

# LundaEkonomerna Student Union's Strategy 2024-2026



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The Board of LundaEkonomerna 23/24

With input from

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# Background

## Purpose

LundaEkonomerna is a Student Union regulated by the Swedish Higher Education Act, an organization independent from all trade unions and with no political or religious affiliation. LundaEkonomerna's main purpose is to monitor and contribute to the development of the education and conditions for studies provided at the Lund University School of Economics and Management (LUSEM) and to create value for our members through our daily operations. Being a nonprofit organization, it is of utter importance that every decision, process, and investment made has the purpose of creating value for the members.

The Strategy of LundaEkonomerna shall serve as the long-term direction of the organization and the foundation of the organization's operations. It highlights focus areas in need of continuous work or development, and it states the long-term strategic goals of the organization, as well as the foundation for these. The Strategy shall be used when forming yearly goals, Business Plans, and when making decisions of impact for the union. The Strategy makes it possible for all the engaged members of LundaEkonomerna to contribute to the vision, mission, and long-term goals of the organization through their work, thus contributing to the core purpose of creating value for its members.

## Foundation

LundaEkonomerna offers a wide range of opportunities for its members, including educational surveillance, social events, and career-focused activities. Maintaining quality in these operations requires significant effort. The Strategy is based on the organisation's statute, purpose, values, and current performance. This strategy has been based on an analysis of LundaEkonomerna, in what areas the organization is doing well and in which it needs improving.

## Assessment of the Current Situation

As of writing this, LundaEkonomerna consists of more than 3600 members. The union house is still Skånis, located outside of EC3. As for actively engaged students, the Union consists of 10 board members (6 full-time and 4 half-time), 31 members of the General Council, 40+ collegial members, and 250+ active members.

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LundaEkonomerna receives annual government support, known as "kårstöd" (Union support), accounting for about 1 000 000 SEK of the revenue. Additional income is generated through employer branding and career activities and occasional grants, while "study-circle" grants were deemed less worthwhile in 2022/2023. In the business year 2022/2023 the Union's revenue amounted to a record of approximately 8 700 000 SEK.

Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, LundaEkonomerna has successfully resumed normal operations, achieving pre-pandemic levels of engagement and revenue. Notably, the Union organised its first non-profit employer branding event in collaboration with the United Nations during the spring of 2023. The previous Strategy focused on "Sustainable and Stimulating Union Engagement" and "Output rendering in employability and a stimulating study social environment for all members." The Board of 2022/2023 has made progress in reducing working hours within the board, although further improvements are needed to balance workloads among collegial and active members. The implementation of TimeReport software has facilitated easier reporting and tracking of working hours within the organisation.

Internal stakeholders of LundaEkonomerna include its members who form and benefit from the Union, while external stakeholders include the University and collaborating companies. The Student Union brings student life to LUSEM, benefiting both parties and providing companies with access to its talent.

LundaEkonomerna stands out among other Unions in Lund and Sweden due to its professionalism and internationalisation efforts. Continuous praise from company representatives attests to the ease of working with the Union and the professionalism exhibited in every event. While internationalisation remains an area for improvement, the Union is regarded as one of the best in Sweden, with English as the official language for internal documents and events.

By engaging its members, LundaEkonomerna ensures that their contributions align with the organisation's mission: creating value for its members.

## Strategic Focus Areas

There are three focus areas of the strategy, each with separate subgoals. The focus areas are based on what LundaEkonomerna does and how to achieve the mission of the organization. Furthermore, this divide also separates the goals into what the Union needs to focus on internally, externally, and within educational surveillance.

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# Internal - Inclusive and Sustainable Operations

## Finding a New Union House

Skånis, the yellow castle, has served LundaEkonomerna for a long time. However, in recent years it has become apparent that the organisation has outgrown Skånis and it has its issues. Therefore, the task of finding a new house is a vital one and should continue to receive priority. While it is hard to find a complete match for the needs of the union: close to school, room for study areas, room for sittnings/bar area, and office spaces - LundaEkonomerna needs to find a solution. This goal is of high importance and has the potential to take the organisation to a new level in terms of member value.

## Ensuring Purpose and Variety in Our Committees

The Union should oversee the purpose of every committee so that it is clear what operations it should work with. It is important for the committees to identify and work with their niche so they can bring value to their members in their own unique way. Ensuring that there is a project plan for the committees of the Union is one step that should be taken in this direction. A project plan helps the committees themselves as well as the Board to have a common vision of how the committee should adhere to its purpose. In doing this, the union also takes a step towards offering more variety in our activities by committees not cannibalising each other and identifying gaps in what the union offers. When creating these project plans one should also oversee the active positions. It is vital to remove redundant positions so that each member can feel a sense of ownership, contribution, and responsibility in their roles.

## Sustainable Union Engagement

As a Student Union, it is imperative that LundaEkonomerna continuously works proactively to ensure a sustainable engagement amongst those who voluntarily work for this Union. During the past years, LundaEkonomerna has taken significant steps towards having sustainable engagements and while this issue has gotten better it is work that LundaEkonomerna always should continue with. Working hours and stress levels have steadily decreased however there are still some areas where the Union needs to improve such as the Board, the Blue leg, and some other positions. The Organization needs to identify why some parts of the Union are unsustainable at the moment and implement the appropriate solutions. Some of the workloads can be eliminated if it is not considered important, the structure can be improved so less time is put into administrative tasks, and knowledge can be addressed to improve efficiency.

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## Internationalisation

LUSEM is known to be one of the most international schools in all of Sweden with a high percentage of international students. This is something that LundaEkonomerna wishes to have represented within the Union as well. LundaEkonomerna wants to make sure that international students have the same opportunities to be involved in the Union both partaking in events and also being active members. The Union needs to continually work on how it reaches international students and what information reaches them. It is also important that the Union keeps pushing the use of English within its operations, both in formal and informal settings.

## Environmental Sustainability

LundaEkonomerna aims to be as environmentally sustainable as possible and strives to be an inspiration for members as well as other unions in Sweden. The Environmental Policy should be used within all areas of LundaEkonomerna's activities and the Union should engage all members in the efforts being made. To ensure this, we aim to make the policy well-known within the Union. How LundaEkonomerna works with environmental sustainability should continuously be monitored and evaluated. We strive to identify long-term sustainable methods for assessing our progress and areas for improvement. In addition, LundaEkonomerna should be transparent about the work that is being done and promote it towards the public.

## External - Connecting Students and Employers

### Be the Preferred Choice

The Union is, and always strives, to be the top choice for companies conducting employer branding activities for business, economics, and informatics students. Lately, however, LUSEM has approached and been approached by some companies which in turn could compromise our operations, including organising pure employer branding lectures outside of courses and prospecting our Union companies as new Partners of LUSEM. Therefore, it is important to be attentive and keep a lookout for the future. By continuing to offer tailored employer branding opportunities and showcasing our value to companies, along with having good relations with the faculty, the Union can remain the preferred choice for employer branding. The Union also understands that companies collaborate with us because they value our commitment to professionalism and quality. To achieve this in the future, emphasis should continue to be put on good planning, attention to detail, and communication. Gathering feedback from companies and students also helps us to continuously improve our career operations.

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## Ensure Opportunities for All Our Students

Working towards a diverse range of companies to provide value to all students attending our events has been of high importance lately. The Union wants to cater towards all members and not only the ones with an interest in e.g., accounting and consulting. More events need to be catered to Informatics and Economy and Society students. All events should also be in English to ensure that all members have the opportunity to attend and understand. In addition, the Union should work more with connecting students with companies that can give job opportunities abroad as well as connect international students with companies that are hiring in Sweden.

## Give Our Active Members Tools for The Future

In the pursuit of our strategic goals, one of our foremost objectives is to equip our engaged members with the skills, resources, and experiences they need for a successful future. As a non-profit Student Union, we understand that our continued relevance and success depend on the growth and development of our members. We are committed to providing educational opportunities, organizing events that foster personal and professional growth, and facilitating career-focused activities. By doing so, we not only enrich the lives of our members but also empower them to face the challenges and opportunities of the future with confidence.

## Educational Surveillance

LundaEkonomerna's strategy for educational surveillance encompasses specific focus areas that align with the organisation's main purpose. The goal is to establish a clear vision for educational matters and ensure continuity in LundaEkonomerna's initiatives. These identified focus areas are closely intertwined with LundaEkonomerna's Business Plan, creating a cohesive approach to educational surveillance. It is of utmost importance that LundaEkonomerna has a long-term perspective when it comes to pushing our core opinions. It is therefore imperative that the Union fosters relationships with decision-making bodies and has student representatives that can advocate student interests.

## Organisational

### Efficient Student Representation

To better address students' issues and represent their interests, the Student Union aims to establish an informed and knowledgeable Education Committee. This involves recruiting committee members with a strong interest in educational politics and student

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concerns. Feedback-gathering routines can be developed to identify common issues and propose appropriate solutions. Additionally, efforts need to be made to minimise information asymmetry among Union members involved in educational surveillance by establishing effective communication structures, creating a platform for information sharing, and implementing routines and procedures for regular updates. To create a lasting routine and knowledge among student representatives it is important to focus on this for more than one business year.

### Importance of Communication

In general, most of the student issues that the union receives are regarding a breach of the Student Rights List. Moreover, there are breaches of the rights that are not reported to the student union due to the students' low knowledge of the rights. Therefore, the union's work with increasing awareness among students as well as in conversation with LUSEM must mark the importance of respecting the Student Right List. In addition to this, the Union must keep working to spread awareness regarding the educational surveillance work that the Union does. It is a longstanding issue for the Union that students don't know what the Union can do for them. The Union together with the Education Committee must communicate what it does and what it can do to help students with the issues they face in their studies.

### Educational Politics

#### Well-Being of the Students

There has been a concerning trend among LUSEM students in recent semesters regarding mental well-being and the availability of support services. The faculty must proactively address students' study environment and establish effective procedures to enhance these improvements. Insufficient breaks between study periods and academic semesters contribute significantly to increased stress levels, negatively impacting mental well-being. Moreover, the faculty should allocate more resources to promoting student well-being, including the exploration of a faculty-specific counsellor. Lastly, ongoing discussions between LundaEkonomerna and LUS are vital to addressing students' well-being concerns and enhancing existing support systems at Lund University.

#### Pedagogical Meriting

Today at LUSEM and Lund University research merits are of high importance and are valued highly when recruiting teachers. A teacher with good knowledge of the subject, and more importantly, good pedagogical skills is of high importance when it comes to the quality of the education at LUSEM. Students at LUSEM report that the quality of pedagogical skills varies a lot among teachers. To increase the quality of education at

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LUSEM, the school should value pedagogical merits just as much as research merits. This applies both when recruiting new teachers but also for the current teachers today.

## Implementation

The most important part of the strategy is ensuring that the organisation implements it effectively. The implementation process can be seen as a 7 step process.

### 1. Set Clear Goals and Define Key Variables

In this strategy, long-term goals have been set within each focus area. The strategy document should serve as a basis for the goals set out in the Business Plan that each Board writes at the start of their business year. The previous Board should help and give tips to the Board that is stepping on to identify the next steps for the organisation to achieve the strategic goals.

### 2. Determine Responsibilities

The Board should identify together who is responsible for which focus areas. This includes both within the Board but also if any committees have certain responsibilities connected to the goals that have been set. Expectations should be set and who the decision makers are should be decided.

### 3. Delegate the Work

The Board and the Board members responsible for the respective focus area are in charge of delegating the work needed to achieve the goals. Whether this is to themselves, other board members or committees. Timelines should be set for the work and those involved in the work should have a clear understanding of the vision as well as what their specific responsibilities are.

### 4. Execute the Plan, Monitor Progress and Performance

The board is responsible for monitoring progress on the goals set out. It is the responsibility of the Board to evaluate and implement the infrastructure that is needed so that LundaEkonomerna can measure the aforementioned goals. When goals are set the Board should also make a plan for how to execute those goals and have a clear plan on how they should achieve them. Progress and goals should be followed up within the Board every quarter and presented to the General Council during State of The Union.

### 5. Take Corrective Action (Adjust or Revise, as Necessary)

The Board must be attentive, flexible, and willing to change or readjust plans or goals. As Boards and times change so might the goals and plans that are put in place. Every Board should look through the strategy and evaluate if the goals set out are still relevant or if they should be revised.

### 6. Get Closure on the Project, and Agreement on the Output

When goals are set the Board should have agreed on what the final result should

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look like, especially when goals are more qualitative than quantitative. When there check with everyone if they feel as if that goal has been achieved or if there is still work left to be done.

## **7. Conduct a Retrospective or Review of How the Process Went**

In the end, it's important to review how everything went, the Board is in charge of this together with others that have been involved. Some questions that are good to ask ourselves as an organisation:

- Did we achieve our goals?
- If not, why? What steps are required to get us to those goals?
- What roadblocks or challenges emerged that we could have anticipated? How can we avoid these challenges in the future?

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