



**UNIVERSITY  
OF TURKU**

# **Strategy**



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## Introduction

The University of Turku is a multidisciplinary institution of higher education that through its values fosters high-quality research and true education based on it. Our research is guided by high scientific quality. Our education is highly regarded and the degrees completed at our University provide the best possible foundation for the future. We want to be in constant dialogue with the society around us and strive for deep, genuine impact. I believe that in difficult times, the importance of our University's core missions will become even clearer and stronger.

The Strategy of the University of Turku builds on our previously identified strengths, but also encourages unexpected endeavours. It lays a solid foundation for the University of the coming decades. We want to identify and anticipate future needs, develop new ideas, and create solutions to our planet's problems. We do all this with ambition and passion.

In all this work, in everyday life as in celebration, we are sustained by the long and varied tradition of the university institution: the deep human need to learn, to know and to understand better, and the strong desire and calling to pass all this on to new generations.

A university is a community of people, which at the University of Turku will become even stronger with the common and shared goals of this strategy. Community spirit creates well-being and well-being creates a better university. Let's embrace this positive cycle together!

In Turku on 1 August 2024

**Marjo Kaartinen**

Rector

# Mission

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The University of Turku is a high-level, globally recognised and highly regarded research university. Our strengths are multidisciplinary research and research-based education. We foster learning and academic freedom. We operate in international networks and participate in the development of Finnish society and our region.

# Vision

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We are dynamically building a sustainable future and social well-being through research and education.

# Profile

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The University of Turku is a strong and multidisciplinary research University. Our success is built on more than a century of history and academic tradition. Internationality is our strength, and we are a valued member of the global scientific community.

We foster learning, high-quality multidisciplinary research, and education based on research. We foresee changes in our operational environment and look to the future. As a multidisciplinary institution, we offer a wide range of studies in continuous learning.

We work to ensure sustainable life conditions for present and future generations. Through our actions, we promote the green twin transition and planetary well-being.

We are ambitious visionaries driven by scientific knowledge. We are recognised for using multidisciplinary approaches to build a sustainable future and tackle global challenges. The University of Turku is a proactive partner in regional, national and international development and innovation activities.

Our students and employees are thriving, and we are proud of our diverse community. We offer inviting and safe work and study environments, high-quality services, and a vibrant campus culture.

# Target state for 2035

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In 2035, the University of Turku will be a dynamic and forward-looking multidisciplinary university that transforms the world with scientific knowledge. We are ambitious and experimental in driving change. We are an advocate for freedom of scientific research and education. We have strengthened our position among Europe's leading universities. We consider the requirements of both sustainability transformation and twin transition in all our activities.

We are internationally renowned for our high-quality education. A multidisciplinary range of studies and world-class learning environments attract students from both Finland and abroad. A degree from the University of Turku is highly valued and opens a wide range of career opportunities for our graduates. Our education selection in continuous learning provides possibilities for updating skills to meet the needs of the changing professional life.

Our student experience is excellent. A strong student culture is an important part of the University's appeal and students' motivation. We place great emphasis on study guidance. We create new and effective ways to support students and boost their well-being and sense of community. Our campuses are safe and functional.

Our multidisciplinary research enables us to solve challenging global problems. Close cooperation in research infrastructures creates the basis for international top research. Collaboration with our stakeholders has expanded, introducing new research resources and innovations.

We are committed to responsible and open research as well as to the open assessment of researchers and research. We are pioneers in the development of researcher careers. Our involvement in international scientific networks and research collaboration has increased, giving us visibility and a strong standing. We are one of Finland's leading universities in acquiring EU research funding.

We work openly in regional, national and international networks and with stakeholders. Our collaboration is responsible, reciprocal and goal-oriented. We actively contribute research-based knowledge to the public debate.

Our financial flexibility has become stronger. Our thriving community is committed to common goals. We offer a wide range of opportunities to develop expertise and leadership. Our welcoming campuses and functional facilities meet the changing needs of teaching and research, and the requirements of sustainability. We effectively use the opportunities provided by automation and artificial intelligence.

# Values

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**At the University of Turku, we foster high-quality research and education in accordance with our values.**

## **Creativity**



By providing modern work and study environments, we ensure conditions for creative thinking and further for excellence in research and education. We encourage creativity through supporting our community and academic freedom.

## **Openness**



An open dialogue, both within our community and with the wider society, is of particular importance to us. Openness supports the production of new knowledge and sharing it with society. We are committed to the principles of open science.

## **Ethical principles**



We act responsibly, fairly and with respect for others. We are committed to the principles of sustainability as well as good scientific practice and we apply them in our teaching.

## **Critical thinking**



For us, responsible criticism is a constructive debate based on researched information and respect for the diversity of opinion. We strengthen the ability of the members of our University community to analyse issues independently and objectively.

## **Strong community**



We promote accessibility and diversity in the University community. We ensure the well-being of our community through comprehensive and effective support services.

# 1. High-quality and international education

## 1.1 We have the best learning experience in Finland

We offer a unique learning experience where students and teachers form a strong learning ecosystem. Our learning environments are top-level and allow for flexible and diverse ways to achieve excellent learning outcomes.

The overall well-being of students is of utmost importance to us. Through guidance that supports learning and efficient student services, we help students progress smoothly in their studies and graduate on time. A vibrant student culture and a compact campus create an excellent environment for a real sense of community.

### Indicators

- ▶ The Finnish Bachelor's Graduate Survey: composite variable measuring the quality of teaching
- ▶ Number of applications, the second application round of the spring excluding master's degree programmes
- ▶ Percentage of students graduating within the target time, bachelor's degrees or equivalent

## 1.2 We educate visionaries for a changing world

Our diverse and flexible curriculum allows for choosing interesting and individual study paths. By anticipating changes in the operational environment, we ensure that our education is up-to-date and adapts to the changing world. The latest scientific knowledge guides our teaching.

We encourage students towards responsible critical thinking and achieving comprehensive learning. Our graduates are visionaries of the future, who have excellent skills to work with competence and ambition in demanding positions, both nationally and internationally. Our continuous learning modules correspond to the needs of professional life.

### Indicators

- ▶ The Finnish Bachelor's Graduate Survey: composite variable measuring the attractiveness of studies
- ▶ The Finnish Bachelor's Graduate Survey: composite variable measuring general skills

## 1.3 We internationalise our education with determination

We are a notable player in the European education area, and internationality is a central part of our education. We strengthen our international education selection and multicultural competence that prepare students and teachers to operate fluently in a global environment. Collaboration with the higher education institutions in the Turku region creates new opportunities for students to engage in international networking.

The strong reputation of the University of Turku attracts students from all over the world. International students are an important part of the student community. We provide a wide range of support to help our students settle in at the University and in Finland.

### Indicators

- ▶ Master's degrees completed by international students
- ▶ Number of international students, bachelor's and master's degrees
- ▶ Number of outgoing exchange students

# 2. Multidisciplinary and high-level research

## 2.1 Our research is visionary and innovative

We are active in the international academic community. With high-quality basic research and a multidisciplinary research profile, we create innovations and solutions in the areas of sustainability, biodiversity, health and the welfare state, economic, legal and cultural issues, digitalisation, and technologies.

Our research is scientifically excellent, responsible and effective, which helps us to be successful in research funding applications. We make extensive use of various sources of research funding and are one of Finland's leading universities in acquiring national and especially international funding.

### Indicators

- Amount of international competitive research funding
- Total external research funding

## 2.2 Our research infrastructure is competitive

Strong national and international networks in research infrastructures and unique longitudinal research data allow our researchers to gain new perspectives and contribute to the renewal of science. We are leading the way in developing research infrastructures.

We offer high-quality conditions for conducting research. Our research environment is user-oriented and utilises automation and artificial intelligence. Expert support services and successful research groups strengthen our appeal as a top European research university. Being part of the academic community at the University of Turku is pursued and valued.

### Indicators

- Funding spent on research infrastructure

## 2.3 We promote open and responsible science

We are a pioneer and developer of open science both nationally and internationally. We apply the principles of open science and research in our research, development and innovation activities, and teaching in a variety of ways. Our research results are widely applied, and our publications are of high quality and impact. The open dissemination of research brings significant benefits to society and strengthens the credibility of the University of Turku as a responsible institution.

We follow good scientific practice and contribute to the promotion of research ethics. Our Principles for Responsible Assessment of Research and Researchers support the recognition and acknowledgement of broader and more diverse success. We advance the graduation of our doctoral researchers and support our researchers at all stages of their careers.

### Indicators

- Peer-reviewed publication scores in publication type categories A and C
- Percentage of open access publications in publication type category A
- Average time of completing a doctorate



# 3. Active expert community

### 3.1 Our students and personnel are thriving

The well-being of our staff and students shows in their enthusiasm, creativity, and achievements. We are a community committed to mutually agreed goals. Our way of working is open, fair and inclusive. Through active accessibility work, we ensure equality.

By providing effective services, we help to strengthen the mental and physical ability to work and study. We ensure healthy and safe conditions for working and studying on all our campuses. We pay particular attention to the quality of working life.

#### Indicators

- Workplace Well-being Survey: total index
- The Finnish Bachelor's Graduate Survey: I feel well at my university

### 3.2 Our personnel are experts

Our staff training is at the forefront of development and provides a good basis for acquiring a wide range of skills. Everyone has the opportunity to deepen their expertise and improve their skills. We offer interesting career paths.

The number of international experts in our community has grown significantly and they are an integral part of the University. We are systematically developing ways of integrating international experts into the University and Finnish society.

#### Indicators

- Workplace Well-being Survey: competence, learning and development index
- Participation in training, training days/year
- The share of international personnel of the entire personnel

### 3.3 We invest in leadership

Our leadership is based on dynamically generated knowledge and open interaction. We are a pioneer in the systematic use of strategic foresight in University management. We emphasise engaging the community, giving responsibility, and respecting each other.

With high-quality managerial and supervisory work, we support leadership and create good working conditions. We maintain the leadership skills of our supervisors by providing them with training, comprehensive support, and services.

#### Indicators

- Workplace Well-being Survey: immediate supervisor work index
- Workplace Well-being Survey: strategic management composite variable

# 4. Dynamic and responsible partner

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### 4.1 We are a valued partner

We are known as an open and reliable partner at regional, national and international level. We boost our region's vitality and strengthen Finnish society's faith in the future.

We promote responsible international cooperation and reciprocal, goal-oriented partnerships. Our alumni create opportunities for the mutual growth of the University community and professional life. Collaboration with business life as well as with the public and third sectors creates research-based technological, entrepreneurial, and social innovations.

#### Indicators

- Supplementary funding, business collaboration
- Number of idea and innovation propositions

### 4.2 We act with responsibly and impact

Excellent research and education create the basis for our increasing impact. We communicate responsibly and engage actively in public debate. We present scientific information in ways that are relevant to different audiences.

We expand the positive impact of our University and strengthen sustainability by considering the ecological, economic, social, and cultural dimensions.

The University of Turku has an excellent reputation, we offer attractive education and interesting positions. Our expertise and research are valued in societal decision-making.

#### Indicators

- Number of publications aimed at the general public and the professional community
- The Finnish Bachelor's Graduate Survey: expertise in sustainability and responsibility
- Courses with sustainability (related) contents, number of courses

# 5. Campus of possibilities and connections

## 5.1 Our facilities increase a sense of community

Our inviting campuses in Turku, Pori and Rauma, and their functional facilities support the implementation of our basic missions and create excellent conditions for a strong community. Our facilities meet the changing teaching and research needs and sustainability requirements.

The work and study environments are developed holistically, so that their functionality, accessibility, flexibility and efficiency are reflected in the solutions.

### Indicators

- Workplace Well-being Survey: the accessibility of our University's facilities supports non-discrimination

## 5.2 Our digital environment is seamless

Our digital environment is user-oriented, up-to-date and secure. We make effective use of the new opportunities offered by automation and artificial intelligence. Through advanced data analytics and digitalisation, we enable knowledge-based operation and facilitate studying and working independent of time and location. We strengthen the University community's digital competence and ability to make the most of the latest technologies.

We collaborate with the other higher education institutions in the region to provide digital services. Our Library, integrated into the digital age, makes scientific results accessible to researchers and our publications available to the wider audience.

### Indicators

- IT costs' share from the total costs of the University
- The Finnish Bachelor's Graduate Survey: composite variable measuring student satisfaction with the digital environment

# Multidisciplinary themes and areas of strength of the University of Turku

The multidisciplinary themes bring together and enable collaboration between researchers and experts in different disciplines. Multidisciplinary approaches strengthen our ability to find solutions to the complex problems of our time. In the multidisciplinary themes, we collaborate with our important higher education partners: Åbo Akademi University and the universities of applied sciences in Turku. For each multidisciplinary theme, we establish international signature master's degree programmes that implement the international and multidisciplinary objectives of our education.

The areas of strength profile the University. They are research fields and clusters with multiple, large-scale, ambitious, and competitive research projects. The areas of strength are also examples of successful collaboration within cross-cutting themes. We are at the global top in our identified areas of strength.

## 1. New technologies and digitalisation

- > AI theory, language models, societal implications, and regulation
- > Future technologies

## 2. Health, diagnostics and drug development

- > Immune systems and inflammatory diseases
- > Medical imaging, bioimaging and health technologies
- > Long-term follow-up and intervention studies

## 3. Children, young people and learning

- > Learning environments
- > The welfare state, population inequality and demography

## 4. Cultural memory and social change

- > Digital cultural heritage
- > Human diversity and migration

## 5. Biodiversity and sustainability

- > Impact of climate change and biodiversity loss on nature, society and economy
- > Renewable energies and sustainable materials

# Multidisciplinary themes and areas of strength of the University of Turku

## 1. New technologies and digitalisation

Solving wicked problems in the global environment and society requires new technologies, for example, in the digital and green transition. At the same time, digitalisation and technologies change our world, challenging the way we think and act. The new technologies and digitalisation theme focuses on developing technologies and digital solutions as well as understanding and managing their impact; we need ethical, moral, and social reflection in the midst of change.

### Areas of strength

- AI theory, language models, societal implications, and regulation
- Future technologies

## 2. Health, diagnostics and drug development

There is a strong expertise cluster in health research in the Turku region where cross-faculty research of different higher education institutions, public healthcare, and versatile business life meet. In the field of immunology and inflammation research, Turku coordinates the national InFLAMES flagship. Drug development and diagnostics are at the heart of the collaboration. In many areas of biomedical imaging, Turku is the leading centre in Europe. The cohort studies of the University of Turku form an international spearhead in population health studies spanning several generations. Research on the health care system and the well-being of children and young people is becoming more and more crucial. The high-level research theme creates medical, technological and societal breakthroughs that advance public health.

### Areas of strength

- Immune systems and inflammatory diseases
- Medical imaging, bioimaging and health technologies
- Long-term follow-up and intervention studies

## 3. Children, young people and learning

Our research on the well-being and learning of children and young people and on preventing exclusion is internationally recognised. The INVEST and EDUCA flagships and other multidisciplinary research ecosystems produce scientific knowledge on promoting children and young people's well-being and learning, reducing social inequality, reforming the welfare state, and ensuring expertise needed in the future. Research infrastructures, large datasets, and data analytics provide a strong basis for multidisciplinary research and the development of scalable interventions.

### Areas of strength

- Learning environments
- The welfare state, population inequality and demography

# Multidisciplinary themes and areas of strength of the University of Turku

## 4. Cultural memory and social change

Cultural memory refers to the collective practices that societies use to build and uphold their relationship to the past, living in the present, and preparing for the future. Communities, groups, and minorities have their own cultural memories, and understanding them forms the starting point for cultural sustainability and well-being. As society changes, the objects and practices of remembering also change; on the other hand, new practices of memory create conditions for understanding human diversity, social change and political debate. Individual and collective identities, and the boundaries and struggles associated with them, are essential for social change. The University of Turku conducts extensive, critical and multidisciplinary research on cultural memory and its social connections, spanning from prehistoric times to futures research.

### Areas of strength

- › Digital cultural heritage
- › Human diversity and migration

## 5. Biodiversity and sustainability

Tackling climate change and biodiversity loss and ensuring sustainable food production are among the greatest challenges for humanity and crucial for the well-being of people and the entire planet. Multidisciplinary and multispecies research on biodiversity, climate change, food systems, the circular economy and bioenergy as well as the education based on this research create conditions for an ecologically, socially, culturally and economically sustainable future and innovations. The theme also combines research and education on marine, coastal, river and other aquatic ecosystems and the culture, communities and livelihoods in these environments, including the activities of the DIWA flagship.

### Areas of strength

- › Impact of climate change and biodiversity loss on nature, society and economy
- › Renewable energies and sustainable materials

# Emerging fields

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Emerging fields are multidisciplinary research areas that can achieve a high level of research. These are distinctive and/or new fields with high potential.

- Futures research and foresight
- Oceans, aquatic systems and shipping of the future
- Food science and technology
- Democracy, constitutional state, justice and social peace



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# **Strategy**

**[ 27.8.2024 ]**