

RSU REPORT ON PROGRESS
TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS
2024

OPEN
to the world

CONTENTS

Introduction

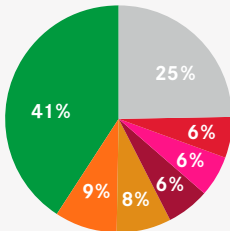
The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations member states, provides a global framework for building more resilient and prosperous societies, and a healthier, more liveable planet. This vision is expressed through 17 Sustainable Development Goals (hereinafter SDGs) that address both environmental and social dimensions of sustainability, and encourage collaboration. Universities, as stewards of talent, knowledge, and resources, play a vital role in driving progress towards these goals.

In 2024, RSU continued to advance the sustainability of its operations, strengthen its SDG-related research capacity, and contribute to workforce development in healthcare and other society-facing professions. The university also completed consolidation with the Latvian Academy of Sports Education, whose expertise in sports science and pedagogy further supports RSU's mission of building a healthier society.

RSU's sustained efforts in promoting sustainability were recognised in 2024 by students, staff, national organisations, and global university rankings alike. At a time when sustainability is an increasingly important factor for prospective students [\[link\]](#), RSU recorded its highest-ever number of both domestic and international applicants [\[link\]](#) [\[link\]](#). The university was also deemed to have the best reputation among higher education institutions in Latvia for the 8th consecutive year, based on a major public survey [\[link\]](#), and it was voted the Best Employer in the public sector for the 3rd year running [\[link\]](#). Further recognition came in the form of the Employers' Confederation of Latvia award for 'Support to Public Health Promotion and Health Sector' [\[link\]](#). RSU's Medical Education Technology Centre was commended by the Ministry of Defence for its collaboration with the National Guard [\[link\]](#), and over 35 employees received certificates of appreciation from the Government of Latvia for their individual contributions to healthcare and higher education [\[link\]](#) [\[link\]](#) [\[link\]](#). On the global stage, RSU earned a spot in the QS Sustainability Rankings for the first time, and placed among the world's top 400 universities in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings. These achievements reaffirm RSU's progress towards the SDGs, especially through its impact on the healthcare sector (SDG 3), its high standard of education (SDG 4), its inclusive workplace practices (SDG 8), and its support for peace and security beyond the university (SDG 16).

For the first time in both Latvian and English, this report spotlights selected research projects and new initiatives across all 17 SDGs, demonstrating RSU's commitment to sustainable development. Many initiatives featured in previous reports have evolved into annual traditions and are instead documented on the university's website [\[link\]](#).

RSU in numbers

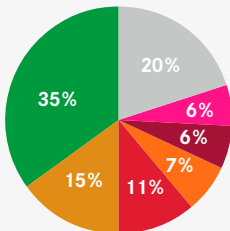


220 SDG-related publications **47%** of all publications

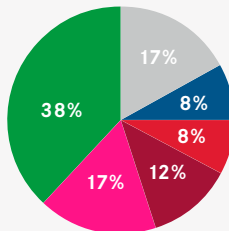
84% and **51%** of these publications were produced through cross-institutional and cross-country collaborations, respectively, involving a total of **822** institutions from **131** countries.

These numbers reflect Scopus-indexed publications (articles, reviews, conference papers, books, and book chapters) in 2024. Their SDG relevance has been evaluated by SciVal, using Elsevier’s keyword-matching algorithm, supplemented by a machine learning model. Data were extracted on 17.01.2025.

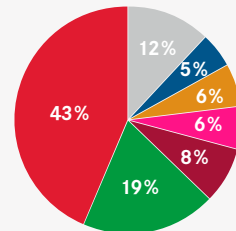
In the 2022 and 2023 SDG reports, we presented only the five-year publication count. For this 2024 report, the corresponding number, covering publications from 2020 to 2024, is **880**.



47 new SDG-related research projects
38% of all new research projects



16 defended PhD theses that support the SDGs
73% of all defended PhD theses



761 SDG-related study courses
33% of all courses

SDG relevance was assessed using Elsevier’s keyword-matching queries, modified to operate on course or project descriptions as plain text. Proximity measures (W/n, PRE/n) were replaced with Boolean AND due to deep nesting. We intend to refine our SDG mapping in the future. For new research projects, the keyword-based results were combined with SDG labels from the RSU Research Portal, which contains labels that were either assigned by the authors or, in cases where projects already have associated publications, derived from Scopus.



Research

New research project to mitigate energy poverty [🔗](#)

In collaboration with colleagues from Riga Technical University, RSU researchers launched a new research project, 'Mitigating Energy Poverty Through Innovative Solutions', funded by the Latvian Council of Science and led on the RSU side by Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Assoc. Prof. Karina Palkova. The project was initiated in response to the rapid rise in energy prices across the European Union, which increases the risk of poverty and highlights the urgent need for the transition to renewable energy solutions. To support the successful implementation of this transition in Latvia, the research team will evaluate the experiences and best practices of other countries, considering social, legal, political, technical, economic, and environmental aspects. A key outcome of the research will be recommendations for implementing sustainable energy solutions and mitigating poverty.



Stewardship

Scholarships for students from socially disadvantaged groups (SDG 1.3)

■ Social scholarship 'Studēt gods' – 1,493

Awarded to students from families with 3+ children, students who themselves have 3+ children, orphans, and students with Group I or II disabilities.

■ Social tuition discount – 56

Awarded based on students' financial situation.

■ Pregnancy scholarships – 10

■ Minimum scholarships – 1,269

Awarded to cover tuition fees, based on academic excellence; when comparing students of similar academic merit, priority is given to students from socially vulnerable backgrounds.

■ Increased scholarships – 34

Awarded on similar principles to the Minimum scholarship, with additional consideration of scientific and community activities.

■ One-off financial support – 281

Granted once per semester to cover study-related expenses and support socially disadvantaged students in fully engaging with the study process.

■ Student Union's social support funding – 32

Intended for the purchase of glasses, study-related equipment, or medical appointments; awarded to students with a justified financial need.

■ Boris and Inara Teterev Foundation scholarships in Medicine – 20

Awarded based on academic excellence, scientific and community activities, as well as family and social circumstances.

■ Egils Gulbis Medicine – social scholarship – 36

Awarded to students in Years 2-6 on the Medicine or Paediatrics study programmes who come from poor or low-income households, have a disability or caregiver responsibilities, or who are orphans or have been adopted.

Knowledge exchange

4th International Conference ‘Nutrition and Health’[↗](#)

The 4th International Conference ‘Nutrition and Health’ took place at the RSU Medical Education Technology Centre, jointly organised by RSU, the University of Latvia, and the Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies, in cooperation with the Association of Diet Doctors of Latvia, and the Latvian Association of Diet and Nutrition Specialists. The conference brought together leading and emerging researchers in the field, including students of the joint master’s programme in Nutrition Science, policymakers, as well as business leaders from the food, nutrition, and health sectors. Over the course of two days, participants explored topics ranging from nutrition policy, food safety, and metabolic syndrome, to the role of nutrition at different stages of life.

The conference included dedicated lecture and poster sessions on the sustainability of food systems, and the impact of nutrition on the health of pregnant and breastfeeding women. During these sessions, Assoc. Prof. Ólafur Ögmundarson from the University of Iceland delivered a lecture on sustainable healthy diets and food systems; Daniela Grach from FH Joanneum University of Applied Sciences spoke about implementing sustainable nutrition in professional settings; while Dr Julianne Williams from the World Health Organisation addressed the audience on the role of nutrition in women’s health. These topics directly relate to SDG targets 2.2 and 2.4, which aim to “end all forms of malnutrition” and “ensure sustainable food production systems”.

Public outreach

A new episode on the ‘RSU Health Express’ podcast covering the preservation of fruits and vegetables[↗](#)

Preserving seasonal natural produce is an effective way to extend the availability of healthy food and reduce food waste. In episode 17 of the podcast ‘RSU Health Express’, dietitian, lecturer, and creator and head of the study programmes Nutrition and Nutritional Science, Lolita Vija Neimane, together with lecturer and biochemist, Anita Pastare, discussed the preservation and fermentation of fruits and vegetables. The RSU experts explained the biological mechanisms of these processes and their impact on the nutritional value of the produce. They also informed listeners about the best practices for preserving and fermenting seasonal produce, and for consuming it in healthy amounts. As an example of sustainable food processing, they highlighted how apple seeds and peels can be used to make pectin jelly for further consumption, rather than thrown away. During the discussion, the experts additionally shared their own tried-and-tested food-processing methods, covering the fermentation of cucumbers, cabbage, and apples, as well as the preparation of various jams and preserves.



influence the sensitivity of specific cancer cells to currently available pharmacological agents, and to provide insights that could guide the development of personalised therapies.

Research

New research project towards personalised treatment of triple-negative breast cancer [🔗](#)

In 2024, a team of researchers led by Dr Inese Čakstiņa-Dzērve launched a new project, 'Hypoxia-induced molecular alterations and druggable targets in triple-negative breast cancer cell lines', funded by the Latvian Council of Science. Aligned with SDG 3.4, which aims to "reduce mortality from non-communicable diseases", this project seeks to identify and validate molecular changes in tumour cells caused by different forms (acute, cyclic, chronic) of oxygen deficiency (hypoxia) within the tumour microenvironment. The researchers hypothesise that the heterogeneity of hypoxia may be one reason why current therapies for triple-negative breast cancer are not equally effective across all patients. As part of the project, the team will analyse publicly available multi-omics datasets to identify potential biomarkers, and will empirically test the link between these biomarkers and hypoxia by exposing relevant cancer cell lines to various hypoxic regimes. Ultimately, the project aims to evaluate how different hypoxic regimes

Stewardship

Organised hikes for students and staff [🔗](#)

To promote a healthy lifestyle and strengthen the RSU community, the RSU Sports Club launched a new tradition of organised hikes for students and staff. The first hike covered 8–10 km along the scenic seaside Saulrieta Trail, from Baltā Kāpa to Saulkrasti town centre. Participants met at the train station to encourage the use of public transport.

■ **(SDG 3.4)** **52** students received a tuition-fee discount for excellence in sports, reserved for athletes in individual and team sports who are on Latvia's national team, are training with RSU Sports Club's coaches, or have earned medals at competitions in Latvia and abroad.

Public outreach

Informing the public and policymakers about the prevalence of smoking in Latvia [🔗](#)

Following the publication of the RSU Institute of Public Health's report, 'The Situation of Combustible and Smokeless Tobacco Products in Latvia and Recommendations for Promoting Public Health' [🔗](#), the research team carried out extensive outreach activities to communicate the findings to both the public and policymakers. The study showed that

(SDG 3.C) In 2024, **167** residents completed their training across **50** specialties, making a significant contribution to the number of certified medical specialists in Latvia. The most widely represented specialties were general practitioners, anaesthetists, and radiologists.

Number of residents

133

144

156

166

149

167

Year of graduation

2019

2020

2021

2022

2023

2024



smoking prevalence in Latvia has not declined in recent years, and that improving the situation requires a comprehensive approach. This includes monitoring public attitudes and the health consequences of smoking, as well as reducing the influence of the tobacco industry on political decision-making. The main conclusions and policy recommendations were presented at a public event attended by the Minister of Health. In addition, researchers Assoc. Prof. Anda Ķīvīte-Urtāne and Ļubova Tihomirova published an educational article on the Latvian Public Media portal, *ism.lv*, while Ļ. Tihomirova and Aelita Vagale also took part in the Latvian Radio programme, 'Kā labāk dzīvot'. Through these efforts, the authors

addressed misconceptions about the health effects of e-cigarettes, and shared effective strategies to reduce smoking.

Knowledge exchange

Conference on healthy living in midlife

The RSU Liepāja branch organised a free interdisciplinary conference, 'Healthy midlife - acceptance or denial?', aiming to raise awareness among medical professionals about the social and healthcare challenges people face between the ages of 40 and 60. The conference featured presentations by physicians of various specialties, as well as professionals in art therapy, social work, and psychotherapy. Participants explored the most common health problems of midlife, including cardiovascular disease and diabetes, heard perspectives on maintaining mental balance in the face of biological ageing, and discussed healthy attitudes towards life-limiting illnesses and mortality.

Community Engagement

Student competition on public health crisis communication simulation scenarios

Continuing to advance a simulation-based approach to healthcare education, RSU launched a competition inviting interdisciplinary student teams to design a simulation scenario that would allow participants to practise communication in a public health crisis. Students were required to define learning outcomes, identify the parties involved in the simulated scenario, and create a detailed, feasible yet challenging task for each role. The four best scenarios – simulating environmental pollution, misinformation in the dairy sector, the spread of Legionnaires' disease, and a tobacco product-related crisis - were presented at the RSU International Student Conference, 'Health and Social Sciences'. The winning scenario, 'Tobacco Product-Induced Healthcare Crisis Simulation (TAIVA)', was developed by Maija Pēce, Viktorija Kuņicina, and Annija Ermiča from the Medicine, Public Health, and Public Relations study programmes.

Research

New research project to support lifelong learning for nurses [🔗](#)

An RSU research team, led by Assoc. Prof. Agita Melbārde-Kelme, has begun work on a European Union co-founded international project, 'Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment Skills Education Programme for Nurses - Can You See the Big Picture?'. In collaboration with partners from the higher education, healthcare, and IT sectors in six European countries, the project aims to develop an innovative educational programme that enhances nurses' skills in the care of older patients. As the average age of the European population increases, there is a rapidly growing demand for appropriately qualified nurses in the workforce. During the project, researchers will analyse the best practices in geriatric assessment and develop digital learning materials, including 3D simulations. This new curriculum will be integrated into the elective courses of five European Union universities, and its digital content will ensure access to high-quality lifelong learning, even for nurses in rural areas.

Stewardship

Glossary of learning and teaching concepts [🔗](#) [🔗](#)

To promote consistent use of pedagogical terminology, the RSU Centre for Educational Growth developed a glossary of learning and teaching concepts, grounded in the student-centred approach to education implemented at RSU. This resource compiles over 160 terms, organised into nine thematic categories that cover learning and teaching strategies, theories, methods, and

techniques, as well as forms and modes of study, and study organisation. The glossary explains key aspects of everyday pedagogical practice in a way that is adapted to the RSU context. It serves as a practical tool for academics, administrative staff, and students alike, supporting the implementation of student-centred teaching and strengthening education quality.

Excellence scholarships motivate students to pursue outstanding achievements in studies and research (SDG 4.3)

■ State Education Development Agency scholarships – 36

Awarded to international students based on academic excellence and extracurricular activities, including participation in scientific conferences and research projects.

■ Tuition-fee discount for outstanding students – 295

Awarded to academically outstanding students enrolled in Latvian-language study programmes.

■ Student research and innovation grants – 7

Awarded to support the costs of student research projects carried out under the mentorship of an RSU researcher.

■ JSC Olpha (formerly JSC Olainfarm) scholarship of excellence – 3

Awarded to academically outstanding home students in the Faculty of Pharmacy during their 5th year of studies.

Other tuition fee discounts to promote access to quality education (SDG 4.3)

■ Tuition-fee discount for employees and their children – 39

Awarded to RSU employees enrolled in study programmes related to their work at the university.

■ Tuition-fee discount for family members – 73

Awarded to self-funded students whose immediate family members are also enrolled in an RSU study programme.

■ Tuition-fee discount for alumni – 116

Awarded to students who have completed another degree at RSU prior to commencing their current studies.

■ Tuition-fee discount for active involvement in promoting RSU internationally and contributing to its community life – 3

Awarded to students in English-language programmes Medicine or Dentistry who demonstrate active engagement in university life and represent RSU at official sports and cultural events.

External scholarships open to students from other universities, highlighting the talent and achievements of RSU students (SDG 4.3)

■ **Prof. Ilmārs Lazovskis Medical Foundation scholarships and promotion scholarships – 3**

Awarded by the Latvian Medical and Dental Association to highly motivated senior medical students intending to work in Latvia.

■ **Ojārs Veide Foundation scholarships – 5**

Awarded by the Latvian Medical and Dental Association to young medical professionals who may still be in residency or pursuing a PhD, for the purpose of improving their qualifications at an institution outside Latvia.

Community engagement

(SDG 4.3) The Student Union's Mentorship Programme supports first-year students from Latvia as they adapt to the academic environment and social life of the university, while giving more senior students the opportunity to gain valuable mentoring experience.

In 2024:



428 mentees



172 mentors

Knowledge exchange

Free professional development programme for health and physical education teachers

The RSU Centre for Lifelong Learning and the RSU Latvian Academy of Sports Education, in cooperation with the State Education Development Agency, organised a free professional development programme for health and physical education teachers, 'Individualisation and Differentiation Approach'. Over the course of four days, 100 primary and secondary school teachers from across the country participated in lectures and practical sessions on planning and implementing individualised curricula, and on com-

prehensive student performance assessment. The programme enhanced teachers' skills in adapting the curriculum to the needs of each student, facilitating the inclusion of children with neurodiversity and various physical conditions. These pedagogical skills form an essential component of the 'Health and Physical Activity' area within the national education initiative 'School 2030'.

Public outreach

Public discussion on the value of master's studies

In collaboration with the RSU Alumni Association, the university organised a public discussion, 'Master's - A Step Up', aiming to encourage participants to consider pursuing master's studies, regardless of whether they had already obtained a master's degree. Gathering 140 participants, the event was opened by physician-psychologist, RSU alumnus, and lecturer, Artūrs Miksons, who shared his own master's experience and offered advice on choosing what to study and why. In the second part of the event, RSU students and alumni from various fields discussed how master's studies support career development and provide broader opportunities to shape the future of society.



Research

Commissioned report on gendered aggression against journalists on X [↗](#)

Commissioned by the 'Progresīvie' faction of the Latvian Parliament, Assoc. Prof. Klāvs Sedlenieks conducted a study to determine whether female journalists in Latvia experience more aggression on the microblogging platform X than their male counterparts. As part of the study, using the artificial intelligence tool ChatGPT-4, posts addressed to 49 Latvian journalists on X were analysed in relation to the journalists' own posts, quantitatively assessing the extent to which each post was aggressive or supportive. The results of the study, published in the open-access report, "I was disgusted watching you on TV": Aggression against journalists in the portal X (Twitter): Comparison of males and females', revealed that the proportion of negative and highly negative posts directed at female journalists was numerically higher. At the same time, differences between male and female journalists were not statistically significant, which may be partly explained by the limited number of journalists using the platform X.

The researchers noted the need for future gender-based analyses to examine the actual content of posts and journalists' interactions with those expressing negative opinions.

Publication of a monograph on feminist art in a post-socialist context [↗](#)

Asst. Prof. and Lead Researcher at the RSU Faculty of Social Sciences, Jana Kukaine, has published a book titled 'Viscerālā estētika: afekti un feministrīkā māksla postsociālismā' (English translation: *Visceral Aesthetics: Affects and Feminist Art in Postsocialism*) with support from the State Culture Capital Foundation. Drawing on frameworks from feminist aesthetics, art philosophy, and affect theory, the author analyses contemporary Latvian art in the context of Central and Eastern European art history and theory.

The monograph promotes understanding of gender equality and the principles of an inclusive society, inviting readers to view feminism as "an impulse for cultural creativity and societal transformation". Moreover, by developing academic terminology for the study of societal processes in Latvian, Asst. Prof. Kukaine makes a valuable contribution to further research in the area of humanities and social sciences. In fact, the author herself continues to build upon the research direction presented in the monograph through her postdoctoral project 'Augu aģence un laikmetīgā māksla: ilgtspējīgas attiecības ar vairāk-kā-cilvēka pasauli' (English translation: *Plant Agency and Contemporary Art: Sustainable Relations with the World Beyond Humans*).



Public outreach

Drawing attention to gender equality on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

Aiming to raise awareness of gender-based violence in line with RSU's Gender Equality Action Plan, an informational article was published on the university website on 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. The article drew readers' attention to statistics compiled by the United Nations, which reveal the persistence of gender inequality in the context of technological development, geopolitical conflicts, and humanitarian crises. It also highlighted the European Commission's Directive (2024/1385) on combating violence against women and domestic violence, emphasising the European Union's commitment to strengthening women's rights.

Challenging gender stereotypes in the public domain

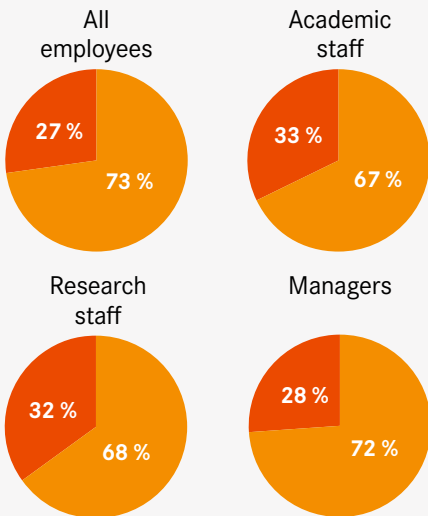
The stereotype that nursing and social work are 'female professions' still persists in society. In 2024, this was also reflected in RSU's study programmes Nursing and Social Work, where, across both the bachelor's and master's levels, 94% and 85% of applicants, and 96% and 87% of students, were female. To highlight the gender-neutral aspects of these professions, RSU published an interview with Nursing programme graduate Artūrs Jirgensons, and as an educational article about the social work profession. Both articles emphasised that the character traits associated with these professions, such as empathy and willingness to help others, are not tied to any specific gender, and that variety of perspectives can only enhance the quality of the medical and social services provided.

Stewardship

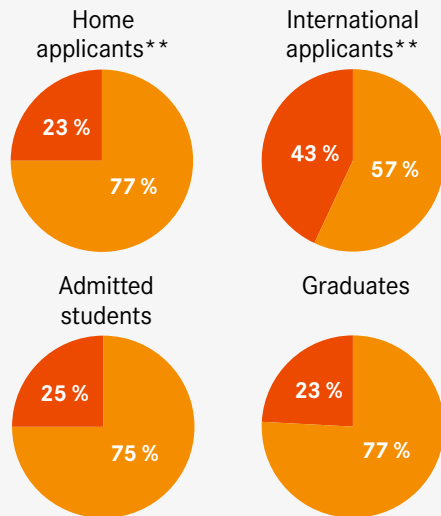
RSU community in 2024 – by gender (SDG 5.5)

● women ● men

Employees*



Students



* The methodology was revised this year to align with the RSU Gender Equality Plan; shown are the proportions of female employees based on headcount.

** Unique applications across all levels of study.

clinical isolates of *Klebsiella* spp. Ultimately, researchers plan to develop a local phage bank to support their therapeutic applications and thus limit the development of antimicrobial resistance in *Klebsiella*.

Research

New research project to limit antimicrobial resistance in bacteria found in hospital wastewater

In 2024, a team led by Prof. Jutta Kroiča launched the project 'Innovative Strategies to Combat Antibacterial Resistance in *Klebsiella* spp.: Harnessing the Synergy of Phage and Antibiotics', funded by the European Union's Recovery and Resilience Mechanism and the state budget. The project aims to explore the interaction between antibiotics and various viruses that kill bacteria – bacteriophages – that target *Klebsiella*, to evaluate their therapeutic potential as alternatives to antibiotics. During the project, phages will be isolated from a range of sources, including hospital wastewater, and tested against multiple

Stewardship

Drinking water refill stations (SDG 6.1)

- In 2024, RSU installed **2** new drinking water refill stations.
- Since 2012, RSU has installed a total of **69** water refill stations across **17** university buildings.
- Plastic cups have not been provided on campus for several years. In 2024, this resulted in savings of **EUR 20,212**.



Water use (SDG 6.4)

- Total water use: **55,465 m³** - similar to 2023.
- Compared with the base year (2019), water use has decreased by **14%**.



Research

Scientific publications on the clash between sustainability and security considerations in Latvia's political narrative amid geopolitical unrest [🔗](#)

In 2024, at the conclusion of the interdisciplinary project, 'From indifference to making difference in climate policy: improving the interaction between political narrative and societal perceptions in Latvia', funded by the Latvian Council of Science programme 'Fundamental and Applied Research', RSU researcher and doctoral student, Vineta Kleinberga, published a report in the Kon-Koop research network's series on energy security in Eastern Europe, as well as a chapter in the book 'The Energy Trilemma in the Baltic Sea Region: Security, Equity and the Environment'. In these publications, the researcher analyses the decisions and strategic narratives of Latvia's political leadership on the energy sector since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The research demonstrates how issues of energy security and equity dominate over environmental considerations, with government policy only partly aligning with the climate targets set by the European Union. Based on these and other findings of the project, the RSU research team also published guidelines to improve the strategic narrative on climate change in Latvia [🔗](#).

Stewardship

Solar panels installed on the Pharmaceutical Education and Research Centre [🔗](#)

In 2024, RSU expanded its use of renewable energy by installing solar panels with a total capacity of 70 kW on the Pharmaceutical Education

and Research Centre at Konsula Street 21. This followed the successful solar panel installation on the Clinic of Psychosomatic Medicine and Psychotherapy in 2023, and forms part of the Infrastructure Department's five-year energy-efficiency strategy. Additional installations are planned in the coming years, further reducing the university's carbon footprint.

■ Solar energy generated across RSU buildings in 2024: **83,104 kWh**

■ Avoided CO₂ emissions in 2024: **39.47 t**

This represents a more than tenfold increase in RSU's renewable energy generation capacity compared with 2023.

Energy use (SDG 7.3)

■ Total thermal energy consumed: **518,580 kWh** – a 3% decrease compared with 2023.

Community engagement

Raising community awareness about 'Earth Hour' [🔗](#)

As part of the annual sustainability project 'Green', the RSU Student Union organised a social campaign encouraging university students and staff to participate in the global switch-off initiative 'Earth Hour'. This campaign aimed to reduce electricity consumption within the RSU community, and to raise awareness of energy conservation and climate action.



Research

Doctoral thesis on the legal regulation of employment termination in Latvia [🔗](#) [🔗](#)

Dr Dace Tarasova defended her doctoral thesis in law, 'Legal regulation of termination of employment relationships and its issues in the Republic of Latvia'. The research was motivated by the observation that cases of employment contract termination are increasingly characterised by insufficient justification, with employers often basing their decisions on the employee's behaviour. Through an in-depth analysis of legislation, court judgments, and other information sources, Dr Tarasova highlighted the need to strengthen the legal framework governing employment relations, while also considering the social function of Labour Law. This is necessary to ensure that legal norms remain relevant to the needs of modern society and are interpreted consistently by employers, employees, and the courts alike. The dissertation includes specific legislative proposals, such as addressing workplace bullying in the Labour Protection Law

and establishing the job description as an integral part of the employment contract under the Labour Law. These improvements could foster a better balance between employers' economic interests and employees' needs, enabling sustainable development of both society and the economy.

Knowledge exchange

International conference 'Qualification, entrepreneurship and innovation in the Green Economy' [🔗](#) [🔗](#)

At the conclusion of the international Erasmus+ project 'Three-level Centres of Professional Excellence' [🔗](#), RSU, in collaboration with the Latvian Chamber of Crafts, the State Education Development Agency, and the Professional Education Competence Centre 'Liepaja State Technical school', organised the conference 'Qualification, entrepreneurship and innovation in the Green Economy'. These institutions have jointly established a Centre of Vocational Excellence in Latvia, aiming to support small and medium-sized businesses with a workforce educated in the green economy, digitalisation, and entrepreneurship, necessary to tackle challenges related to energy, climate, and environmental protection. Conference participants presented and discussed the achievements of the Centres of Vocational Excellence across the project countries, as well as the educational programmes they had implemented. The event concluded with panel discussions on political





strategies for shaping the future and on dual bachelor's programmes as a means for the higher education sector to support green skill development and innovation.

Community engagement

Winners of the *B-Space* incubation programme successfully launch their business

November saw the launch of *Coffee Society*, a coffee shop that originated from the RSU business incubator *B-Space*. The company's founders, Karlina Jance and Daniela Solovjova-Vlasova, participated in the 2023 *B-Space* INK programme, where they received mentorship to develop the skills necessary for business planning, growth, and presentation. At the Demo Day concluding the programme, the founders of *Coffee Society* won first place and received financial support to start their business. Thanks to the experience gained in the programme, the new entrepreneurs have not only successfully launched their business idea, but have also contributed to strengthening the local economy. The café offers coffee beverages created by

the founders themselves, alongside a wide selection of sweet and savoury snacks, including vegan and gluten-free options. The success of *Coffee Society* demonstrates the *B-Space* incubation programme's contribution to supporting modern entrepreneurship and advancing SDG 8.3, 'encourage the formalisation and growth of micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises'.

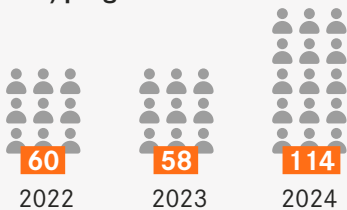
 *Coffee Society*, Tērbatas Street 72, Rīga 

Career Inspiration Week highlights the importance of well-being

Each year, the RSU Career Centre hosts a Career Inspiration Week to encourage students to discover their potential and make bold decisions in shaping their professional paths. In 2024, particular emphasis was placed on well-being, with all events organised in line with the PERMA model, which highlights the importance of positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement in career development. The week featured seminars on highly relevant topics, such as self-criticism and the role of emotional health during studies, as well as hands-on activities, including an art therapy session and a simple meal preparation workshop.

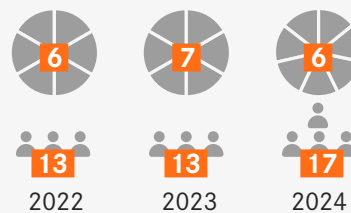
Participants in the *B-Space* business incubator programmes (SDG 8.3)

Participants of the pre-incubation (PINK) programme



The PINK programme attracted **114** participants in 2024, nearly doubling the number from the previous year and surpassing the previous record by 11%. Since its establishment in 2020, the PINK programme has served a total of **405** aspiring business leaders.

Teams and participants of the incubation (INK) programme



The 2024 INK programme involved **6** teams, composed of **17** participants. Thus, over the four years of the programme, there have been a total of 67 participants working in 27 teams, each pursuing its own unique business idea.

Research

New research project to advance sustainable pharmaceutical technologies

Visiting Lead Researcher Valentyn Mohylyuk began working on the project 'Suitability of sugar alcohols (polyols) as binders in twin-screw melt granulation for preparation of high-drug-loaded immediate-release tablets with superior mechanical properties', funded by the European Union's Recovery and Resilience Facility and Latvia's state budget. Twin-screw melt granulation is one of the most controllable and environmentally friendly tablet-manufacturing technologies. However, a key shortcoming of this technology is tablets' relatively low mechanical strength and insufficiently rapid drug release. This project will test sugar alcohols as alternative binders to improve the mechanical and pharmaceutical properties of tablets, and promote the development of innovative and sustainable pharmaceutical technologies in line with SDG 9.

Public outreach

Hackathon to optimise infrastructure use at Riga 1st Hospital

The RSU Innovation Centre, in collaboration with the EIT Health RIS Hub and Riga 1st Hospital, organised a hackathon 'The Big Four: From Space to Patient'. The event aimed to expand the range of services the hospital offers by developing practical and innovative solutions for the use of four buildings that were unused at the time. This challenge attracted students, healthcare specialists, entrepreneurs, and people from other sectors. Forming eight teams, they developed ideas for the use of one or more of Riga 1st Hospital's

buildings. The proposal to establish a 3D centre in one of the buildings was recognised as the most promising. It would support surgical planning and enable the printing of personalised implants. Other highly commended ideas included the creation of a well-being centre for staff, a garden house to promote seniors' recovery, and a self-service centre for basic diagnostic services, such as skin and mole checks.

Community engagement

Free training programme for research-result commercialisation

The RSU Innovation Centre launched a free training programme 'Innovate-Protect-Create!', designed to equip RSU researchers with practical skills for commercialising their research results and innovations, from intellectual property management to fundraising. In the first training cycle, researchers from healthcare, sports, and social sciences explored topics such as idea generation, customer development, innovation financing, and project pitching. By helping researchers bring their ideas closer to the market, the programme strengthens Latvia's innovation ecosystem and builds bridges between academic research and industry.

Stewardship

Changes in the Science Motivation

Programme to foster ambitious research

Each year, as part of the Science Motivation Programme, RSU evaluates the individual contributions of its researchers, taking into account their scientific publications, patents, supervised doctoral theses, participation in research-funding calls, and secured funding. Based on the programme's results in previous years, several evaluation criteria were revised in 2024. These revisions included a significant increase in rewards for patents registered abroad and for secured *Horizon Europe* funding. Compensation for articles published in top-quartile journals was also raised. These changes in the evaluation criteria reflect an emphasis on rewarding research that is not only of excellent quality, but also ambitious and innovative.

Research

Published research on social and work-related inequalities at the intersection of age, gender, and migration

2024 saw the conclusion of the research project ‘(Re)moving Ties: Relatedness in Contemporary Mobile Work Regimes’, funded within the ‘Fundamental and Applied Research’ programme of the Latvian Council of Science. As part of the project, Visiting Assoc. Prof. Aija Lulle published an article, ‘Middle-aged Migrants: Expanding an Understanding of Lifecourses and Linked Lives’, which represents the culmination of more than ten years of research on the challenges and opportunities experienced by women who migrated in midlife. The article analyses the life stories of four women of Latvian origin, with a particular focus on how migration affects social networks related to family, work, and self-actualisation. In fact, the pursuit of self-actualisation and the desire to break away from established routines were identified as the most common

reasons for migration, despite challenges associated with disrupted social ties or the need to find new solutions for childcare. This article provides insights into the social and workplace inequalities related to age, gender, and migration, laying the groundwork for further research on the role of home and self-actualisation in midlife mobility.

Stewardship

RSU Code of Ethics has been supplemented with principles of justice and human dignity



RSU’s core ethical principles apply to every member of the university and serve as an overarching guide for all its actions. This year, the Code of Ethics was expanded to include the principle of justice, which firmly establishes that RSU “does not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of nationality, race, gender, age, sexual orientation, political, philosophical, or religious beliefs, social origin, property, family or health status, or any other grounds”. This principle also highlights the university’s duty to promote diversity and to approach individuals from different cultures with understanding. The second newly introduced principle concerns human dignity, affirming that “attention, tolerance, and respect for the other person are both rights and obligations at the same time”. The enshrining of these values in the Code of Ethics deepens RSU’s contribution to the implementation of SDG 10.2, thereby fostering a more inclusive university community.





Public outreach

Sports session for children and young people with impaired mobility [↗](#)

RSU and RSU-LASE researchers, in collaboration with colleagues from the University of Latvia and the Children and Youth Parasports Association, conducted a special sports session for children and young people with impaired mobility. During the session, researchers, including aspiring physiotherapists from RSU-LASE, carried out a comprehensive assessment of participants' physical abilities, measuring their body strength, flexibility, balance, and movement speed. This assessment was performed as part of the project 'Innovations, methodologies, and recommendations for the development and management of the sports sector in Latvia', funded by Latvia's Ministry of Education and Science, and will inform training recommendations in adaptive sports for coaches, parents, and sports managers. Thus, this initiative not only promoted the inclusion of children and young people with mobility impairments in sports activities, but also helped develop evidence-based solutions for social integration and equal opportunities.

Community engagement

(SDG 10.3) The mentorship programme for international students helps students from abroad integrate into the RSU community, aiming to give everyone equal opportunities during their studies. Since 2010, around 6,300 international students have received peer-to-peer mentorship in their first semester at RSU, supported by ~3,200 senior students, both domestic and international.

In 2024:



305 mentees



203 mentors

a 31% increase compared with 2023

Knowledge exchange

International anthropology conference about mobility and social inclusion [↗](#) [↗](#)

An international conference, 'The Getaway Conference: Mobilities, Societies, the State, and Detoxing', took place at RSU, organised by RSU researchers from the Social Sciences Research Centre within the project '(R)E-TIES: Managing mobility and human relations in digitally saturated worlds', in cooperation with the project '(Re)moving Ties: Relatedness in Contemporary Mobile Work Regimes'. Participants explored how social ties are created, maintained, and disrupted in the context of professional mobility. In the keynote lecture, Prof. Louise Ryan from London Metropolitan University spoke about the experiences of highly skilled refugees as they rebuild their professional identity and social networks after forced migration. Social and economic inequality was also discussed in several other talks, highlighting the interplay between social and professional environments experienced by, for example, food-delivery workers in Riga, middle-class families in Buenos Aires, the Romanian diaspora in Madrid, and white English teachers in China. At the end of the conference, researcher Valdis Krebs summed up its key message: "Connect on your similarities, benefit from your differences."

Research

Doctoral thesis on the impact of digital technologies in the financial sector [🔗](#)

Dr Oļegs Čerņiševs defended his doctoral thesis in Economics and Business, titled 'Regional Dimension in the European Union: Shaping Key Performance Indicators for Financial Institutions'. The dissertation examined how the rapid development of financial technologies (fintech), together with related changes in customer preferences and regional regulations, affects banks and other financial institutions. The study also examined the use of fintech in smart cities, highlighting the need to integrate Account Information Services and Payment Initiation Services into urban financial systems. Among the most significant contributions of the research is a new risk-based approach for evaluating key performance indicators of financial institutions in the European Union, taking into account regional differences. The work received recognition from the Bank of Latvia, which noted that the methods developed can serve as a basis for policy-making that supports the sustainable development of the fintech sector.

Stewardship

Exhibition at the RSU Anatomy Museum honours the legacy of Prof. Hochstetter [🔗](#)

The RSU Anatomy Museum opened a unique new exhibition, 'Professor Hochstetter's Anatomical Cabinet', which allows visitors to explore Prof. Arthur von Hochstetter's (1918–1997) collection of anatomical specimens dating from late 18th to the early 20th century. With more than 10,000 specimens, it is among the largest

collections of its kind in the world. After Prof. Hochstetter's passing, the collection was inherited by his colleague Oscar Baldomero, who donated part of it to the RSU Anatomy Museum in 2022. The museum ensures that this impressive collection continues to serve its original purpose: to educate and improve lives.

Public outreach

Visiting lecturer publishes an educational article on artificial intelligence [🔗](#)

Entrepreneur and RSU visiting lecturer in the course 'Futures Thinking', Artis Birziņš, published an educational article on the Latvian Public Media portal lsm.lv, titled 'What does the expansion of artificial intelligence mean for society?'. In the article, he compares the recent introduction of artificial intelligence into everyday life with other technological revolutions in human history, highlighting the potentially transformative impact of this new technology on knowledge processing and collective learning. A. Birziņš predicts that the current trajectory of artificial intelligence development could radically change civilisation within the next few decades and emphasises the need to balance the benefits of the technology with awareness of its individual and collective risks.



Stewardship

Pre-incubation programme to develop sustainable business ideas [🔗](#)

In collaboration with universities across several different countries, the RSU Innovation Centre launched 'Green HExagon', its first pre-incubation programme dedicated specifically to the development of sustainable business ideas. The inaugural programme cycle is planned for the first half of 2025 and was open to students, alumni, and staff of partner universities whose business ideas relate to at least one of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals. Participants will acquire fundamental business skills, such as market research, marketing, and financial planning, with the aim of bringing sustainable products and services to the market.

Public outreach

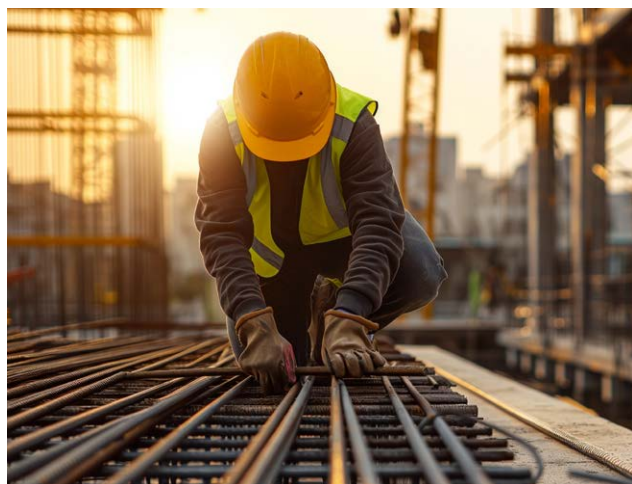
Article on responsible consumption of medicinal plants [🔗](#)

RSU researcher Ance Bārzdiņa published an article on the Latvian Public Media portal *lsm.lv*, titled 'How are medicinal plants studied and what is their role in medicine?'. In addition to providing insight into the research process, A. Bārzdiņa drew attention to counterfeit medicinal plant products as a globally growing problem. She encouraged readers to use such products responsibly, noting that items of unknown origin may not only have lost the beneficial properties of the plants, but may also contain toxic substances. One of the researcher's goals is to develop a method that would allow easy and reliable identification of counterfeit products.

Knowledge exchange

International networking event for sustainability researchers in food, transport, textiles, and energy [🔗](#)

The RSU Social Sciences Research Centre, in collaboration with the Baltic Studies Centre, organised a networking event for members of the 'International Network for Research on Transformations in Sustainability Contexts (TransformERS)'. Over the course of three days, 56 researchers from 23 countries highlighted underexplored aspects of sustainability in the food, transport, textiles, and energy sectors, and discussed them in working groups. The programme also included a visit to Āgenskalns Market to explore Latvian market culture in practice and identify examples of sustainability in its operations.



Community engagement

Creative workshop on green technologies [🔗](#)

Concluding a series of seminars on technology use in sports and medicine, the RSU business incubator B-Space hosted a free creative workshop for RSU students, employees, and researchers, titled 'Green and sustainable technology'. Led by technology enthusiast Kristaps Skutelis, this workshop explored the role of technology in building a more sustainable future, discussing the latest trends and practical tools for promoting responsible technological practices in everyday life.

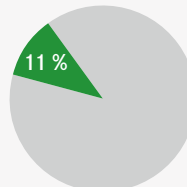
Sorting and recycling waste in 2024

TOTAL waste:

607,595 kg

This represents an **8%** increase in total waste compared with 2023.

>>> Of this, locally sorted waste:



SORTED waste:

69,035 kg

Compared with 2023, the share of sorted waste has increased by **nearly 5 percentage points**.
Sorting of waste has led to savings of **EUR 23,692**

The increase in total waste is linked to the expansion of university facilities and staff following the consolidation of RSU and RSU-LASE.

**To Ligatne Paper Mill,
we delivered
20,630 kg
of paper waste**

This has resulted
in savings of
EUR 512



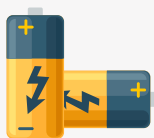
**Food waste:
9,427 kg**

**Responsible disposal of hazardous waste
in 2024 (SDG 12.4)**

**681 kg
bulbs**



**65 kg
batteries**



**524 kg
chemical
and medical
waste**



disruptions. He predicts that, in the face of global problems, there will be an unavoidable clash between individual and collective interests, as experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic. He urges readers to recognise that, sooner or later, some of today's comforts will have to be given up, and encourages reflection on how to preserve democratic governance, even when individual freedoms must be restricted in the name of the collective good.

Research

New study on the impact of the European Green Deal on the healthcare sector

In 2024, RSU researchers launched a new research project led by Assoc. Prof. Dina Bite, 'Socially responsible green transition: strengthening governance solutions to empower Homo Climaticus in the healthcare sector', funded by the Latvian Council of Science programme 'Fundamental and Applied Research'. Through a comprehensive analysis of scientific literature and policy documents, including examples of international best practice, the project will examine how the European Union's climate policy affects healthcare practitioners and socially vulnerable groups. Public opinion surveys, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups will also be organised to understand stakeholders' experiences with the implementation of the European Green Deal in Latvia. In addition to its scientific contribution, the project will produce recommendations for governance solutions in the healthcare sector to promote a socially responsible green transition.

Public outreach

Tenured Professor's article on individual roles in collective climate adaptation

Tenured Professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Miķelis Grīviņš, published an article on the Latvian Public Media portal *lsm.lv*, titled 'The Inevitable Future Reality'. Reflecting on a series of global challenges recently faced by humanity, Prof. Grīviņš argued that it is too late to talk about reversing the consequences of unsustainable management practices, and that the discourse must shift to adapting to inevitable future

Knowledge exchange

RSU hosts a discussion on climate change communication in Latvia

The RSU research project 'From indifference to making difference in climate policy: improving the interaction between political narrative and societal perceptions in Latvia' revealed that the climate change narrative remains unclear and fragmented. To explore how this topic can be framed in a unified, comprehensive, and solution-oriented narrative, RSU researchers organised a public discussion titled 'EU requirement or threat to Latvia? How to talk about climate change in Latvia?'. The conversation, led by RSU lecturer Lelde Metla-Rozentāle and doctoral candidate Vineta Kleinberga, featured representatives from the media, business, and environmental organisations, as well as the Minister for Climate and Energy. When discussing the reasons behind society's ambivalent attitude towards climate change, participants cited people's fear of change, unclear political communication, and an unwillingness to take responsibility. It was also noted that the media could cover climate change more frequently. Concluding the discussion, RSU researchers emphasised that it is crucial for Latvian society to receive both pragmatic messages on the individual benefits of climate action, and value-based arguments that highlight the collective good.

Vehicle emissions (SDG 13.2)

■ RSU vehicle fleet emissions (CO₂): **17.521 t**
– a 37% decrease, driven by the partial replacement of fleet vehicles with electric cars in 2023, along with the gradual adoption and optimisation of electric vehicle use.

Stewardship

Reducing plastic-related environmental pollution (SDG 14.1)

In 2024:

- Sorted plastic and cardboard waste: **47,135 kg** – an 80% increase compared with 2023.
- Fines for inappropriate items in sorted waste were issued **60** times – **25%** fewer than the year before.

Research

Second socio-anthropological expedition to explore the Livonian shore [↗](#)

Aspiring anthropologists from RSU joined Assoc. Prof. Guntra Aistara at Central European University on a socio-anthropological expedition to Kolka and Livonian villages to explore how fishing practices and fish-cuisine traditions on the Livonian shore have changed under the influence of various regimes, fishing systems, and climate change. This was the second expedition within the project 'Life by the Sea Across a Century', drawing inspiration and cultural-historical context from Vilis Veldre's book 'Life by the Sea', which describes the life of fishermen a hundred years ago. During the expedition, the team conducted life-story interviews with local residents and documented their lives in photographs. Assoc. Prof. Aistara later published some of the observations and collected stories in the *Latvian Fisheries Yearbook 2024*.

Community engagement

Lecture and creative workshop on environmentally friendly packaging [↗](#)

As part of the RSU Student Union's project 'Green', representatives from the energy company Elektrum delivered a lecture on green energy and waste-sorting principles, emphasising the impact of each individual's daily choices on climate change on a broader scale. The lecturers explained, in an interactive way, how seemingly small, deliberate actions can help people live more sustainably while also benefiting themselves. The lecture was followed by a creative workshop in which students learnt how to make environmentally friendly, reusable tea bags. This workshop aimed to raise awareness that even small everyday products, including tea bags, often contain plastic that prevents them from biodegrading and contributes to microplastic pollution in water bodies.



Stewardship

Beehives on the rooftop of the Pharmaceutical Education and Research Centre

In May, RSU introduced 16 beehives on the rooftop of its modern Pharmaceutical Education and Research Centre, providing urban habitat for pollinators and promoting biodiversity in Riga. Managed by beekeeper Kārlis Krievkalns, the rooftop apiary produces high-quality Latvian honey, and researchers from the Faculty of Pharmacy see potential in using it as a living laboratory to study the chemical and medicinal properties of honey. This initiative demonstrates RSU's commitment to biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources in an urban setting.

Knowledge exchange

RSU researchers organise an international symposium on wilderness

Researchers from the RSU Faculty of Social Sciences organised an international symposium, 'Wild Things', aiming to raise awareness of wilderness as a social and cultural practice and to explore it from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Participants from seven European countries discussed topics such as the genealogies of nature discourse in Latvia, the role of art and culture in connecting society with nature, and the practical uses of products from the wild in the modern world. The symposium was deliberately held at Āgenskalns Market to ensure that researchers' talks on topics so dear to Latvian society were accessible to the public. During the discussions, researchers agreed to continue the co-creation initiated at the symposium, for example by compiling their research into a book, developing joint research proposals, and possibly organising a similar symposium again in two years.

Public outreach

Citizen-science project collecting the experiences of berry and mushroom pickers

A team of researchers at the RSU Social Sciences Research Centre, led by Prof. Miķelis Grīviņš, launched a citizen-science project, 'Wild Stories', to promote and document foraging traditions in Latvia. Everyone is invited to become a co-author of this growing collection of stories by sharing their experiences of gathering mushrooms, berries, and other wild plants, thereby helping to preserve this knowledge for future generations. Through personal and emotionally rich accounts, this initiative highlights both the joys and challenges of foraging, while also exploring the role of forests in Latvian society not just as an economic resource but as a vital part of national identity and in sustaining Latvia's ecosystems. The archive of Wild Stories already features over 30 contributions.



guidelines are designed for use not just in Ukraine and Latvia but across Europe, helping universities build resilience in the face of geopolitical and technological disruptions while maintaining their openness and international cooperation.

Research

Handbook on security and resilience for academic institutions [🔗](#)

As part of the joint RSU and Kharkiv Aviation Institute project 'Best Practice University: Transformation and Adaptation Process in Challenging Environments', a research team led by Assoc. Prof. Karina Palkova developed a handbook to support academic and scientific institutions in managing risks during times of heightened security threats. The handbook explores a wide range of challenges faced by universities, including cyber-attacks, disinformation campaigns, and hybrid warfare. It also draws extensively on the experiences of Ukrainian universities that have continued to operate under conditions of armed conflict. The researchers provide practical recommendations on how institutions can strengthen their strategic independence from foreign influence and protect their physical and digital infrastructure, as well as students and staff. These

Stewardship

Optimising governance through structural consolidation [🔗](#)

RSU consolidated several faculties and laboratories with the aim of promoting interdisciplinarity and optimising university governance. First, the Faculty of Public Health and Social Welfare was merged with the Faculty of Rehabilitation, creating the new Faculty of Health and Sports Sciences. RSU's Liepāja branch, the Psychology Laboratory, and the RSU Red Cross Medical College now operate under this faculty. This structural change has increased opportunities for collaboration in both health research and education. Second, the Faculty of Law, the Faculty of Communication, and the Faculty of European Studies were merged into a robust Faculty of Social Sciences that drew inspiration for its structure and operating principles from U.S. universities. To improve education quality, the former departmental system was replaced by working groups for thematically related study programmes, while research excellence was boosted by the establishment of a dedicated Social Sciences Research Centre. A new democratic governance structure was also



introduced in the form of a faculty council [↗](#) composed of professors, students, administrative staff, and employer representatives. Third, RSU continued the consolidation of scientific units, merging several laboratories into larger structures and encouraging the sharing of infrastructure. To improve research governance, RSU also established an external advisory board [↗](#), comprising leading scholars and science administrators from Europe and the U.S., with the goal of guiding RSU's research to new heights.

Knowledge exchange

First-ever scientific and practical law conference in Latvia [↗](#)

The RSU Faculty of Social Sciences hosted the first-ever scientific and practical law conference, *Lex Scripta*, bringing together legal experts, practitioners, researchers, and students. Participants discussed opportunities and challenges for Latvia's legal sector in healthcare and education, the digital environment, and public administration. Talks also addressed gender equality and the strengthening of the rule of law in both national and international contexts. The conference concluded with a launch of Dr Ivars Kronis's book 'Residential Tenancy Rights: From Theory to Practice'.

Lex Scripta provided an important platform for dialogue between academia and legal practice, contributing to the sustainable development of Latvia's legal system.

Public outreach

new podcast on the relationship between media and society in Latvia and Estonia [↗](#) [↗](#)

Researchers from the RSU Social Sciences Research Centre, in cooperation with the student media network Skaļāk!, launched a new podcast series Media & Society, as part of the project 'Making Sense of Media: A Non-Media-Centric and Open-Ended Approach to the Study of Media-Related Experiences and Perceptions'. The podcast aims to encourage dialogue and raise awareness about the relationship between media and society in Latvia and Estonia, engaging not only media professionals and researchers but also the wider public. In the first few episodes of the podcast, Latvian and Estonian journalists compare their professional experiences in the two countries. This format, with guests from both countries, is maintained throughout the series, with later episodes focusing on public attitudes towards the media, levels of trust, and strategies to engage a Russian-speaking audience.



Research

Anthropological research project in cooperation with Cēsis Municipality and Roche Latvia [🔗🔗🔗](#)

Following a memorandum signed by RSU, Cēsis Municipality, and the healthcare company Roche Latvia, RSU launched the project 'Anthropological Study of Latvian Residents: Piebalga', which aims to follow up on an 87-year-old study of Piebalga residents' health status. As part of the project, a team of RSU researchers and students conducted field research in Piebalga to examine residents' health using various physiological measurements, genetic information, and survey questionnaires. Participation in the study was open to all Piebalga residents without prior registration, and the response was unexpectedly high. A total of 690 people aged 1.5–99 years took part, including individuals who had participated in an analogous study as children 87 years ago. The new and historical data were compiled into a unified digital database, and the initial results of this unique study were also presented to the residents of Piebalga.

Stewardship

Partnership with the Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives [🔗](#)

RSU established a partnership with the Consortium of European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA), becoming its official partner in Latvia. CESSDA is the leading European research infrastructure in the social sciences, bringing together 22 member countries. This collaboration will strengthen the involvement

of RSU social science researchers in European research networks, ensure high data quality, and enhance the international visibility of RSU's research outputs.

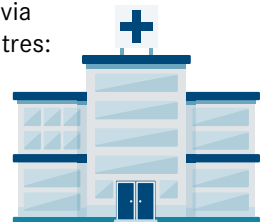
First RSU branch outside Latvia [🔗](#)

RSU opened a branch at Elbe Clinic in the German city of Stade, the university's first branch outside Latvia. For several years, RSU medical students had undertaken internships at Elbe Clinic as part of a pilot project. The newly established branch has expanded this collaboration, with Elbe Clinic now providing not only student placements but also the full clinical study course of RSU's accredited programme in Medicine. As a result of this extended cooperation, students with German-language proficiency at C1 level who see their future in the German healthcare system can complete the first three years of their studies in Riga and carry out their clinical studies in Germany.

Active partnerships in healthcare (SDG 17.G)

Signed agreements with:

- **286** healthcare institutions in Latvia
- **1** branch outside Latvia
- **14** clinical study centres:
 - 🇩🇪 Germany: 8
 - 🇮🇱 Israel: 2
 - 🇵🇹 Portugal: 1
 - 🇮🇹 Italy: 1
 - 🇫🇮 Finland: 2



Active partnerships in science and education (SDG 17.6)

Signed agreements with:

- **125** universities
- **47** scientific institutes
- **112** schools



The largest number of new partnership agreements in 2024 was signed with institutions in Spain, France, Bulgaria, Germany, the Netherlands, Ireland, Finland, Norway, Slovakia, Croatia, and Ukraine.

Knowledge exchange

New cooperation agreements with Latvia's leading pharmaceutical companies

RSU signed new cooperation agreements with two of Latvia's leading pharmaceutical companies, *JSC Olpha* (formerly *JSC Olainfarm*) and *Grindeks*, to further strengthen the Faculty of Pharmacy's links with industry in both education and research. Both companies have been long-standing partners of RSU, and part of the Pharmacy study programme is conducted on their premises. The new agreement with *JSC Olpha* provides RSU students with internship and research opportunities within the company and also includes the company's involvement in study programme development. The agreement with *Grindeks* establishes broad collaboration in innovation to facilitate the introduction of new products to the market.

New cooperation agreements with higher education institutions

RSU continued to strengthen and expand its partnerships within the higher education sector by signing a strategic cooperation agreement with the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences (LSMU) in Kaunas and a memorandum of understanding with the American University of Cyprus (AUC) in Larnaca. RSU and LSMU are long-standing partners, with students and academic staff participating in a

dedicated exchange programme every year. The new agreement will form the basis of continued sharing of best practice and collaborative innovation in both teaching and research, making full use of the synergies between the universities' expertise in medicine, pharmacy, healthcare, and sports science. There is also potential for cooperation in several areas, including social sciences, with AUC. The signed memorandum marks the beginning of a new partnership and aims to foster collaboration in research, as well as in study and human-resources mobility.

Community engagement

New scholarship to promote RSU abroad

RSU launched a new scholarship programme for international student ambassadors, aimed at enhancing the university's global visibility in medicine and dentistry. The first ambassador cohort comprised six medical students from various countries in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia, selected on the basis of academic excellence, prior contributions to promoting RSU, and willingness to continue representing the university worldwide. By connecting RSU with institutions and communities in their home countries, the ambassadors strengthen RSU's international network and collaboration potential in education and healthcare.



