2025 / ANNUAL SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

SDG 5 | Gender Equality

Khazar University · Baku, Azerbaijan

REPORTING PERIOD JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

Institutional Approach

Khazar University promotes gender equality through fair access to education, a respectful learning and working environment, opportunities for women's academic development, and public discussion of issues affecting women and girls. In 2025, the University revised its equality policies, expanded dialogue on women's leadership and inclusion, and continued research and educational activities focused on gender-related experiences.

2	**204**	**60+**
Equality policies revised in Jan 2025	Students in gender-based psychology research	Delegates at Women's Congress

5.1 Research on gender equality

In 2025, Khazar University continued to contribute to research addressing gender equality, gender-related social perceptions, women's professional opportunities, psychological well-being, and gender differences in health outcomes. University-affiliated researchers participated in international scientific publications examining the social, educational, linguistic, and psychological dimensions of gender, contributing to interdisciplinary knowledge relevant to SDG 5 (Gender Equality).

Gender stereotypes and equal professional opportunities represented important areas of scientific investigation. Alotaibi, Almusharraf, and Imran (2025), in their study *Why Some Jobs Just "Sound" Male: The Arabic Language Effect*, examined how linguistic structures and educational materials influence students' perceptions of professional and political roles. Drawing on responses from 62 elementary school students in Saudi Arabia, the study highlighted the influence of gendered language on occupational stereotypes and the importance of gender-inclusive educational content.

Research also addressed **gender disparities in professional development and career advancement**. Alotaibi et al. (2025), in *Trends and Gender Dynamics in Professional Certification Growth in Saudi Arabia*, analysed professional certification trends using publicly available data. The study identified persistent differences between male and female participation, particularly in advanced professional qualifications, contributing evidence relevant to understanding gender inequalities in access to professional development opportunities.

Gender identity and psychological well-being constituted another area of research. In August 2025, Alotaibi, Almusharraf, and Imran published *Examining the Linguistic and Behavioural Patterns of Gender Identity in Women with Dissociative Identity Disorder* in *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*. The research investigated relationships between psychological gender identity and linguistic behaviour, examining speech patterns in publicly available interviews involving six women diagnosed with dissociative identity disorder.

At the institutional level, Khazar University's Psychology Department contributed research examining **gender differences in students' psychological adjustment to university life**. In February 2025, Malak Karimova and Mirsadiq Mukhtarov presented findings from a study involving 204 first-year university students at the 9th International Marmara Scientific Research and Innovation Congress. The gender-based analysis identified higher levels of reported psychological symptoms among female students, highlighting differences in adjustment experiences during the transition to higher education. Research based on the same student sample was also published in *Azərbaycan Məktəbi* (Issue 1, 2025), contributing to academic discussion on student mental health and psychological support.

Further interdisciplinary research explored gender-related differences in healthcare. Montazeri et al. (2025) examined blood coagulation monitoring among 139 patients with mechanical heart valves, including 84 women. The study reported sex-related differences in anticoagulation control, offering evidence relevant to understanding variations in healthcare experiences and outcomes.

Together, these research contributions reflect Khazar University's engagement in gender-related scholarship across education, social sciences, psychology, and healthcare. Through international scientific collaboration and locally relevant research, the University contributes to the evidence base for understanding gender disparities, challenging occupational stereotypes, and promoting greater awareness of women's well-being and opportunities.

Selected Research Publications (2025)

Scopus-indexed research

1. **Alotaibi, T., Almusharraf, N., & Imran, M. (2025).** *Why some jobs just 'sound' male: the Arabic language effect.* Cogent Education, 12(1), Article 2530160. DOI
2. **Alotaibi, T., Almusharraf, N., Imran, M., & Gamage, K. A. A. (2025).** *Trends and Gender Dynamics in Professional Certification Growth in Saudi Arabia.* Societies, 15(2), 28. DOI
3. **Montazeri, N., Pourmehr, S., Ziapour, A., & Moghadam, R. H. (2025).** *Blood coagulation monitoring of patients with mechanical heart valve visiting Imam.* Journal of Cardiothoracic Surgery, 20, Article 68. DOI

Additional gender-related research

4. **Alotaibi, T., Almusharraf, N., & Imran, M. (2025).** *Examining the linguistic and behavioural patterns of gender identity in women with dissociative identity disorder.* Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, 12, Article 1303. DOI
5. **Karimova, M., & Mukhtarov, M. (2025).** *Research on psychological symptoms among first-year university students.* Azərbaycan Məktəbi, Issue 1, 2025. University Publication News · Conference Presentation

5.2 Proportion of first-generation female students

Khazar University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, revised in January 2025, supports fair access to higher education regardless of gender or socioeconomic background. Its principles apply to admission and participation across the University. The policy provides a framework for considering barriers that may affect prospective students, including women from families with limited experience of higher education.

5.3 Student access measures

The University's approach to student access brings together equal-opportunity commitments and scholarship information. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy covers admissions, academic assessment and participation in university life, while the Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy sets out standards for fair treatment and protection from inappropriate conduct.

One education opportunity highlighted during the year was the Nailekhanim Foundation Scholarship. The 2024–2025 call accepted applications until 1 June 2025 for one full scholarship for an academically strong female applicant seeking a master's or doctoral degree, regardless of nationality. The published announcement described the application criteria and the role of women's leadership in the selection essay.

In October 2025, an online seminar within the DIRNA project, coordinated by Khazar University, brought partner institutions together to discuss gender equality, inclusive education and support systems. The exchange encouraged discussion of how educational environments can be more accessible and inclusive.



5.4 Proportion of senior female academics

Women held visible leadership positions at Khazar University during the reporting period. On 2 September 2025, the University's Scientific Council announced the appointment of Dr. Razia Isayeva as Rector, effective from 3 September 2025.



Women also chaired academic sessions during the International Turkish World Women's Congress held in October. These activities highlight women's participation in institutional leadership and scholarly exchange.



5.5 Proportion of women receiving degrees

Supporting women's academic progress is part of Khazar University's wider commitment to equal treatment in teaching, assessment and participation. Its equality policy applies across the educational experience, while gender-related teaching content, including the published Gender and Law course (LAW 542), encourages students to explore discrimination, rights and women's participation in society.

5.6 Women's progress measures

In January 2025, Khazar University reviewed both its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy. Together, these documents describe fair treatment, prevention of discrimination and harassment, and processes for raising concerns. The anti-harassment policy allows affected individuals and witnesses to report concerns, including anonymously, through designated university offices. It also describes how complaints may be investigated and addressed.

The University supported wider discussion of women's leadership by hosting the II International Turkish World Women's Congress on 2–3 October 2025. More than 60 delegates joined discussions on women in science, academia, management, entrepreneurship and public life. The event brought together researchers, civic representatives and international partners.



Awareness-raising activities also addressed issues affecting girls and young women. On 7 October, a Khazar psychologist delivered a seminar on the effects of early marriage at the Baku Youth Center. On 4 December, the University hosted a preventive awareness event discussing early marriage and drug addiction with representatives of the Nizami District Police Department.

Selected Activities in 2025

2025	ACTIVITY
Jan	Equality and anti-harassment policies revised

2–3 Feb	Gender-focused student research presented
3 Sep	Female Rector appointment effective
2–3 Oct	II International Turkish World Women's Congress
4 Dec	Awareness event on early marriage

2025 Overview

Throughout 2025, Khazar University maintained institution-wide equality protections, communicated educational opportunities for women, contributed research on gender-related issues and brought partners together to discuss women's leadership and inclusion. Its policy framework, academic work and public events supported an environment in which women can take part in university life and wider social dialogue.