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Review by the President: Successful year of activity for Laurea University of Applied Sciences despite COVID-19 pandemic

DESPITE THE COVID-19 pandemic, the year of activity 2020 was quite successful for Laurea University of Applied Sciences from the perspective of education, research, development, innovation and regional development, even though exceptional arrangements were needed in all higher education activities due to the pandemic.

THE YEAR 2020 was the year of the agreement negotiations during which the higher education institution negotiated with the Ministry of Education and Culture on objectives and funding in accordance with the Laurea 2030 strategy prepared in 2019. The ministry granted Laurea the largest number of additional study places (210) in proportion to the size of the university of applied sciences with separate funding, which included students from the joint application system for the spring, and these students were able to start their studies already in autumn 2020. There is plenty of demand for Laurea degrees in the labour market, as the employment of graduates is excellent.

THE ADDITIONAL STUDY places were also a natural solution because the attractiveness of Laurea's degree education, i.e. the number of primary applicants per study place, was again the highest among universities of applied sciences in the joint application system for the spring 2020. Laurea had 6.3 primary applicants for each study place.

LAUREA'S INTERNATIONAL RDI activities were hit particularly hard by travel and meeting restrictions caused by the pandemic, and the competitive external RDI funding (4.3 MEUR) did not quite reach the level of the year before (4.5 MEUR). However, the EU's Horizon 2020 funding continued to develop in a positive way, and it was the highest among all universities of applied sciences. The higher education institution's business turnover also decreased from the

previous year (2.0 MEUR) to 1.7 MEUR. Although the pandemic cut Laurea's returns from 2020, it cut costs even more. The financial result of Laurea University of Applied Sciences Ltd is thus EUR 2.9 million for the year 2020 and operating profit is significantly higher than in the previous year (EUR 0.1 million): EUR 1.7 million.

LAUREA'S STRATEGIC ALLIANCE of large universities of applied sciences (3AMK) formed by Laurea together with Haaga-Helia and Metropolia was in its fourth year of operation. For established 3AMK cooperation, the Ministry of Education and Culture also allocated significant strategic funding for the new contract period 2021–2024, when 3AMK's strategic development target is anchoring the alliance to global and international ecosystems in the metropolitan area.

AS THE DEVELOPMENT of 3AMK's workplace-oriented competence paths continues, it was also identified as a joint strategic development target to expand them to the needs of continuous learning by utilising artificial intelligence. At the end of the first four-year period of the strategic 3AMK alliance 2017–2020, an evaluation report on the alliance's activities was commissioned. The conclusions describe the 3AMK as a higher education policy innovation.

THE FAIRLY STRONG operational results of 2020, along with the very strong financial result and, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Culture, negotiated objectives and strategic funding as well as the volume targets of education leading to a qualification will create a good operating environment for Laurea during the new contract period 2021–2024, even though the funding model will change from 1 January 2021 to a direction that is unfavourable to the higher education institution as the pricing model for degrees changes.



Jouni Koski
President, CEO, PhD



Katri Ojasalo

Vice President (Education)

Education: Agile transition to emergency conditions

DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS pandemic, 2020 was exceptional in many ways for education activities. All Laurea campuses were closed in mid-March and teaching continued remotely until the end of the spring term. The rapid transition to remote learning was successful in relation to the situation. The most important factors contributing to the progress of studies were the cancellation or interruption of numerous internships and international student exchanges. Replacement online studies could be arranged quickly. Digital pedagogical support for teachers was strengthened. A new online exam service was introduced for examinations.

THE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS for studies in English and studies leading to a University of Applied Sciences Master's degree were quickly turned into online exams. For the first time, some of the entrance examinations were implemented as selection courses. In June, the joint digital entrance examination of universities of applied sciences was carried out in two stages: the first stage remotely and the second stage with safety arrangements in place on Laurea's three campuses. In the autumn, the joint entrance examination for Laurea was carried out at the premises of Messukeskus Expo and Convention Centre.

AT THE BEGINNING of the autumn term, the coronavirus situation was temporarily better, which made it possible to carry out workshops requiring close contact and contact education on campuses for students

who started their studies in 2020. The students' experiences of studying in emergency conditions were examined in two surveys during the year. A number of measures were taken to support the well-being of students, including hiring a third study psychologist. In addition to the changes caused by the coronavirus pandemic, systematic development work was continued. Laurea's digital reform continued with the introduction of the new Canvas learning platform in all Laurea training programmes. Online orientation was developed for new students, and the new electronic eHOT tool was introduced to assist in the process of recognition of studies.

IN ADDITION TO degree education, the provision of continuous learning and the related advisory and guidance services were also strongly developed. In the spring, a decision was made to offer open university of applied sciences studies free of charge to persons who were unemployed or laid off.

DESPITE THE EXCEPTIONAL circumstances, the indicator results of education activities improved – partly even at record level. For example, those with a degree from a university of applied sciences gave a better grade than in the previous year in each of the 98 statements in the national feedback survey for the graduation phase.

Quality feedback from graduates was near the top of the nation

A large increase in the number of University of Applied Sciences Master's degrees

Record amount of Open University of Applied Sciences studies



Mari Vuolteenaho
Vice President (RDI)

RDI activities and business operations: Toward impactfulness

LAUREA HAS SET for itself a goal to increase the societal impact of research, development and innovation activities (RDI). It is also necessary to increase funding so that effective RDI activities can be implemented to a sufficient extent.

IN 2020, THE external R&D funding received by Laurea was EUR 4.3 million, which is somewhat less than in the previous year (EUR 4.5 million in 2019). The underlying reality is the global coronavirus pandemic, which has significantly hindered project activities and, in particular, international projects.

FUTURE RDI ACTIVITIES were built more strongly, even though the actual project activities decreased slightly. 160 project applications were sent to finance research and development activities and other project activities, which is significantly more than in the previous year. Based on the applications sent to Laurea in 2020, the funding granted to Laurea has already been more than 70% higher than in previous year's applications, even though some of the applications are still under evaluation by the funding provider. Funding applications from the Ministry of Education and Culture and the European Social Fund were among the most popular domestic funding instruments. The largest number of applications for international calls for funding were made for Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020 calls for funding. International funding in particular increased strongly. Laurea's success in acquiring internationally competitive research funding has continued for a long time.

In the Horizon 2020 research framework programme funded by the European Union for the period 2013–2020, Laurea managed to get the most funding among the Finnish universities of applied sciences.

PLANS THAT WERE named RDI funding road maps were developed to support systematic project preparation, and support for RDI project preparation was further strengthened by recruiting a third Grant Writing Expert. The operating models for the integration of RDI projects and teaching were documented.

REVENUE FROM LAUREA'S business operations was EUR 1.7 million in 2020, which is slightly less than in the previous year. The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the business operations, as activities that require spending time in the same facilities could not be implemented as usual, and travelling between countries was more difficult than usual. Despite these difficulties, Laurea's revenue from education export remained unchanged, and two new groups started in degree-awarding commissioned education in 2020. Moreover, Laurea's MAPA® training programme, which coaches students in encountering challenging customer situations, also contributed to keeping the revenue at the previous level. The business operations mainly consisted of the sales of education services in Finland, the operations of the teaching restaurant Bar Laurea and other work performed by students, as well as education export.

External
R&D funding

EUR 4.3 million

Significantly
more funding
applications
were sent

Most Horizon
funding among the
Finnish universities
of applied sciences



Kimmo Hannonen

Vice President (Support Services)

Services: Safe and sustainable everyday life – even during exceptional times

AT LAUREA, WE have been working on online services in a long-term way, and the value of this has been emphasised during the coronavirus pandemic. For example, it has been possible to offer services of Student Affairs Office mainly online. Apart from the lockdown period in the spring, our campuses have remained open, and in addition to the Student Affairs Offices, restaurant services have also been available to users – albeit with slightly shorter service hours. We have also developed service processes together with students as part of their studies.

THE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS were organised in 2020 using special arrangements. The autumn entrance examination, which was prepared to receive nearly 6,000 applicants, was organised at the Messukeskus Expo and Convention Centre, where the required safety distances and other protective measures were able to be ensured.

SAFETY IN HIGHER education has naturally been at the heart of the pandemic situation. We have provided operators with the necessary protective equipment and changed service practices to ensure the safety of operators on our campuses. When the campuses were completely closed, Laurea also offered the staff an opportunity to order ergonomic rental chairs for home use. In 2020, the utilisation rate of campuses has obviously been relatively low, which has enabled more extensive maintenance work on the premises. Even though remote learning and working remotely

have yielded good results, our higher education community is certainly looking forward to returning to our pleasant campuses. Physical meetings and encounters are of great importance today, even though virtual facilities have been becoming ever more popular.

THE AVAILABILITY AND support for the use of information networks and devices has played a key role when we have changed teaching and research practices in accordance with the requirements of the pandemic situation. In order to streamline the early stages of studies, we have also advanced the granting of online user rights so that students can familiarise themselves with Laurea's practices before the actual teaching begins. In addition, we increased the resources of local support to meet the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic, e.g. to ensure the quality of hybrid teaching.

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT Programme adopted in 2020 also requires the assessment of the ecological, social and economic impacts of our facilities, procurements and services and goal-oriented action to achieve the goals of sustainable development.

Comprehensive
services
electronically

Safety during
the coronavirus
pandemic

Sustainability and
responsibility



Tiina Päivärinne
HR Director

Personnel: Together and openly

WELL-BEING AT WORK and trust provide the foundation for collective work at Laurea. The Great Place to Work survey, chosen as the method for workplace community development, was carried out for the sixth time in spring 2020. At the same time, the staff started working remotely because of the coronavirus pandemic. The results of the personnel survey at Laurea and unit level have been openly distributed to all personnel, and in 2020, teams have been actively encouraged to share good practices and learn from each other. During the exceptional year, the employer has supported staff e.g. by enabling flexible working time solutions, providing regular office workouts and encouraging active virtual communication.

TRAINING FOR STAFF has become completely virtual during the year. The training has been focusing on themes identified as strategically important, such as the development of pedagogical and guidance competence and digital skills. The development of language skills has also been supported. Laurea's idea is that the learning of staff and the development of competence are based on a strong culture of on-the-job learning. We learn together when doing our work and sharing what we have learned openly.

SUPERVISORY TRAINING HAS been organised with variable themes during 2020. In the organisation of supervisory training, cooperation with external experts has been carried out and the school's internal competence has been strongly utilised. The main

themes of the training have been well-being at work and work ability management as well as competence management.

DURING 2020, LAUREA launched the comprehensive and forward-looking Deep Leadership programme. During the first year, all supervisors and separately selected internal coaches participated in the programme. Over the next few years, the programme will be continued with the support of internal coaches so that all Laurea members can eventually participate in it. The training is used to systematically support the development of expert work as well as supervisory and management work. It provides genuine impact on everyday life and develops everyone's personal management skills.

The importance of well-being at work is emphasised in exceptional times

Laurea's competence is developed by learning on the job together

The Deep Leadership programme was launched



Teemu Ylikoski

Director (Marketing and External Relations)

External relations: Strong development of partnerships was continued

A NEW KIND OF service for working life partnerships that we launched in 2019, key partnership, continued to develop successfully in 2020. The purpose of the key partnership programme is to support Laurea's strategic goal to deepen cooperation with working life and working life networks. The success of the programme shows that our partners have a need for it.

IN 2020, WE signed 24 new key partnership agreements. By concluding a key partner agreement with Laurea, the partner receives benefits that are not included in other Laurea partnerships. The key partnership contains three elements: project cooperation, recruitment cooperation and a visibility package. The key partnership is available to partners against a fee (EUR 2,500/year).

THE RESULTS OF LAUREA'S stakeholder survey for the year of activity 2020 were also positive. Of the respondents, 96% were satisfied with Laurea, and Laurea's overall score was 4.0 (on a scale of 1–5). Of the 196 survey respondents, 80 per cent were willing to give Laurea a strong recommendation or have already recommended Laurea to others.

THE SURVEY WAS conducted late in 2020 and now, for the first time, a sample of Laurea's key partners was also included and examined separately in the analysis. The feedback received from key partners is at a great level and more positive than that from other respondents, especially in terms of regional development and

the ability to hold international positions. Moreover, one in four of the non-key partner respondents were interested in a key partnership with Laurea.

DESPITE THE CIRCUMSTANCES of the exceptional year of activity, the overall results of the partner feedback remained at the previous level and the gaps, in other words, estimates of Laurea's success compared to expectations, developed positively. The same positive trend can also be observed in terms of indicators of successful cooperation.

96%

of partners
satisfied with
Laurea

Laurea's overall
score (1–5)

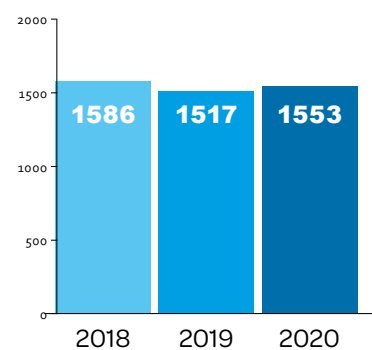
4

24

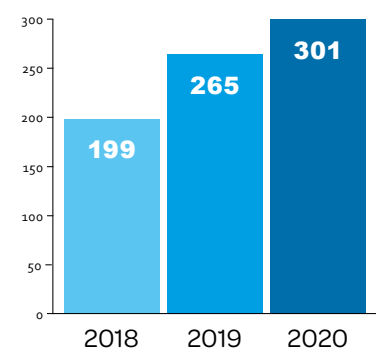
new key partners

Teaching

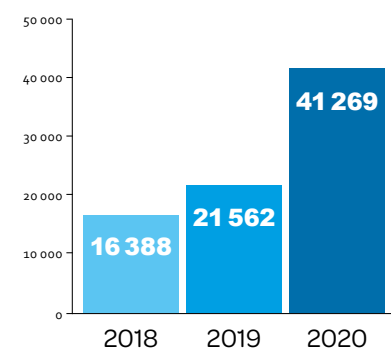
BACHELOR'S DEGREES COMPLETED



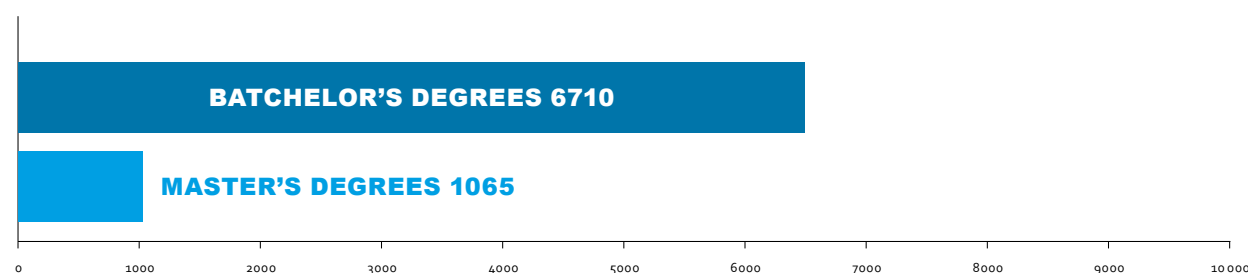
MASTER'S DEGREES COMPLETED



OPEN UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES (CREDITS)



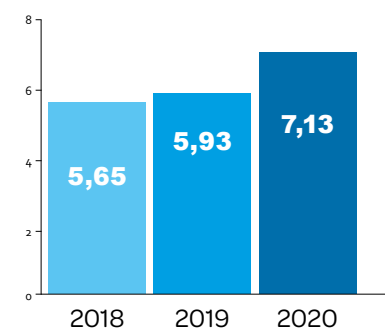
NUMBER OF STUDENTS (20 SEPTEMBER 2020)



Appeal

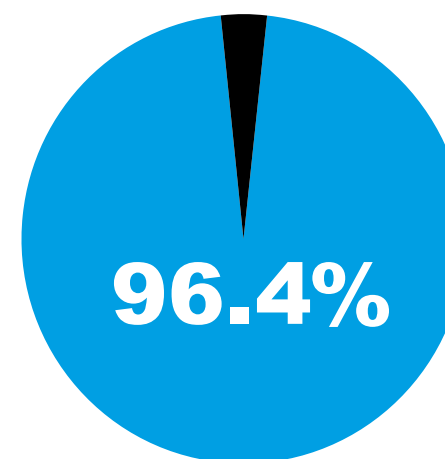
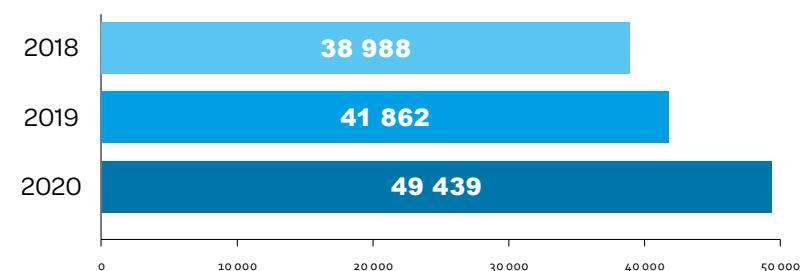
Primary applicants per study place in the autumn 2020 joint application system. (Note: in the joint application system for English-language education and the joint application system for spring, no preferred option for application was defined in 2020.)

TOTAL APPEAL



NUMBER OF APPLICANTS TO LAUREA

(Applicants who had Laurea education as an option for application)



Employment

of those who completed a university of applied sciences degree were in employment a year after graduation (graduates of 2017)

RDI activities in 2020

H2020 and
FP7 ventures
under way in 2020

10

External
funding for the
RDI activities

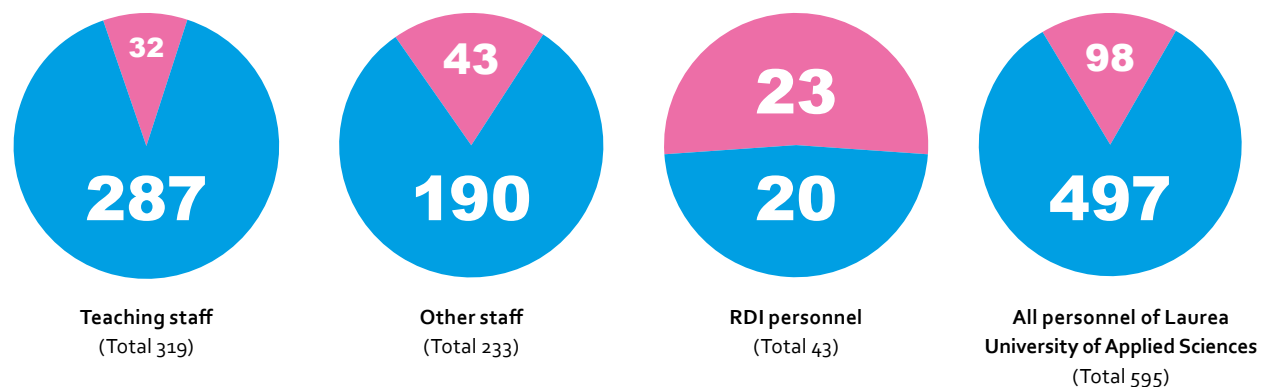
EUR **4.26** MILLION

Number of
project applications
in 2020

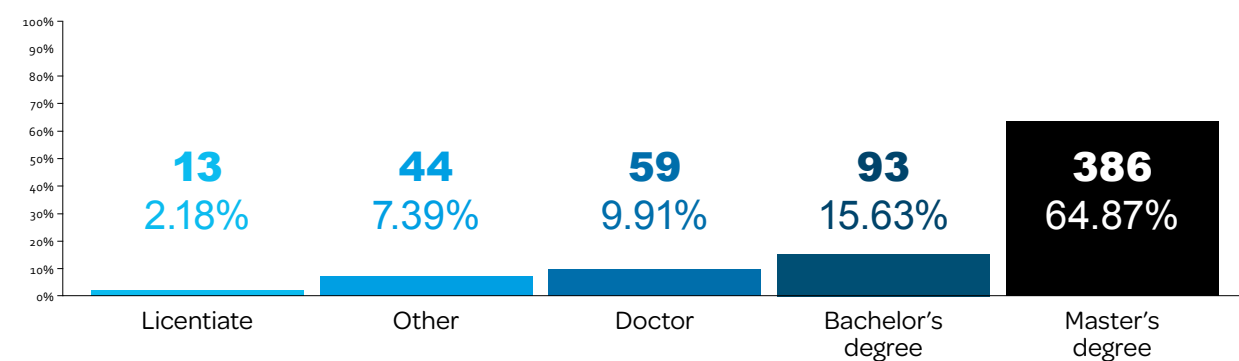
160

Staff

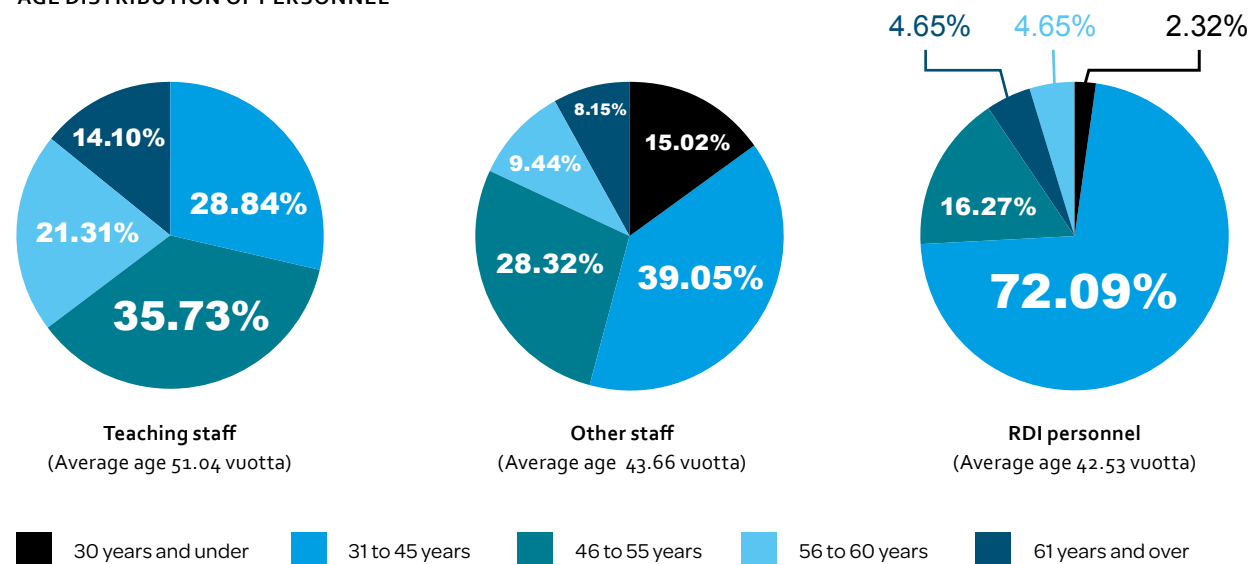
PERMANENT/FIXED-TERM STAFF



PERSONNEL TRAINING

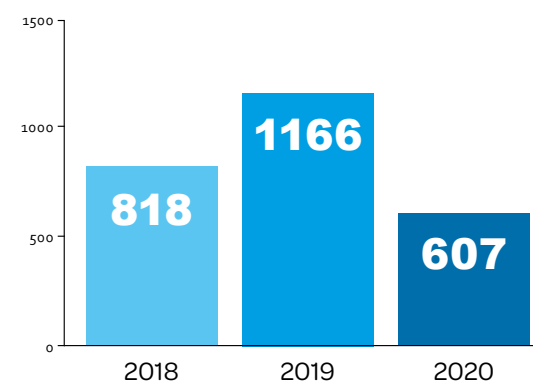


AGE DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONNEL

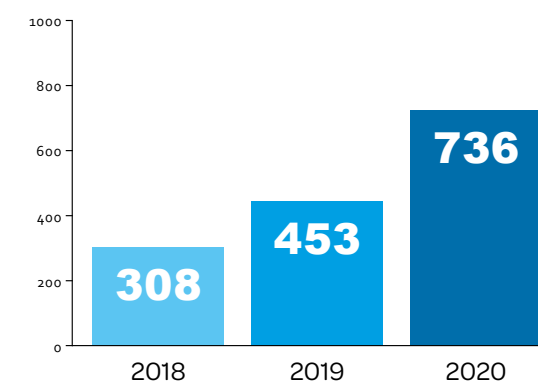


Social activities and impactfulness

ACTIVE PARTNERS DURING THE YEAR



WORKPLACE ASSIGNMENTS



NEW KEY PARTNERSHIPS IN 2020



**Jarno
Lappalainen**

Jukka Linna
(staff representative)

**Sanna
Hartikainen**

**Perttu
Koistinen**

**Juha
Salo**

**Minna
Hyytiäinen**

**Saana
Simonen**

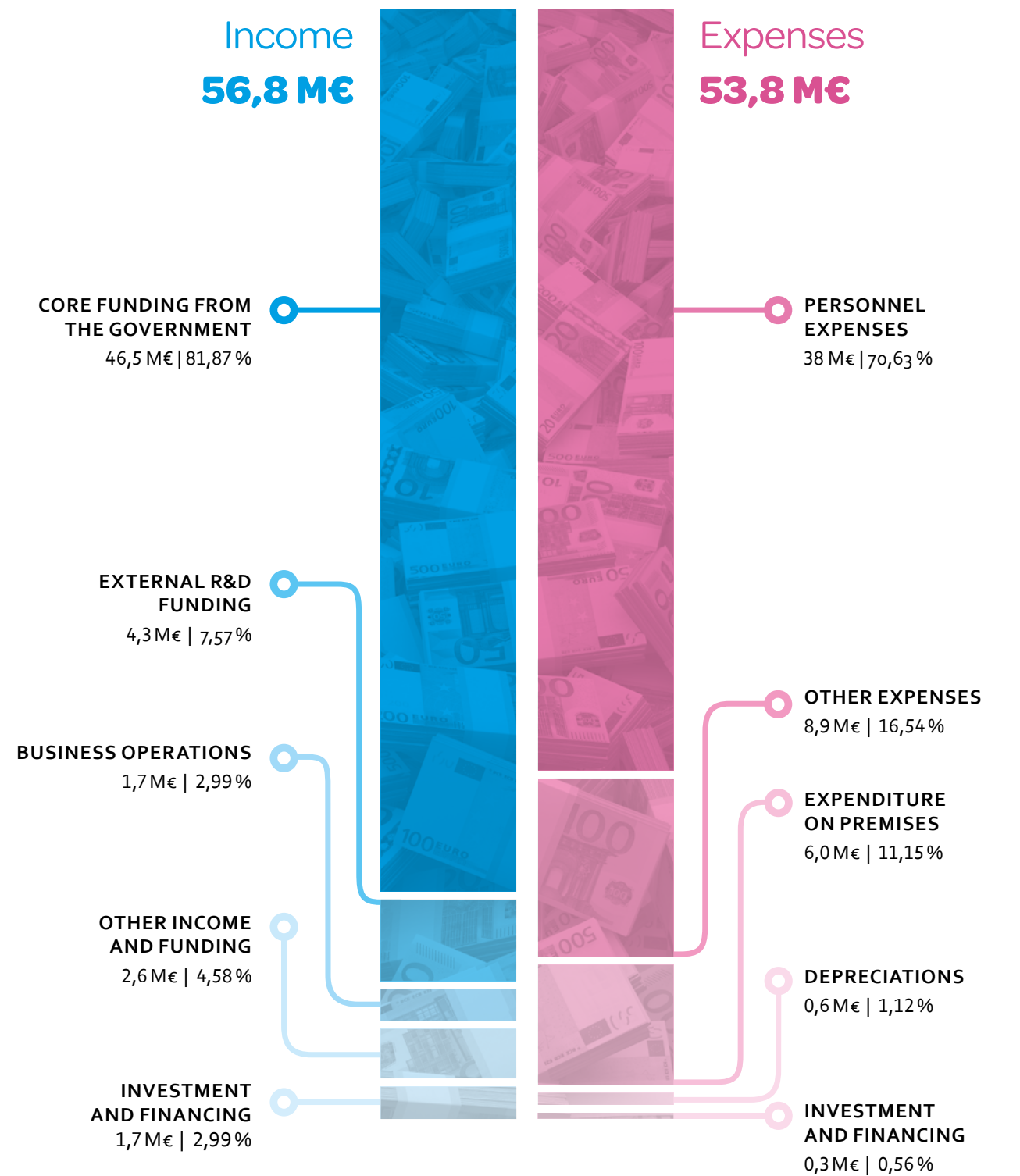
Jan Holst
(Chair)

**Pirjo
Väänänen**

Laurea University of Applied Sciences Ltd Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of Laurea University of Applied Sciences Ltd carries out tasks according to the Finnish Companies Act, is responsible for the company's administration, ensures that operations are appropriately run and ensures that the company is organised and managed in accordance with the regulations. In 2020, the Board met nine times.

Finances



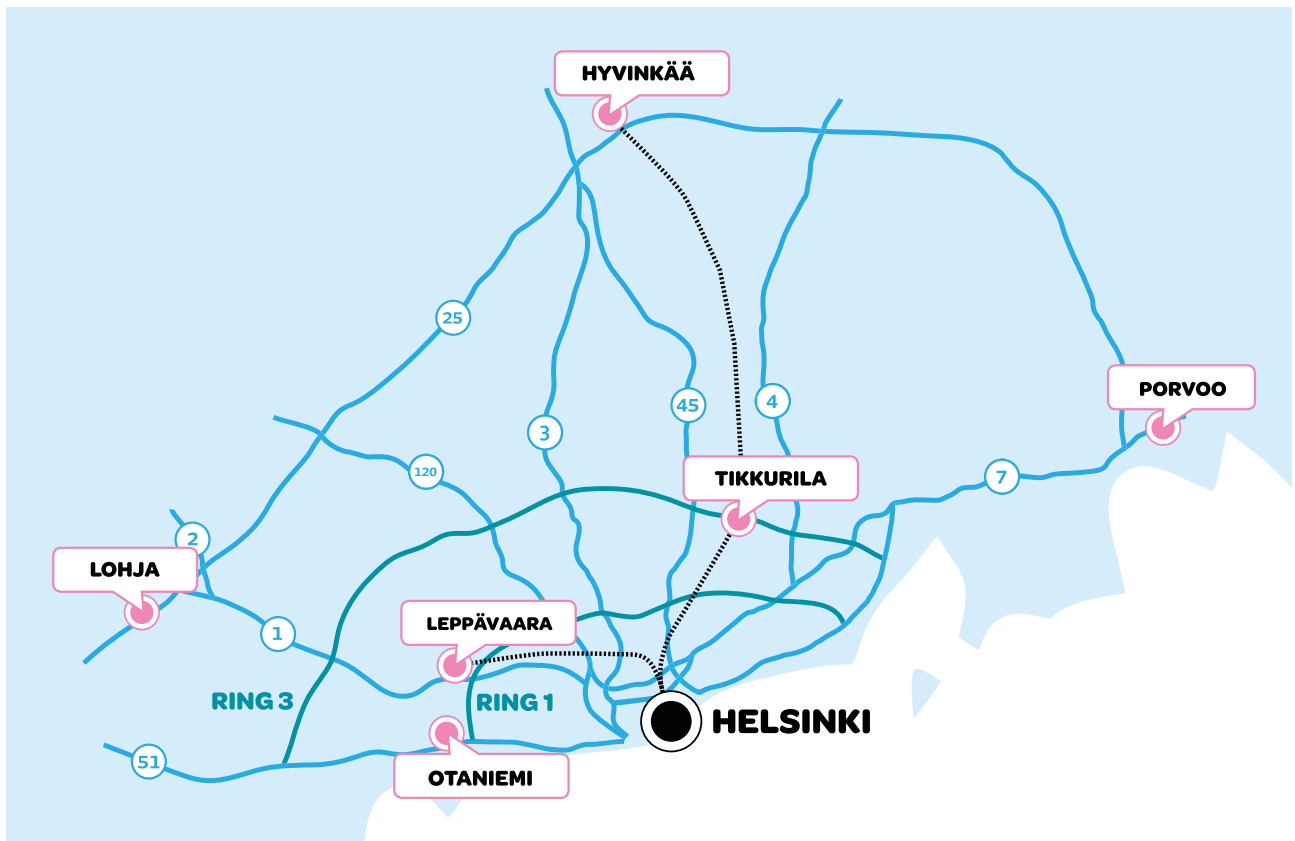
Operating profit 1,7 M€

Result for the financial period (including unrealised increase in value) 3,0 M€

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Laurea has **six campuses** in the Helsinki-Uusimaa Region. Real-life assignments arising from the needs of workplaces, such as projects, have a significant role in the studies. These projects help students to develop networks during their studies and also to develop important workplace skills.

the laurea community comprises approximately **6700** Bachelor's degree students, **1100** Master's degree students, **550** staff members and over **30 000** Laurea alumni. Laurea has no religious or political affiliations.

laurea focuses on practical research and development work in strategic areas, based on future needs and strong expertise in the fields of social services and health care, service business and security.



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University of Applied Sciences

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