

NAKHCHIVAN  
STATE  
UNIVERSITY

20  
23

# SDG PROGRESS REPORT

17 PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR THE GOALS



THE GLOBAL GOALS

# Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as Global Goals, encompass 17 interlinked objectives aimed at eradicating poverty, protecting the environment, and fostering peace and prosperity by 2030. SDG 17, “Partnerships for the Goals,” underscores the necessity of global collaboration to achieve these targets. Nakhchivan State University (NSU) actively supports this goal by fostering partnerships at local, national, and international levels. Through Erasmus+ exchanges, collaborations with universities worldwide, and joint research projects, NSU enhances academic and cultural exchange. Locally, NSU partners with government agencies, private sectors, and NGOs to promote sustainable practices, community development, and educational access. These alliances amplify NSU’s capacity to contribute to sustainable development, equipping students to engage meaningfully in a globally connected and collaborative world.

Nakhchivan State University (NSU) has made significant strides in advancing Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17 — "Partnerships for the Goals." Through its extensive network of international collaborations, research initiatives, and regional partnerships, NSU has strengthened its impact in Azerbaijan's higher education landscape, offering students and faculty diverse educational and research opportunities. Collaborative projects across disciplines—spanning technology, social sciences, medicine, and environmental conservation—position NSU as a vital contributor to educational and societal progress within Azerbaijan and on a global scale.

Nakhchivan State University (NSU) has made significant strides in advancing Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17 — "Partnerships for the Goals." Through its broad network of international collaborations, regional integration efforts, and research initiatives, NSU has strengthened its role in Azerbaijan's higher education landscape, providing students and faculty with access to a variety of educational and research opportunities. The university's collaborative projects span across numerous fields, including technology, social sciences, medicine, and environmental conservation, positioning NSU as a vital contributor to educational and social progress in Azerbaijan and beyond.

#### *International Collaboration: Partner Universities and Strategic Protocols*

NSU maintains close relationships with many foreign higher education institutions through bilateral agreements. In Turkey alone, NSU has established partnerships with universities such as Kapadokya, Çankırı Karatekin, Erzincan Binali Yıldırım, Karadeniz Teknik, and Van Yüzüncü Yıl. These collaborations facilitate student and faculty exchanges, joint research projects, and conference organization, fostering intellectual growth and international connectivity. NSU has extended its partnerships to universities and companies in Ukraine, Austria, and Serbia, enabling the institution to engage in diversified research and practical training. Notable collaborations with global organizations, including IBM, Robotex, and Abis Technology, have further strengthened NSU's expertise in technology and digital innovation, offering students and faculty hands-on experience in fields such as artificial intelligence, cloud computing, and cybersecurity.





## *Erasmus+ Projects and Enhanced Global Learning Experiences*

NSU participated in numerous Erasmus+ projects, which serve as a cornerstone for enhancing global learning experiences. The Erasmus+ LMQS Sante project, for instance, facilitated the management board's meeting at NSU with representatives from 13 institutions, including the University of West Attica (Greece), South Kazakhstan Medical Academy, Kazakh-Russian Medical University, and Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. This four-day meeting addressed project management, budget allocation, and the financial status of partner universities, with each institution presenting their progress and challenges.

As part of the Erasmus+ initiative, NSU also inaugurated a "Mastery Center" at its Faculty of Medicine to support advanced training in healthcare education, a step NSU's leadership affirmed would make a lasting impact on medical training quality. Additionally, NSU's academic advisor, Rajab Jafarli, participated in Erasmus+ Engage project training in Poland. Organized by Mingachevir State University (MSU) with European Commission support, this project gathered representatives from 11 Azerbaijani universities for training sessions hosted by Bydgoszcz University of Economics, one of Poland's entrepreneurial universities, from December 4–9.

Further extending NSU's Erasmus+ engagements, university staff joined training sessions in Spain, where topics included quality assurance, institutional policies, and pilot testing standards. The sessions highlighted the Erasmus+ DIRNA project, which aims to advance open access to scientific research and foster collaboration among Azerbaijan's higher education institutions.

## *Comprehensive Training and Exposure to Global Best Practices*

NSU representatives participated in extensive training and exchange programs under the Erasmus+ Engage initiative. For instance, training sessions in Spain at the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya covered strategies for strengthening entrepreneurship ecosystems in Azerbaijani higher education. NSU's representatives also attended trainings in Sweden's Stockholm University, exploring entrepreneurship education, university-industry collaboration, and Sweden's startup ecosystem, which highlighted how entrepreneurial frameworks can be integrated within Azerbaijan's academic institutions.

Through these sessions, NSU delegates engaged with best practices in entrepreneurship from Tallinn University of Technology in Estonia, where they learned about Estonia's digital governance and e-management. This exchange included visits to innovation and business centers, where NSU faculty familiarized themselves with Estonia's largest startup incubator and digital advancements.

#### *Strengthening Research Collaboration and Expanding Academic Horizons*

NSU continuously strives to expand its research collaborations, notably through the Erasmus+ DIRNA project, which enhances the university's open-access research capabilities. NSU's delegation attended the project's inaugural training at Izmir Institute of Technology, focusing on developing a national research repository network and strengthening scientific output and quality standards in Azerbaijan. Similarly, faculty from NSU's Scientific Library joined the project, underscoring NSU's commitment to fostering a cohesive academic research community within Azerbaijan.

#### *Collaboration with Jagiellonian University in Poland*

NSU's rector and administrative advisors visited Jagiellonian University's Tech Park and Nanotechnology and Biotechnology Centers in Poland to observe and exchange insights on advanced research practices and facilities. This collaboration marks a significant step in NSU's goal to enhance its scientific research infrastructure and capacity for innovative studies.

#### *Exposure to Swedish Educational Practices*

NSU's academic staff visited Sweden under the Engage project to gain insights into Swedish higher education methodologies. This engagement promoted mutual understanding of best practices between NSU and Swedish academic institutions, leading to valuable discussions on implementing similar approaches within Azerbaijan's education system.

#### *Bilateral Cooperation with Hungarian Universities*

In line with Azerbaijan's 2023-2027 State Program, NSU has been expanding its international partnerships, notably with Hungary's John von Neumann University. NSU representatives visited Hungary to explore joint degree

programs in computer engineering and discuss collaborative research initiatives, with a focus on artificial intelligence and business management. This cooperation reinforces Azerbaijan's educational diplomacy and expands NSU's offerings in internationally recognized degree programs.

#### *Regional and Cultural Partnerships with Turkish Institutions*

NSU's commitment to strengthening regional ties was further demonstrated by a collaborative concert hosted by NSU's Symphony Orchestra in Turkey's Van province. The event, commemorating the centenary of both Heydar Aliyev's birth and the Republic of Turkey, celebrated cultural unity and academic collaboration between NSU and Van Yüzüncü Yıl University.

#### *Advancements in Environmental Conservation and Biodiversity*

Aligned with its environmental sustainability mission, NSU, in collaboration with the Nakhchivan Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, took significant steps to promote biodiversity. The university participated in releasing 200,000 young carp into the Heydar Aliyev Reservoir. This initiative, aimed at enhancing aquatic biodiversity, demonstrated NSU's commitment to environmental sustainability and resource conservation. The project involved government officials and ecological volunteers, underscoring the collective dedication to preserving regional ecosystems.

#### *Fostering Cross-Cultural Learning and Preservation of Heritage*

NSU places great emphasis on promoting Azerbaijan's cultural heritage and national values. The university hosted a scientific conference on "The Achievements of Azerbaijan's Cultural Diplomacy," along with seminars on national identity and cultural heritage. These events contribute to a broader understanding and appreciation of Azerbaijan's rich cultural history among students and faculty, fostering a sense of pride and belonging.





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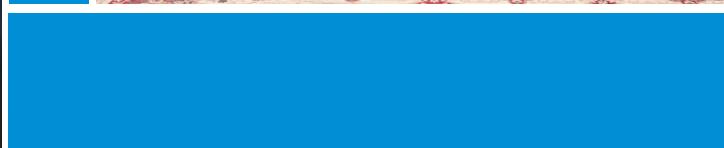


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### *Partnerships with Government and Public Organizations*

NSU has cultivated productive relationships with government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) within the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. Each faculty maintains partnerships with relevant state and NGO organizations, which organize training, seminars, and conferences for students. These collaborations offer students valuable exposure to real-world professional environments and help bridge academic theory with practical experience. Moreover, NSU's partnerships with institutions like the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences' Folklore Institute, the Azerbaijan Bar Association, the Azerbaijan University of Languages, and the Azerbaijan National Conservatory facilitate knowledge exchange in law, humanities, and cultural studies.

### *Technological and Research Development with Global Leaders*

NSU's commitment to technological advancement is reflected in its collaboration with IBM, which led to the establishment of the Software Engineering Institute on campus. The institute provides training and research opportunities in cutting-edge fields like artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, cloud technologies, and quantum computing. NSU faculty members have also joined IBM's "SkillsBuild for Academia" program, where they gain specialized training in digital competencies, enhancing the university's capability to deliver advanced technical education. This partnership empowers NSU students to acquire expertise in high-demand fields, positioning them for successful careers in an increasingly digital world.

### *Hosting and Participating in International Conferences and Symposia*

NSU serves as a platform for knowledge exchange by hosting numerous international and regional conferences and symposia. The international scientific conference on "Food Safety: Realities and Prospects," for example, fostered in-depth discussions on food security and global health challenges. In honor of the 100th anniversary of national leader Heydar Aliyev's birth, NSU organized conferences focusing on "The Contract of the Century: Economic Independence and Development" and "Innovative Economy: Realities and Strategic Goals." These gatherings contribute to Azerbaijan's economic independence narrative and highlight the country's commitment to sustainable development and technological progress.

## *Inclusive Education and Social Support Systems*

In line with inclusive education principles, NSU provides equal access to education for all students, ensuring that individuals with special needs are fully integrated into the academic environment. The Inclusive Education Center at NSU is dedicated to addressing the unique social, cultural, and personal needs of each student. Tailored educational programs, psychological support, and rehabilitation services are provided, enabling students with special needs to participate fully in the university's academic life. The center also engages in outreach to raise public awareness about inclusivity, organizing events and informational campaigns to promote positive attitudes towards students with disabilities.

## *Scholarship Programs and Educational Support for Disadvantaged Students*

NSU actively supports low-income and talented students through scholarship programs, offering them the means to pursue educational opportunities at an international level. Partnerships with organizations like Roof Academic Training help NSU finance high-quality preparatory courses abroad, specifically tailored for underprivileged but gifted students. Through these initiatives, NSU strengthens its role as a socially responsible institution that prioritizes equal educational opportunities.

## *Regional Development Initiatives and Broad Partnerships*

NSU's activities extend beyond Nakhchivan and include collaborations with various state agencies and private sector partners across Azerbaijan. Collaborations with SOCAR and Baku Higher Oil School enable NSU students to gain practical experience in the oil and gas industry, while offering essential training in the country's energy sector. These partnerships also facilitate career placement for students and graduates, ensuring they contribute effectively to Azerbaijan's workforce in regions beyond the capital.

## *Internationally Inspired Approaches to Education and Training*

NSU collaborates with prestigious international institutions such as BOKU University and the Austrian Federal Research Center. These partnerships facilitate knowledge exchange in agriculture, organic production, and environmental research, enabling NSU to adopt innovative methodologies. During recent discussions in Austria, the Ambassador of Azerbaijan also

expressed strong support for expanding such partnerships. By participating in cutting-edge research programs, NSU students and faculty gain valuable exposure to global advancements in their fields of study.

### *Promoting Cultural Diplomacy and Heritage*

NSU emphasizes the promotion of Azerbaijan's cultural and national values. Events like the "Achievements of Azerbaijan's Cultural Diplomacy" conference, as well as seminars on national identity and heritage, underscore the university's commitment to cultural preservation. NSU organizes conferences marking significant national anniversaries, such as the 100th anniversary of Heydar Aliyev, to reinforce the importance of heritage and instill pride in younger generations.

### *Biodiversity and Environmental Initiatives*

NSU actively contributes to biodiversity conservation projects, reflecting its commitment to ecological preservation. In collaboration with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, NSU participated in the release of 20,000 young carp into the Heydar Aliyev reservoir. This project aimed to enrich the aquatic ecosystem, increase fish populations, and sustain biodiversity in the region. NSU's involvement in such environmental initiatives highlights its dedication to sustainable practices and ecological awareness, ensuring that future generations benefit from healthy, vibrant ecosystems.

