<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FOREWORD</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANISATION</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROFILE</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEOPLE</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRUCTURE</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINANCES</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAMPUSES</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUALITY AND EXCELLENCE</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COOPERATION</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOUNG TALENT</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCH VALORISATION</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AWARDS AND RECOGNITION</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIVERSITY AND SOCIETY</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIVING AND FUNDRAISING</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATION AND STUDENT LIFE</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUDENT ENROLMENT</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEGREE PROGRAMMES</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUDY STRUCTURE &amp; STUDENT ADVISING</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT AND INNOVATION</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIFELONG LEARNING</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIVERSITY LIFE</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENSE OF PURPOSE</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CULTURE</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPORT</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STURA AND LOKO</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALUMNI</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS LEUVEN</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The university is a place of constant change. You’ll read all about that in this brochure. But a lot has remained the same as well. That, too, you can read in this text. Stability is necessary for the patient creation and dissemination of knowledge. And to make room for sustainable change. Both are necessary. For society, for students, for our staff.

There is a lot of diversity at our university. What happens in research unit A is of an entirely different nature than what happens in research unit B. Department X is completely different from department Y. And yet, there are shared elements that transcend all differences. We almost span the entire domain of human knowledge. Theology requires another approach than endocrinology, and internationalisation is not the same thing as managing student housing. Yet, in spirit, there are many resemblances, in the attempt to perform as well as possible, the attention to accessibility, the desire to push back frontiers.

This booklet presents you with a wide range of facts and figures. They come with the large, complex organisation that a modern university inevitably is. A university, however, is also a matter of spirit, of feeling and emotion even. You will experience these between the lines of the following pages, even though we won’t promise you a full ‘spiritual profile’ of KU Leuven. You will have to come and experience that for yourself. The invitation to do so is embedded in every single one of these pages.

This brochure will help you to discover KU Leuven. And discovering new worlds... Isn’t that what a university is all about?

Rik Torfs
Rector
On Monday, 4 August 2014, King Philippe and Queen Mathilde of Belgium and President Joachim Gauck of Germany visited Leuven to commemorate the centenary of the beginning of the First World War. The royal couple and the president were received on the Grote Markt by Mayor Louis Tobback and were later welcomed to KU Leuven’s University Halls by Rector Rik Torfs. President Joachim Gauck and King Philippe then unveiled a memorial plaque in the University Halls. A century before the KU Leuven University Library – which, at the time, was located in the University Halls – had gone up in war flames.

“The government, not the university, is living beyond its means,” said Rector Rik Torfs in his address at the official opening of the academic year on 22 September. The announced cutbacks in the higher education budget were a recurring theme in the day’s speeches – and in the streets. Students posing as beggars lined the route of the traditional procession of academic regalia in protest. Their message to the government: “Do not play with our future; it is yours too.” Rector Torfs clearly agreed: “The Flemish Government thinks it wise to reduce the higher education budget, as if there is any other resource more important than our brain cells,” he said in his speech. “Without adequate funding for its universities, the lights in Flanders will sooner or later go out, be it for lack of brain power or lack of electric power.”

In October, representatives of five international scientific organisations convened in the Vatican to discuss criminal law, criminology, and victimology. They presented their activities and discussed the major challenges for the criminal justice system. KU Leuven criminologists Ivo Aertsen and Stephan Parmentier were members of the delegation. Professor Stephan Parmentier presented a number of publications to the Pope and thanked him for calling attention to issues such as crime and punishment. “My Spanish is flawed, but I think he understood me nonetheless.”

Professor Stephan Parmentier presented a number of publications to the Pope and thanked him for calling attention to issues such as crime and punishment. “My Spanish is flawed, but I think he understood me nonetheless.”
KU Leuven is a university with nearly 600 years of history and tens of thousands of students and staff. It is devoted to comprehensive and advanced scientific research and education and exercises an important position in and responsibility toward the world of science and society as a whole.

On 24 January 1990 – 25 years ago – KU Leuven printed the very first issue of its corporate magazine Campuskrant. “With your help, we hope to turn Campuskrant into a magazine that appeals to our entire university community,” wrote the first editorial team in its declaration of intent. “The best PR is what you achieve by means of high-quality reporting about a high-quality university,” says honorary rector Roger Dillemans, who was the spiritual father of Campuskrant a quarter century ago.

On 29 January, ecumenical patriarch Bartholomew I opened the international colloquium entitled “Christian Doctrines on Divinization East and West.” In his remarks he called for an immediate response to the large-scale forced migrations “in the name of misleading nationalism and religious fanaticism. If we keep silent about the discrimination of others, and if we, as a religious community, ignore the suffering and the torture of other human beings, we deny the image of God in them,” said the patriarch. He also called for a reinforcement of the interreligious dialogue “between those with good intentions.” He then urged the audience to defend the freedom of conscience and religion. The patriarch, who is the spiritual leader of 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide, also honoured his ‘green’ reputation by once again devoting attention to the ecological crisis.

On 2 January, ecumenical patriarch Bartholomew I opened the international colloquium entitled “Christian Doctrines on Divinization East and West.” In his remarks he called for an immediate response to the large-scale forced migrations “in the name of misleading nationalism and religious fanaticism. If we keep silent about the discrimination of others, and if we, as a religious community, ignore the suffering and the torture of other human beings, we deny the image of God in them,” said the patriarch. He also called for a reinforcement of the interreligious dialogue “between those with good intentions.” He then urged the audience to defend the freedom of conscience and religion. The patriarch, who is the spiritual leader of 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide, also honoured his ‘green’ reputation by once again devoting attention to the ecological crisis.
KU Leuven was founded in 1425. It is an autonomous university. In late 2011, it changed its name from ‘Katholieke Universiteit Leuven’ to ‘KU Leuven’ and elaborated its mission statement:

KU Leuven endeavours to be a place for open discussion of social, philosophical, and ethical issues and a critical centre of reflection in and for the Catholic community.

KU Leuven offers its students an academic education based on high-level research, with the aim of preparing students to assume their social responsibilities.

KU Leuven is a research-intensive, internationally oriented university that carries out both fundamental and applied research. It is strongly inter- and multidisciplinary in focus and strives for international excellence. To this end, KU Leuven works together actively with its research partners at home and abroad.

KU Leuven encourages personal initiative and critical reflection in a culture of idea exchange, cooperation, solidarity, and academic freedom. It pursues a proactive diversity policy for its students and staff.

KU Leuven aims to actively participate in public and cultural debate and in the advancement of a knowledge-based society. It puts its expertise to the service of society, with particular consideration for its most vulnerable members.

To realise this manifold mission, KU Leuven has only one form of ‘capital’ at its disposal: talented and dedicated people. Excluding University Hospitals Leuven (the network of KU Leuven university hospitals), KU Leuven employs 11,769 people.

### Distribution of staff by gender, in percentage (as of December 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Technical Staff</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Academic Staff</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>50.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Academic Staff</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Staff</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Academic Staff</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>44.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: some staff members hold mandates in multiple categories.*

### Distribution of staff by nationality, in percentage (as of December 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Belgian/ EU</th>
<th>Non-Belgian/ non-EU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Technical Staff</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Academic Staff</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Academic Staff</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Staff</td>
<td>97.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Academic Staff</td>
<td>62.0</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
KU Leuven’s various faculties and departments are organised into three groups. Each group has a doctoral school.

The **Humanities and Social Sciences Group** organises the Doctoral School for the Humanities and Social Sciences and is comprised of the following faculties:

- Institute of Philosophy
- Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies
- Faculty of Canon Law
- Faculty of Law
- Faculty of Economics and Business
- Faculty of Social Sciences
- Faculty of Arts
- Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences

The faculties of the Humanities and Social Sciences Group organise their research activities into various research units.

The **Biomedical Sciences Group** consists of the Faculties of Medicine, Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Kinesiology and Rehabilitation Sciences. It organises the Doctoral School for Biomedical Sciences and includes the following 14 departments:

- Department of Cardiovascular Sciences
- Department of Oral Health Sciences
- Department of Pharmaceutical and Pharmacological Sciences
- Department of Human Genetics
- Department of Imaging and Pathology
- Department of Kinesiology
- Department of Microbiology and Immunology
- Department of Cellular and Molecular Medicine
- Department of Neurosciences
- Department of Oncology
- Department of Clinical and Experimental Medicine
- Department of Rehabilitation Sciences
- Department of Development and Regeneration
- Department of Public Health and Primary Care

The **Science, Engineering and Technology Group** consists of five faculties: Science, Engineering Science, Bioscience Engineering, Engineering Technology, and Architecture. The Science, Engineering and Technology Group organises the Arenberg Doctoral School and includes the following research departments:

- Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences
- Department of Architecture
- Department of Biology
- Department of Biosystems
- Department of Civil Engineering
- Department of Chemistry
- Department of Chemical Engineering
- Department of Computer Science
- Department of Electrical Engineering (ESAT)
- Department of Materials Engineering
- Department of Microbial and Molecular Systems
- Department of Physics and Astronomy
- Department of Mechanical Engineering
- Department of Mathematics
The university’s operating revenue has increased significantly in the last decade from 516 million euros in 2004 to 933 million euros in 2014. Separately, the university hospitals had operating revenue of 921 million euros in 2014.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>in euros</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total revenue linked to education, research, and services</td>
<td>855,751,915</td>
<td>750,151,810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government grants and subsidies – basic funding</td>
<td>382,045,110</td>
<td>303,051,244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government funding – fundamental research</td>
<td>127,435,016</td>
<td>123,691,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government funding – applied research</td>
<td>118,544,547</td>
<td>115,209,497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracted research with the private sector and scientific services</td>
<td>145,797,803</td>
<td>128,693,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other revenue linked to education, research, and services</td>
<td>81,929,438</td>
<td>79,506,552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other operating revenue</td>
<td>77,572,076</td>
<td>67,890,237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total operating revenue – university</td>
<td>933,323,991</td>
<td>818,042,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total operating revenue – University Hospitals Leuven</td>
<td>920,565,758</td>
<td>891,721,877</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CAMPUSES

Europe’s higher education system has radically changed over the last 15 years. As a result, since 1 October 2013, KU Leuven has 15 campuses in 11 Flemish cities. The newly integrated degree programmes are in the fields of architecture, industrial engineering, business engineering, environment and prevention management, applied linguistics, journalism, and kinesiology and rehabilitation sciences.

By maintaining the profiles and objectives of the integrated degree programmes, KU Leuven ensures variation in its degree programmes to cater to many interests. Every campus now awards full KU Leuven degrees.

**Technology Campus Ostend**
This warm-hearted campus is dedicated to technology and has a unique location on the seafront of Ostend.

**Campus**
At walking distance from the train station in the historical city of Bruges, this campus offers a laid-back, personal atmosphere.

**Campus Kulak Kortrijk**
High-quality education with a human touch in a dynamic region close to the border. This comprehensive campus offers bachelor’s degree programmes and bridging programmes. The campus also has its own facilities to conduct research into carefully selected fields.

**Technology Campus Ghent**
In the bustling student city of Ghent this engineering campus invests in state-of-the-art infrastructure for experiments and technological creativity.

**Technology Campus Aalst**
This campus offers the general module of the bachelor’s programme in industrial sciences. It is dedicated to human-scale education in green surroundings.

**Campus Sint-Lucas Ghent**
This Faculty of Architecture in the centre of Ghent boasts a 150-years-old tradition in design. The campus offers state-of-the-art equipment in the MMLab.

**Campus Sint-Lucas Brussel**
This campus in the heart of Brussels is home to 300 students of architecture. The programme is identical to the one offered at Campus Sint-Lucas Ghent.
Technology Campus De Nayer
This green campus has a tradition of training students to become all-round engineers with a strong technical background.

Technology Campus Geel
This rural campus is a biotope for engineers. Its degree programmes attach great importance to respect for nature and attention to sustainability.

Technology Campus Diepenbeek
The intense collaboration between KU Leuven and UHasselt results in a wide range of specialisations in the field of engineering.

Campus Antwerp
Campus Carolus is home to Antwerp’s Faculty of Economics and Business.

Campus St Andries offers language-oriented programmes from the Faculty of Arts in the heart of metropolitan Antwerp.

Campus Brussels
The programmes offered at this campus in the heart of Europe are known for their international standing, excellent student coaching, practice-oriented focus, and flexible organisation.

Leuven
The original KU Leuven campus in Leuven provides education driven by innovative scientific research.

Campus Group T Leuven
This campus – dedicated to the engineering enterprise – is the only one in Belgium that offers the industrial engineering programme in Dutch as well as exclusively in English.
Egyptian pharaoh Akhenaton is mostly known for his wife Nefertiti and his successor Tutankhamun. But in the fourteenth century BC, he also ordered the construction of a gigantic new capital for the Egyptian empire. This capital, the city of Amarna, was located some 300 km to the south of Cairo. Last year, the research unit of Professor Harco Willems already found the remains of an industrial suburb just outside Amarna. On the basis of satellite images, the team has now also discovered a gigantic ‘industrial zone’ from which the building blocks for the city where quarried. Their discovery explains why a large city could be built in a relatively short amount of time. The findings indicate that the industrial zone stretched up to twelve km to the north of the city, which makes the agglomeration approximately six km2 larger than was previously assumed.

Professor Thierry Voet and his team from the Department of Human Genetics developed a new technique that reveals – simultaneously and in unprecedented detail – the DNA and RNA of a single cell. Their parallel sequencing technique, developed in collaboration with the Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute and the University of Oxford, is called Genome and Transcriptome Sequencing or, in short, the G&T-seq-technique. “By looking at the genome and transcriptome of a single cell in parallel, we can begin to see what the functional consequences of genetic variations are,” Professor Voet explains. “This technology enables us to probe for genetic heterogeneity in normal and diseased tissues deeper than ever before, which will increase our understanding of normal and disease development. For instance, it will help improve our understanding of the diversity of cancer cells within a tumour, and may help in the development of personalised cancer treatments.”

Duchenne muscular dystrophy is a common genetic muscular disorder in children. The condition causes progressive muscle degeneration, so that patients need a wheelchair around the age of nine and pass away in early adulthood. An international team led by Professor Gunnar Buyse from University Hospitals Leuven has developed a drug that reduces the loss of respiratory function in Duchenne patients. As cardiorespiratory failure is these patients’ leading cause of death, the new treatment is a big step forward.
Scientific research is the backbone of a forward-looking, dynamic university. It is a university’s \textit{raison d’être} in today’s knowledge society and the foundation for high-quality education and social engagement. KU Leuven provides a stimulating home for all types of research, from fundamental to applied, and from individual research projects to large-scale, international research consortia.

Extreme weather phenomena called atmospheric rivers were behind intense snowstorms recorded in 2009 and 2011 in East Antarctica. The resulting snow accumulation partly offset recent ice loss from the Antarctic ice sheet, report researchers from KU Leuven. Atmospheric rivers are long, narrow water vapour plumes stretching thousands of kilometres across the sky over vast ocean areas. They are capable of rapidly transporting large amounts of moisture around the globe. Although atmospheric rivers were already notorious for their ability to cause devastating precipitation and for their flood-inducing impact, their importance for Earth’s polar climate – and for global sea levels – is only now coming to light.

Paediatric cardiologists at University Hospitals Leuven (UZ Leuven) have successfully placed a new cardiac valve in a one-year-old via a catheter through the liver. This is the first time access through the liver was used to place a new valve. The cardiologists used the alternative route because infants’ blood vessels are too small to transport the cardiac valve to the heart. The infant is in good health and has returned home. Cardiologist Marc Gewillig: “Normally we would guide a catheter through a vein in the neck or groin to the heart. But in children who weigh less than ten kilograms, these blood vessels are too narrow for such a catheter, which is 7 to 8 millimetres wide. That is why we used an alternative access point through the liver.”

Andreas Vesalius, who was born 500 years ago, received particular attention in the academic year 2014-2015. An ambitious exhibition at Museum M as well as several lectures, events, and publications commemorated the founding father of modern anatomy. Professor Peter Carmeliet: “Five hundred years after Vesalius, medicine and science in general still need thinkers and trailblazers of his calibre. Not followers, but people who are not afraid to explore new paths and establish new connections.”
QUALITY AND EXCELLENCE

KU Leuven claims a place among Europe’s top centres of learning, and its voice can be heard throughout the global scientific discourse. Its comprehensive strategic research policy, attractive working environment for national and international talent, and dynamic, efficient administrative framework ensure that this top position is maintained.

The university’s research activities are propelled by a steadily increasing research budget. In 2014, KU Leuven invested 426.5 million euros in research, a 2.03% increase over 2013.

KU Leuven consistently secures funding from the most select competitive research funds, among them the prestigious ERC grants awarded by the European Research Council. KU Leuven researchers have been involved in a total of 81 ERC projects, placing the university eighth overall among European universities. In 2014, 10 KU Leuven researchers received ERC grants.

Numerous other academic and scientific grants and awards highlight the quality of research at KU Leuven. The most significant global indicators of academic excellence can be found in figures on research output in the form of PhD dissertations, publications, and associated citations and impact factors.

As a comprehensive university, KU Leuven aspires to a broad presence in the academic and scientific world, both in its educational activities and in its research. It is dedicated to excelling in domains that address preeminent and urgent societal challenges. The university’s funds for research are allotted with these goals in mind.

KU Leuven ranked among the European top in total projects and funding under the EU’s large-scale Seventh Framework Programme, which started in 2007 and ended in 2013. In the new Horizon 2020 programme, too, KU Leuven boasts a top position. Our university ranks sixth among European universities with 60 Horizon 2020 projects worth 28 million euros in total (situation in June 2015).

41,111 SCIE publications
- KU Leuven Senior Academic Staff
- KU Leuven publications (10-year window)
- KU Leuven citations (10-year window)
- BOF projects allocated to KU Leuven (year N+1)

680,122 SCIE citations
- KU Leuven Senior Academic Staff
- KU Leuven publications (10-year window)
- KU Leuven citations (10-year window)

Statistics: September 2014
**COOPERATION**

The choice to actively participate in major strategic areas of research requires not only sound financial commitments but also a multidisciplinary approach. A comprehensive university like KU Leuven is uniquely positioned to actualise this. Additionally, multidisciplinarity often invites new organisational forms, including partnerships outside the university.

Imec – the *Interuniversity Microelectronics Centre* – was founded in 1984. With nearly 2,000 employees, dozens of subsidiary spin-offs, and key partnerships with global companies such as Samsung and Intel, Imec has become a global player in the development of micro- and nanoelectronics.

Another such partnership is NERF, or *Neuro-electronics Research Flanders*, a joint research framework comprised of researchers from Imec, the Flanders Institute for Biotechnology (VIB), and KU Leuven. NERF was created with the goal of unravelling the neuro-circuitry of the human brain. In the long term, relying on a combination of nanotechnology and biology, NERF will provide new insights into the functionality of the brain and contribute to new diagnostic and treatment techniques for disorders affecting the central and peripheral nervous system. KU Leuven’s research centres have long played a leading role in brain-related research fields.

*iMinds* is Flanders’ digital research centre. Building on the strength of its 850+ researchers, iMinds leads digital innovation in 6 key markets – ICT, media, health, energy, smart cities, and manufacturing. It strives to convert digital knowhow into real-life products and services that change people’s lives for the better and contribute to the socio-economic growth of Flanders.

In today’s globalised knowledge economy, academic cooperation is international by definition. KU Leuven has numerous on-going bilateral and multilateral partnerships ranging from small- to large-scale, several of which include two-way exchange of students and researchers.

Our university also actively participates in institutional partnerships such as LERU, the *League of European Research Universities*, which brings together 21 leading research universities. Joining KU Leuven are, among others, the universities of Cambridge, Oxford, Heidelberg, Leiden, Imperial College London, and University College London. The LERU partners work together with the European institutions and other stakeholders to delineate the continent’s research framework, as it did, for instance, in shaping Horizon 2020.

---

**Award for 3D printing**

Professor Jean-Pierre Kruth has received the 2015 Bower Award Prize for Achievement in Science, one of the richest and most prestigious science prizes in the United States. Professor Kruth leads a team of engineers at KU Leuven’s Production Engineering, Machine Design and Automation Section in the Department of Mechanical Engineering. He was recognised for his achievements in the field of additive manufacturing (AM), commonly known as 3D printing. AM is a technology that produces objects by adding material in a layer-by-layer process that involves lasers.

Jean-Pierre Kruth: “Our country is at the forefront of AM science and industry. Our global share in industrial 3D output is four times what you would expect on the basis of our total industrial output, which indicates that we are very much in the picture. Materialise and LayerWise, two KU Leuven spin-offs, are among the world’s top-level companies in the AM market. We have to keep it that way. Receiving the Bower Award highlights our leading role.”
Young talent must be actively sought out and recruited. KU Leuven does this in a number of ways, with its three doctoral schools playing leading roles. Each of the university’s three overarching groups has a doctoral school: the Arenberg Doctoral School (organised by the Science, Engineering and Technology Group), the Doctoral School for Biomedical Sciences, and the Doctoral School of Humanities and Social Sciences. Each school seeks out international research talent and provides individualised doctoral training. In addition to academic course offerings, the doctoral programmes emphasise non-academic skills acquisition in areas such as effective communication and entrepreneurship.

In the 2013-2014 academic year, KU Leuven awarded 669 doctoral degrees. Of these, 284 (42%) were completed by non-Belgians.

Mathematician Stefaan Vaes wins Francqui Prize

Professor Stefaan Vaes from the KU Leuven Department of Mathematics has received the Francqui Prize – Belgium’s most important scientific distinction – for his research into von Neumann algebras. These mathematical structures have applications in, for instance, quantum mechanics and knot theory.

The Francqui jury praised Stefaan Vaes’s ground-breaking work on the structure and classification of operator algebras, in particular. According to the jury, “his findings have significantly improved all existing techniques in his field of research. In addition, Stefaan Vaes inspires an entire generation of young mathematicians in Belgium and beyond.”

Doctoral dance

“What is your PhD about?” To answer this question, botanist Patrizia Tavormina turned her research into a choreography. And she is not the only one: 21 doctoral students from all across the world competed in the Dance your PhD Contest. The playful contest challenges doctoral students to explain their research without jargon, PowerPoint presentations, or posters. Patrizia has already made it to the finals. The winners will be invited to demonstrate their dance talents at Stanford University.

Recreating Belgian beer from 1842

Scientists at KU Leuven, Campus Ghent, have successfully recreated beer recovered from a nineteenth-century ship-wreck off the coast of Finland in 2010. A Finnish brewery now plans to market the brew worldwide. The old bottles had lain undisturbed at the bottom of the ocean, some 50 metres under the sea’s surface, since 1842.

The Fins called on researchers at KU Leuven’s Brewing Technology Research Group to reconstruct the beer. Led by Professor Guido Aerts and brewmaster Gert De Rouck, the team worked for a year to reconstruct the centuries-old brew. Gert De Rouck: “On the basis of the micro-organisms in the bottles, we were able to figure out which type of yeast and bacteria were used by the beer’s nineteenth-century brewers. This information allowed us to trace the beer back to Belgium.”
Under a tenure-track contract, newly appointed members of the Junior Academic Staff demonstrate their research and managerial capacities for a period of five years in a challenging, international context. At the end of this period, outstanding candidates move on to the permanent framework for Senior Academic Staff.

Attracting well-established, discipline-leading researchers is another method of strengthening the university’s research fabric and enhancing its international success. One way KU Leuven does this is by making use of Odysseus resources to attract international researchers to Leuven, where they continue their research at the helm of a fully-fledged research group. Likewise, the Methusalem programme provides established researchers with a stable framework to carry out their research activities.

RESEARCH VALORISATION

Research is important both as the basis of knowledge creation and as the foundation of university-level education. Research can also have important economic implications. KU Leuven’s research community, socially embedded as it is, recognises and cultivates the opportunities this presents. Research valorisation constitutes an important form of societal return. Much of the university’s research is carried out in the context of development cooperation and partnerships with universities in the developing world.

KU Leuven also has an exceptional record when it comes to the commercial valorisation of research. The university’s technology transfer office, KU Leuven Research & Development (LRD), has been active in this field since 1972. For more than 40 years, LRD has cultivated a spirit of cooperation between the university and the business world and continues to connect academic, scientific, and economic partners.

Investing in research yields economic dividends

Paul Van Dun, General Manager of KU Leuven Research & Development, is also Managing Director of the Gemma Frisius Fund (GFF), which was founded in 1997 by KBC, the BNP Paribas Group (at the time Generale Bank), and KU Leuven with 40/40/20 stakes. “The Gemma Frisius Fund was created to enable entrepreneurial researchers to start businesses based on technologies or ideas developed at KU Leuven. In the mid-nineties, venture capital for high-tech start-ups was not easy to come by and because of this a number of good concept companies had difficulty raising the necessary capital to open their doors. GFF wanted to help.”

“And the investment has paid off. Participating partners quickly doubled their up-front capital from 12.5 to 25 million euros. GFF has since invested in several dozen companies. Usually, funds provided by GFF do not cover all start-up costs, but experience shows that allocated capital acts as an important catalyst: if GFF signs on to a project, the more traditional investors usually follow. Spin-offs now form a large high-tech belt around Leuven that comes with thousands of jobs, including suppliers. They significantly increase the added value of the regional economy.”
Research Foundation Flanders (FWO) recognises excellence

KU Leuven professors Greet Van den Berghe and Luc Van Gool have won the FWO Excellence Prize. They each receive 100,000 euros in recognition of their scientific careers.

The FWO Excellence Prizes are awarded every five years to Flemish researchers from five research domains. The winners are international leaders in their field who have pushed back scientific frontiers. They were nominated by (inter)national colleagues and selected by an international jury of top-level researchers.

Professor Greet Van den Berghe (Department of Cellular and Molecular Medicine) was awarded the Excellence Prize for fundamental biomedical sciences. The jury praised her new insights into hormonal and metabolic reactions in critically ill patients. Van den Berghe has improved the medical treatment of these patients by means of targeted research into specific tools for patient care.

Professor Luc Van Gool (ESAT Department of Electrical Engineering) won the Excellence Prize for applied sciences. His research into the role of invariance in geometrical transformations has resulted in the development of models that are still being used for research into image recognition. His current research covers several aspects of computer vision, imaging, and image processing. It has been used in technology for movies, security, archaeology, and the digitalisation of cultural heritage, to name just a few examples.

Approximately 2,500 new university-to-industry contracts are signed every year, most of which for contracted research and research within university consortia. These contracts account for one-third of LRD’s total turnover, which amounted to 186.4 million euros in 2013 (excluding revenue realised from spin-off operations). Additionally, LRD devotes special attention to the creation of intellectual property with economic value (e.g. patents).

Often, LRD’s activities involve high-leverage initiatives such as spin-offs. A relatively small investment on the part of LRD can act as an important impulse for attracting extra external capital, essential for developing spin-offs. Together, LRD’s 100+ spin-offs form a unique belt of knowledge-driven high-tech companies in and around Leuven that comes with thousands of jobs, including supply and support positions. Well-known examples include LMS, Thrombogenics, and Materialise.

Sexual difficulties not always a problem

Not everyone who experiences sexual difficulties considers that an actual problem, reports sexologist Lies Hendrickx. As part of her doctoral research, Hendrickx analysed data from the population-based Sexpert study (2,000 participants) and an online survey with 30,000 Flemish respondents. 44-49% of the women and 35-48% of the men reported sexual difficulties. However, when participants were asked whether their sexual difficulties caused distress – and thus fit the DSM definition of sexual dysfunctions – the rates dropped by half: only 22-24% of the women and 12-21% of the men suffered from sexual dysfunction. Only a minority, in other words, considered their sexual difficulties problematic. Hendrickx also found that while the prevalence of sexual difficulties increases with age, older participants are less likely to experience these difficulties as distressing.
AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

In keeping with a centuries-long tradition, KU Leuven conferred a number of honorary doctorates during its Patron Saint’s Day on 2 February. This year’s honourees were writer Philippe Claudel, ecologist Carl Folke, cancer researcher Rakesh Jain, and political scientist Brainard Guy Peters.

In tracing the contours of the honouree’s oeuvre, promotor Lieven D’hulst called French writer and filmmaker Philippe Claudel the most eminent French author of his generation. How do we give meaning to historical events? How do time and memory work? Exploring these questions – with rich language, a unique style, and juxtaposed points of view – are, for Professor D’huiist, the core business of Claudel’s writing. Alongside his work as an author, Claudel is also an acclaimed screenwriter and filmmaker. His artistic achievements and unique position as a master of written and cinematic storytelling make him a deserving doctor honoris causa. “This award is an encouragement to continue working,” said Claudel in his remarks. “Writing is a difficult and often lonely occupation, but writers have a responsibility to be community builders.

That alone is reason enough to undertake the difficult task of writing a book. Acclaim may or may not follow and is always unexpected.” As was this honorary doctorate: “I want to continue to be worthy of this distinction.”

“Earth is becoming an unsafe environment,” said Professor Erik Mathijs, promotor for the Swedish ecologist Carl Folke, in his laudatio. “A number of vital thresholds have already been crossed.” Carl Folke warns against treating our natural environment as a factor to be exploited. Our biosphere is in fact the prerequisite for all social and economic activity and should therefore be protected at all costs, he emphasised. And yet Carl Folke is not pessimistic. By focusing on the interaction between man and nature and on the resilience that is inherent in both,
Folke’s research casts a sober but hopeful message. He was surprised to be selected for an honorary doctorate, but says the award adds important momentum to his work. “We used to think we were a small world on a big planet. Now we know we are a big world on a small planet.”

Professor Rakesh Jain is a true pioneer, said promotor Peter Carmeliet in his laudatio. Professor Jain has contributed new insights and strategies for the treatment of cancer and vascular diseases that affect 500 million people worldwide. Jain is also one of the world’s most cited researchers and has inspired generations of researchers, clinicians, and engineers. In his remarks, Jain emphasised the important role cancer patients play in cancer research, particularly those who participate in experimental clinical trials despite dire prognoses. “They make this choice purely to help future cancer patients,” said Professor Jain. “I would like to dedicate this honorary doctorate to them.” Central to the work of Professor Jain is the question as to how we can normalise the blood vessels in tumours to guarantee that cancer drugs can reach their target.

Carmeliet: “Jain has highlighted the instrumental role of engineering techniques in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer. He has revolutionised our ideas about how cancer drugs actually work.”

Promotor Bart Kerremans opened his laudatio for Brainard Guy Peters with the following words: “Professor Peters is the most eminent public administration scholar of our time.” Peters has played an instrumental role in conceptualising core concepts in contemporary political science, including governance and new institutionalism. Peters is not only a prolific researcher but has also translated his insights into textbooks and handbooks, which are currently being used in classrooms and boardrooms around the world. In his remarks, professor Peters emphasised that he is mainly looking for ways in which people can govern themselves more democratically, more effectively, and more efficiently. “For decades, Peters has been the one to distil the essence from theoretical discussions, connect it to current affairs, and educate younger generations. This makes him an all-round academic,” Bart Kerremans concluded.
On 28 May, KU Leuven conferred an honorary doctorate on UN Secretary-General **Ban Ki-moon**. The university honoured him for his dedication to global causes including human rights, sustainability, and peace. In his remarks, Ban Ki-moon emphasised Belgium’s instrumental role in the United Nations. Former Prime Minister of Belgium Paul-Henri Spaak, for instance, also served as the first President of the United Nations General Assembly. And a country where the scourge of war brought untold sorrows attaches great importance to an organisation that has made peace-keeping its primary mission. The UN can contribute to a better, more peaceful world in many ways, but we all have to join forces. That is why the Secretary-General brought ‘homework’ for all KU Leuven students. “Become a global citizen with a global vision. Challenge your leaders. Tell them they have a responsibility to make this world more peaceful and prosperous. Use your voices to claim your rights.”

On 10 June, KU Leuven conferred an honorary doctorate on Chilean President **Michelle Bachelet**. The university honoured her for her role in UN women and for her contribution to socio-economic equality and women’s rights in Chile and beyond. In her remarks, President Bachelet pointed out that, all too often, Latin America is still confronted with major inequalities. There is growing willingness to pursue prosperity and justice, but a lot of work remains to be done. Putting this theory into practice presupposes an inclusive society that is not just a noble ideal but also a strategic imperative to create and distribute more wealth. These fundamental ideas underpin a series of reforms aimed at stimulating equality in Chile. President Bachelet implemented a tax reform – initially controversial, but now commonly accepted – that increases wealthier citizens’ contribution. She also changed the voting system and imposed 40% quota for female candidates on electoral lists for the Parliament. And, of course, the recent establishment of the Ministry of Women and Gender Equality dovetails with the pursuit of equality as well. But the greatest opportunities to boost equality are embedded in the Chilean educational system. Whereas high-quality education used to be a prerogative of the rich, traditional segregation is increasingly giving way to inclusion.

On 8 September, KU Leuven conferred an honorary doctorate on Professor **Justin Yifu Lin** on the occasion of the official opening of Vlerick’s academic year. Professor Lin is one of China’s foremost economists as well as the former Chief Economist and Senior Vice President of the World Bank. Professor Lin played an important role in planning China’s modern economic development. In his work, he resolves the ostensibly irresolvable: he built a world-encompassing career without losing sight of China, he reconciled economic performance with real social harmony, and he successfully brought free market thinking in line with the needs of developing countries. None of these trajectories are easy, but, to quote one of his colleagues, Professor Lin possesses “the patience to cook a stone.”
On 23 September, historian and professor Jay Winter from Yale University received an honorary doctorate from Kulak in recognition of a half-century of research into WWI and its consequences for twentieth-century Europe: “Europeans know that war opens a Pandora’s box.” Winter accepted his honorary doctorate during the opening of the academic year. The event marks the 50th anniversary of Kulak’s founding and, of course, the commemoration of the First World War. “WWI was the result of a collective failure of the great powers to maintain peace,” Winter argued in his remarks. “Every single one of them could have stopped the march to war if they so desired. Singling out – and humiliating – Germany as the only aggressor after the war was both inaccurate and a huge mistake, with all the disastrous consequences that came with it.”

On 6 November, KU Leuven’s Institute of Philosophy conferred an honorary doctorate on the Canadian Will Kymlicka. The institute also celebrated its 125th year on the occasion. Will Kymlicka has emerged as one of the most important political philosophers of our time. His main focus is on the topic of multicultural citizenship. Professor Helder De Schutter (Institute of Philosophy): “Kymlicka argues that the liberal focus on individual autonomy requires that we acknowledge the right of these individuals to experience their culture. Languages and cultures are contexts in which choices and thus real autonomy are made possible. That means that cultures must be explicitly and officially recognised. And that, in turn, implies that we, in addition to the individual rights that apply to everyone in society, must also recognise group-differentiated rights as well.”

**Titles of nobility for KU Leuven governors and professors**

In July 2015 King Philippe of Belgium bestowed titles of nobility upon a number of meritorious Belgians. The list of honourees includes a number of KU Leuven governors and professors.

- Former President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy is a member of the KU Leuven Board of Governors. He was honoured with the title of count.
- Professor Hilde Laga is a member of the Board of Governors as well. She received the title of baroness.
- Professor Koenraad Debackere from the Faculty of Economics and Business was given the title of baron. He is managing director of KU Leuven and executive director of KU Leuven Research & Development.
- Professor Peter Carmeliet, too, now bears the title of baron. He is affiliated with the Faculty of Medicine and best known for his ground-breaking research into angiogenesis.
UNIVERSITY AND SOCIETY

Research results and expertise can contribute greatly to the public debate and public opinion. As the interdisciplinary think tank of the university, Metaforum aims to optimise the university’s scientific contribution to this discourse.

Metaforum’s interdisciplinary work groups produce vision papers on pressing social issues. Under Metaforum’s ‘Euroforum’ branch, a number of work groups are reaching out to representatives of the European Commission to stimulate dialogue between research and policy in the context of the “Europe 2020” strategy. In addition to work groups focused on five strategic themes (employment; research, development and innovation; climate change and energy; education; and poverty and social exclusion), Metaforum includes a ‘horizontal’ work group working to elaborate an overarching, long-term vision for Europe.

Metaforum also organises the Politeia Conference, geared toward exposing a broad audience to innovative insights that inspire dialogue on the future of our society. Important contemporary issues are presented and discussed by experts from various scientific disciplines at current event lectures held throughout the year.
SOLIDARITY

Research and education constitute the university’s key tools for fulfilling its responsibility to society and the wider world. The university community is also dedicated to helping those in need via annual fundraisers and social outreach programmes.

KU Leuven has traditionally devoted special attention and resources to development cooperation. This includes study and research bursaries, diverse projects carried out in cooperation with universities in the developing world, institutional support for key partners in the Global South, etc.

Each year, a total of nearly 12 million euros is appropriated to the University Development Cooperation (via VLIR-UOS, the Flemish Interuniversity Council - University Development Cooperation). KU Leuven contributes own funds as well, primarily in the form of bursaries for doctoral researchers from the Global South. LUMOS (Leuven University Medical Development and Solidarity) coordinates the projects of University Hospitals Leuven in Congo, Rwanda, Cameroon, and elsewhere.

An ice bucket for the rector

“I’ve been taking a cold shower every morning for twenty years – and they last longer than this one – but this was refreshing in more ways than one. I recommend you do it, too,” laughs a wet rector Rik Torfs after completing the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge, an initiative to raise awareness – and research funding – for Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS). Vice Rector for Biomedical Sciences Wim Robberecht did the bucket-pouring honours. Torfs then returned the favour. ALS is a neurodegenerative disease. In people with ALS, nerve cells in the muscles slowly deteriorate. Eventually, patients lose motor control and become paralysed, while their mental abilities remain completely intact.

Bloedserieus Leuven, a cooperative effort between the student associations of the faculties of Medicine and Bioengineering, has been a fixture of university life in Leuven for more than 25 years. Blood drives are organised twice a year in cooperation with the Belgian Red Cross and Bloedserieus Week. Students can give blood at various locations around the city. The effort has enjoyed spectacular success, attracting many thousands of donors each year.
GIVING AND FUNDRAISING

The government and, through it, society make a considerable effort to enable the university to fulfil as many of its goals as possible. But the university’s ambitions almost always exceed the financial means available to it. The Leuven University Fund (LUF) plays an important role in bridging the gap between budget and ambition. With LUF support, our researchers can explore new fields not supported by conventional funding.

**Bursaries** provide opportunities for promising students. The *Roger Dillemans Fund* awards excellence grants to students in specialised degree programmes. The *Marc Vervenne Fund* awards scholarships with the aim of contributing to the development of the capabilities of universities in developing countries.

**Endowed funds**, several of which carry the name of their donor, support specific activities within the university. The *Library Fund*, for instance, supports the university libraries’ acquisition and restauration of valuable documents and books. The *Rune Fund* provides funding for paediatric-cardiological research.

Since 1982, the university has established a number of prestigious **endowed chairs** bearing the name of the chair’s benefactor. Endowing a chair is an excellent way to mark the commitment of individuals, associations, and businesses to the university's research and teaching activities.

A **memorial gift** is a financial contribution made by the estate of a deceased donor.
Wilfried Martens Fund

The Wilfried Martens Fund aims to preserve, disseminate, and deepen Wilfried Martens’s European political legacy. The fund was established at KU Leuven in 2014 on the initiative of Minister of State Miet Smet-Martens and the European People’s Party. The fund will finance academic education and research projects about the topics that mattered most to Wilfried Martens in the final years of his European political career. Examples include the institutional architecture of the EU, its neighbourhood policy, and the development of European parties and agencies. The fund will also pay attention to the dialogue between politics and religion and to the European aspirations of countries in the Western Balkans as well as to the Eastern Partnership.

Growth despite economic crisis

“We find that many people see a donation for a promising project as a meaningful investment,” says Isabel Penne, director of the LUF. Benefactors can support the university through a gift, the establishment of a fund or endowed chair, or by including KU Leuven in their will. “The funds support researchers, promising doctoral students, and other staff members to pursue an ambitious plan, whether it be related to teaching, research, or social outreach.”

“It is striking how robustly we continue to grow despite the economic crisis,” Isabel Penne adds. “People often tell us that a gift that supports research and helps find a solution is a better investment, and yields better results, than other forms of investment.”

‘Opening the Future’ on a new scale

Opening the Future is a large-scale fundraising campaign geared toward funding advanced, high-risk, high-reward research. The campaign is embedded within the Leuven University Fund (LUF), which provides administrative support, but otherwise operates parallel and under the guidance of its own campaign board and management.

Campaign chair Urbain Vandeurzen is a co-founder of LMS, honorary chair of Voka, and current chair of the board of directors of Gimv: “Opening the Future supports research into brain disorders, which by far and away constitute the most challenging global medical-scientific challenge out there, even more so than cancer and other problems. Brain disorders affect many people and families. We are focusing on four neurodegenerative diseases – Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s, ALS, and muscular dystrophy – in addition to autism. Research in these areas remains very incomplete; brain research is still in its pioneer days.”

Diabetes

On Thursday, 28 May the Danish clothing and accessories company Bestseller presented a cheque of 217,169.10 euros to the Hippo & Friends Fund. Bestseller is the distributor of brands including Vero Moda and Only. The company donated its net turnover of ‘Give-a-day’ 10 April 2015 to charities. Fifty percent of the net turnover in Belgium and Luxemburg was donated to the KU Leuven Hippo & Friends Fund. The Hippo & Friends Fund was originally established to support parents of children with type 1 diabetes; today, its main focus is on raising money for scientific research. Professor Chantal Mathieu: “The proceeds from this initiative breathe new life into type 1 diabetes research. The disease affects young people and has a major impact on their quality of life. The money will help us pave the way for a cure, which is one of the main goals of our fund.”
On Thursday evening, 9 October, Vice Rector for Student Affairs Rik Gosselink and Alderman for Student Affairs Bieke Verlinden plunged into the Leuven nightlife. They first joined the police’s nuisance patrol and then worked a shift as stewards in a student bar (or ‘fakbar’ in Dutch). Their goal was to raise students’ awareness of the problems caused by night-time noise.

Every year in October, umbrella student organisation LOKO organises an awareness campaign about night-time noise, urging party-going students to keep it down in the streets out of respect for their neighbours. LOKO joins forces with the police, the city of Leuven, and the university.

Vice Rector Rik Gosselink happily sacrificed some sleep to raise students’ enthusiasm for a sleep-friendly city: “I think it’s important to make students aware of the problem. After all, they are the ones who have to fix it.”

The Faculty of Economics and Business has earned the prestigious EQUIS label and can therefore claim its position among internationally renowned business schools. The EQUIS accreditation is awarded by the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD), a non-profit organisation of business schools and companies dedicated to promoting, improving, and internationalising management education. The EFMB aims to bridge the gap between education and corporations.

The EQUIS accreditation is given to a select group of business schools and faculties that meet the high quality standards of the EFMD. With this accreditation, the Faculty of Economics and Business ranks among a select list of top-level schools including the Amsterdam Business School, Copenhagen Business School, and Said Business School (Oxford University). In Flanders, only Vlerick Business School has thus far received the EQUIS label.

Rector Rik Torfs has laid the foundation stone for the new KU Leuven campus in Bruges. Minister-President of Flanders Geert Bourgeois, Minister of Education Hilde Crevits, and Mayor Renaat Landuyt were also present at the ceremony on 22 April. The first students will be able to attend classes on the new campus in September 2017. Campus Bruges will house the programme in Kinesiology and Rehabilitation Sciences (currently hosted in the Xaverianenstraat in Bruges) as well as the programme in Industrial Engineering (currently in Ostend). The professional bachelor’s programmes in industrial engineering will relocate from VIVES in Ostend to Bruges. The new campus will also be the site of scientific research in all these fields.
On 15 October, Polish road bicycle racer Michal Kwiatkowski made a triumphant return to the Bakala Academy after winning the world championships. Kwiatkowski often consults the scientists at Bakala, the research and testing centre for sport at KU Leuven. At the gathering, he and his coach Koen Pelgrim emphasised the important role science has in top-level athletics. “Bakala was a turning point in my career,” says Kwiatkowski. “Without the coaching that I received here, I would never have gotten as far as I have. The input of scientists is just as important as training. The coaching I get here helps me understand my body better. And it boosts my confidence because it gives me a clearer picture of my performance and allows me to see incremental improvement.”

More than 3,000 students filled the Ladeuzeplein on 29 April to take part in the fourth edition of the Big Splash. Each year, student organisations compete in Belgium’s biggest water balloon fight. The students threw as many as 150,000 bright yellow water balloons at each other. The absence of the sun could not spoil the fun. The 16 student organisations had to keep their presidents – or rather, their T-shirts – as dry as possible. Amid loud cheers of the 4,500 supporters, the president of Ekonomika and ESN Leuven – the student organisation for Erasmus students in Leuven – made it into the finals. The two presidents then climbed on to air cushions to be pelted with water balloons. The president of Ekonomika fell of the cushion most often and was thus defeated by his female colleague of ESN Leuven. The students of ESN Leuven won a party worth 10,000 euros.

On Saturday, 18 October, the auditoria and several seminar rooms at Campus Gasthuisberg filled up with unusually young students. 750 children between 8 and 13 years old took part in the tenth edition of the KU Leuven Children’s University. The anniversary edition was themed ‘From Head to Toe’. In the morning, Professor An Zwijsen talked about Andreas Vesalius and the pioneering work he performed five centuries ago. And in the afternoon, Professor Jean-Jacques Cassiman introduced the audience to the world of genetics. The children needed some time to get used to such a large ‘classroom’. After Cassiman’s class, they were divided into smaller groups for workshops.

Teaching and research reinforce and influence each other. Together they create the stimulating environment that makes a university so unique. They form the foundation of the university’s role as a crucial societal actor. Professors, students, and staff are all part of this educational process, which is characterised by the common and substantive pursuit of knowledge. The university community rearticulated its strategic vision for education in the course of the 2013-2014 academic year. Students – and their prospects for the future – are at the centre of this vision, which is now being implemented by all of the university’s faculties. Newly-launched projects help students structure, deepen, and expand their plans for the future.
STUDENT ENROLMENT

Following the integration of the university colleges, the university added 13,000 students to its admission rolls and gained around 1,300 staff members.

As of 23 June 2015, the ‘entire’ KU Leuven counted 57,284 students. Among them, 14% are ‘generation students’ (students enrolling at a Flemish institution of higher education for the first time). KU Leuven’s student population can be broken down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>39.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Master</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Master</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Teacher Training</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The largest student populations are found in the faculties of Economics and Business, Medicine, Engineering Technology, Arts, and Law.

The ratio of male to female students is even at 50/50. However, the gender ratio fluctuates across disciplines. Male students have traditionally been strongly represented in the science and (industrial) engineering disciplines while female students are strongly represented in pharmaceutical sciences, psychology, and educational sciences.

DEGREE PROGRAMMES

In 2013-2014, KU Leuven offered 78 bachelor's programmes, four of which also had an English-language track. 127 Dutch-language initial master's programmes were offered, 44 of which were also offered in English and one of which was also offered in French. Additionally, the university offered eight Erasmus Mundus degree programmes. 22 Dutch-language, 25 English-language, and one Spanish-language advanced master's programmes were offered. An increasing number of degree programmes are organised in partnership with universities in Belgium and abroad. As KU Leuven is a comprehensive university, its degree programmes span nearly all fields of study.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Students from approximately 150 countries study at KU Leuven. The countries with the largest student populations are, in descending order, the Netherlands, China, Italy, Spain, and India.

The International Office plays a central role in implementing the university's international policy. Its team of experts provides policy support, interacts with faculties and foreign partners, develops projects and programmes, stimulates development cooperation, and bolsters the position of KU Leuven abroad.

The International Admissions and Mobility Unit is an important contact point for international students and researchers. It provides intercultural guidance and administration services for international admissions and bursaries.

In the beginning of the academic year, the Orientation Days help newly arrived international students get settled in their new home away from home. Other initiatives throughout the year provide a practical, culturally enriching, and accessible introduction to the city and the university as well.

Outgoing international mobility is strongly promoted through very active participation in the Erasmus programme, which enables Belgian students to study abroad for up to a year at another European university.
STUDY STRUCTURE & STUDENT ADVISING

KU Leuven implements the concept of ‘diploma space’, which combines a clear study structure with flexibility. Students have significant freedom in planning out a personalised path to graduation. To ensure a timely graduation perspective, students can make use of specialised advising services, which offer binding and non-binding tests and advice. The Study Advice Service assists almost 6,000 students each year and offers guidance to students who, for instance, want to transfer to a different programme. Additionally, each faculty has monitors and counsellors on staff who play a key role in student advising.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT AND INNOVATION

In 2014 KU Leuven developed a policy plan for university education. Central to the plan is students’ motivational picture of the future (the “disciplinary future self”).

The research-oriented nature of a university education guarantees its substantive renewal, while the integration of technological tools and innovative pedagogy ensures that the university’s educational perspective remains up to date.

Toledo is the university’s online learning platform. It has become an irreplaceable tool in the modern learning process. Kotnet provides high-speed Internet to all university residences. Special arrangements are also in place to provide students living in privately owned housing with Internet access at affordable rates.

Students as well as members of the teaching staff enjoy specialised services directed toward optimising education, including teacher training, curriculum development, and exposure to new teaching tools and methods.

A system of internal and institutional reviews ensures that excellence in teaching is maintained.

In the academic year 2016-2017 KU Leuven – and all other Flemish institutions of higher education – will be subjected to an institutional review for the first time. That prospect created the framework to develop a contemporary, dynamic, and effective system for quality assurance.

MindMates and life’s fundamental questions

The Facebook pseudo-world may suggest otherwise, but in real life, sooner or later, many people go through a rough patch or experience psychological problems. Students are particularly vulnerable. That is why KU Leuven launched MindMates, a project that coaches students to take care of their own mental health – and that of others.

Jan Toye manages Palm Breweries, but he also dedicates his time to the GavoorGeluk (‘Go for Happiness’) Fund. The fund supports research into and the prevention of suicide in young people. “Whenever possible, we support projects that may help to detect and prevent the causes of suicide. In that context, the MindMates initiative is sorely needed, so we are happy to support it.”

“We need to start accepting our vulnerability as human beings. When young people know that everyone experiences fear or powerlessness, and that we all question the meaning of life sometimes, it becomes a little easier to be open about these thoughts. When fellow students learn to pick up on signs of unhappiness and suicidal tendencies, we make progress, especially when those peers know how to handle the situation and where to get professional help. That is what MindMates and GavoorGeluk have set out to achieve.”

The Programme Committees will play a central role, in close dialogue with all parties involved.
LIFELONG LEARNING

A university education does not end with a diploma. Lecture series, short and long training courses, and postgraduate programmes – pursued part-time or on the weekends – are an ideal way for ‘graduates’ to keep abreast of new developments and skills in their field.

The flexibility of today’s education structure provides many new and varied opportunities for non-traditional students. Lifelong learning has an important place in this new structure. Holders of a bachelor’s degree can continue on to various master’s programmes (possibly subject to a preparatory programme). Transitional pathways are in place to accommodate many kinds of non-traditional students, including holders of a professional bachelor’s degree seeking to advance on to an academic master’s programme, transfer students wishing to switch disciplines, working students, etc.

UNIVERSITY LIFE

Leuven is a relatively small city, with close to 30,000 inhabitants living in its city centre. Add to this a large university with more than 40,000 students at its Leuven-based campus and the result is a truly unique environment far more international and youthful than a ‘normal’ city of similar size. Leuven is also home to several university colleges.

KU Leuven’s Housing Service helps students find a comfortable place to live while in Leuven. With several thousand student rooms under university management, KU Leuven offers extensive housing options for all living situations. Many students also find housing on the private market.

DOUBLE VICTORY FOR KU LEUVEN IN EUROPEAN LAW MOOT COURT

KU Leuven has won a double victory in this year’s European Law Moot Court, the most prestigious international competition of its kind in the field of European Union law. In the final rounds, our university team trumped the competition from Leiden, Liège, and Maastricht. KU Leuven also landed the trophy for best advocate-general. The European Law Moot Court is an annual competition with participants from approximately seventy universities in Europe and beyond.

The Faculty of Law strongly encourages its students to take part in international competitions such as the European Law Moot Court instead of writing a traditional master’s thesis. To this end, the faculty coaches the students and brings them into contact with dozens of people from the field – including lawyers, judges, EU officials, and professors – for feedback on their pleading skills.
Many students take their meals at an Alma. The university’s network of student restaurants serves nearly 2 million meals each year at very affordable prices.

In Leuven, you are never far from A to B. Getting around is easy on foot, by bicycle, or by bus. The city centre is decidedly pedestrian-friendly, which makes walking a pleasure and driving somewhat of a pain.

The university also provides various services for students seeking financial, legal, and employment advice. The Social Services Office provides information and guidance regarding student finances, including need-based scholarships. The Legal Office specialises in fielding social-juridical questions about students’ particular socio-legal status. The Student Employment Office helps place students in part-time, temporary, and holiday jobs. The service also provides information on laws governing the social and fiscal aspects of student employment.

For primary medical care, student walk-ins are welcome at the Student Health Centre, which is staffed by excellent general practitioners with decades of experience treating young adults. The centre also provides health information and education tailored to a student audience.

Additionally, the centre offers outpatient psychotherapy and psychiatric care for individuals and groups. Students visit the centre with study-related issues such as exam anxiety, chronic procrastination, and concentration problems. Students experiencing depression, anxiety, and relationship issues can also seek support here.

The Ombudsperson provides support and guidance to students experiencing harassment and violence of a sexual or non-sexual nature.

SENSE OF PURPOSE

The philosophical and religious aspects of university life take on various forms in our multicultural university community. The University Parish provides Catholic worship services in Dutch and coordinates a number of other initiatives inspired by a social or philosophical purpose. It organises workshops, common residences, retreats, volunteer projects, and more.

Catholic worship services are also organised in English, French, and Spanish. Protestant, Evangelical, Orthodox, and Muslim members of the university community organise additional worship services and activities.

All degree programmes include the course ‘Perspectives on Religion and Meaning’.
CULTURE

Leuven’s cultural landscape is as varied as it is rich. From large-scale to small-scale, highbrow to art-house, classical to techno, the city has something to fit everyone’s fancy. The university strives to do its part to nurture this and gives students and staff every opportunity to participate in the rich cultural life of the city.

The city’s thoughtful cultural policy – the result of a cooperative effort by the city, its cultural organisations, and the university – and a widely varied infrastructure create an excellent framework for active participation and expression.

Two university carillons, eight ensembles, museum-calibre exhibitions, a centuries-old patrimony, performances by rising and established stars, awards for creative achievements: the cultural richness of the city and the university literally fills volumes.

Students can enjoy cultural activities at various locations. Particularly worth noting is STUK, a centre for the arts that has recently adopted a new mission: to become a House for Dance, Image, and Sound.

SPORT

Tucked away in the green Arenberg Park is the University Sports Centre. This expansive and modern complex offers students and staff members access to numerous indoor and outdoor sports, both recreational and competitive, ranging from tennis to climbing and basketball to speleology and paragliding.

For fitness enthusiasts, personal trainers are on staff at the fully equipped fitness centre. There is also a swimming pool, tennis courts, several soccer fields, and an all-weather track, among other facilities.

Topsport ABC, which includes a high-altitude simulation room among its facilities, provides sports medicine expertise (exercise physiology, nutrition, sports rehabilitation) for Belgian and international elite athletes. Student-athletes who excel in a specific discipline can make arrangements to combine their studies with a competitive sport.

The Bakala Academy Athletic Performance Center is a state-of-the-art facility dedicated to sport science research and testing. It helps elite athletes optimise their performance.

STURA AND LOKO

Stura (the KU Leuven Student Council) and LOKO (KU Leuven’s umbrella student organisation) play a central role in student life at the university.

What better way to prepare yourself for the intellectual hurdle race known as ‘de blok’ (the official study period) than actual hurdle practice? On 22 April, students gathered in the University Sports Centre and Arenberg Castle Park to blow off some steam during ‘Survival of the Student’, the first student obstacle race organised by LOKO Sport, Apolloon, and the University Sports Centre. The weather was great, but finishing the 6 km track with 21 obstacles was not exactly a walk in the park. As the first edition was a big success, the organisers plan to make the obstacle race an annual tradition.
Stura represents all KU Leuven students, including the students from the university colleges that integrated into KU Leuven (e.g. in Mechelen and Antwerp). The Stura representatives defend student interests in various governing bodies of KU Leuven, particularly when it comes to educational matters. In addition, the KU Leuven Student Council also reflects on internationalisation, ICT, and diversity.

LOKO, also known as ‘Campus Council Leuven’, mainly focuses on social issues (with representatives in, for instance, Alma and Velo) as well as on culture and sport. Activities including the 24-Hour Relay Race and Lokomotion are co-organised by LOKO.

ALUMNI

The link between the university and its students persists long after graduation.

KU Leuven’s alumni policy – coordinated and implemented by the Alumni Office – provides the necessary framework. For that purpose, the Alumni Office manages a mailing list numbering more than 200,000 alumni. Alumni activities include lectures by renowned speakers, concerts, and group trips.

While information exchange is instrumental to the interaction between alumni and their alma mater, many other aspects add value to the relationship. The extensive alumni network provides sources of inspiration and stimulates new synergies – both on a professional and a personal level. Alumni are KU Leuven’s ‘ambassadors’ in Belgium and abroad. They make a very real contribution to the university’s image in all areas of society. Alumni are also in an excellent position to provide input about the connection between the education, research, and professional life and to reinforce the ties between the university and employers. Finally, they can play a role in the university’s recruitment and graduation policies.

KU Leuven alumni establish and maintain connections via 32 faculty-based alumni chapters and 11 regional or interest-based ones. All these chapters are members of Alumni Lovanienses, the umbrella alumni association founded in 1968.

KU Leuven also boasts a growing number of international alumni chapters, active in Shanghai, the United States, London, the Netherlands, Berlin, and India. The alumni chapters coordinate networking events, publish a magazine, and grant awards for meritorious master’s theses. They coordinate these activities in close cooperation with student organisations and faculties.
University Hospitals Leuven (UZ Leuven), KU Leuven’s network of research hospitals, is part of the university but functions as an autonomous healthcare organisation.

Gasthuisberg – ‘the city on the hill’ – is the flagship campus of University Hospitals Leuven but the network also includes the St. Raphael, St. Peter, Lubbeek (as of November 2012, a psychiatric care centre) and Pellenberg campuses.

An overview of several important medical indicators provides an idea of the network’s scope: in 2014, the university hospitals handled 56,658 in-patients; 100,005 out-patients; 53,816 emergency room visits; 684,199 consultations; 53,544 operations and 289 transplants. Expressed in full-time equivalents, University Hospitals Leuven employed 7,642 staff members in 2014. In individuals, that number was 9,038.

University Hospitals Leuven has an important social, scientific, and educational mission. It offers high-quality healthcare, plays a prominent role in the training of health professionals, and develops new therapeutic and diagnostic insights and techniques in the broad field of healthcare.

University Hospitals Leuven aims to expand its position as a leading European academic medical centre. It strives to attain and maintain the highest standards in quality of care and patient safety.

Endometriosis team among world’s best

An objective literature search on the basis of PubMed publications has shown that University Hospitals Leuven is one of the world’s leading institutions for the treatment of endometriosis. The radical surgical removal of endometriosis tissue by means of a CO2 laser yields outstanding results. The patients experience significantly less pain, the endometriosis hardly ever returns, and there are few complications after the procedure. UZ Leuven has been using laparoscopic surgery to remove endometriosis since 1989.

“Via an incision in the navel we insert a small tube with a camera – the laparoscope – into the patient,” explains gynaecologist and professor Christel Meuleman. “To remove the endometriosis tissue, we use a CO2 laser, which aims a beam of energy at the unwanted cells via the laparoscope.” This technique has several advantages. The increased visibility allows for a more targeted removal of the endometriosis cells, the scar is smaller, and recovery is faster.

“The endometriosis has to be removed as thoroughly as possible, because any remainders will continue to grow. Sometimes we have to remove an affected ovary. Fortunately, research has shown that women with one ovary have better chances of pregnancy than those with two ovaries and endometriosis.”
With this in mind, University Hospitals Leuven underwent and successfully passed a rigorous external audit in 2010 conducted by the independent accreditation organisation Joint Commission International (JCI). JCI accreditation was renewed in 2013, affirming Leuven University Hospitals’ core business philosophy: to constantly strive for better and safer patient care.

Providing high-quality patient care and conducting quality translational research requires an adequate infrastructure. To this end, the Health Sciences Campus is currently being built in Gasthuisberg in a joint effort by the university and the university hospitals to bring patient care facilities, education, and advanced research together in one single location. More than 1,000 doctoral and 400 postdoctoral researchers in biomedical sciences carry out their work in the campus’ research facilities. Their efforts are guided by more than 600 university professors, half of which also practice clinical medicine at University Hospitals Leuven. The integration of the university’s Biomedical Sciences Group with University Hospitals Leuven constitutes an exceptional added value for translational research, innovation, and basic and specialised clinical education. University Hospitals Leuven is one of Europe’s largest hospitals.

To advance innovation, an organisational culture was developed to encourage organic structures, bottom-up initiatives, and the stimulation of entrepreneurship and individual employee initiative. The HR team that led this transformation was awarded an ‘Employer of the Year’ award in 2014.

University Hospitals Leuven plays a key role in the KU Leuven Flemish Hospital Network. This is an alliance of twenty-three Flemish hospitals dedicated to optimising quality and efficiency in the areas of patient care, education, research, and management.

New centre for proton therapy

KU Leuven and Université Catholique de Louvain (UCL) are investing in a brand new centre for proton therapy. They are doing so with the support of the university hospitals of Ghent, Brussels, and Antwerp. In recent years, proton therapy has been shown to be a very effective treatment for children’s cancer and for tumours in the central nervous system. The new proton therapy centre will be located at the University Hospitals Leuven Campus Gasthuisberg. It will be run by teams from University Hospitals Leuven and the UCL academic hospital Saint-Luc. Proton therapy – or radiotherapy with proton beams – is a technique that allows for an increase of the radiation dose in the tumour while the dose in the healthy tissue that surrounds it remains low. As a result, unintended damage to the healthy tissues as well as the chances of a relapse are limited. This is because protons release their dose in a very specific way: depending on their energy they penetrate the tissues – the higher the energy levels, the deeper the penetration – and the radiation dose is only released in the final millimetres of the trajectory.

To advance innovation, an organisational culture was developed to encourage organic structures, bottom-up initiatives, and the stimulation of entrepreneurship and individual employee initiative. The HR team that led this transformation was awarded an ‘Employer of the Year’ award in 2014.

University Hospitals Leuven plays a key role in the KU Leuven Flemish Hospital Network. This is an alliance of twenty-three Flemish hospitals dedicated to optimising quality and efficiency in the areas of patient care, education, research, and management.