

# 1 NO POVERTY

*Globally, poverty remains one of the most pressing challenges, limiting access to education, health, and opportunity. Özyegin University contributes locally by ensuring equitable access to higher education through extensive scholarships, financial aid, and programs designed to reduce socioeconomic barriers, empowering students and communities to break cycles of poverty.*



**13**

Scholarly Publications  
(2020-2024)

**2.54**

Citation Impact  
(FWCI)

**1**

Funded  
Projects

**2**

Student-Led  
Activities



## Scholarship and Financial Support

Inclusion is one of Özyegin University's core values. The University recognizes that education is a pathway to employment and economic security and should therefore be accessible to students from all backgrounds and circumstances. ÖzÜ celebrates and welcomes diversity and is committed to providing comprehensive support to enable students to succeed in their studies and beyond.

During the 2023-24 academic year, out of 8,520 students enrolled in at least one semester, 87% or 7,436 students received scholarships or financial support. This substantial commitment to financial accessibility reflects the University's dedication to eliminating economic barriers to quality education and directly contributes to poverty reduction by enabling students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds to access higher education opportunities.





## Scholarship Program for Equality of Opportunities in Education (EFEB)

In recognition of its social responsibility, the University launched the Scholarship Program for Equality of Opportunities in Education (EFEB) in 2015. Through this program, the University provides outstanding higher education opportunities to prospective students who ranked in the top 1% of the Turkish national university entrance examination but were unable to access full scholarship programs due to financial constraints.

The scholarship program continues to thrive thanks to generous donations, with the number of recipients reaching 115 in the 2024-2025 academic year. The impact of EFEB is measured through social impact analysis to ensure the program delivers its intended transformative outcomes. Research has found that EFEB scholars begin their job search significantly earlier than their peers, and the program demonstrates a statistically significant impact on their competency development.

## The Sustainability HUB - Ecological Living and Food Club's Garden Workshop

On 30 May 2024, the Sustainability HUB at Özyegin University, together with the Ecological Living and Food Club, organized the "Garden Workshop" event to raise awareness about ecological living and sustainable agriculture. Participants were encouraged to appreciate the value of natural resources through engagement with diverse agricultural products grown from locally-sourced heirloom seeds.

The Sustainability HUB is the University's central platform for integrating sustainability into operations, education, research, and outreach, while the Ecological Living and Food Club is a student-led organization dedicated to promoting sustainable food culture, ecological lifestyle choices, and campus-based experiential agriculture. By conducting the workshop in the campus garden, the initiative enabled participants to experience the full cycle of agriculture — from seed to harvest — and reinforced the importance of clean food production and sustainable farming practices.



## Local and Rural Development Expertise Training

### Certificate Program

Since 2014, the "Local and Rural Development Expertise Training Certificate Program" has provided holistic training on sustainable local and rural development, benefiting over 500 participants by its 10th year in 2024. The program offers participants — primarily public sector employees, local government officials, and NGO staff — a comprehensive understanding of critical themes, practices, and approaches in sustainable rural development.

With contributions from experts across universities, NGOs, and producer organizations, this program has become a vital resource for professionals dedicated to sustainable development. Aligned with SDG 1 (No Poverty), the program addresses the socioeconomic challenges faced by rural communities, equipping participants with skills to promote sustainable livelihoods and economic inclusion. By focusing on sustainable agricultural practices, rural economies, and food security, the program also directly supports SDG 2 (Zero Hunger). Through this collaborative platform, Özyegin University strengthens its role as a hub for sustainable development, fostering knowledge and action that empowers local actors to reduce poverty, enhance food security, and build resilient communities.





## World Food Day:

### Water is Life. Water is Food. Leave No One Behind

In celebration of World Food Day (October 16), Özyegin University partnered with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to host an event on 17 October 2024 at the Çekmeköy Campus under the theme "Food Rights for a Better Life and a Better Future." The event emphasized the universal right to nutritious and safe food, aligning with global efforts toward sustainable and just food systems. Opening remarks were delivered by Rector Prof. Dr. Barış Tan and FAO Türkiye Deputy Representative Dr. Ayşegül Selışık, followed by a student-led seminar titled "Students of ÖzÜ Discuss Food Rights: An Interdisciplinary Perspective." The event featured a vibrant "GastroShow," where local women producers from the Şile Earth Market and Le Cordon Bleu chefs collaborated with Gastronomy students to prepare healthy, locally sourced dishes and engage in dialogue on women's empowerment and food rights. The initiative strengthened ÖzÜ's academic and community engagement on SDGs, promoting equitable access to food and sustainable production practices.





## **Research Highlight: Understanding and Breaking the Cycle of Poverty through Child Development Research**

Prof. Dr. İbrahim Hakkı Acar, a faculty member in the Department of Psychology and Director of the Child Development and Learning Studies Lab at Özyegin University, conducts research on how poverty and related social stressors affect children's development and long-term well-being, generating scientific evidence on the intergenerational pathways through which economic disadvantage shapes children's educational, emotional, and social outcomes.

Dr. Acar's studies focus on both risk and protective factors influencing child development, including regulatory temperament, executive functioning, parenting quality, and socioeconomic adversity. His research with low-income children has demonstrated how home and classroom environments can buffer or exacerbate poverty's effects on development. Recent projects examine the effects of parental and environmental stressors on children's psychological health in the post-pandemic period, as well as the psychosocial well-being of Syrian refugee adolescents in Türkiye. These research efforts provide critical insights into how early experiences, family contexts, and access to supportive environments

shape children's life chances, informing social policies and educational practices that aim to reduce inequality and break cycles of disadvantage.