

Government of the University of Kuopio  
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## Strategy of the University of Kuopio 2000-2006

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## **The strategical plan for the period 2000 - 2006**

### **1. Introduction**

The university's strategical plan for the period 2000-2006 is the outcome of thorough debate and review on strategical objectives which was carried out throughout the entire university. During 1999, all of the university's faculties, independent departments and other strategical units were asked to undertake a thorough analysis of their future plans. In this analysis they were asked to review their strengths and weaknesses, to assess potential risks and possibilities and then to evaluate their future development schemes and strategies. The strategical plans put the emphasis on activity, administrative solutions were deliberately put aside to be considered at a later date.

The strategical plan is intended to support the university's leadership as it plans how the university will grow. The reason why the university needs a strategical plan is that it must be able to react to rapidly changing situations. It has to be able to alter its activities to meet new needs. Furthermore, the plan can help in programmes designed to improve the quality and impact of the university's activities and can help the university achieve its central goals.

The strategical plan extends through two three year contractual agreement periods. The extent to which the plan is being fulfilled will be annually assessed and its contents re-evaluated in conjunction with the preparatory evaluations of activity and budget planning.

### **2. The University of Kuopio today**

At the dawn of the new century, the University of Kuopio finds itself as one of the most clearly profiled of all the Finnish universities. The university has focussed its research and educational activities on health and environment related sciences. There are four faculties within the university - the faculties of pharmacy, medicine, natural and environmental sciences and social sciences. In addition, the university houses the A.I. Virtanen Institute, which is one of only five bioscience research centres in Finland, specializing in biotechnology. The university has a student body of about 3700 undergraduate students and about 1000 students undertaking either post-graduate training or education towards a professional speciality qualification. Each year the university confers about 350 basic degrees, (plus slightly over 100 degrees to students in three year degree courses), about 70 doctoral degrees and over 100 professional specialization qualifications. The current university budget amounts to 400 million Finnish marks (about 67 million euros). Over 40% of the budget comes from outside sources. The personnel of the university numbers around 1200 individuals.

The activities of many of the university's departments have been evaluated in nationwide and international audits and the university has undertaken extensive internal reviews. In 1998, the university participated in a review of the regional impact of the universities sited in eastern Finland. All of these evaluations as well as the so-called SWOT analysis conducted internally

have pinpointed the current strengths of the university as well as those sectors needing reinforcement. The identification of future challenges and pressures from outside was an important process contributing to the creation of this strategical plan. These provide a reliable set of bearings for navigation into the future.

### **3. The current environment and pressures from outside directed on the University**

The university must be aware of factors which can alter its role and activities. The following trends will undoubtedly impact on the university in the near future.

- European integration as a part of a general globalization trend will continue. Common European employment sectors will require changes in the content of the educational programmes. This can be achieved through improving the mobility of faculty and students and through networking.
- Finland will continue to develop as an information-based society. Knowledge, know-how and information are now central and critical production factors. Progress in informational technology will make it easier for individuals to communicate and to access knowledge. These opportunities must be grasped in developing our teaching and learning skills.
- The position of Europe in the global competitive marketplace will be assured through programmes encouraging scientific research and information technologies. Furthermore, the less well developed regional economies will be bolstered by structural funding and cooperation initiatives.
- Investment in the economical development of eastern Finland will achieve its goal of removing the gap between the region and the rest of Finland and most other EU regions. One pre-requisite for this change is a re-invigoration of the regional economic base by encouraging knowledge-based commercial enterprise activities.
- In addition to investing in research and development programmes, the courses provided by the university must emphasize the importance of productivity, exploitation of innovations and expanding commercial activities to foreign markets.
- Regional development can be encouraged by strengthening the network of national centres of know-how and skills.
- The national policy of establishing centres of excellence will continue in the future. Investment in research will be targeted to those centres meeting the established quality criteria. Research centres will continue to be competitive in international terms.

- The significance of teaching and learning skills will be even more emphasized. It must be our objective to maintain the present high quality of education provided by the university. A further objective is to expand and develop new ways to teach skills which will be needed in the future workplace.
- Promotion of life long learning is pivotal in accordance with national educational policies and plans.
- The links between the educational system and commercial and industrial sectors must be strengthened.
- Through collaborative efforts between the universities and outside interests a virtual university will be created.
- The profiling of universities will continue and universities will be encouraged to sharpen their profile and specialities through networking.
- Universities and polytechnic colleges will be encouraged to increase their collaborative and cooperative educational ventures.
- The basic university funding is unsatisfactory in terms of the demands and expectations. New projects and educational programmes as well as expansion of current research efforts will require substantial amounts of new funding. Nonetheless, outside funding as a proportion of the entire university budget will continue to increase and sources of funding will become even more diversified.
- Nationally important projects will be initiated such as the supplementary programme for information industries through a strategic programme to improve the information skills in education and research. Furthermore, the university will actively participate in the virtual university project, the expansion of medical education, the programmes to develop university teacher training courses, schemes to develop pedagogic and language skills and biotechnology.
- It can be predicted that the competition to recruit competent faculty, particularly eminent scientific researchers, will intensify as a consequence of the shrinkage of the labour pool. Due to the reduced size of the potential student population, it will be increasingly difficult to attract gifted students. Recruitment policies both for faculty and students will become even more important. The university must increase the way that it markets its services and ensure that it has a positive public image.

#### **4. The University's values and the way it conducts its activities**

All of the university's activities are governed by the principles of freedom, fairness and equality. These basic principles are the foundation of our efforts to use scientific discoveries and applications to promote global well-being. It is the duty of the university to encourage the pursuit of learning and to ensure that all of its teaching is based on the most up-to date knowledge available.

Fairness is achieved through transparency, respect for the individual and the community, with responsibility in its activities and actions. Equality is achieved at the level of the individual, groups of individuals as well as for different philosophical beliefs through mutual respect. It must take into consideration theoretical and practical aspects of equality.

The staff and students of the university will always be expected to think and act according to the highest principles of civil ethics and professional codes of conduct. Researchers will always adhere to accepted scientific principles. All members of the academic community will act within the university as enlightened citizens.

## **5. The University's mission**

The University of Kuopio has a clear profile; it is a university specializing in health-based and environmental sciences including the technologies related to these disciplines. The mission of the university is to promote internationally-recognized scientific research and learning skills. In this way it can enlarge the knowledge base, increase the level of know-how, improve the standard of education and promote the application of science to improve the quality of life and benefit the well-being of the community. Through its activities, the university will invigorate the livelihood of the inhabitants of east Finland region as well as the communities in proximity to the city of Kuopio. The university will act as a catalyst for growth and expansion for the Kuopio region.

## **6. The University's vision for the year 2007**

The university will be an internationally recognized and respected science-based university. It will contain centres of excellence known throughout the world and it will have a major role as a provider of high quality postgraduate and post-doctoral training programmes.

The university will contain excellent facilities to provide innovative learning in its undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and will be a centre of life long learning. The university will be a major contributor to the national virtual university. It will also be part of a wide network with other universities to which it is linked. The curricula provided by the educational programmes and the number of graduates will meet the needs of a modern society, in particular they will be optimized to meet the demands of the business enterprises in eastern Finland. Student numbers (i.e. undergraduates and postgraduates) attending the university will have grown to a total of around 7500. This growth in student numbers will have been anticipated in the provision of new buildings, other facilities and services.

The university's finances will be in sound shape. Much of the funding will be from outside sources, with a significant amount coming via competitive research funding awarded on the basis of quality.

The university campus in Savilahti will represent the core of a thriving science park. Enterprises will be attracted to the science park so that they can work in close proximity to researchers in the university, the Kuopio University Hospital, as well as the many research institutes, the polytechnic and other science-based companies. The campus will have become a vital and vigorous community. Students will be able to access, at any time of the day or night, learning and information resources and have access to numerous services. In addition, the campus will be home to many well-paid skills-based employment opportunities. Globalization will have become inherent in all activities and will impact on education, research and employment.

The university will maintain a responsibility to ensure that the discoveries made in its laboratories are properly developed and its knowledge- and skill-base will be preserved. It will encourage technology transfer and it will also provide support and guidance to its graduates through a career service programme. It will offer expert advice services on the setting up of new enterprises and it will support the existing commercial activities within its sphere of influence. The growth of the Savilahti science park and collaboration with the North Savo Polytechnic College will mean that there will be over 200 companies specializing in research & development, services and production with a skilled work force of at least 3000 situated in the expanded science and technology park. These companies will be specialized in health-based or environmental technologies and information technology.

## **7. Development and activity goals**

The strategical plan for the University of Kuopio and its central development challenges are based on an analysis of changing trends as well as a careful consideration of the university's strengths, weaknesses and prospects. It is also based on the university's vision for the year 2007.

The central development and activity goals for the strategy period 2000 - 2006 are:

- Sharpening and diversification of the university's profile as a health-based and environmental science university.
- Investment in applied technologies such as biotechnology, information technology and data processing technology which complement and support the health and environmental sciences.
- Support for internationally recognized research projects and graduate research education programmes.
- Diversification of the curricula and increasing student enrollment to meet changing employment needs, especially of companies operating in eastern Finland.

- Reorganization and revitalization of the teaching and learning culture.
- Increasing the attractiveness of the university in order to maintain student numbers and also increasing the efficiency of student recruitment programmes.
- Increasing globalization.
- Increasing the university's sphere of influence. This can be supported by developing quality assessment procedures.
- Strengthening and widening the extent of cooperation and networking.
- Implementation of a personnel strategy for university staff which contains an attractive and competitive personnel and salary policy.
- Securing a sound financial and resource base and maintaining the high standard of the university's infrastructure.
- Maintaining an active role in the community; the university can act as pioneer and influence for good through its role as a seat of learning.

These aims will help the university achieve its overall goals to be a source of innovation, actively seeking, preserving and transmitting knowledge as well as developing applications for its discoveries. This strategical plan is concerned with the central development themes for the core areas of the university. The above objectives will be achieved by a variety of development activities which will be financially supported by the university's own sources, through funds to the university from the Ministry of Education, from competitive awards targeted to specific fields, and also from structural funding for regional development.

## **8. Structural developments**

The university will continue to develop and strengthen its profile as a university specializing in the health and environment sciences. In particular, it will diversify in the fields of health and environmental technologies and informational technologies in keeping with its profile. One major objective of this profiling exercise is to nurture the regional economical growth.

The University of Kuopio will set the following structural objectives to be achieved through its developmental activities.

- The university will increase its intake of students (and subsequently increase the numbers of students graduating), in disciplines which support regional commercial activity but also in those areas where its graduates can contribute to the well-being of the general public.

- The university will intensify its networking and cooperation with other universities and the regional polytechnic with the aim of offering more diversified education and the creation of novel forms of continued educational alternatives.
- The university will create new ways of ensuring transfer of technologies. It will set up regional units and increase the degree of cooperation with these enterprises in the courses it offers and in ways that research being conducted within the university can be exploited by these regional companies.
- The university will intensify its research and development activities in those areas which will benefit regional business enterprises. It will also establish research entities to further this aim and it will increase its cooperation with polytechnic colleges to speed up commercial application and product development of the discoveries emerging from the university.
- The university will expand its research and educational facilities in order to accomplish the above objectives.

Furthermore, in pursuit of the above objectives, the university will support the following proposals:

- Correction of the deficit in university level education for the inhabitants of eastern Finland.
- Creation of a rational educational complex covering all aspects of health, environmental science and information-based technologies. This will be accomplished in conjunction with North Savo Polytechnic.
- Initiation of courses in economics and commerce with a strong emphasis on business expertise and acumen. This will be accomplished through a joint educational network of the eastern Finland universities.
- Establishment of developmental complexes for research services in drug development, nutritional and clinical research in conjunction with the Kuopio University Hospital and the North Savo Health Board
- Improvement in the university's capabilities for technology transfer including organization of how this service will be provided.
- Expansion of the university campus and its science park (Construction of Microtekniä-2; enlargement of the Canthia building, modernization of the laboratory animal complex).

## **9. Research and scientific postgraduate training**

## Research

The university will continue to excel as a site for multi-disciplinary research in accordance with its profile and its designated role in national science policy.

The university's fundamental role is to support pursuit of prestigious basic research in the scientific disciplines represented within its faculties. The criteria for assessment of quality research will be the number of publications in peer-reviewed journals and success in obtaining competitive funding from grant giving agencies. The university will also encourage work done which finds applications for basic discoveries emerging from its research facilities. This kind of applied research shall be conducted in parallel with basic research though its funding will be predominantly from outside sources.

It is one of the university's objectives that research being conducted within its jurisdiction shall be recognized at an international level leading to the establishment of 2 - 3 centres of national excellence for research. One of the factors which will be decisive in achieving this objective is the establishment of multi-disciplinary research across departmental and faculty boundaries in those research areas which the university has decided as being strategically crucial.

The main areas where efforts will be concentrated are biotechnology, molecular biology and molecular medicine, research into major diseases, research into the nutritional properties and safety of foodstuffs, health care technology, environmental impacts on health, applied clinical science for drug development plus biomedical research, pharmaceuticals, chemistry and other forms of natural science research which support drug development, health care research, investigations of the economics and the sociological impact of social welfare and health care programmes, entrepreneurship and regional development. The university will be particularly keen to increase its research activity in data processing and computer science, applied data transfer technology and information technology in those areas which can be considered as its core research activities.

The objective of research activities is not only to achieve scientific breakthroughs in basic research but that these discoveries will form the foundation for the establishment of both regionally and nationally significant commercial enterprises. These will create employment opportunities and act as crystals for growth for the region of Kuopio, in turn attracting new companies in a virtuous cycle.

The areas to be emphasized in the development plans and the means by which the objectives will be attained are as follows:

- Establishment of an internal quality research assessment procedure
- Targeting of resources to those areas of current strength and also to areas which can grow and develop into areas of strength

- Develop a career structural policy for researchers, especially for those at the post-doctoral level.
- Promotion of the recruitment of eminent Finnish and international scientists. This can only be achieved if the research environment is of an internationally recognized high standard to attract such individuals.
- Ensuring that teaching faculty involved in undergraduate and post-graduate education have access to the latest knowledge and techniques.
- Encouraging the widest possible dissemination of research findings.
- Boosting services which support these research and innovation activities. The exploitation of research findings and transfer of technology will be made more efficient in partnership with national and regional organizations.
- Ensuring that the evaluation process for research groups becomes a routine procedure and that the results of these evaluations must be used to support future development. The university will establish its own internal procedure to reward significant discoveries.
- Ensuring that all research being conducted within the university meets the highest ethical standards and is conducted according to the best scientific procedures.

#### Scientific postgraduate education

Postgraduate education will be concentrated in those core areas of the university's activities. These have been selected according to the profile of the university as a health and environmental science based establishment.

During the contractual agreement period 2001 - 2003, it is envisaged that the university will award 68 doctoral degrees each year. However, the increases in the intake of undergraduates as well as the expansion of research activities both represent forces such that the number of students completing doctoral degrees may have to be increased in the next contractual agreement period.

The areas where activities will be concentrated are:

- Continuing the present trend of establishing new centres and enlarging the current centres for postgraduate education. Postgraduate education being carried outside of these recognized centres shall also be of the highest standard.
- The future needs of commercial enterprises as well as the public sector must be taken into consideration in the recruitment of graduates to these postgraduate centres.

- Postgraduate education can be viewed as a means whereby the university can expand its sphere of influence at regional, national and international levels. It can also be considered as a source of expertise and know-how which commercial enterprises can access.
- The curriculum for postgraduate scientific training must be modernized with emphasis placed on how knowledge can be exploited for commercial purposes, and more information on innovativeness and how to patent innovative ideas. The amount of tuition provided in English will be increased. The latest advances in informational technology will be utilized to a substantial extent. Cooperation between universities and polytechnics will be increased and expanded in the arrangement of postgraduate courses for lecturers and other teaching faculty.
- The university must ensure that there is sufficient resources available to guarantee the quality of its post-graduate courses. Resources must be available at the disciplinary level as well as for courses which are common to many postgraduate programmes.
- Students' progress must be monitored and supervision must be intensified in an attempt to curtail the duration of these degree courses. Supervision should also be available to newly qualified post-doctoral scientists. There should be more possibilities for students to undertake part of their education in foreign institutes. The university should encourage the placement of newly qualified doctoral candidates into its research groups.

## **10. Teaching and learning**

The central objective of the tuition provided by the university is to provide its students with the ability to comprehend fundamental issues and the ability to apply the knowledge they have acquired. Students will be encouraged to think and act independently and critically. These aims will be achieved through tuition which places its emphasis on effective and activating teaching methods.

The central development areas in teaching and learning will be:

- Diversification of the methods used in teaching and learning
- Improving both the pedagogical and professional expertise of the teaching faculty
- Development of the centre for learning such that it becomes a source of pedagogic innovation and a unit for creative teaching practice
- Intensification of schemes to monitor students' progress

- Improving the technical capabilities of students and teaching staff with respect to educational technologies. One way to achieve this objective is through the networking, in particular with the eastern Finnish universities but also with the polytechnics (for example, through the "Virtual University" project)
- The setting up of a scheme which evaluates the standards of teaching and learning
- Increasing the prestige of teaching work, for example teaching expertise should be given more importance when university appointments are being decided

It is the university's goal that during this strategical period the quality of its teaching will be recognized by designation of 2 - 3 of its units as centres of teaching expertise in nationwide assessments. There will also be a policy of internal review of teaching achievements. These designated units will receive extra funding as a reward for their endeavors. The current practice of selecting a "teacher of the year" within the university will be continued.

The attractiveness of the university to new students will be increased by:

- Renovating and diversifying the courses on offer and improving the publicity and awareness of these courses to potential students
- Providing appealing tuition in classrooms equipped with the very latest in educational technology
- Expanding the current programmes on offer in local high schools, encouraging them to increase the amount of study time devoted to the natural sciences. It is intended that this scheme will also influence the teaching of natural science in lower grades of the schools. One way to achieve this aim is to encourage the schools to set up specializations in the natural sciences. The university could offer expertise in the establishment and teaching of these courses. The university should also strive to increase the extent of cooperation with vocational colleges providing basic degrees and diplomas.
- Increasing the international dimension of the tuition on offer within the university. The amount of tuition provided in foreign languages should also be increased. These aims are part of the internationalization strategy of the university's educational policies.

## **11. Education**

### Basic educational courses

It is the aim of all the basic courses that students should receive multifaceted and diverse scientific education which will allow them to take up professional

appointments not only within Finland but also on a global stage. The education will emphasize the ability to adapt to the ever-changing demands of the modern workplace and will prepare its graduates for the challenges of entrepreneurship. Students will be encouraged to pursue post-graduate training and the importance of life-long learning will be stressed.

During the contractual period 2001 - 2003, the university is committed to producing on average 385 graduates each year. It has already been decided or it is under consideration to expand student intakes in medicine, data processing and pharmacy (3 year degree course).

The crucial areas which must be attended to if the university is to achieve its objectives are:

- Maintaining the university's good reputation as a place where degree quotas are met and students graduate in the time allocated for each degree course.
- The university will have a continual assessment and review of its course contents and degree programmes striving to improve the quality of the education being provided.
- Courses will be more tightly integrated into research projects taking into consideration changes in workplace practices. Cooperation between departments and faculties will be developed further. It is the intention to increase the possibilities for students to independently choose the content of their degree programmes.
- Developing the degree courses which are tailored to support the requirements of commercial and industrial companies operating in eastern Finland. The numbers of students being admitted into the university will be increased by almost 400 through project funding during this contractual period. This expansion in student intake will be concentrated in areas where it is anticipated that there will be shortages in the availability of qualified personnel. Business administration and commercial practices will become integral parts of many degree programmes.
- Striving to achieve a more natural educational environment which is both efficient but takes into account individuality. Courses taken before enrollment into the university shall be evaluated in a positive manner and whenever possible credit can be included in the final degree.
- The university will recognize and credit lower university degrees offered by other educational establishments (e.g. Bachelor's degrees). In particular, credit towards the degree will be given for courses in data processing, computing science and informational technology in the relevant schools of study.

- Career services will promote the employment of university graduates. Work placement schemes and international exchanges will be encouraged and credited in degree programmes.

### Professional postgraduate training

The environmental science and health care disciplines are also areas in which professional postgraduate training will be given

- In the medical specialization courses, students will be allocated personal supervisors and the progress of their training will be monitored using a training log manual.
- In the pharmaceutical sciences, the current specializations for pharmacists (5 year degree course) and pharmacy personnel (3 year degree course) will be reviewed and attempts will be made to create more satisfactory entities which would be recognized throughout the profession. Furthermore, the future of the present postgraduate studies in toxicology will be reviewed. Supplementary three year pharmacy degree courses will be arranged to alleviate the personnel shortages in the pharmacies.
- The university will develop its further educational courses in the food sciences including nutritional sciences. There will also be diplomas offered in social and health administration and health promotion. The university will be a contributor to the national university network for social work (SOSNET) covering all seven Finnish universities which teach social work. The objective of the network is to create and offer a nationwide professional licentiate degree in social work. The network will also increase cooperation in undergraduate teaching. Its aim is to create cooperation between the departments, with each developing its own distinct profile and area of speciality.
- Training in clinical chemistry and hospital physics will be arranged in collaboration with other institutes by creating an effective educational network.
- The current commercial and business supplemental training schemes for graduates will be maintained.

### Adult education

The objective of adult education is to disseminate the most up to date knowledge emerging from the departments of the university and to increase the sphere of influence of the university in the community. Adult education is the means by which the university can respond to educational needs and training requests emerging from the community. Adult education is arranged through the open university and the Centre for Professional Adult Education. The

"Maturing" University is a project which is carried out in conjunction with the Summer University of Kuopio. Its objective is that it can provide a low threshold source of education fulfilling the needs of life long learning.

It is envisaged that during the period 2001 - 2003 there will be the equivalent of 1150 students (calculated as full time student places) attending open university courses. An increasing number of these students will be studying in a virtual environment. It is intended that each year about 100 students enrolled in the open university will be admitted to degree courses in the university.

- The university is a major source of training in the following health care related disciplines; ergonomics, gerontology, nursing science, public and community health, sports medicine, basics of medicine, nutritional sciences, health administration. The university is also recognized as a source of open educational training in those areas of environmental sciences in which it specializes.
- There are also wide training opportunities offered in the social sciences, computer sciences and entrepreneurship and leadership.

One important facet of professional further education is its impact in regional and national terms. In general, the courses are part of long term training programmes which make use of the latest educational technology or are arranged as part of some developmental project. Shorter courses are organized around topical themes.

The University of Kuopio is a significant source of professional further education in the following areas; environmental science, nutritional and food science, social and health care, pharmacy, rural development.

The university will continue its policy of cooperation with other universities in further education in the environmental topics and rural development. The MBA degree programme will continue to be organized in conjunction with the University of Stirling.

In regional terms, the university is an important source of further education in its own areas of expertise and also it provides courses to meet the demands of emerging regional enterprises. In particular, emphasis will be placed on promoting business administration, entrepreneurship and leadership qualities in these courses.

## **12. International programmes**

International activity is valued throughout the university community. Activities designed to promote and increase international exchanges are considered as important quality factors. International activity represents an important way for faculty members to increase their professional competence. For students, participation in international exchanges may be a means of increasing their competitiveness of their degree when they seek employment.

It is the objective that as many as possible of the university's postgraduate students will participate in courses or training in foreign institutes. During the period 2001 - 2003, it is hoped that a total of 130 students will participate in international exchange programmes (duration at least three months).

The critical development objectives are:

- The University of Kuopio will achieve an international reputation as an eminent and prestigious seat of learning and in that way attract researchers from foreign educational establishments. Equally, the quality of its education will attract foreign undergraduates to come to Kuopio to study.
- Promotion of mobility of teaching faculty, researchers and students.
- The amount and diversity of teaching provided in languages other than Finnish will be increased. Virtual technologies will be utilized in teaching.
- Participation in EU-sponsored and other international exchange programmes will be encouraged.
- The globalization of regional enterprises will be supported. The university will be a major contributor to international informational networks.

### **13. Extramural activity and regional cooperation**

The University of Kuopio's activity and future development will be based on the university's profile. This is based on its international reputation for the excellence of research and education being conducted within its walls. The university also has a responsibility that its innovations and knowledge base must be exploited and applied, particularly to promote economic growth in eastern Finland.

The activities are those which are aimed at enlarging the university's sphere of influence at both an international and domestic level. Furthermore the university has activities governed by national higher education policies. In regional terms, the university will strive to increase its expertise, especially expertise which can benefit the welfare of the inhabitants of eastern Finland and profitability of commercial businesses operating there. It is one of the central objectives of strategical planning that these factors should be considered at all levels of university activity.

This emphasis on regional development will be a major challenge to the university in the coming years. Academic activity must be transformed into a true regional resource. For this to happen, there will have to be changes in attitudes and the creation of a willingness to collaborate with regional partners. Recently, this regional emphasis has become increasingly meaningful and accepted within the University of Kuopio. These trends will be encouraged in the future.

The central aspects of extramural activities will be:

- The volume and quality of research and research-based education must be such that it takes into account the present vitality of commercial activity in eastern Finland. Furthermore, it must anticipate future growth needs
- The inventions, knowledge base and expertise present within the university must be linked to regional commercial activity and be used to improve the welfare of the region's inhabitants
- The university will utilize the resources available in the regional centres of expertise. It will ensure unimpeded transfer of technology, help in patenting innovations and provide support to the creation of new research intensive companies
- The university will organize effective regional activity units, some of these being established as cooperations between the university and the polytechnics.
- Cooperation between the university and polytechnics in research and education will be primarily arranged to meet regional needs and objectives
- Through the creation of a network of the eastern Finnish universities in collaboration with the University of Oulu, it will be possible to create a full spectrum of expertise covering almost all of the academic disciplines
- The university guarantees that it will play its part in ensuring that the objective 1 goals targeted by East Finland will be accomplished.

#### **14. Activities funded by EU structural funds**

The role of the universities will be crucial if the targets set in the EU objective 1 programmes for East Finland are to be achieved. The way that the university can influence regional development and innovative activities is through maintaining and improving its knowledge base in its core disciplines. The university must ensure these are the foundations for the construction of new knowledge-based industrial and commercial activities throughout the region. In other words, the seed from which these new enterprises will sprout is the fertile soil of research and training on which the University of Kuopio is built.

Funds from the EU structural funds will be one way through which the university can benefit regional economic development and structural changes. This will be achieved through the encouragement of the establishment of knowledge-based companies, research and development (R

& D) services, welfare services and the promotion of technology transfer and education.

One way that research in the university can support this objective is to ensure that research activities will be intensified in those areas (e.g. laboratory activities and services) which will attract outside companies to devolve to this region. In addition, cooperation with companies already operating here will be intensified and new forms of cooperation will be sought.

The intake of students will be increased in those disciplines within the university anticipated to experience major growth in the future. The structural funds will be utilized to ensure that the graduates from the university dovetail with the personnel requirements of regional employers.

The fundamental principles which will guide the university's activities related to structural funding programmes are:

- Project activities will be an integral part of the university's overall strategical plan
- Project activities will expand the university's regional sphere of influence
- Project activities will be based on the core activities of the university and will also support new initiatives emerging from these areas of expertise
- Project activities will take fully into account the areas of specializations represented in the Kuopio regional centre of expertise
- Funding should promote research activities, development and cooperative initiatives
- Projects should encourage cooperation with the Polytechnic college and other regional research institutes as well as regional enterprises
- Project activities will maximize the benefit which can be obtained from the various aspects of Objective 1 programmes as well as from other special funding programmes

Initially the projects proposed by the University of Kuopio to be funded by structural programmes will represent overlapping, mutually supporting elements. These will include developmental aspects, educational objectives and constructional components. These will be presented such that the total impact of the proposed project can be readily evaluated. These proposed projects, in conjunction with their visions of the future, are conducive to continual assessment of their impact. Furthermore, these activities can be linked to the more traditional development activities envisaged over the coming years within the university.

## **15. Data management**

The strategy of the University of Kuopio for future data management is based on the current high state of data and communication technology in Finland, assessments of future trends, and national strategical policies in this area. It is the objective that by the end of the period covered by this plan, people working in the university will be able, if they wish, to access the services and to carry out all the necessary transactions with the university administration with ease and security through electronic networks. Furthermore, information needed for teaching, studying and research will no longer be available from only particular places, access will be available on a global basis and to some extent, at any time. These services will not be restricted to university personnel; certain groups or organizations associated with the university will be able to enjoy this access. An integral part of this vision of the future is that there will be much more mutual activities in particular with other universities but also with other educational institutes and enterprises. International cooperation and networking is another aspect of these future trends.

The central areas for development are:

- Acquainting and training the teaching staff in the latest developments in educational technology as well as improving the educational technology available
- Participation in the nationwide "Virtual University of Finland" project
- Improvement of data transfer and technological services; development of digital publishing, electronic library services and other forms of digital knowledge bases.
- The university will evaluate the best way to ensure the provision of technological services and information transfer. Cooperation with outside interests working in these fields will be undertaken to improve these basic services.

## **16. Public relations and links to social organizations**

The relationships that the university conducts with social organizations, outside interests and regional collaborators are intended to achieve the university's aim of increasing its public awareness of the university and creating a positive image. It is important that the university has a positive public image if it is to attract the most gifted students and recruit the best staff. The university aims to act in an open manner in its discussions with outside interests and cooperation partners. The leadership of the university must act to secure the crucial links between the university and interest groups, pioneering new forms of cooperations and establishing forums for open discussion. An active public relations policy will be pursued to support the university's objectives and strategical plans.

To widen the university's public recognition and create a positive public image it will be necessary to

- Create new and effective ways and networks for public relations activities and internal dissemination of information
- Ensure that the traditional and electronic media are kept informed about progress and developments in the university. Research findings, innovative educational courses and novel services must be disseminated promptly to as wide an audience as possible.
- Continual and systematic efforts must be made to create a public image of the university as a desirable and attractive study and work environment by disseminating information about its high educational standards and popularity with its students.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of its public relations efforts

## **17. Personnel policies and the promotion of equality within the University community**

It is self evident that the productivity and success of the university is based on its staff and the university must invest in its human resources. The university as an employer is committed to improving and promoting the well-being and prospects of all of its workers by adhering to a fair, responsible and supportive personnel policy with respect to conditions and remuneration. It is the objective that the university now and in the future will be able to recruit and retain the most competent personnel and that the university will maintain its international reputation and eminence.

The main ways through which the university's personnel policy will achieve its objectives are as follows:

- A separate personnel policy will be constructed with which the university's personnel resources in terms of numbers and duties will be linked to the university's expansion plans and other strategical activities
- Administrative units, work environments, job descriptions, work processes, workplace practices, conditions and attitudes will be arranged such that they create fulfillment and esteem and promote job satisfaction, commitment and a feeling of accomplishment
- The salary structure will be revised to make it both motivational and rewarding, personnel career structures will be clarified. A new project will examine ways to revise career structures and appointments for teaching faculty, as well as for support personnel involved in research and teaching

- The skill-base and the access to training courses for the personnel will be expanded
- Leadership resources will be optimized by increasing the training and advice available in the areas of general management, especially personnel management. Individuals being appointed into managerial positions must be able to exhibit tact in handling personnel problems and be able to work with others in harmony.
- At all levels, the university will follow an active, enlightened and rewarding personnel policy
- In those positions where it is possible, remote job placement will be encouraged
- Equality will be promoted through transparency. The principles of equality which are detailed in the university's policy on workplace equality will apply in all activities in which the university is involved.
- The personnel will be encouraged to participate in planning and decision-making processes which will impact on their work activities through joint management and personnel structures. These are intended to improve the flow of information and the productivity and commitment of the workforce.
- Strategical schemes will be synchronized with the personnel policy programmes. To clarify the division of responsibilities, the university as an employer will undertake to oversee general personnel policy, employer's obligations and statutory administrative tasks related to personnel management. The departments and other administrative units will be responsible for their own aspects of personnel policy and management. The departments and units will pursue activities in their personnel policies designed to improve the work community's effectiveness and loyalty and to guarantee the physical and mental well-being of the workforce.

## **18. Finances**

The University of Kuopio will endeavor to ensure that all of its basic activities are funded through state budget basic funding. It is envisaged that the current level of basic funding from the Ministry of Education will be increased. It is anticipated that the amount of external funding supporting the university's core areas of expertise will increase and some of this can also be diverted to support basic activities.

The central areas for action are:

- The goal of increasing the university's productivity will be achieved by increasing the proportion of funding awarded to units meeting their productivity targets. This will mean that even more emphasis will be placed

on quality in research and education with units seeking to attain national recognition as centres of excellence.

- The allocation of funds within the university to its departments and units will be according to the university's internal funding model which takes into consideration the university's activity goals as well as productivity. The amount of funding awarded on the basis of productivity will be increased.
- Structural developments will be concentrated on these areas related to the university's core fields of expertise which, in the long term, can be funded through the framework of the university's basic funding.
- Efforts will be made to increase the level of external funding. An organization providing researchers with administrative, public relations and advice services will be strengthened. External funding will reinforce the university's profile and in that way enhance the prestige of the entire university. The university will set different objectives for different departments and units on the basis of their activities with respect to the degree of external funding they are expected to attract.
- EU structural funding will be a driving motor for development in East Finland.
- Joint funding with other outside interests will be used to support critical growth areas (e.g. through the appointment of new professorships).
- Efforts will be made to increase the capital finance reserves owned by the University of Kuopio Foundation.

## **19. Sustained development**

The University of Kuopio will adhere to the principles of sustained development in all its research, educational and other activities. The university has established its own programme to ensure that its activities meet these objectives. The sustained development programme considers the environmental, cultural and social impact of all activities. The university will strive to communicate the importance of sustained development to the community through its interactions with student bodies and other interest groups. The principles of sustained development will be implicit in teaching and research strategies as well as an inherent part of the university's quality assurance system.

In particular, the university as a source of expertise will be critical in:

- reinforcing the awareness and knowledge of sustained development in the community
- being an active participant in technological research programmes aimed at reducing environmental burdens and being involved in the commercialization of research findings in this area

- using its educational and research programmes to promote wellbeing within the community, emphasizing employment, prevention of deprivation and isolation, as well as improving the living standards of the elderly