2025 / ANNUAL SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

SDG 8 | Decent work and economic growth

Khazar University · Baku, Azerbaijan

REPORTING PERIOD JANUARY–DECEMBER 2025

Institutional Approach

Khazar University promotes decent work and sustainable economic growth through fair-employment commitments, career support, practical education and partnerships with employers. During 2025, the University revised workplace policies, connected students and graduates with professional opportunities, and encouraged cooperation between research, business and industry.

≈50	3	1
Organisations at Career Fair 2025	Policies revised in January 2025	Business–industry club introduced in 2025

8.1 Research on economic growth and employment

In 2025, Khazar University contributed to **37 Scopus-indexed research articles and reviews associated with SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)**, comprising 34 research articles and three review papers. These publications addressed economic growth, employment opportunities, financial development, sustainable investment, labour-market challenges, and the relationship between environmental sustainability and economic development.

Economic growth and employment in Azerbaijan

An important research direction focused on the relationship between economic development and employment in Azerbaijan. In *Examining Economic Growth from the Agricultural Sector Perspective in Azerbaijan*, Huseynli and Durmuşkaya (2025) investigated the contribution of agriculture to economic growth, particularly the relationship between agricultural employment and economic performance. The study identified a significant relationship between agricultural employment and economic growth, providing evidence relevant to understanding the sector's role in Azerbaijan's economy.

Research also examined how economic development can be supported through diversification and sustainable energy policies. Nuriyev, Nuriyev, and Mammadov (2025), in *Application of the Z-Information-Based Scenarios for Energy Transition Policy Development*, explored different energy-transition pathways for Azerbaijan. Their study considered economic, technological, social, and environmental factors to help assess how traditional and renewable energy sources could be combined during the transition towards a more sustainable economy.

Employment opportunities and sustainable tourism

Khazar-affiliated researchers contributed to understanding the economic importance of tourism and its potential to support employment.

Huseynli (2025) examined South Africa's tourism sector, analysing the relationship between tourism revenues, employment, and business development. The research used economic data to investigate how tourism activity relates to job creation and wider economic opportunities.

Similarly, Baghirov and Sarkhanov (2025) investigated factors influencing tourism development in BRICS countries, contributing to research on the economic conditions that support tourism-sector growth.

Financial development and inclusive economic growth

Financial systems and their role in economic development constituted another important area of research.

Girma and Huseynov (2025) investigated the relationship between financial development and economic growth across 30 African countries. The study examined financial efficiency, liquidity, stability, and access to financial resources, demonstrating that different aspects of financial development can affect economic growth in different ways.

Research also addressed economic inequality associated with sustainable investment. Kalkavan et al. (2025) examined how renewable energy investments may create or increase economic inequalities, including through changes in land use and energy costs. The study proposed recommendations for reducing these risks while supporting sustainable development.

Green growth and sustainable economic transformation

The relationship between economic growth and environmental sustainability was also explored through international research.

Guliyev (2025) investigated the relationship between renewable energy consumption and economic growth in G7 countries. The study found that the economic effects of renewable energy differ across countries, highlighting the importance of considering national economic conditions when developing green-growth policies.

These findings complement research examining how sustainable investment, technological innovation, and environmental policies can support long-term economic development.

Skilled employment and workforce development

Research also examined factors influencing the movement and retention of skilled professionals.

Eti et al. (2025) investigated approaches to encouraging highly qualified professionals to return to their home countries. The study considered psychological factors, economic incentives, career opportunities, and expectations about the future, contributing knowledge relevant to workforce development and the retention of human capital.

Together, these publications demonstrate Khazar University's interdisciplinary engagement in research on economic growth, employment, financial systems, sustainable investment, and workforce development. Through research addressing both national and international economic challenges, the University contributes scientific knowledge relevant to inclusive and sustainable economic development.

Selected Research Publications (2025)

1. **Huseynli, N., & Durmuşkaya, S. (2025).** *Examining economic growth from the agricultural sector perspective in Azerbaijan*. Bulgarian Journal of Agricultural Science, 31(3), 431–437. Journal Publication
2. **Nuriyev, M., Nuriyev, A., & Mammadov, J. (2025).** *Application of the Z-Information-Based Scenarios for Energy Transition Policy Development*. Energies, 18(6), 1437. DOI
3. **Huseynli, N. (2025).** *South Africa's Tourism Sector: Job Creation and Employment Analysis Using the Least Squares Method*. Finance: Theory and Practice, 29(3), 83–89. DOI
4. **Baghirov, A., & Sarkhanov, T. (2025).** *Investigation of the Factors Affecting Tourism Development: Panel Causality Analysis — The Case of BRICS Countries*. GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites, 60(2spl), 1136–1146. DOI
5. **Girma, A. G., & Huseynov, F. (2025).** *Multidimensional analysis of finance-growth nexus in Africa: evidence from a panel ARDL model*. Journal of Economics and Finance, 49, 429–449. DOI
6. **Kalkavan, H., Yüksel, S., Eti, S., Dinçer, H., Mikhaylov, A., & Pinter, G. (2025).** *Strategy recommendations for minimizing economic inequalities increased by renewable energy investments regarding sustainable development*. Sustainable Energy Technologies and Assessments, 75, 104225. DOI
7. **Guliyev, H. (2025).** *Heterogeneous panel data model with sharp and smooth changes: Testing green growth hypothesis in G7 countries*. Innovation and Green Development, 4(3), 100245. DOI
8. **Eti, S., Yüksel, S., Dinçer, H., Çetinkaya, H., & Zaralioğlu, F. B. (2025).** *Integrating psychological factors into AI-supported decision-making for reverse brain drain policies: A human-centered computing approach*. Acta Psychologica, 260, 105728. DOI

8.2 Employment practice

Khazar University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy, both revised in January 2025, set out expectations for equal treatment in recruitment, employment, promotion and university life. They also describe routes for reporting harassment and discrimination.

The University's Human Rights, Modern Slavery and Ethical Conduct Policy prohibits forced labour, human trafficking and exploitative employment or internships. The Sustainable Procurement Policy, revised in January 2025, promotes ethical sourcing, respect for labour rights and responsible supplier selection. Together these policies provide a framework for a fair and respectful working environment.

8.3 Expenditure per employee

As an employer and education provider, Khazar University contributes to the economy through its academic, administrative and service operations. The University's published ethical-employment and procurement policies guide how it works with employees, contractors and suppliers, linking day-to-day operations with responsible economic activity.

8.4 Proportion of students taking work placements

The Career and Alumni Center supports students and graduates with job and internship information, career advice, CV preparation, interviews and meetings with employers. On 11 April 2025, the Center met representatives of the State Employment Agency to discuss practical work experience and cooperation on youth employment.

The University's Career Fair 2025, held on 23 May at Neftchilar campus, brought together nearly 50 organisations. Participants could discuss vacancies and internships, submit CVs and meet recruiters.



Other 2025 activities included KPMG Azerbaijan's Audit – Career Day, a "Maarifchi" internship information session and career preparation for translation students. These activities expanded access to career information and practical opportunities.

University–industry dialogue also supported students' career development. The Business and Science Forum in February introduced the Khazar University Business Industry Club (KUBIC). Later, a meeting with PepsiCo explored graduate readiness, internships and employer expectations, while a SOFAZ seminar introduced students to sustainable economic development and public investment.





8.5 Proportion of employees on secure contracts

Stable and transparent employment arrangements are part of a responsible workplace. Khazar University's Human Rights, Modern Slavery and Ethical Conduct Policy calls for voluntary employment and transparent contracts and extends expectations of ethical conduct to partners and suppliers. This framework supports the University's broader commitment to decent working conditions.

Selected Activities in 2025

2025	ACTIVITY
27 Feb	Business and Science Forum; KUBIC introduced
11 Apr	Meeting with State Employment Agency representatives
16 Apr	KPMG Azerbaijan Audit – Career Day
17 Apr	“Maarifchi” internship programme information session
23 May	Career Fair 2025: nearly 50 organisations
10 Oct	Azad Mirzajanzade Development Programme session
13 Nov	Industry dialogue with PepsiCo talent teams
25 Nov	Translation career seminar and internship opportunity

2025 Overview

In 2025, Khazar University updated employment-related policies, brought students and graduates into contact with employers, introduced an industry cooperation platform, and strengthened understanding of economic development through research and education. These actions connect academic learning with professional opportunities and responsible organisational practices.