Medical Center Amsterdam and their collective components are also reported in the financial statements of the VU-VUmc Foundation.

The splitting up of VU Amsterdam and VU Medical Center Amsterdam took effect on 1 January 2016, whereupon the VU-VUmc Foundation was renamed the VU Foundation and a separate VUmc Foundation was formed. The following business activities were transferred to the VUmc Foundation and will consequently no longer be carried on under the auspices of the VU Foundation: patient care under the *Wet Toelating Zorginstellingen* (Care Institutions Accreditation Act) (WTZi), medical training and medical scientific research. The separation of the activities was completed at the beginning of 2016. VU Amsterdam is an educational institution pursuant to the *Wet op Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek* (Higher Education and Research Act) and is required by that act to prepare its own financial statements.

VU Amsterdam has its registered office at De Boelelaan 1105 in Amsterdam. The operations and activities of VU Amsterdam consist of providing academic education and conducting scientific research. The financial statements for 2015 were approved by the VU Amsterdam Executive Board on 10 May 2016.

The financial statements were prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Regeling jaarverslaggeving onderwijs* (Annual Accounts Regulations for the Education Sector), Part 9 of Book 2 of the Dutch Civil Code, and chapter 660 of the *Richtlijnen voor de jaarverslaggeving* (Dutch Standards on Auditing) and the authoritative statements in the other chapters of the *Richtlijnen voor de jaarverslaggeving* (Dutch Standards on Auditing) and in accordance with the *Wet normering bezoldiging topfunctionarissen publieke en semipublieke sector (WNT)*.

All amounts quoted in this report are in euros. The amounts in the financial statements are reported in thousands of euros, unless otherwise specified.

Cash flow statement

The cash flow statement was prepared using the indirect method. For the purposes of the cash flow statement, the cash and cash equivalents consist of the liquid assets. Cash flows in foreign currencies have been converted at an estimated average exchange rate. Exchange rate differences on cash and cash equivalents are presented separately in the cash flow statement. Income and expenditure arising from interest, dividends received and taxation of profits are recognized under the cash flow from operational activities. Dividend payments are recognized under the cash flow from financing activities. The purchase price of the group company that was acquired is recognized under the cash flow from investment activities, in so far as it was paid in cash. The cash and cash equivalents held by the group company that was acquired were deducted from the purchase price. Transactions that involved no inflow or outflow of cash and cash equivalents have not been recognized in the cash flow statement.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2015 (AFTER APPROPRIATION OF PROFIT)
(in thousands of euros)

ASSETS	31-12-2015	31-12-2014
Fixed assets		
1.1 Intangible fixed assets	22,677	18,703
1.2 Tangible fixed assets	511,584	462,316
1.3 Financial fixed assets	5,895	5,842
Total fixed assets	540,156	486,861
Current assets		
1.4 Inventories	1,016	693
1.5 Receivables	70,771	78,806
1.6 Stocks and shares	-	-
1.7 Cash and cash equivalents	9,744	24,460
Total current assets	81,531	103,959
Total assets	621,687	590,820
EQUITY AND LIABILITY	31-12-2015	31-12-2014
2.1 Equity capital	231,228	238,528
2.2 Provisions	36,898	38,913
2.3 Long-term liabilities	164,955	124,727
2.4 Current liabilities	188,606	188,652
Total equity and liability	621,687	590,820

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
(in thousands of euros)

INCOME	ACTUAL 2015	BUDGET 2015	ACTUAL 2014
3.1 Government contribution	302,394	298,300	291,469
3.2 Other government contributions	173	-	286
3.3 Tuition fees, course fees and examination fees	47,282	45,300	43,228
3.4 Income from third parties	85,850	87,900	95,153
3.5 Other income	52,657	58,600	52,499
Total income	488,356	490,100	482,635
EXPENDITURE			
4.1 Staffing expenses	340,942	326,400	333,809
4.2 Depreciation	32,376	40,300	30,934
4.3 Accommodation expenses	38,126	40,600	38,496
4.4 Other expenses	86,749	89,300	90,240
Total expenses	498,193	496,600	493,479
Operating result	(9,837)	(6,500)	(10,844)
5 Financial income and expenses	1,690	(5,500)	(7,809)
Result	(8,147)	(12,000)	(18,653)
6 Taxes	-	-	-
7 Result of participations	848	-	(192)
Result after tax	(7,300)	(12,000)	(18,845)
8 Share of third parties in result	-	-	-
Net result	(7,300)	(12,000)	(18,845)

CASH FLOW STATEMENT
(in thousands of euros)

	2015	2014
CASH FLOW FROM OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES		
Balance of income and expenditure	(9,837)	(10,845)
4.2 Depreciation	32,376	30,934
2.2 Changes in provisions	(2,015)	8,314
Changes in current assets		
1.4 Inventories	(323)	(40)
1.5 Receivables	8,035	(1,008)
2.4 Liabilities	(46)	(1,861)
<i>Cash flow from business operations</i>	28,190	25,494
Financial result (including participation)	2,538	(8,001)
<i>Cash flow from operational activities</i>	30,728	17,493
CASH FLOW FROM INVESTMENT ACTIVITIES		
1.1 Investments in intangible fixed assets	(7,314)	(9,937)
1.1 Divestments of intangible fixed assets	70	-
1.2 Investments in tangible fixed assets	(78,463)	(124,577)
1.2 Divestments of tangible fixed assets	89	-
1.3 Investments in participations and/or joint ventures	(370)	4
Changes in loans	317	637
<i>Cash flow from investment activities</i>	(85,671)	(133,873)
CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
2.3 New loans / liabilities	44,050	101,311
2.3 Repayment of long-term liabilities	(3,822)	(33)
<i>Cash flow from financing activities</i>	40,228	101,278
Change in cash and cash equivalents	(14,716)	(15,102)
1.7 Cash and cash equivalents as at 1 January	24,460	39,562
Change in cash and cash equivalents	(14,716)	(15,102)
1.7 Cash and cash equivalents as at 31 December	9,744	24,460

NOTES TO THE BALANCE SHEET (in thousands of euros)

1.1 INTANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Acquisition cost	Cum, depreciation	Book value 01,01,2015	Invest, 2015	Divest, 2015	Depreciation 2015	Acquisition cost	Cum, depreciation	Book value 31,12,2015
Software	29,144	(10,441)	18,703	7,314	(70)	(3,271)	36,397	(13,720)	22,677

The investments in software relate to the implementation of applications and systems. A statutory reserve has been created for the book value at the end of 2015.

1.2 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Acquisition cost	Cum, depreciation	Book value 01,01,2015	Invest, 2015	Divest, 2015	Depreciation 2015	Acquisition cost	Cum, depreciation	Book value 31,12,2015
Land	28,033	-	28,033	-	-	-	28,033	-	28,033
Buildings	604,649	(363,825)	240,824	23,999	-	(23,849)	628,652	(387,678)	240,974
Fixed assets under construction and prepayments	178,450	-	178,450	50,445	-	-	228,895	-	228,895
	811,132	(363,825)	447,307	74,444	-	(23,849)	885,580	(387,678)	497,902
Inventory and equipment	97,257	(82,248)	15,009	4,019	(89)	(5,256)	90,520	(76,838)	13,682
TOTAL TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	908,389	(446,073)	462,316	78,463	(89)	(29,105)	976,100	(464,516)	511,584

The reconstruction value of the buildings and the appraised value for the purposes of Dutch property tax (*WOZ waarde*) of the buildings and land are reported as an indication of the fair value. The current reconstruction value on 31 December 2015 was appraised at €915.5 million, which is equal to the insured value. The appraised value for the purposes of Dutch property tax was fixed at €302 million on 1 January 2015.

The investments in land, buildings, work in progress and prepayments are largely related to the development of the campus on Boelelaan.

Some of the land on the Laan van Kronenburg in Amstelveen is held on a long-term lease; the ground rent is €0.9 million.

The item 'fixed assets under construction and prepayments' includes a sum of €4.8 million for capitalized staffing expenses.

In 2015, €7.3 million in interest on borrowings was capitalized as part of the acquisition cost. The interest is calculated on the interest owed on the loans taken out specifically for the redevelopment of the campus on the basis of the average cumulative investment in the financial year, having regard to the

portion that is financed with borrowed and equity capital. The interest is allocated to the point in time when the asset is ready for use. The interest rate is 6%.

In 2014 and 2015, fully depreciated inventory and equipment to a value of €10.7 million was no longer in use. Because the book value of these assets was fully depreciated, this had no financial effect on capital and result. This change was mistakenly not reported in the financial statements for 2014, the year in which assets worth just over €10 million were no longer being used.

1.3 FINANCIAL FIXED ASSETS

PARTICIPATIONS	Book value 01.01.2015	Investments	Divestments	Result participations	Book value 31.12.2015
ACTA Holding BV	67	-	-	22	89
WTCW*	416	-	(370)	(46)	-
VU-VUmc holding	321	-	-	872	1,192
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>804</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>(370)</i>	<i>848</i>	<i>1,281</i>
LOANS TO NON-CONSOLIDATED RELATED PARTIES					
Hendrik Brunsting Foundation	250	-	(20)	-	230
Bio Detection Systems BV	371	-	(57)	-	314
Loan to STEGA**	201	-	-	-	201
Provision for STEGA loan	(201)	-	-	-	(201)
Loan to SBT**	66	-	-	-	66
Preseeds financing	157	422	(280)	-	299
Miscellaneous	60	-	-	-	60
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>904</i>	<i>422</i>	<i>(357)</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>969</i>
Long-term receivable from OCW****	4,134	58	(547)	-	3,645
TOTAL FINANCIAL FIXED ASSETS	5,842	480	(1,274)	848	5,895

* WTCW = Science & Technology Center Watergraafsmeer

** STEGA = Skeletal Tissue Engineering Group Amsterdam

*** SBT = Special Care Dentistry Group

**** long-term receivable for one-off compensation from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) arising from the introduction of the Bachelor-Master structure, extending over a number of years

No securities were provided for the loans.

1.4 INVENTORIES

	31-12-2015	31-12-2014
Acquisition cost	1,016	693
Total inventories	1,016	693

The receivables from students concern future payments of tuition fees that are payable in instalments.

The accruals and deferred income are primarily items that have still to be invoiced arising from (contract) activities for third parties that have not yet been completed, for which a correction has been made for anticipated losses.

1.5 RECEIVABLES

	31-12-2015	31-12-2014
Trade receivables	17,230	17,308
Ministry of Education, Culture and Science Cash limitation	1,060	1,434
Students / course participants	16,689	15,970
Staff	284	612
Other receivables	964	832
Receivables from group companies	882	6,403
Prepaid expenses	5,753	5,447
Accruals and deferred income	3,573	4,515
Work for third parties still to be invoiced	25,768	27,081
Less: Provision for doubtful debts	(1,432)	(796)
Total receivables	70,771	78,806

Specification of work for third parties still to be invoiced	31.12.2015	31.12.2014
To be invoiced	26,198	27,443
Correction for anticipated losses	(430)	(362)
Total	25,768	27,081

1.7 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	31-12-2015	31-12-2014
Cash	16	18
Banks	(399)	1,942
Deposits	10,127	22,500
Total cash and cash equivalents	9,744	24,460

The receivables and prepayments and accrued income have a term to maturity of not more than 1 year.

The OCW cash limitation relates to the Government contribution that has still to be received and will be settled in a subsequent year.

The cash and cash equivalents and deposits are available immediately.

The share of partnerships in the cash and cash equivalents is €0.7 million.

2.1 EQUITY CAPITAL (including the proposed appropriation of the result)

	Reserves 31.12.2014	Appropriation of result	Other changes	Reserves 31.12.2015
Result in current book year				
General reserve	35,156	173,113	-	208,269
Allocated reserves (public)				
Reserve for Accommodation policy	109,200	(109,200)	-	-
Other allocated reserves	66,000	(66,000)	-	-
Allocated reserves (private)				
Reserve for land at Boelelaan	9,300	(9,300)	-	-
Statutory reserve for software development	18,703	3,974	-	22,677
Reserve for related parties	169	113	-	282
Total Equity capital	238,528	(7,300)		231,228

EQUITY CAPITAL

In accordance with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science's reporting guidelines (RJ 660), the equity capital is divided into a general reserve and allocated reserves. The allocated reserves

are subject to a self-imposed spending limitation. This spending limitation applies at both central and faculty level. Current insights dictated that the allocated reserves would be released

in 2015 and transferred to the general reserve via the appropriation of the result. VU Amsterdam's negative result of €7.3 million in 2015 was withdrawn from the reserves.

2.2 PROVISIONS

Staff-related provisions	31.12.2014	Additions/ (release)	With- drawals	Change in discount rate	31.12.2015	Short < 1 year	Longer > 1 year
Redundancy costs	6,411	3,378	(4,292)	16	5,513	2,039	3,474
Reorganization costs	14,433	3,904	(5,448)	-	12,889	4,900	7,989
Transition payments	-	1,554	-	-	1,554	-	1,554
Anniversary benefits	4,389	339	(339)	-	4,389	494	3,895
Sabbatical leave	2,947	539	(916)	-	2,570	573	1,997
Own risk under WIA	1,977	685	(751)	17	1,928	270	1,658
Other	-	62	-	-	62	62	-
subtotal	30,157	10,461	(11,746)	33	28,905	8,338	20,567
Provisions for property, plant and equipment							
Environmental obligations	7,821	180	(160)	-	7,841	-	7,841
Damage to ACTA's parking deck	400	(400)	-	-	-	-	-
Settlement Atria	504	-	(504)	-	-	-	-
Stichting Pro	-	152	-	-	152	152	-
Other	31	-	(31)	-	-	-	-
subtotal	8,756	(68)	(695)	-	7,993	152	7,841
Total provisions	38,913	10,393	(12,441)	33	36,898	8,490	28,408

STAFF-RELATED PROVISIONS

Provision for redundancy costs

A provision has been created for the anticipated payments to (former) employees under the terms of the Unemployment Regulation for Dutch Universities. The provision also covers obligations arising from individual redundancy schemes and related outplacement and retraining costs. The cash value was calculated using the 12-month Euribor rate on 31 December of the financial year (2015: 0.06%, 2014: 0.325%).

Provision for reorganization costs

A provision has been created for the obligations arising from the reorganization of a number of VU Amsterdam's organizational units, the plans for which were announced to the affected employees in 2014.

Provision for transition payments

A provision has been created for the obligations arising from the transition payments. Transition costs are expenses connected with measures designed to prevent or shorten the period of unemployment of employees with two or more years of service who are made redundant or are threatened with redundancy.

Provision for own risk under WIA
VU Amsterdam bears its own risk under the Work and Income (Capacity for Work) Act (WIA). The purpose of the own risk under WIA provision is to cover the cost of future payments of the employer's obligations to employees who are incapacitated for work on balance sheet date.

The cash value was calculated using the 12-month Euribor rate on 31 December of the financial year (2015: 0.06%, 2014: 0.325%).

Provision for anniversary benefits

A provision has been created for the employer's obligations to employees with regard to future anniversary benefits. The provision has been estimated as closely as possible on the basis of the workforce. The estimate takes

account of salary increases (above-inflation correction), incapacity for work and other benefits with any persons entering or leaving the service of the university.

Provision for sabbatical leave/long-term saving schemes

The provision for sabbatical leave has been created to meet future obligations relating to the employer's contributions during sabbatical leave.

PROVISIONS FOR PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Provision for environmental obligations

The provision for environmental obligations relates to demolition, removal and storage costs relating to the Cyclotron. The costs of demolishing buildings are based on an estimate made in 2002 by a specialist firm of consultants. The costs of removing and storing (slightly) radioactive materials are based on the estimates of experts, including a radiation expert. This estimate is revised annually. In 2015, research costs were charged to the provision.

The provision in its current form is the best possible estimate, but there is a margin of error in the size of the provision of +/- 25%.

Three scenarios for removal and storage were investigated in 2012. In consultation with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and the radiation expert, talks are being conducted with the intended purchasing party about the preferred scenario. The preparatory phase of the project will continue until the end of 2016; demolition, removal and storage are scheduled between 2018 and 2023.

Damage to the parking deck of the ACTA building

This provision was created to cover the estimated costs of repairing the parking deck of the ACTA building. The repairs were completed at the end of 2015 and the provision was used in full.

Other

Due to its nature, the provision of €535k at the beginning of 2015 was converted into a short-term liability in 2015. Because there were no uncertainties about the size or the time of payment of the liability at the end of 2015, this obligation is recognized as a short-term liability in the financial statements for 2015.

A new provision was also created in 2015 for the purposes of settling a claim. The total amount of the claim is expected to be €152k.

2.3 LONG-TERM LIABILITIES

	01.01.2015	Addition/ Withdrawal	Repay- ments	31.12.2015	Maturity > 1 year	Maturity > 5 years
Credit institutions	98,000	43,550	-	141,550	-	141,550
Ineffectiveness of derivatives	25,812	-	(3,820)	21,992	21,992	-
Advance payments of ground lease	915	-	(2)	913	-	913
Debt to the University of Amsterdam/ Genetica	-	500	-	500	500	-
TOTAL LONG-TERM LIABILITIES	124,727	44,050	(3,822)	164,955	22,492	142,463

CREDIT INSTITUTIONS

The liability to credit institutions concerns a loan from the European Investment bank (EIB) for the redevelopment of the campus.

The total credit facility of €230 million will be taken up in tranches up to the end of 2018; €43.5 million was taken up in 2015. No securities were provided.

Ineffectiveness of derivatives

The ineffectiveness of the derivatives declined in 2015 compared with 2014. The reasons were as follows: financing was raised from the EIB almost entirely according to schedule in 2015, part of the ineffectiveness was paid off in the past year via the regular interest payments, and account has been taken of the fact that additional financing will be raised from the EIB in the coming years. A calculation was made of the ineffectiveness on the basis of the updated EIB drawing scheme (at the end of 2015), with the result that part of the long-term liability was released. VU Amsterdam applies cost price hedge accounting to its derivatives portfolio. Guideline RJ 290 prescribes that the portion of the derivatives portfolio that is ineffective must be

valued in the balance sheet if the value of the derivatives is negative and more negative than the change in value of the underlying hedged loans. This amount is recognized under the long-term liabilities because of the long-term nature of the derivatives. A reduction in ineffectiveness is credited to the statement of income and expenditure and in 2015 amounted to €3,820k positive (2014: €3,310k negative).

The scale of the ineffectiveness is determined by comparing the change in the value of the highly likely future external financing (which is modelled as a so-called 'hypothetical derivative') and the fair value of the existing derivatives portfolio as of the end of 2015. The ineffectiveness is the difference between those two values.

The fair value of the portfolio varies according to developments on the capital market. Because of the currently low capital market rate and the long term to maturity, the fair value of the portfolio was approximately €126.3 million euro negative at the end of 2015 (2014: €142.6 million). The fair value is the current value of the future obligations. VU Amsterdam will only be confronted

with a major one-off cash outflow in the event of the premature termination of an interest-rate swap contract. VU Amsterdam has meanwhile raised external financing, the volume of which will increase in the coming years, so the issue of premature termination does not arise.

There are no margin call obligations on these interest-rate swaps. The negative fair value of the interest-rate swaps is €126.3 million.

Advance payments of ground lease

Ground lease instalments that are collected in a single payment are recognized under long-term liabilities. A portion of this liability in proportion to the term to maturity is released in favour of the result every year.

Debt to the University of Amsterdam / Genetica

The debt to the University of Amsterdam in relation to Genetica is based on VU Amsterdam's agreement with the University of Amsterdam for the transfer of some of Genetica's employees. The debt is being paid annually on a linear basis.

Principal	Reference	Counter-party	Period	Interest to be paid	Interest to be received	Actual value 31.12.2015	Actual value 31.12.2014
15,000	15446	BNG	2005 – 2020	5.07 %	6 mnds Euribor	(3,328)	(3,900)
10,000	155089	BNG	2010 – 2025	4.60 %	6 mnds Euribor	(3,655)	(4,100)
10,000	155090	BNG	2011 – 2026	4.65 %	6 mnds Euribor	(3,937)	(4,400)
15,000	4058115L	DB	2008 – 2025	5.53 %	1 mnds Euribor	(7,062)	(8,000)
50,000	4173242L	DB	2013 – 2035	5.23 %	1 mnds Euribor	(34,947)	(39,600)
41,000*	4173244L	DB	2013 – 2035	5.37 %	1 mnds Euribor	(32,523)	(36,900)
57,000*	4173247L	DB	2014 – 2035	5.16 %	1 mnds Euribor	(40,871)	(45,700)
Total x €1.000						(126,323)	(142,600)

* The principal varies during the term to maturity. This is the average amount of the principal during the term to maturity.

2.4 CURRENT LIABILITIES

	31.12.2015	31.12.2014
Creditors	20,039	14,586
Taxes and social security premiums		
Wage tax	12,026	10,442
Social security premiums	3,146	2,921
Turnover tax	2,148	2,380
Pension contributions	3,009	3,557
Advance payments on work for third parties	61,176	72,360
Other current liabilities	3,215	2,165
Accruals and deferred income		
Prepaid tuition fees	35,806	35,854
Prepaid special-purpose OCW contributions	1,952	2,271
Holiday allowance	8,727	7,394
Leave days	11,032	10,777
Other	26,330	23,945
Total current liabilities	188,606	188,652

The advance payments on work for third parties relate to sums received from clients that have not yet been spent.

The current liabilities include the following items for VU University Medical Center Amsterdam and the VU-VUmc Parking Company:

	VU University Medical Center	Parking Company
Accounts payable	1.364	84
Accruals and deferred income	2.516	426
Total	3.880	510

OFF-BALANCE SHEET ASSETS AND LIABILITIES (in thousands of euros)

Description	2015				2014			
	< 1 year	1-5 years	> 5 years	Total	< 1 year	1-5 years	> 5 years	Total
Rent obligations	5,316	13,896	11,745	30,957	5,734	13,091	-	18,825
Maintenance contracts	2,228	4,998	-	7,226	739	2,956	-	3,695
Investment obligations	50,941	24,015	-	74,956	23,124	84,319	-	107,443
Cleaning costs	5,353	10,972	-	16,325	5,921	12,480	-	18,401
Security	2,370	5,017	-	7,387	2,724	5,484	-	8,208
Catering	2,000	8,000	20,000	30,000	1,692	3,801	-	5,493
IT obligations	2,919	-	-	2,919	257	-	-	257
Other management expenses	-	-	-	-	435	450	-	885
Total liabilities	71,127	66,898	31,745	169,770	40,626	122,581	-	163,207

OTHER ASSETS

Intellectual property and patents:

It is the task of public knowledge institutes to ensure that knowledge ultimately reaches society in the form of new products or services. The point of departure in protecting the knowledge is to give a market party a competitive advantage at a later stage in order to recoup the necessary investments. This competitive advantage can be achieved by means of a patent. In recent years the VU-VUmc Foundation has accumulated a dynamic patent portfolio, on 31 December 2015 comprising 144 unique patent applications, of which 44 were from VU Amsterdam (2014: 138, 41 from VU Amsterdam). In 2015, 6 (of which 3 from VU Amsterdam) new patents were applied for. It is the policy of the knowledge institute to recover the costs of patent applications from the licensee. Part of the net proceeds (milestone payments, royalties, etc.) is used for new scientific research.

Kaupthing:

In 2015, VU Amsterdam had a claim of €10 million against the assets of the Icelandic bank Kaupthing. This claim arises from the purchase, in 2007, of 10,000 Kaupthing bonds with a nominal value of €10 million. Kaupthing was declared bankrupt in 2007, whereupon VU Amsterdam, in 2008, immediately registered a claim with Kaupthing. Because of the lengthy uncertainty about the value of this claim, in 2010 VU Amsterdam recognized an impairment charge that reduced the value of the claim to zero. In view of the continuing uncertainty surrounding the resolution of Kaupthing's bankruptcy, and hence the value of the claim, in 2015 VU Amsterdam decided to investigate the possibilities of selling the claim. An independent external specialist firm was asked to write a report on the various options.

That report also assessed the option of retaining the claim. The report's conclusion was that there was little likelihood that the claim would appreciate in value and that selling the claim was good for the liquidity in the short term and would remove the uncertainty regarding the prospective income.

A number of renowned parties were then asked to make an offer for the claim. VU Amsterdam ultimately sold the right to future proceeds from the claim to the highest bidder for a sum of €2.65 million.

Bank guarantees (in thousands of euros)

ING	3
ING	3
ING	6
Deutsche Bank	176
Deutsche Bank	16
Deutsche Bank	31
Deutsche Bank	264
Total	499

OTHER OBLIGATIONS

In 1996, VU Amsterdam and the University of Amsterdam jointly provided guarantees for the costs associated with the legal status of employees who were at that time employed by SURF/Stichting Academisch Rekencentrum Amsterdam (SARA).

The legal department has made an assessment of ongoing legal disputes. There is no indication of any significant financial risk from the current disputes.

These statements relate solely to the cases involving VU Amsterdam. No significant liabilities are known for the related party.

As a group, VU Amsterdam, VU Medical Center Amsterdam and the VU-VUmc Foundation are holding talks with the Tax and Customs Administration concerning the applicable pro-rata rate for VAT for the years 2012 to 2014.

NOTES TO THE STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE (in thousands of euros)

3.1 GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTION

	Actual 2015	Budget 2015	Actual 2014
Contribution according to the Performance-related Funding Model	302,274		291,326
Workplace function VU Medical Center Amsterdam	68,894		67,385
Total government contribution	371,168		358,711
OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS			
Bachelor-Master compensation 2010	(489)		(528)
Sophocles	(52)		(52)
Miscellaneous	661		723
Minus: Income transfers			
Government grant to Academic Hospitals			
- VU Medical Center Amsterdam workplace function	(68,894)		(67,385)
Total government contributions	302,394	298,300	291,469

3.2 OTHER GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS

	Actual 2015	Budget 2015	Actual 2014
City of Amsterdam's subsidy for AUC	173	-	286
Total other government contributions	173	-	286

3.3 TUITION FEES, COURSE FEES AND EXAMINATION FEES

	Actual 2015	Budget 2015	Actual 2014
Statutory tuition fees	41,729		38,944
Extra-statutory tuition fees	4,173		3,005
Contract costs tuition fees	397		333
Other tuition fees, course fees and examination fees	983		946
Total tuition fees, course fees and examination fees	47,282	45,300	43,228

3.4 INCOME FROM WORK FOR THIRD PARTIES

	Actual 2015	Budget 2015	Actual 2014
Contract teaching	16,459		16,659
Contract research:			
International organizations (EU)	19,659		23,350
National governments	3,728		3,529
NWO	26,744		31,390
KNAW	856		346
Not for profit organizations	5,958		9,850
Companies	250		480
<i>Total contract research</i>	<i>57,195</i>		<i>68,945</i>
Other income from work for third parties and services	12,196		9,549
Total income from work for third parties	85,850	87,900	95,153

3.5 OTHER INCOME

	Actual 2015	Budget 2015	Actual 2014
Letting of property	13,838		12,096
Secondment and other staff-related income	4,577		4,287
Supply of energy	9,914		9,625
Other income from teaching and research	3,882		5,988
Other			
Dental treatment for patients	2,576		2,766
Student activities	3,319		2,765
Audio-visual equipment	981		1,376
Catering services	1,076		1,939
Printing and reproduction	802		262
Contributions to purchases for University Library's collection	454		454
VAT pro rata	813		1,030
Miscellaneous	10,425		9,911
Total other income	52,657	58,600	52,499

The other income from teaching and research consists of income other than the income from contract activities.

4.1 STAFFING EXPENSES

	Actual 2015	Budget 2015	Actual 2014
Gross wages and salaries	250,062		236,349
Social security contributions	23,494		21,921
Pension contributions	24,784		28,864
Total Wages and salaries	298,340		287,134
Other staffing expenses			
additions to staff-related provisions	10,471		16,575
temporary employees, contractors, hired staff	29,381		26,136
miscellaneous	4,062		5,275
Total Other staffing expenses	43,914		47,986
<i>Minus: Benefits received</i>	<i>(1,312)</i>		<i>(1,311)</i>
Total Staffing expenses	340,942	326,400	333,809

Average number of staff (in FTEs)	2015*	2014
Academic staff	2,229.5	2,244.4
Support and management staff	1,414.5	1,436.6
Total	3,644.0	3,681.0

* excluding VU Medical Center Amsterdam and related party

** the number of employees working outside the Netherlands is zero

MATERIAL EXPENSES BY COST ITEM

4.2 DEPRECIATION

	Actual 2015	Budget 2015	Actual 2014
Intangible fixed assets	3,271		2,348
Buildings	23,849		22,548
Inventory and equipment	5,256		6,038
Total depreciation	32,376	40,300	30,934

4.3 ACCOMMODATION EXPENSES

	Actual 2015	Budget 2015	Actual 2014
Rent	6,447		7,250
Maintenance	7,444		7,988
Energy and water	11,742		11,755
Cleaning costs	5,731		5,689
Levies and statutory charges	1,547		1,121
Other accommodation expenses	5,215		4,693
Total accommodation expenses	38,126	40,600	38,496

4.4 OTHER EXPENSES

	Actual 2015	Budget 2015	Actual 2014
Administrative and management expenses	6,211		7,249
Income transfers, subsidies and contributions	13,401		12,782
Inventory and equipment	9,201		5,860
Release / additions to provisions for other expenses	643		(558)
Travel / accommodation and conference expenses	8,278		7,601
Specific teaching and research	16,585		15,616
Opinions and advice	3,251		4,538
IT costs	7,304		7,612
Acquisitions and subscriptions for University Library's collection	6,061		5,402
Procurement costs of operational units	1,594		2,353
Miscellaneous general costs*	14,220		21,785
Total other expenses	86,749	89,300	90,240
Total material expenses	157,251	170,200	159,670

5 FINANCIAL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	Actual 2015	Budget 2015	Actual 2014
<i>Financial income</i>			
Interest	86		392
Other financial income	2,650		-
Total financial income	2,736		392
<i>Financial expenses</i>			
Interest	24		10
Interest EIB	1,109		815
Change in value of ineffective portion of interest-rate swaps	(3,820)		3,310
Interest on swap portfolio	10,993		8,988
Capitalized interest costs	(7,260)		(4,922)
Total financial expenses	1,046		8,201
Total financial income and expenses	1,690	(5,500)	(7,809)

The other financial income concerns the sale of the claim against Kaupthing.

The change in the value of the ineffective portion of the interest-rate swap concerns the reduction of

the long-term debt due to the decline in the ineffectiveness of the interest-rate swaps.

The interest rate adopted for the capitalized interest costs is 6%.

6 RESULT OF PARTICIPATIONS

	Actual	Budget	Actual
	2015	2015	2014
Result of participations	848	-	(192)

OTHER INFORMATION

Appropriation of result

The result in 2015 has been withdrawn from the equity capital.

General reserve	173,113
Release of reserve for accommodation policy	(109,200)
Release of other allocated reserves	(66,000)
Release of reserve for land at Boelelaan	(9,300)
Statutory reserve for software development	3,974
Reserve for related parties	113
Total	(7,300)

Events after balance-sheet date

No noteworthy events have occurred in this context.

