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DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



Global economies depend on fair employment and sustainable growth. Özyeğin University prepares students for the workforce through professional development, career services, and entrepreneurship support, while also contributing research on labor rights, migration, and equitable economic practices.

28

Scholarly Publications
(2020-2024)

1.2

Citation Impact
(FWCI)

4

Funded
Projects

18

Student-Led
Activities

Professional Development and Career Support

Özyeğin University supports students' transition from education to professional life through the Professional Development Team, operating under the Sectoral Education and Professional Development Department. The team provides continuous guidance in career planning, skill development, and employability, helping students and alumni identify their strengths and align them with suitable career paths. Collaborating closely with national and international companies, the team organizes recruitment activities, workshops, and mentoring programs that connect academic learning with industry expectations.

In the 2023–2024 academic year, the team delivered 515 professional development events reaching 3,726 students, while in 2024–2025, 330 events engaged 3,097 participants, including counseling sessions, mock interviews, and Unplugged Talks. New formats such as case study competitions and hackathons further expanded experiential learning opportunities. Through these initiatives, Özyeğin University strengthens students' readiness for professional life, fostering career confidence, adaptability, and lifelong employability.

Future's Greens: Sustainable Economy Summit

In 2024, the student-led event Future's Greens was organized by the Sustainability Hub at Özyeğin University on 20 March 2024. The event brought together students, faculty members, and professionals from various industries to discuss the role of young people in building a sustainable and inclusive economy. Featuring expert speakers, thematic panels, and interactive workshops, the program created a collaborative space for exploring sustainable business practices, innovative career paths, and the growing importance of the green economy. The event provided students with opportunities to develop competencies aligned with the needs of future job markets, such as sustainable entrepreneurship, creative problem-solving, and responsible leadership. Through networking activities and interactive discussions, participants connected with industry representatives and sustainability practitioners, gaining insights into emerging employment areas and the future of work in sustainability-focused sectors.

Institutional Commitments to Fair Employment

Özyeğin University's Human Resources Policy is grounded in the principles of fairness, equality, and voluntary employment, promoting inclusive and sustainable economic growth, productive employment, and decent work for all. The university strictly prohibits any form of forced or bonded labor and ensures that all work is performed voluntarily. Employees are free to terminate their employment, and recruitment processes never involve payments or fees from employees to intermediaries. The university is firmly committed to providing equal opportunities to all individuals in recruitment, promotion, and all aspects of employment, without discrimination based on gender, race, nationality, ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation.

Employee Relations and Comprehensive Benefits

Özyeğin University ensures fair, transparent, and supportive employment practices in full compliance with Türkiye's Labor Law and international workplace standards. All employees work under formal contracts—indefinite for administrative staff and renewable for academic personnel in line with national higher education regulations. Working hours are shorter than the legal maximum, with Saturdays observed as non-working days. Employees receive above-standard paid leave entitlements, including annual, maternity,

paternity, and special leaves, alongside flexible options such as part-time parental leave.

The university provides comprehensive social protection through government health insurance, private health coverage for all employees, and additional maternity support payments. A fully equipped on-campus medical center offers doctor consultations, laboratory services, and ambulance access. Beyond statutory benefits, the university invests in employee well-being through a private pension plan with employer contributions, private life insurance, free daily meals, campus transportation services, and access to on-campus facilities such as the sports center, swimming pool, grocery store, and hairdresser. Employees also benefit from discounted childcare and school tuition, as well as free and confidential counseling services covering psychological, family, medical, and legal issues.

Supporting Women's Cooperatives in Iğdır Province

Four women's cooperatives in Iğdır Province—the Ayyıldız Women's Initiative Production and Business Cooperative, the Tuzluca Working Women's Initiative Production and Business Cooperative, the Iğdır Entrepreneurial Women's Production and Business Cooperative, and the Green Iğdır Producing Women's Initiative Production and Business Cooperative—benefited from the project "Support for Women's Cooperatives in Iğdır Province", supported by the Serhat Development Agency (SERKA).

The initiative was launched in May 2023, with the first phase of corporate capacity development training conducted between 8–10 May 2023, engaging 35 cooperative members and managers in interactive workshops aimed at strengthening leadership, organizational management, and entrepreneurship capacities. Following the training sessions, each cooperative underwent a SWOT analysis, and customized business plans were prepared to guide strategic growth and operational improvement. The mentorship and sustainability phase continued throughout 2023 and into 2024, with a technical follow-up visit conducted by SERKA on 23 September 2024 confirming the progress and institutional strengthening achieved by the cooperatives.

Kayseri Bünyan Women's Cooperative Capacity Building

Funded by the Middle Anatolia Development Agency, Özyeğin University implemented a mentorship program between April and December 2024 to strengthen the organizational, managerial, and marketing capacities of the Bünyan Women's Cooperative operating in Kayseri/Bünyan. Designed to enhance the product development, marketing, costing, organizational, and managerial skills of more than 30 cooperative members, the project included both in-person and online mentoring sessions, successfully empowering women entrepreneurs in the region.

Migration, Labor Rights, and Non-Deportability

Dr. Deniz Sert, along with a scholar from Kadir Has University, explores the politics of (non-)deportability in Türkiye by focusing on Afghan migrants, the largest community without formal protection in a country that hosts the most refugees globally. This research, part of the Building Research and Innovation in Diversity, Governance, and Identity project (Erasmus JMO - 2025), delves into how deportation policies are shaped and enacted for Afghans and the everyday strategies they use to navigate the constant risk of deportation.

Addressing Workplace Violence and Harassment

The project "Women's and Men's Perceptions and Experiences of Violence and Harassment at Work," led by Prof. Dr. H. Canan Sümer, is conducted as part of the "More and Better Jobs for Women" programme funded by Sweden and implemented by the ILO Office for Türkiye in collaboration with Özyeğin University. The research involves a household survey in Istanbul with a sample size of 3,000 individuals and is the first study in Türkiye to examine such a broad scope of workplace violence and harassment across sectors and types. The survey investigates the types and frequency of physical, psychological, sexual, and economic violence and harassment experienced by women and men, employer attitudes toward these

situations, coping strategies, and the availability of referral and support mechanisms. By capturing both experiences and perceptions, the study provides a comprehensive picture of the current situation in Turkish workplaces. Findings from this research inform the development of preventive programs and policies, with policy recommendations formulated based on the results and targeting all actors in the world of work.

