Squeezing the University of Antwerp into just a few pages is impossible. Full stop. But if we really have to try, then it is fair to say that the Annual Report 2014 is a highly commendable effort. While it cannot hope to be complete, this handsome brochure paints a rather good picture of the goings on at our university.

2014 was not an easy year for Flemish universities. While higher education was constantly in the news, the messages were not always positive. Discussions about higher tuition fees, poor pass rates and budget cuts dominated the agenda all too often.

And yet 2014 was a good year for the University of Antwerp. We welcomed more students, scored top marks in scientific research and unveiled new buildings: all good reasons to look to the future with confidence.

Happy reading!

Alain Verschoren
Rector of the University of Antwerp
In 2014, just under a thousand different activities were reported on the University of Antwerp website. Obviously, this annual report cannot hope to cover them all, so we’ve put together ‘2014 at a glance’: a selection of the year’s most eye-catching activities, visits and projects.

02/06:
**Red Devils**
The Red Devils made a video message full of tips for our students on combining exams with football.

19/02:
**Talent Forum**
More than 1500 students and alumni met with 83 leading companies, all potential employers in search of talented young professionals.

27/02:
**Queen Mathilde**
Queen Mathilde visited the University of Antwerp and attended ‘Bits of help’, a seminar on cyber bullying.

16/03:
**Children’s University**
Around 1000 children dived into the world of science during the tenth Children’s University.

17/03-23/03:
**Calamartes**
For the first time since it was established six years ago, the Calamartes culture festival organised a rock rally for secondary school pupils.

19/03:
**Talent Forum**
More than 1500 students and alumni met with 83 leading companies, all potential employers in search of talented young professionals.

22/03:
**Queen Mathilde**
Queen Mathilde visited the University of Antwerp and attended ‘Bits of help’, a seminar on cyber bullying.

20/03:
**Children’s University**
Around 1000 children dived into the world of science during the tenth Children’s University.

16/03:
**Calamartes**
For the first time since it was established six years ago, the Calamartes culture festival organised a rock rally for secondary school pupils.

28/06-05/07:
**Solar Boat**
The UAntwerp Solar Boat Team took part in the Solar Boat World Championship in Friesland and came in a very respectable twelfth place.

07/11:
**Remembering World War I**
The University of Antwerp paid tribute to soldier-students, war heroes who died during the Great War.

23/10 & 12/11:
**Alumni drinks**
Our new alumni received a festive welcome at two alumni drinks, one at the Stadscampus and one at Campus Drie Eiken.

23/11:
**Science Day**
Young and old came together at a number of locations to learn more about all aspects of science and technology.

20/11:
**Worm burger**
The long awaited Buffalo Bill worm burger was launched in the student restaurants to an enthusiastic response.

In 2014, just under a thousand different activities were reported on the University of Antwerp website. Obviously, this annual report cannot hope to cover them all, so we’ve put together ‘2014 at a glance’: a selection of the year’s most eye-catching activities, visits and projects.
Communication
In 2014 the University of Antwerp launched a haunting campaign focusing on its research into Alzheimer’s, hearing, big data and cancer. The campaign struck a chord with all who saw it, and called on prospective students to help rethink tomorrow.

Finance
In spite of budget cuts instigated by the Government of Flanders, the university succeeded in submitting a balanced budget for 2015. The policy of budgetary restraint being exercised at the university is sure to have played a role in this.

HR policy
In 2014, Randstad awarded the University of Antwerp a prize for being the ‘most attractive social profit company in Flanders’, a nice reward for our efforts. The university also made significant progress in terms of growth: our workforce increased to 5,200 employees.

ICT
In 2014, all students were given larger inboxes and more space for storing and sharing documents. From now on they can also use their university inboxes to work on group assignments.

Library
The University Library owns a bundle of centuries-old programmes of plays performed in Jesuit schools. This collection of programmes has been recognised as a Flemish Masterpiece. The library also successfully completed a project whose aim was to make the archives of the Royal Geographical Society of Antwerp more accessible.

Media training
How do you come across well on television? What should you say to a journalist, and what not? The University of Antwerp wanted to ensure that its researchers were prepared, so we organised our first media training sessions.

Religion
Buket Karaca joined the university as a guidance counsellor for Muslim students. On her list of plans are an accessible prayer room, mentors for Muslims and exam schedules that take Ramadan into account.

Sustainability
The University of Antwerp won the 2014 Winter Trophy as an XL company. The Bike to Work contest is organised by Fietsersbond (the Flemish Cyclists’ Federation) and aims to encourage commuting by bike.

Infrastructure
A new student restaurant and service building, including high-performance network infrastructure, were inaugurated on Campus Middelheim. New construction projects were also started on Campus Groenenborger and Campus Drie Eiken.
The faces of 2014
The faces of 2014

Professor Roeland Samson
Department of Bio-Engineering Sciences
Faculty of Science
As seen: in the AIRbezen project

This project saw more than a thousand enthusiastic Antwerpians caring for a strawberry plant over a number of weeks. After analysing the leaves of these plants, Samson and his team were able to put together a detailed picture of air quality in the City of Antwerp and its districts. “Our AIRbezen project garnered a lot of interest, even from abroad. The City of Amsterdam would like us to launch a similar campaign there. This project is really an excellent example of citizen science. It was quite hard work, but we were inspired by people’s positive reactions.”

Professor Herman Van Goethem
Faculty of Law
As seen: at Kazerne Dossin

Van Goethem works tirelessly to share his scientific knowledge of Flemish history with the public. In 2014, the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium awarded him the career achievement award for Science Communication. “It is exhausting to communicate clearly and transparently. But I inflict this on myself because of how I communicate. I’m like a fire — I can be very ‘invasive’ when I speak. When you receive a career achievement award, it looks as though you’ve reached the end. But I don’t plan on stopping any time soon.”

Sophie Gryseels and Benny Borremans
Department of Biology
Faculty of Science
As seen: working to fight the Ebola epidemic

At the height of the Ebola epidemic, Sophie and Benny left for the outbreak’s epicentre in Guinea where they tested blood samples in a mobile laboratory. “We didn’t hesitate for a second, because of our expertise and because we knew those countries needed our help most. Even though we’re just a couple of links in a long chain, we feel that our work was useful. This experience will prove particularly useful for our future careers.”
Guy Cassiers and Ivo van Hove
Theatre and opera directors
As seen: receiving honorary degrees for General Merit

Every year the University of Antwerp awards a number of honorary degrees. In 2014, the university paid tribute to four international scientists and awarded the honorary degree for General Merit to Ivo van Hove (l.) and Guy Cassiers (r.). The two leading European directors are widely renowned for their sophisticated, multi-faceted theatre. “Art is vital to society”, they emphasised. “It is important to introduce children and young people to art from an early age.”

Chantal Vandamme
Mother of five from Wevelgem
As seen: in the University of Antwerp’s communication campaign

After a long battle with cancer, Chantal Vandamme wanted to help fight the disease in her own way by contributing to the University of Antwerp’s campaign. “By laying myself bare, I can only inspire hope in others. Give others hope, even though I know cancer can kill very quickly. It makes me happy to know that I might inspire young people to contribute to cancer research. I will probably not live to see this happen, but I hope to send out a positive message.”

Chantal died in early 2015.
Quality and innovation
The University of Antwerp focuses on high-quality, innovative education. In 2014, several new programmes were launched and many of our existing programmes scored very highly.

The unique one-year Master programme in Gender and Diversity is a joint initiative of the five Flemish universities. The programme focuses on the relation between gender and other forms of diversity such as ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and disability and has strong links with practice.

The university also launched two brand new programmes in healthcare: the Scar Academy, which focuses on scar therapy, and the Oedema Therapy programme. The two programmes were made possible thanks to intensive collaboration both inside and outside the academic world.

We received the European Master’s in Translation quality label. Our Master programme for translators received good points for curriculum composition, clear formulation of objectives and excellence in staff and research.

During an external review of the Medicine programme, the committee praised IPSIG week, a project that teaches future doctors to work with other health professionals.

Dissertations with added value
Many of the students who graduated in 2014 did so with an excellent Master’s dissertation. They received awards and were even featured in the media.

Els Cassauwers (Product Development) launched a new type of compression bra for breast cancer patients which helps with the preventive treatment of breast oedema. The bra is innovative in that it combines medical treatment with aesthetic appeal. Els devised the concept in cooperation with the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences and Physiotherapy.

Jeroen Op de Beeck (Product Development) won the OVAM Ecodesign award with his Urban Composter, an installation for the collection and rapid processing of vegetables, fruit and garden waste in urban environments. His invention ties in perfectly with the City of Antwerp’s recycling streets, which allow the city to save millions on waste collection.

Matteo Balliauw (Business Engineer) received the 2015 ORBEL Award for his excellent dissertation. He developed software that allows pianists to quickly generate piano fingering based on their personal preferences. With the technical aspect taken care of, musicians can focus completely on studying the piece of music and its musical interpretation.

An incentive for entrepreneurs
The University of Antwerp is committed to training its students to become independent individuals with an entrepreneurial mindset. Along with our partners in Antwerp, we started a number of related initiatives in 2014.

TAKEOFFANTWERP, aims to stimulate entrepreneurship among Flemish students during their studies. The initiative is overseen by the Antwerp University Association and organises high-quality, sustainable activities which focus on innovation and transfer.

GATE15, the new student centre, also opened its doors in 2014. Here students can find out all there is to know about student life in Antwerp. Young entrepreneurs can also sit down and put their heads together here.

In 2015, the new incubator Ubis will move to the Darwin Building at the Waterfront Science Park in Niel. Start-ups and entrepreneurs can rely on the scientific services and expertise of the university’s research groups.

Finally, the Startup Village, a meeting point for start-ups, large companies and investors, will open in 2016. The village is the result of collaboration between the City of Antwerp, Start it @kbc and the university’s TechTransfer service.

One year after integration
After several years of preparation, academic year 2013-2014 was the litmus test for the integration of certain university college programmes.

This integration obviously has the most impact at educational level. Figures are what they are, so we should not attach more importance to them than necessary. However, during academic year 2013-2014, more than 20,000 students enrolled at the University of Antwerp: a milestone. Almost all of the faculties welcomed more students, but the main reason for this sharp increase was obviously the integration.

The crowning achievement of this integration also came in 2014 with the presentation of the first university Bachelor and Master degrees in the integrating faculties.

Along with the existing faculties, the integrating faculties also began to prepare for the institutional review. The University of Antwerp sees the review as an opportunity to demonstrate the culture of excellence and attention to quality assurance already thriving in our institution.
Research

Sewage analysis
In recent years, the University of Antwerp has built up significant experience in sewage-based epidemiology. Thanks to this research, science now has a better understanding of substance abuse (drugs, alcohol or medicines) in particular cities or regions.

In autumn 2014, scientists from the Department of Toxicology (Faculty of Pharmaceutical, Biomedical and Veterinary Sciences) and the research group Medical Sociology and Health Policy (Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences) conducted a large-scale study in Lier. This was the university’s contribution to the EU-funded SEWPROF project, conducted with sixteen partners from other countries.

Between 1 September and 30 November, our university took daily samples of the sewage water at the water purification plant in Lier. By analysing these samples, the scientists were able to determine how much of each type of drug was present in the water. The people of Lier could also volunteer to fill in surveys to ascertain whether the drugs detected were actually being used. Thanks to the enthusiastic participation of the City of Lier and Aquafin, the University of Antwerp was able to paint an accurate picture of drug use in Lier.

Commercialisation
In 2014, the University of Antwerp repeatedly proved that its research leads to tangible results.

Thanks to the university’s spin-off Novosanis, the user-friendly VAX-ID injection system and Colli-Pee, a medical urine test for STIs and HIV, are well on their way to conquering the market. Wakati, a smart means of preserving food in countries where freezers are a rare commodity, is also increasing in popularity. Wakati was devised by Arne Pauwels, a graduate of the Product Development programme, and brought onto the market in 2014: the first 100 3D-printed Wakatis were delivered to Uganda, Afghanistan and Haiti.

The university is successfully valorising its research: with 32 invention notifications already submitted, the future looks bright for the commercialisation of our expertise and technology. Not all research needs to be commercialised in order to be successful. This was made clear by the Meet ME @ M HKA-project, a collaboration with the Museum of Modern Art Antwerp (M HKA). The project encourages people in the early stages of dementia to visit museums, thus helping to break their sense of isolation.

Urban Studies Institute
The University of Antwerp works closely with the City of Antwerp. The Urban Studies Institute was founded to ensure this interaction is continued and strengthened.

The university has combined all its knowledge about Antwerp in the institute, thus establishing a link between its research and the policy surrounding urban issues.

The importance of ‘the city’ as a concept is huge. Worldwide, there are about 40 large urban areas known as ‘megaregions’, which together account for 20% of the world’s population. Migration, poverty, mobility, sustainability, multilingualism... the number of topics that are relevant and can be studied in an urban context is almost endless. Moreover, the University of Antwerp has the required expertise in almost all of these areas. The Urban Studies Institute allows scientists to work together in a structured way across a multitude of disciplines.

The new institute has eight different research groups and three key objectives: interdisciplinary cooperation on fundamental research; clear translation of research results into policy and services; and the development of an integrated vision of education in relation to the city.

Asphalt labs
In 2014, the infrastructure of the Road Engineering research group – part of EMIB (Energy & Materials in Infrastructure & Buildings) – was overhauled. The new labs have given asphalt research a boost.

The labs were renovated in cooperation with NYNAS nv, a supplier of bitumen, the binder in asphalt. The new labs will make it possible to conduct top-class scientific research.

The research group is working on a special type of mastic asphalt, which has the properties of a solar panel and cannot freeze. A supermarket which has a car park on the roof could use the heat absorbed by the asphalt to heat the store, for example. However, this type of asphalt can also increase road safety, as there will never be any snow on the roads! Soundproof asphalt is another possibility. As part of the City of Antwerp’s noise action plan, EMIB is collaborating on a pilot project involving ‘quiet asphalt’.

The International Road Research Board has also realised that the innovations developed by Antwerp researchers may bring about a revolution in road engineering. EMIB received international recognition in 2014, becoming a leading partner and the board’s only academic partner.
A new wind for alumni

Our alumni are sure to have felt the wind of change blowing in 2014. The faculties and programmes are organising more and more of their own alumni activities.

A good example of this was the relaunch of the alumni associations AGUA (History), celebrating the tenth anniversary of the programme, and Ambient (Biomedical Sciences), with an exclusive alumni evening.

But 2014 was also a year of innovation in other respects. In early September, Alumni Office organised its first alumni trip, along with the Elementary Particle Physics research group. A total of 48 alumni travelled to CERN in Geneva, visiting the impressive CMS experiment 100 metres underground.

A new alumni ambassador was appointed at the start of the new academic year. The former CEO of Ecover and talented entrepreneur Michaël Bremans will defend the interests of our alumni with verve.

In the autumn, the university bade farewell to its most recent graduates with two alumni drinks. In October, the first event was organised for the humanities alumni. The event for science, medicine and engineering alumni was held in November.

University Fund

One of the challenges for the coming years is the funding of education and research. Universities and university colleges will have no option but to look into alternative sources of funding more than is the case today. The University Fund will play an important role in this.

In 2014, the university launched its first privately funded chair. Thanks to the Vandeputte Chair, scientific research in Safety Sciences will receive a strong boost as doctoral research is conducted over a period of four years.

The university also established the Antwerp Liability Law and Insurance Chair (ALLIC), which promotes research, offers a postgraduate programme and serves as an academic discussion platform.

The university also attaches great importance to a good work-life balance. It therefore advocates family-friendly meeting times as well as providing childcare during the holidays.

In recent years, the number of female professors has grown steadily. In 2011, 23% of all our academics were female, but by the end of 2014, this had increased to 27%.

Internationalisation

The University of Antwerp is doing well in terms of internationalisation, as evidenced by its partnerships with several leading universities.

More and more individuals and businesses are finding their way to the University Fund. They can make donations, fund a chair or grant, include the university in their will and so on. In 2014, the university received 716,618.75 euros of much-needed additional funds, 88,961.47 euros of which were donated by private individuals.

Gender action plan

In 2014, the University of Antwerp approved the strategic action plan ‘Sustainable gender policy for academic staff’. In so doing, we committed to achieving gender diversity at all academic levels, by means of operational policy measures, action and education.

Neither culture nor structure should prevent either men or women from building a career at every level of the university. The gender action plan will therefore monitor the balance between men and women, making the university an even more attractive employer for top-class staff.

The figures also demonstrate the progress we’re making in terms of internationalisation: the university now has almost 1000 international employees and 3600 international students.
The University of Antwerp ended 2014 with a positive result of 11.5 million euros. This positive result is the combined consequence of both structural and specific factors.

**COMPOSITION OF REVENUES**

Total revenues for 2014 amounted to approximately 271 million euros, around 75% of which came from governmental funds and 25% from other sources. Core financing represented around 50% of the university’s total revenues. Approximately 25% of the revenues related to government research funding, while 4% of the revenues represented private-sector research funding.

**COMPOSITION OF EXPENDITURES**

Total expenditures in 2014 amounted to approximately 260 million euros. These expenditures were primarily operating expenses, with staff costs accounting for 71%. The remaining expenditures relate mainly to the university’s normal running costs.