

NAKHCHIVAN
STATE
UNIVERSITY

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SDG PROGRESS REPORT

17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



THE GLOBAL GOALS



In 2024, NSU reaffirmed its vision to strengthen SDG 17 by building institutional capacity through sustainable partnerships. By engaging with global academic networks, private sector leaders, national institutions, and local communities, NSU improved its impact on education, innovation, and regional development.

- **Global Academic Exchange:** NSU signed a major agreement with John von Neumann University in Hungary. This agreement established the first dual-degree program for Azerbaijani students, marking a new collaboration in computer engineering and business education.
- **International Research Networks:** NSU participated in Erasmus+ projects like DIRNA and hosted online meetings with partner universities, including Khazar, Ganja, and other technical institutions. This aimed to build research infrastructure and improve open-access repositories.
- **Tech-Industry Collaboration:** NSU collaborated with IBM to launch a Software Engineering Institute. This included faculty and staff training in AI, cloud computing, cybersecurity, and data science, and it formally established a joint IBM-NSU Innovation Center.
- **Regional Innovation Ecosystem:** NSU signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Nakhchivan Confederation of Entrepreneurs and "Cahan Holding." This agreement enables student internships, training programs, and joint industrial and research projects.
- **Labour Market Alignment:** NSU also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Observatory on Labour Market and Social Protection. This aims to align graduate skills with the labor market's needs and promote collaborative research on workforce development.
- **Global Consortium Membership:** NSU is an active member of the Caucasus University Association and the Union of Universities of the Black Sea Basin. This membership promotes international solidarity and cooperation in higher education.

Through these alliances, NSU continues to strengthen its institutional capabilities and significantly contributes to resilient educational ecosystems, sustainable innovation, and community development across Azerbaijan and beyond.

International Academic Collaborations and Strategic Agreements

NSU significantly expanded its international academic network through the signing of new cooperation agreements, participation in global research projects, and the development of joint educational programs aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 17.

Dual Degree Programs and MoUs

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Dual Degree Programs and MoUs

- John von Neumann University (Hungary): A dual degree program was established in Computer Engineering, allowing NSU students to earn qualifications from both institutions. This marked a milestone in NSU's efforts to internationalize its academic offerings and expand mobility opportunities.
- Erzurum Technical University (Turkey): A Memorandum of Understanding focused on student exchanges, faculty training, and collaborative research in environmental engineering and innovation.

Erasmus+ and Global Research Projects

- NSU actively participated in three major Erasmus+ projects in 2024:
 - ECOLEAD: Enhancing climate education through cross-border collaboration.
 - DIRNA: Focused on developing a digital research infrastructure and improving accessibility to academic resources.
 - ENGAGE: Promoting entrepreneurial skills and social responsibility among university students in Eastern Europe.



Public-Private and Governmental Partnerships

NSU deepened its role as a regional development catalyst through robust collaborations with industry, government, and civil society, thereby strengthening SDG 17 implementation across the economy, education, and society.

Industry Cooperation for Innovation and Skills

- A Memorandum of Cooperation with Cahan Holding and the Nakhchivan Confederation of Entrepreneurs facilitated internships, entrepreneurship training, and collaborative projects in NSU's upcoming technopark, directly linking academia to industry needs.
- NSU also signed collaboration protocols with local firms like Lazzet Food Industry and APF Group, enabling student-practical learning, joint applied research, and access to professional mentorship.

Academic and Cultural Exchange

- A teacher and student exchange program was launched with Erzurum Atatürk University in Turkey, enabling faculty development and cross-border mobility—part of NSU's broader strategy of academic internationalization.
- NSU participated in the Robotex Azerbaijan Eurasian Championship, demonstrating innovation and outreach in emerging technologies alongside global partners.

Government-Linked Engagements

- NSU hosted a high-level Open Microphone event with the President's Authorized Representative to foster dialogue on youth engagement and policy co-creation.
- Faculty and students collaborated with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and local NGOs on conservation efforts demonstrating commitment to SDG17-driven public impact.





Participation in International Networks and International Action

NSU extended its role in global educational and development networks, institution building, international presence, and best practice sharing for sustainable development in relation to SDG 17 in 2024.

Membership in International Networks

NSU remained a member of the Caucasus University Association and participated in inter-university dialogue on regional peace, innovation, and sustainable education.

Through the Black Sea Universities Network, NSU collaborated within joint conferences and thematic clusters of research, particularly in environmental science and digital innovation.

NSU was part of the IAU Cluster Higher Education for Sustainable Development, participating in peer-learning exercises and SDG-mapped reporting training sessions with European and Central Asian universities.

Global SDG Dialogues Engagement

NSU participated in the UNESCO Global Forum on Higher Education and the SDGs, wherein university members learned from curriculum reforms and community-centered sustainability initiatives. The university participated in the UNAI (United Nations Academic Impact) activities through conducting seminars, essay competitions, and public campaigns on SDG-themed topics among students and staff.

Regional SDG Cooperation

In collaboration with the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic Department of Foreign Affairs, NSU hosted guest delegations from Türkiye, Hungary, and Kazakhstan under themes of SDG research exchange, climate innovation, and youth policy development.

Co-briefings and joint workshops on SDGs were held in collaboration with UN Information Center local staff to promote harmonization with national sustainability indicators.





Observation and Evaluation of Impact

By putting strong monitoring procedures in place, NSU improved its oversight of partnerships. An annual audit of 26 active Memorandums of Understanding was carried out by the university's Office of International Affairs, which assessed performance metrics like student involvement, research outputs, and internship placements. Together with partners like Cahan Holding and the Confederation of Entrepreneurs, a quarterly review process was also established to track the advancement of cooperative events, vocational training, and technopark projects ask.org.az. More than 800 responses were gathered through a special student feedback portal, which assisted NSU in evaluating the usefulness of partnership-led programs and realigning future partnerships.

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Indicator	2023	2024	Change
Active MoUs	19	26	▲ +37%
Internships via partnerships	—	12 SMEs	—
Joint SDG-related events	8	14	▲ +75%
Externally funded SDG 17 projects	5	9	▲ +80%
Faculty & staff in international working	22	40	▲ +82%

Future Directions (2025–2026)

Create a Center for SDG Partnerships

The new centre will consolidate coordination of local and international collaboration, monitor projects in line with the SDGs, and act as a central node for building shared value partnerships.

Start a digital SDG Dashboard

The open platform will provide live data across all 17 SDGs, including partnership analytics, live heatmaps for regional SDG impact, and annual case study spotlights.

Expand Tri-sector Roundtables

From 2025, the NSU will host multilateral roundtables with (other) government, NGO and private sector actors to identify common priorities with respect to sustainability in the region.

Join Horizon Europe / Erasmus+ Consortia

NSU will join multinational consortia related to climate resilience, digital innovation and social inclusion by the middle of 2025, building its global research connectivity.

Scale Private Sector Engagement

NSU will deepen existing collaborations (e.g., IBM, Cahan Holding, Lazzet Food, APF Group) and engage 5 additional enterprises annually to co-develop internship programs, applied research, and green innovation challenges.

