

Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024



Executive Summary

Özyeğin University demonstrates that higher education institutions can be powerful catalysts for sustainable development. In 2024, our commitment to the United Nations' 2030 Agenda translated into measurable impact across education, research, campus operations, and community engagement.



Key Achievements

2,187 courses mapped to SDGs since 2017, with **513** sustainability-related courses offered in 2024-25

87% of students received scholarships or financial support, ensuring equitable access to quality education

6th place nationally in TÜBİTAK's Entrepreneurial and Innovative University Index 2024

Top 100 greenest universities globally and **#1** foundation university in Türkiye (*GreenMetric Rankings, 2019-2024*)

100% renewable electricity certified through **IREC** for all campus operations

First university in Türkiye to receive **Zero Waste Certificate** (2020, renewed 2024)

10,884 therapy sessions provided through **ÖzüÇAM** since 2017, reaching over **1,050** individuals

350 million TL in research funding secured over 10 years through Technology Transfer Office

115 EFEB scholars supported in 2024-25, students who ranked top **1%** nationally but faced financial barriers

1,355 people trained through OpenFab makerspaces in 2024 alone



Research & Collaboration Impact (2020-2024):

28

**International
Collaboration Projects**
advancing sustainable development

227

Annual Events
engaging students, faculty,
and community in sustainability action

403

Scholarly Outputs
related to SDGs published

66

Active Research Projects
44 university-industry collaborations,
22 national/international grant projects

Our Partnerships Include: Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), TÜBİTAK, European Union (Erasmus+, Horizon Europe), Turkish Industry and Business Association (TÜSİAD), Women in Renewable Energy (WiRE), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and numerous municipalities, NGOs, and industry leaders.

This report demonstrates how Özyeğin University integrates the SDGs into every dimension of institutional life—not as an add-on, but as the foundation of our mission to create social benefit through education, research, and engagement.

Introduction

This report presents Özyeğin University's contributions to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) during 2024, with select updates through early 2025.

Our Approach

Sustainable development at Özyeğin University is comprehensive and integrated. For 16 of the 17 SDGs, we demonstrate impact through four institutional dimensions:

1

Education & Student Engagement –
curriculum integration, student clubs, experiential learning

2

Campus Operations & Infrastructure –
policies, certifications, sustainable facilities

3

Community Engagement & Partnerships –
local collaborations, public programs, civic initiatives

4

Research Initiatives –
faculty-led projects, industry partnerships, policy contributions

About This Report

This document provides illustrative case studies, measurable outcomes, and flagship projects that demonstrate how our teaching, operations, research, and partnerships create local impact and global engagement. It is not an exhaustive catalog; rather, it highlights representative initiatives that showcase our institutional commitment to the 2030 Agenda.

Where possible, we use standardized indicators: scholarships awarded, participants reached, project grants secured, environmental certifications obtained, and carbon and water footprints measured. Signature partnerships with organizations like FAO, TÜBİTAK, and Erasmus+ are showcased to enhance transparency and credibility.

Our Context

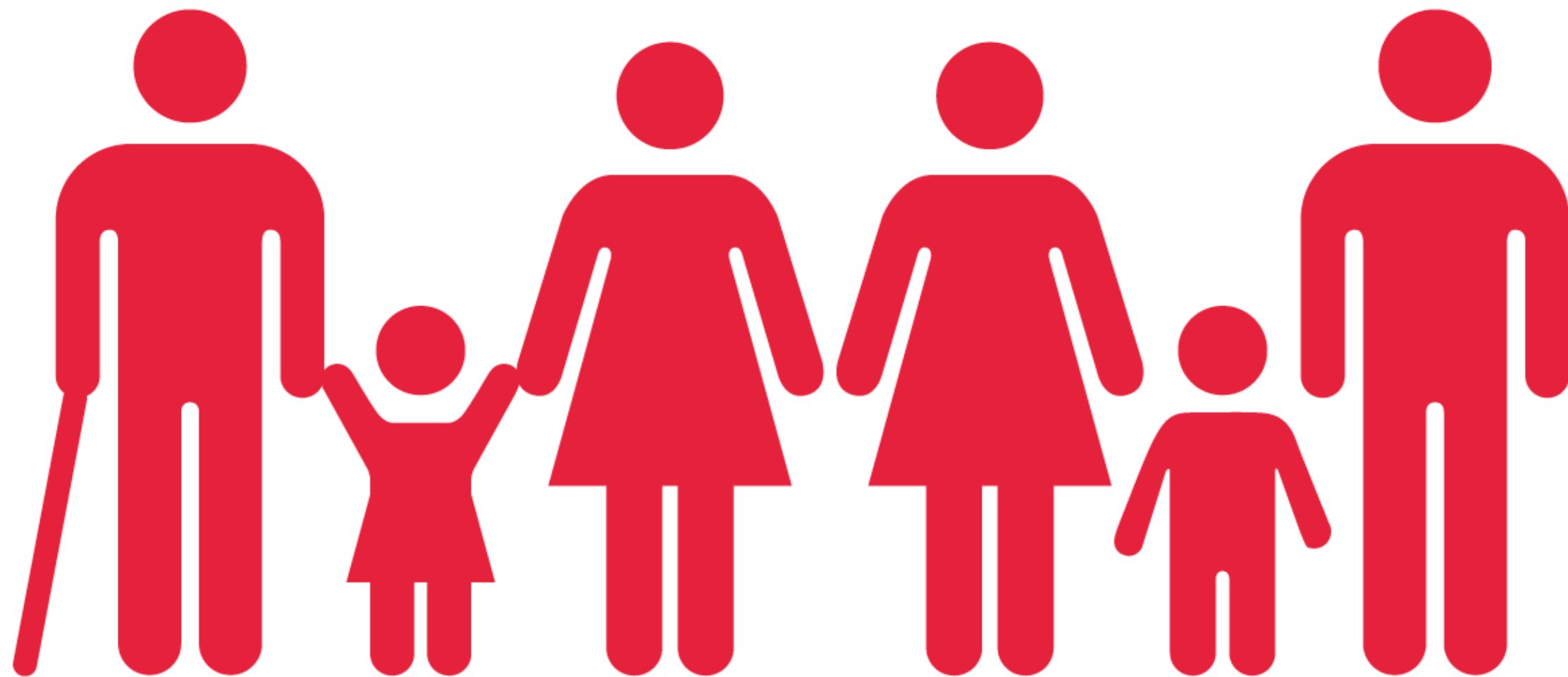
Since its establishment, Özyeğin University has pursued an educational philosophy grounded in creating social benefit, research excellence, and application-oriented learning. Our entrepreneurial research university identity is reflected in measurable outcomes: ranking 6th nationally in innovation, leading in green campus practices, and maintaining financial accessibility with 87% of students receiving support.

Looking Ahead

The closing sections of this report include our performance in global rankings, acknowledgements of leadership and partners who made this work possible, and our commitments for continued progress toward the 2030 targets.

1 NO POVERTY

Globally, poverty remains one of the most pressing challenges, limiting access to education, health, and opportunity. Özyeğin 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

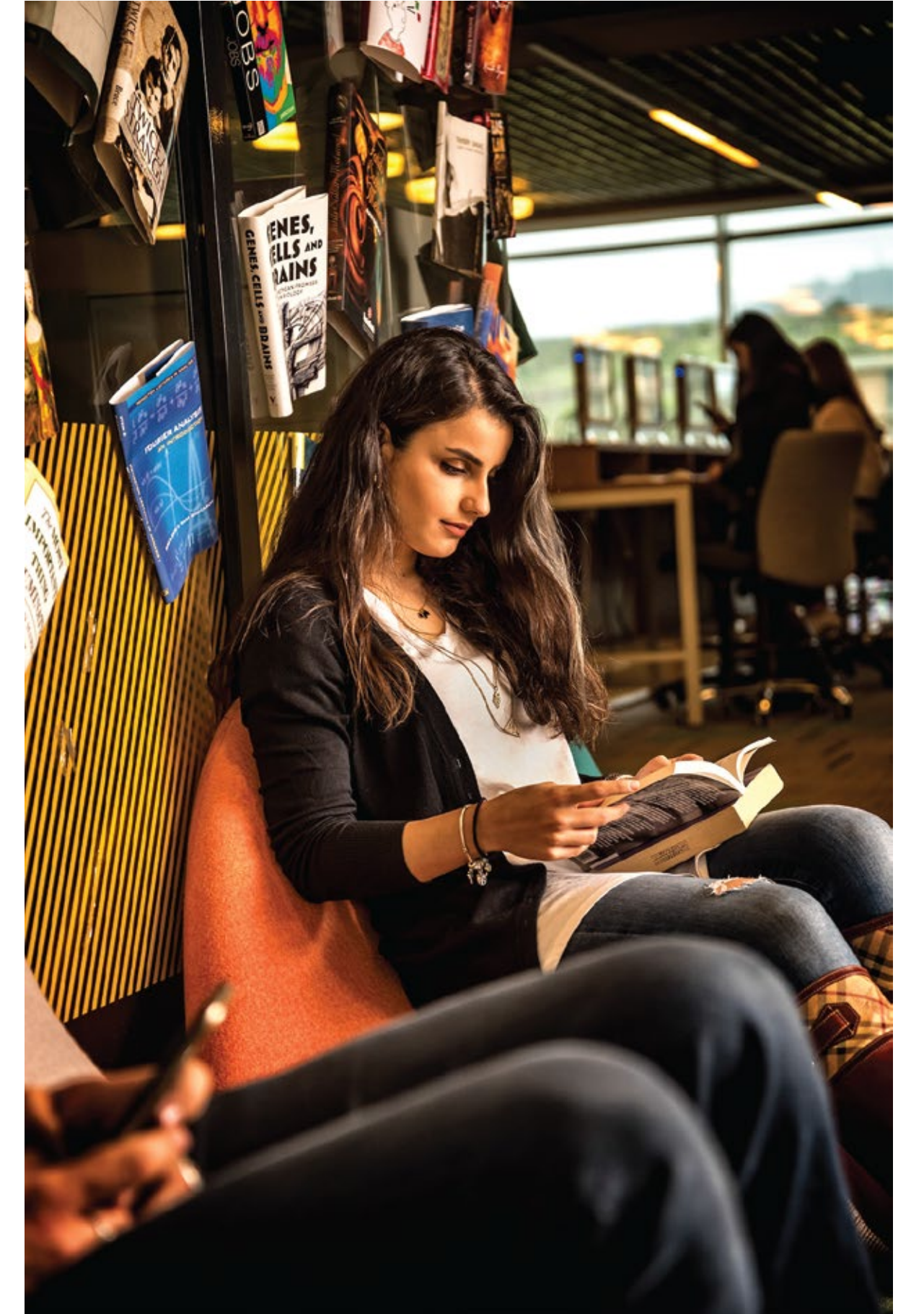
Student-Led
Activities



Scholarship and Financial Support

Inclusion is one of Özyeğin 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 Özyeğin 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, Özyeğin 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), Özyeğin 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 Özyeğin 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.

2 ZERO HUNGER



Hunger and food insecurity affect millions worldwide, with direct consequences for health and social stability. Özyeğin University addresses this challenge through sustainable campus food practices, gastronomy-led educational programs, and research on innovative food solutions, while also engaging students and local communities in initiatives that reduce waste and promote food security.

9

Scholarly Publications
(2020-2024)

1.14

Citation Impact
(FWCI)

1

Funded
Projects

4

Student-Led
Activities

Mobilizing Campus Action Against Food Waste

The SEC 180 course, "Sustainable Campus Practices," was launched in 2023 to mobilize university members in the fight against climate change and encourage sustainable actions on campus. As part of this initiative, Research Action Teams were created, comprising students, faculty, staff members, and suppliers who collaboratively work on specific sustainability challenges identified within the University. Each team participates in a series of workshops where they examine their chosen topic, develop actionable strategies, and promote them to engage the entire university community in this transformative process.

In the 2023-24 academic year, the student group focused on reducing food waste designed an awareness program and installed designated food waste bins in various campus locations to encourage proper disposal and recycling of food waste. Informational flyers were placed strategically around campus to educate students about these new recycling stations and the significant impact using them can have on reducing landfill waste. Their efforts proved effective, with active participation rising from

20% to 55%. By embedding these initiatives into daily campus life, Özyeğin University fosters a culture of sustainability, empowering students and staff to contribute directly to the University's environmental goals.

Responsible Food Management and Waste Reduction

Özyeğin University promotes responsible food management and sustainable nutrition practices throughout its campus operations. Meals for students, faculty, and staff are prepared and served by an external catering partner that is a member of Türkiye's Responsible Restaurant Movement, underscoring a shared commitment to responsible food production and consumption. Together, they plan daily menus and portion sizes based on consumption data to reduce overproduction and food waste while maintaining balanced, nutritious meal options.

The catering partner continuously reviews kitchen and service processes to prevent waste at its source. When food waste cannot be avoided, it is collected and managed under ÖzÜ's Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) framework and repurposed for sustainable uses such as animal feed or compost. Through these integrated efforts, Özyeğin University demonstrates its dedication to minimizing food waste, encouraging responsible consumption, and contributing to a more sustainable campus food system.

Addressing Homelessness and Food Insecurity Through Community Action

In March 2024, Toplumsal Çatı, a student community at Özyeğin University, collaborated with the charity organization Çorbada Tuzun Olsun to organize a social responsibility event near Taksim Square, Istanbul. During the event, volunteers distributed hot meals to individuals experiencing homelessness.

The initiative aimed to raise awareness about social inequality and the daily challenges faced by people living without shelter, while also promoting a culture of empathy and collective responsibility among university students. Through direct engagement, participants provided tangible support to disadvantaged groups and strengthened the spirit of social solidarity within the Özyeğin University community. This event, which has been repeated periodically throughout 2024, continues to foster long-term student involvement in social aid activities.



PACHA: Science-Based Healthy Food Innovation

Founded by Özyeğin University Faculty Member Dr. Aslı Zuluğ Guru, Healthy Food Company produces nutritious food products and received an investment with a valuation of 2.5 million dollars in its first investment round. The company produces Türkiye's first natural collagen and protein chips under the brand PACHA. With the vision of "science for healthy food," Healthy Food Company is establishing a bridge between past and future, local and global, through its products. The initiative is also supported by TÜBİTAK and the Royal Academy.

In July 2024, PACHA rebranded its product line under the name "PACHA Natural Collagen." The change reflects its expanded lineup: as of then, the company offers 8 varieties of chips, 5 types of crackers, 2 granolas, and one children's snack, all of which contain naturally sourced collagen and are free of additives or preservatives. PACHA also emphasizes clean label and "traditionally obtained" natural collagen, positioning the brand both domestically and for exports to Germany, Netherlands, and the USA, while increasing its product family in response to consumer demand.

Strengthening Food Security in Disaster Response

The project "Food Security in Times of Disasters" led by Prof. Dr. Burcu Balcik addresses the growing challenge of food insecurity caused by natural disasters and climate change. It involves collaboration with internationally recognized research institutions and organizations focused on global food security. The aim is to develop effective strategies and innovative solutions to help humanitarian organizations use their resources more efficiently in response to events like earthquakes, floods, heatwaves, and droughts. By utilizing technological advancements and data analytics, the project focuses on planning sustainable needs assessment operations, designing aid programs, and managing resources efficiently.

Two major case studies were completed within the project: the first analyzed the impact of the February 2023 earthquakes in 11 Turkish provinces on food security, while the second examined a region vulnerable to climate-related risks in Asia, Africa, Latin America, or the Caribbean to generate comparative insights.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Health and well-being are essential for thriving societies, yet global inequalities persist. Özyeğin University supports this goal by providing mental health services for students and staff, engaging in public health education, and conducting impactful research on child development, family well-being, and disaster-related psychological support.

49

Scholarly Publications
(2020-2024)

1

Citation Impact
(FWCI)

5

Funded
Projects

32

Student-Led
Activities

Promoting Sexual Health Awareness on Campus

In collaboration with the Turkish Family Health and Planning Foundation (TAP Foundation), ÖzÜ LGBTIQ+ and Women's Studies Clubs set up an awareness booth in the student center forum area to educate hundreds of students about HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and promote safe sexuality. During the event, important information was shared on gender equality and sexual health, aiming to increase awareness about HIV and STIs within the community.

This event provided participants with an opportunity to develop a more informed approach toward health and sexuality, while also enhancing awareness about safe sexual practices.

Supporting Self-Expression and Social Skills Through Art Therapy

The Art Therapy Workshop, organized by the Accessible Education Unit, is designed to help students enhance their self-perception and social communication skills through the expressive and reflective methods of art therapy. Taking place between February 24 and April 14, 2025, the workshop spans eight weeks and is open exclusively to students. Sessions are held face-to-face for two hours each week, with schedules arranged according to participants' availability. The workshop provides students with an opportunity to embark on a journey of self-awareness, creative expression, and interpersonal growth within a supportive and inclusive environment.

Comprehensive Health, Safety, and Accessibility Infrastructure

Özyeğin University places strong emphasis on promoting health, safety, and accessibility across its campus. The University's operations are designed to ensure the physical and psychological well-being of all members of its community, with particular attention to accessibility and emergency preparedness.

The University's Accessibility Unit coordinates a comprehensive range of services and initiatives that support students and staff with disabilities. These include awareness-raising activities, events, and psychological support services. The campus is equipped with a Disabled Navigation System, an Induction System for hearing-impaired students, and Tactile Ground Surface Indicators to facilitate accessible walkways. Dormitories include rooms designed for students with disabilities, while accessible restrooms and dedicated parking spaces are available throughout the campus.

In addition to accessibility efforts, Özyeğin University ensures a high standard of health and safety through its on-campus Health Center, which operates 24/7. Staffed by doctors, occupational physicians, nurses, paramedics, and ambulance drivers, the center provides immediate medical attention in emergencies involving students or

employees. Moreover, 62 members of staff hold certified first aid training, contributing to the University's capacity for rapid and effective emergency response.

Mental Health Support for Students and Staff

The Art Therapy Workshop, organized by the Accessible Education Unit, is designed to help students enhance their self-perception and social communication skills through the expressive and reflective methods of art therapy. Taking place between February 24 and April 14, 2025, the workshop spans eight weeks and is open exclusively to students. Sessions are held face-to-face for two hours each week, with schedules arranged according to participants' availability. The workshop provides students with an opportunity to embark on a journey of self-awareness, creative expression, and interpersonal growth within a supportive and inclusive environment.

Özü Couple and Family Center (ÖzüÇAM): Community-Wide Mental Health Services

Established in February 2017, the Couple and Family Center (ÖzüÇAM) at Özyeğin University serves as a comprehensive training, practice, and research hub for the Couple and Family Therapy Master's Program. The center provides accessible couple and family therapy services to Özü students, staff, and members of the broader community, while conducting research and offering certificate programs and psychoeducational workshops to foster individual and relational growth.

Between September 2024 and the present, ÖzüÇAM carried out 424 therapy sessions and received 43 new applications — including 5 from Özü staff, 1 from students, and 37 from external participants. Cumulatively, since its establishment, the center has delivered 10,884 sessions and reached over 1,050 individuals, including 263 university staff, 37 students, and 750 community members.

Throughout 2024, ÖzüÇAM continued its outreach through events such as the workshop "Strengthening Emotional Connection: Relationship Workshop with Gottman and Emotionally Focused

Couple Therapy" and public seminars on sexuality education and family resilience. These activities contribute to psychological well-being, gender equality, and community mental health.



PERGEL (Positive Teenager Development) Project: Supporting Adolescents Through Crisis

The PERGEL project, which was developed by Prof. Dr. Çiğdem Kağıtçıbaşı and her research team and aims to support the social and emotional development of children in early adolescence, was updated in the 2023-2024 academic year by a research team led by Prof. Dr. Nazlı Baydar and graduate and undergraduate students. A new version including earthquake first aid modules was developed. In Istanbul, the project was implemented in collaboration with Şişli Municipality, Ataşehir Municipality, Sarıyer Municipality, Esenyurt Municipality, Association for Supporting Contemporary Life, and Education Volunteers Foundation. As of June 2024, the PERGEL program reached 1,314 adolescents with 222 interns from universities in Istanbul and Izmir. Of the 222 interns, 60 were Özü Psychology students, and 3 graduate students served as supervisors in PERGEL. A master's graduate carried out the field coordination of the practices conducted in cooperation with the Ministry of Family and Social Services in earthquake-affected cities in Southeastern Anatolia.

Research Laboratories Advancing Health Technologies and Medical Innovation

Two Özü laboratories, where a dynamic and qualified research community consisting of faculty members from different disciplines, interns, students, and technical staff collaboratively conduct their work, correspond to UNDP's SDG 3.

In the Medical and Biological Physics Laboratory, led by Prof. Dr. Burçin Ünlü, research is conducted on disease modeling, imaging, and diagnosis using photoacoustic imaging, optical tomography, and ultrasound techniques. The focus has been particularly on developing new imaging systems for the early detection of prostate and breast cancer. Additionally, structural properties of biological tissues and cells have been examined using techniques such as acoustic microscopy and Raman spectroscopy, and cell manipulation studies have been carried out with the aid of laser beams and optical tweezers. Computational methods such as computer modeling, Monte Carlo simulations, and signal processing algorithms are also extensively used in the laboratory.



The Human-Centered Design Laboratory, led by Dr. Ramazan Ünal, focuses on the design and development of prosthetics and exoskeletons. The laboratory's research encompasses a comprehensive range of themes including robotic prostheses for both lower and upper extremities, robotic testing platforms specifically designed for prosthetics and exoskeletons, exoskeletons for lower limb support, and BalanSens, a robotic balance rehabilitation platform. Through these research areas, the laboratory aims to advance assistive technologies that enhance mobility and quality of life for individuals with physical disabilities.

YÜKSEK TEKNOLOJİLİ PROTEZLER

Dr. Ramazan ÜNAL

Patentli Teknolojiler

WalkMECH: Enerji geri-dönüşümlü transfemoral protez. Yürüme için gerekli olan itme gücünün %76'sını yürüme döngüsünün dinamiğini kullanarak doğalına yakın sağlamaktadır. Ağırlığı 2 kg.

WalkMECHadap: Pasif yürüme prensibine dayanan ve yavaş, normal, hızlı yürüme hızlarına uyum sağlayan mikroişlemci kontrollü adaptif protez. Ağırlığı 2.3 kg.

AnkleMECH: Üç serbestlik derecesi sunarak doğal ayak bileği hareketlerini taklit eden protez. Yürüme konforu, eğimli yüzeylere uyum, dönüş kolaylığı, denge ve oturma konforu sağlamaktadır.

AnkaIQ: AnkleMECH çalışma prensibine göre tasarlanmış, hafif pasif ayak bileği protezi. İnsan ayağı formu ve boyutlarına sahip olup kullanıcının farklı ayaktaabıları giymesine imkan tanımaktadır. Ağırlığı 400 gr.

Ankatron: Hafif ve kompakt yapıda motor destekli güç üreten, 2 serbestlik dereceli robotik ayak bileği protezi. Ağırlığı 1.3 kg.

BioKneecs: Motor destekli robotik diz protezi. Günlük aktivitelerde gereken gücü sağlarken merdiven çıkışında tork sunmaktadır. Ağırlığı 1.2 kg.

RoboLeg: Ankatron ve BioKneecs'in entegre edildiği robotik protez. Biyomekanik tabanlı tasarımı ile en az 5000 adım / 100 merdiven çıkma / 16 saat operasyon kabiliyetini sağlamaktadır. Ağırlığı 3 kg.

KnExo: Kas zayıflığı olan bireylere veya yük taşıyan bireylere destek olan diz eksoskeletonudur. İnsan dizinin biyomekanikini taklit ederek doğal diz hareketine uyumlu, hafif ve kompakttır.

HandMECH: Üç boyutlu eğrisi ile insan elinin biyomekanikini taklit eden omuz kontrollü el protezi. Ağırlığı 1.20 gr.

RoboWrist: Ağırlığa göre tutma ve kavrama kolaylığı sağlayan iki serbestlik dereceli robotik bilek protezi.

TestMECH: Alt ekstremitate yardımcı cihazlarının test edilmesine yönelik bir test platformu sistemidir.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



Access to quality education is key to sustainable development worldwide. Özyeğin University embeds sustainability across its curriculum, offers diverse courses aligned with SDGs, and implements projects that foster inclusive and future-oriented learning, preparing students to be responsible global citizens and leaders

28

Scholarly Publications
(2020-2024)

0.72

Citation Impact
(FWCI)

7

Student-Led
Activities

67

Funded
Projects

Integrating Sustainability Across the Curriculum

ÖzÜ aims to help students internalize a sustainable lifestyle and act accordingly as individuals and professionals. The University recognizes that this goal can be achieved best through an academic culture that prioritizes sustainability. The academic curriculum offers a wide range of sustainability-related courses. As of the 2024-25 academic year, a total of 1,332 courses are offered, 513 of which are sustainability-related.

Özyeğin University has initiated a comprehensive process to map all academic courses to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This effort aims to identify how each course contributes to sustainability-related learning outcomes across disciplines and to strengthen the University's role in advancing the 2030 Agenda through education.

The mapping process involves collaboration among faculty members, program coordinators, and the Sustainability Platform, ensuring that both theoretical and applied courses — from engineering and law to business, architecture, and social sciences — are analyzed in terms of their alignment with specific SDGs.

This initiative increases transparency and accountability in sustainability education and guides curriculum development toward more interdisciplinary and impact-oriented learning experiences.

A comprehensive analysis was conducted to successfully match 2,187 courses opened since 2017 with SDGs. A special course analysis code was developed to scan course descriptions, objectives, and learning outcomes with keywords, assigning weighted scores to SDGs for each course. A total of 8,942 keywords were analyzed for 17 SDGs in both Turkish and English.

Building a Culture of Safety and Environmental Responsibility

Özyeğin University delivers comprehensive Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) trainings in alignment with ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management System, ISO 45001:2018 Occupational Health and Safety Management System, and ISO 50001:2018 Energy Management System standards, as well as relevant national regulations. These initiatives aim to strengthen the University's culture of safety, environmental stewardship, and preparedness.

All newly recruited staff members participate in orientation sessions conducted by occupational safety experts and physicians, followed by a mandatory four-hour online HSE course through the LMS Next platform, renewed every three years. Students receive HSE orientation training during their first semester, focusing on emergency procedures, sustainability practices, and environmental protection. Specialized training sessions such as first aid, search and rescue, and firefighting are also organized to ensure role-specific readiness for emergency response.

To reinforce continuous awareness, ÖzÜ regularly disseminates safety and sustainability messages through MyOzU, digital screens, and internal communication platforms. Annual fire, evacuation, and earthquake drills, along with scenario-based exercises including ambulance response and drowning simulations, further strengthen campus-wide preparedness. As part of the Earthquake Preparedness Project, comprehensive risk assessments have been completed across all facilities, and more than 500 participants have received practical training through the Earthquake Simulation Truck, gaining experience in correct behaviours such as the "Drop-Cover-Hold On" method.

A reward system encourages participation and recognizes outstanding contributions to safety and sustainability through monthly and annual awards and Rector-signed appreciation letters. Collectively, these initiatives advance Özyeğin University's alignment with SDG 4 by fostering lifelong competencies in health, safety, environmental responsibility, and disaster resilience.

Expanding Digital Learning Capacity

Launched in August 2024, the IEEE e-Learning Software License Program expanded Özyeğin University's digital learning capacity by enriching students' online education experience through globally recognized learning technologies. The transformation of the former LMS-Next platform into ÖzU.Next marked a major step toward creating an open, flexible, and accessible learning ecosystem that supports both university members and the wider community.

Through the coordination of the Office for Learning and Teaching Enhancement (OLTE), the initiative has integrated innovative tools for hybrid and HyFlex teaching, supported by purpose-built digital learning studios (B40 and B41) dedicated to content production and media-rich instruction. Continuous professional development remains at the core of this system, with faculty receiving extensive training supported by detailed, regularly updated user guides.

Capacity Building for Urban Climate Action

The Neutralpath 2030 program, in which EÇEM researchers Damla Kaleli, Ruken Karakuş, and Gökçe Tonuktulu participated, represents a significant professional development and continuing education initiative. The workshop held in Istanbul on May 24, 2024, in collaboration with Eurocities, provided intensive training on urban climate action planning, sectoral decarbonization strategies, and integrated sustainability approaches. This capacity-building program targeted professionals working in public administration, urban planning, and energy sectors, offering them advanced skills needed to implement ambitious climate goals by 2030.

The program emphasized the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration and systems thinking in addressing urban sustainability challenges. By providing this type of professional development opportunity, EÇEM contributes to building a skilled workforce capable of implementing Türkiye's climate commitments and advancing sustainable development across municipalities and regions.

ATTUNE: Activating Universities Against Climate Change

ÖzÜ implements a project called "Activate the University Against Climate Change" (ATTUNE). This education program directly addresses climate change on university campuses and is being conducted concurrently in Germany, Italy, Spain, Poland, and Türkiye as an Erasmus+ KA220-HED project. The first step is to register for the online learning platform, which provides learning materials on water, waste, energy, food management, and mobility. Participants complete pre- and post-assessment questions designed to evaluate sustainability literacy and knowledge.



ATTUNE



NEW COURSE

SEC 180
**SUSTAINABLE
CAMPUS PRACTICES**

**Activate the University
for Climate Change!**

The course promotes initiatives at the ÖzÜ campus related to climate change and encourages participants to take action.

Requirements:
Open to all bachelors programs

For More Information:
surdunulebilirlik@ozyegin.edu.tr

ÖZÜĞİN
UNIVERSİTESİ

15th Year

More about
ATTUNE Programme




Advancing Digital Transformation in Higher Education

Among the many projects carried out by the Office for Learning and Teaching Enhancement (OLTE) under the directorship of Prof. Dr. Cengiz Hakan Aydın, the Erasmus+ project titled "Designing an AI-Enriched HyFlex Learning Community for Higher Education Teachers" aims to enhance the HyFlex design and delivery skills of higher education instructors while developing the institutional capacity of higher education institutions for digital transformation. HyFlex, a hybrid-flexible learning model, enables students to participate in courses through various methods, including face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous online formats. This model focuses on accessibility and diversity, granting learners the right to choose among equivalent instructional formats. The project also explores how artificial intelligence can increase engagement, personalize learning experiences, and facilitate teaching processes. Training will be provided for educators within the scope of the project, including content on the environmental impacts of artificial intelligence and its use to increase engagement.

The project "FORCE AI: Fostering Opportunities, Resources, and Capabilities in AI for Effective Management of Higher Education Institutions," also directed by OLTE, empowers universities to manage artificial intelligence integration strategically and responsibly. The project focuses on four main objectives: raising awareness about systemic AI integration in Higher Education Institutions; creating a transnational professional profile and micro-credential for AI Administrators; enhancing institutional capacity through AI administrator training; and providing an Open Educational Resources database. The training content, offered free of charge, includes AI's impact on environmental sustainability. One key learning outcome is "Guide the ethical, transparent, and sustainable implementation of AI systems by integrating legal, social, and environmental responsibility into institutional decision-making." ÖzÜ plays an active role in developing the dedicated module for this outcome.teaching processes. Training will be provided for educators within the scope of the project, including content on the environmental impacts of artificial intelligence and its use to increase engagement.

Enhancing Spatial Learning Through Innovative Game Design

The project "Research-Based Educational Game Design for Children" is a dynamic Erasmus+ initiative led by Dr. Gökçe Elif Baykal from the Faculty of Architecture and Design, investigates the potential impact of gesture-based interaction offered by hand tracking systems in virtual and augmented reality (VR and AR) technologies on spatial thinking skills and three-dimensional (3D) interaction experience. The consortium is led by Fachhochschule des Mittelstands (FHM, Germany) and includes contributions from several European institutions such as RISEBA (Latvia), University of Twente (Netherlands), Anadolu University (Türkiye), AKAD University (Germany), Özyeğin University (Türkiye), the European Association for Educational Technology in Higher Education (EDTECH-U), and the Advanced Information Society Association (AISA). The project aims to design accessible game prototypes for children from low-income groups. The research will identify the opportunities and constraints offered by hand tracking systems in VR and AR technologies for children's manipulative gestures, examine the relationship between gesture-based object interaction and children's spatial thinking processes, and design and evaluate gesture-based game prototypes that make the opportunities offered by AR and VR technologies accessible to children from low-income groups.

TÜBİTAK 1001
THE SCIENTIFIC and TECHNOLOGICAL
RESEARCH PROJECTS FUNDING PROGRAM


TÜBİTAK

The Relationship between Spatial Thinking Skills and Object Interaction in Virtual and Augmented Realities: A Research-Based Educational Game Design Study for Low-SES Children

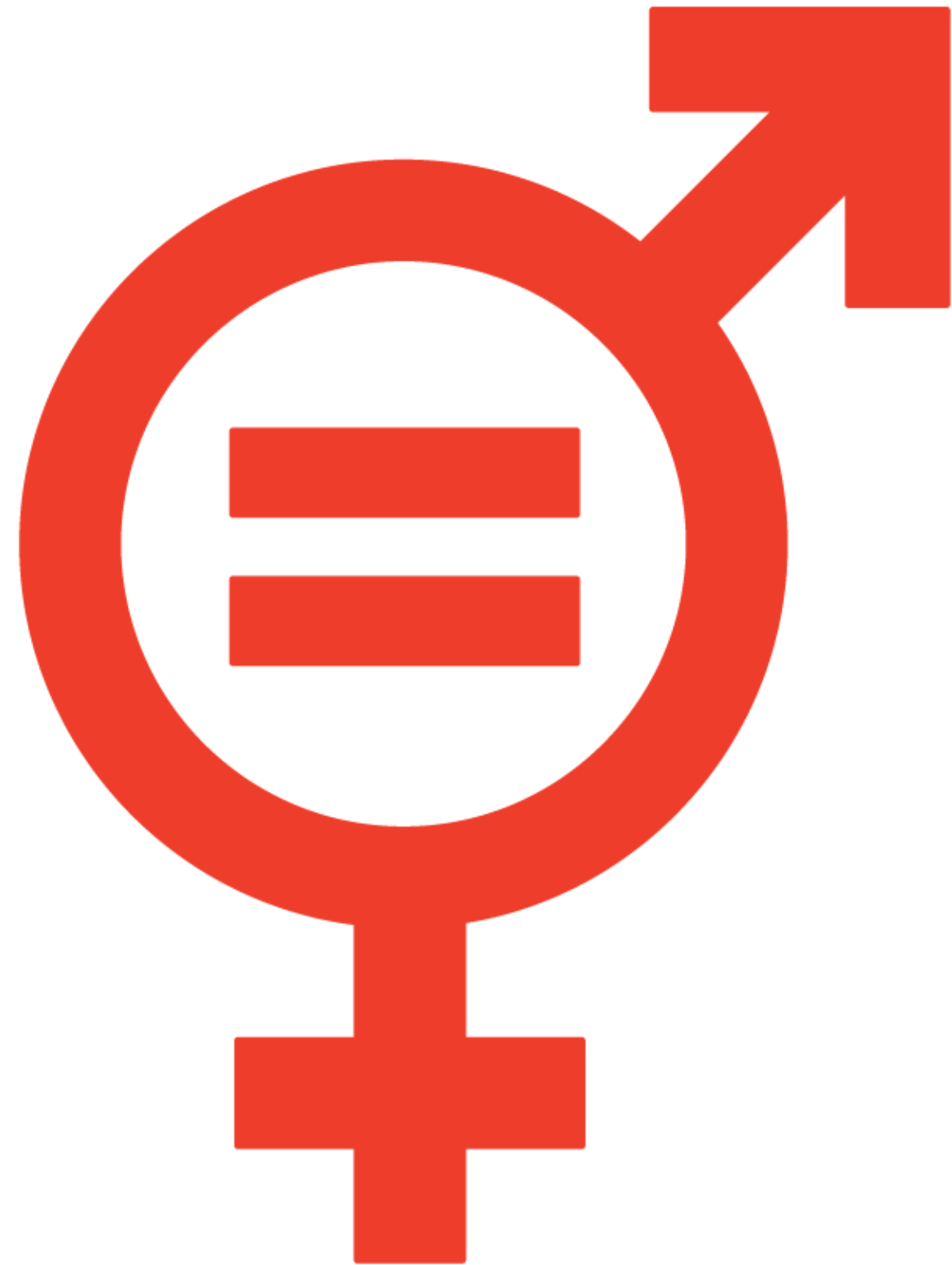
Time Duration 12.2024 – 12.2027 (36 months)


Gökçe Elif Baykal
Communication and Design
Özyeğin University


Demet Özer
Psychology Department
Bilkent University



5 GENDER EQUALITY



Hunger and food insecurity affect millions worldwide, with direct consequences for health and social stability. Özyeğin University addresses this challenge through sustainable campus food practices, gastronomy-led educational programs, and research on innovative food solutions, while also engaging students and local communities in initiatives that reduce waste and promote food security.

14

Scholarly Publications
(2020-2024)

1.21

Citation Impact
(FWCI)

5

Funded
Projects

58

Student-Led
Activities



Women's Human Rights Training Program

The Women's Human Rights Education Program, developed by the Women's Human Rights Association and reaching more than 15,000 women since 1995, was implemented at Özyeğin University in 2024. The 14-week program was held with the participation of ÖzÜ students and facilitated by Gurbet Kabadayı, one of the instructors of the School of Foreign Languages. The training covered a wide range of topics from economic rights to violence against women.

Self-Defense and Violence Prevention Workshop

The ÖzU Gender Office and Women's Studies Student Club organized a Wendo workshop at the University. Wendo, a self-defense method developed specifically to combat psychological and sexual violence, combines "wen" (the abbreviation of the English word women) and "do" (which means path in Japanese). Wendo can be translated as "women's path." Wendo's primary goal is to prevent violence before it escalates to physical violence..



Advancing Gender Equality Through Institutional Strategy

Özyeğin University's Gender Equality Plan (GEP), one of the first of its kind among universities in Türkiye, has completed its first cycle. Following self-assessment and stakeholder consultation, the second version, which will determine the roadmap of gender equality activities for the next five years, was approved at the Senate meeting held in May 2024.

Özyeğin University has been among the first higher education institutions in Türkiye to implement a formal Gender Equality Plan, now in its second cycle. The plan sets out strategic objectives for inclusive recruitment, gender-sensitive leadership development, work-life balance, and the prevention of discrimination and harassment. Oversight is provided by the Gender Equality Steering Committee, which includes representatives from senior management, academic departments, and administrative units.

As of 2023, 53% of ÖzÜ's administrative staff and 47% of academic staff are women, demonstrating near parity across institutional roles. Among academic leadership, 40% of deans and 36% of department heads are women, reflecting sustained progress in promoting women's participation in decision-making positions. Gender-disaggregated data are monitored annually and published in the University's internal equality and diversity report.

Prevention of Discrimination and Violence Unit

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#YükOlmasın Project:

Addressing the Burden of Unpaid Domestic Labor

As part of its March 8, 2024 activities, FİBA Group addressed the issues of unpaid domestic labor and the accompanying mental burden through its communication activities. ÖzÜ Gender Office experts provided content consultancy in creating the guide for the project #YükOlmasın (Don't Be a Burden), which was designed within the scope of these activities. Within the framework of the campaign, a guide, application kit, and awareness materials were produced for media publication.

2nd ÖzÜ Gender Ideathon

The ÖzÜ Gender Ideathon event was organized by the ÖzÜ Gender Office as part of activities for March 8, International Women's Day, with the aim of encouraging Özyeğin University students to question gender inequalities embedded in daily life and to mobilize students to be part of the solution. Ten student groups participated in the event organized for the second time in 2024, and the projects that emerged from the 48-hour marathon were presented. Following jury evaluation, three groups were awarded.



Women in STEM in Türkiye: Three Decades of Progress and Challenges

The project "Women in STEM in the Republic and Türkiye: A Sociological Analysis of the Last 30 Years," led by Dr. Berna Zengin Aslan, explores the representation, experiences, and transformations of women educated and employed in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields in Türkiye over the past three decades, within the context of the 100th anniversary of the Republic. Combining qualitative and quantitative research methods, the project investigates women's pathways into STEM, the challenges they face, and the professional dynamics shaping their careers. The findings are expected to contribute to evidence-based policy recommendations aimed at increasing women's participation in STEM fields and supporting gender equality initiatives. The research includes semi-structured in-depth interviews with 120 women from various age and professional groups across seven provinces (Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir, Antalya, Gaziantep, Malatya, and Samsun), selected based on data from the Ministry of Industry and Technology. Additionally, quantitative data on women's representation in education and employment will be compiled from reliable institutional sources to form a comprehensive database on women's representation and experiences in STEM in Türkiye.

Gender Equality Policies in Türkiye's Opposition Municipalities

Dr. Ebru Ertuğrul and Dr. Itir Bağdadi examined gender equality policy processes in opposition-controlled municipalities in Türkiye. Using interviews and document analysis, the research identifies four factors influencing these policies and argues that political party ideology and mayors' individual views shape opportunities for gender mainstreaming, where gender experts are crucial. The study finds that while gender mainstreaming enhances policy capacity, raises gender awareness, and can shift politicians' electoral views, adversarial intergovernmental relations limit transformative actions, though these may hold potential for future feminist mobilization.

Reframing Women's Empowerment: Understanding Gender Backlash

The project "Countering Gender Backlash," led by Dr. Çimen Günay Erkol, forms part of an international consortium studying gender backlash across different countries and focuses on a critical dimension within Türkiye's women's rights movement. The project examines how certain actors emphasize family values as the primary framework for women's empowerment, creating a complex space that intersects with global discussions on gender backlash. At the core of the project lies an analysis of how familialism legitimizes itself by appropriating feminist language and reframing women's empowerment within traditional structures. By revisiting the long-standing "gender equality versus gender justice" debate, the study seeks to unpack the tensions, discursive shifts, and social impacts that shape both Islamic and secular women's movements in Türkiye.

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Water scarcity and pollution threaten billions globally. Özyeğin University contributes to solutions by integrating water efficiency measures on campus, engaging students through awareness events, and conducting research and projects that promote sustainable water management both locally and nationally.



5

Scholarly Publications
(2020-2024)

1.53

Citation Impact
(FWCI)

1

Funded
Projects

4

Student-Led
Activities

Raising Awareness of Türkiye's Water Crisis Through Cycling and Film

The ÖzÜ Cycling Club organized the "Following the Lakes Gala & Film Launch" event aimed at raising awareness about Türkiye's water crisis and highlighting environmental issues observed during a cycling tour. The event emphasized that the water crisis is not just a future threat but an urgent issue today, while underscoring the importance of improving the human-nature relationship.

During the cycling tour visiting seven lakes, the event provided information about the current state and future of these lakes, proposed collective and individual solutions to the water crisis, and encouraged participants to become active parts of the solution. As part of this initiative, a documentary film titled "Pedaling in Lost Waters," prepared by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Metin Çavuş and Instructor V. Davut Mengi, was launched. The film, completed over six days along the shores of seven lakes, depicted the cycling tour and discussed the challenges facing Türkiye's water sources and lakes, accompanied by presentations from Aydan Çelik and Ömer Madra.



Systematic Water Efficiency Management

Özyeğin University adopts a systematic and integrated approach to sustainable water management, guided by its ISO 46001 Water Efficiency Management System in coordination with the ISO 14001 Environmental Management System and ISO 50001 Energy Management System. These frameworks form part of the University's comprehensive sustainability governance model, ensuring that all activities related to water use, conservation, and reporting are continuously monitored and improved. In line with the ISO 14046 Water Footprint Standard, ÖzÜ regularly calculates and updates its Institutional Water Footprint Report, which supports the University's four-year Strategic Plan objective of reducing per-capita water consumption and promoting sustainable water resource management.

Within the scope of the National Water Efficiency Mobilization initiated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), Özyeğin University has developed and implemented a Water Efficiency Action Plan. This plan focuses on measurable reduction targets, efficient water technologies, and awareness-raising efforts to strengthen institutional commitment to responsible resource use. The University's LEED Gold-certified buildings feature rainwater harvesting, greywater recycling infrastructure, smart irrigation systems, and drought-tolerant

landscape design, significantly decreasing potable water demand and enhancing resilience to climate-related risks such as drought. Complementing these infrastructural measures, ÖzÜ engages its community through digital awareness tools such as the Water Meter and Carbon Meter applications, developed in collaboration with Committed, a carbot consulting start-up. Accessible via the University website and internal communication platform MyÖzÜ, these tools allow students, staff, and visitors to measure their individual water and carbon footprints, encouraging responsible consumption behaviours. Built on the principle of "reduce, replace, and reuse," the University's Environmental, Energy, and Water Efficiency Policy ensures systematic monitoring, evaluation, and continuous improvement of water management practices.

Building Water Literacy Through Community Engagement

Özyeğin University actively engages students, staff, and the broader community in awareness-raising and educational initiatives that promote responsible water use and sustainable management of natural resources. As part of its holistic Health, Safety, and Environment (HSE) approach, the University regularly collaborates with public institutions and experts to foster environmental literacy and behavioural change. On March 20, 2024, ahead of World Water Day, ÖzÜ organized a public event in coordination with Yaklaş 2030, addressing urban freshwater ecosystems, lost streams, and rewilding. The event brought together academics, students, and local stakeholders to share perspectives and co-develop solutions for sustainable water management. In partnership with İSKİ (Istanbul Water and Sewerage Administration), the University also hosted the seminar "The Journey of Water," which enhanced understanding of the urban water cycle and efficient consumption practices. Complementing these activities, ÖzÜ conducts continuous campus-wide awareness campaigns through digital screens, informative posters, and mirror stickers with QR codes in common areas, encouraging efficient water use and environmental mindfulness. Community engagement is further supported through the Water Meter and Carbon Meter applications developed with

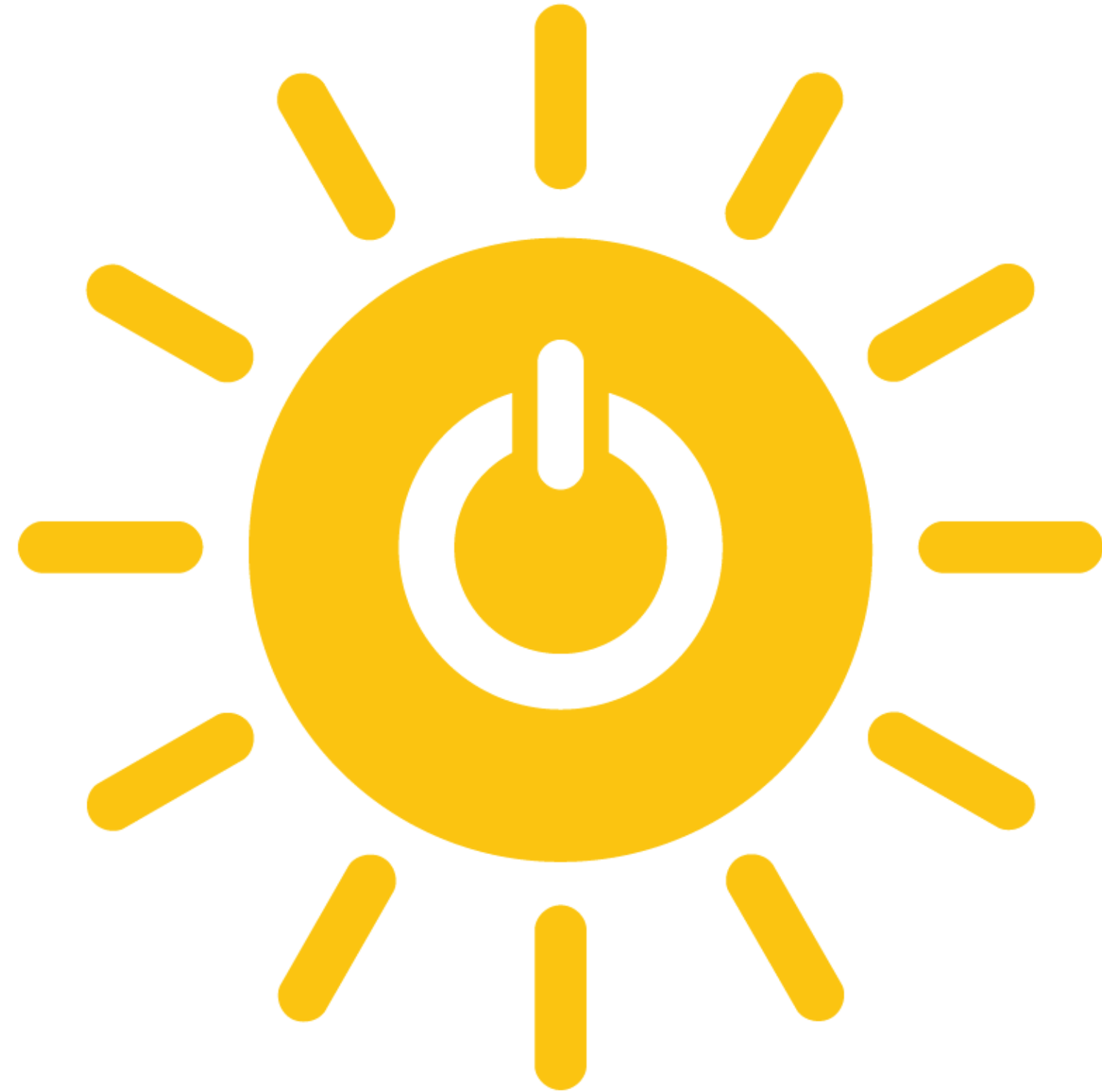
Committed, enabling individuals to calculate their personal water and carbon footprints and take informed action. Through these civic and educational efforts, Özyeğin University advances SDG 6 by cultivating environmental responsibility and collective commitment to sustainable resource management across its community.



Campus as Living Laboratory for Water Sustainability

At Özyeğin University, research on water sustainability has been embedded in both funded projects and educational initiatives. Within the Erasmus+ project ATTUNE (Activate the University for Climate Change), Özyeğin academics and students collaborated in developing a dedicated water module and facilitated Research Action Teams (RATs) that designed and tested small-scale interventions addressing water use and conservation. These activities generated not only awareness and behavioural insights but also pilot data on community engagement, linking higher education research directly with the targets of SDG 6. By positioning the campus as a living laboratory, the University integrates teaching, research, and applied experimentation to advance sustainable water management practices.

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



Sustainable energy is central to tackling climate change and ensuring economic growth. Özyeğin University applies international energy standards on campus, integrates renewable energy projects into its operations, and contributes research to advance energy efficiency and green technologies.

96

Scholarly Publications
(2020-2024)

0.92

Citation Impact
(FWCI)

4

Funded
Projects

5

Student-Led
Activities



Transdisciplinary Energy Transition Course

Özyeğin University integrates clean energy and sustainability principles into its academic ecosystem through experiential learning and sectoral education. A cornerstone of this approach is SEC 373: "Transdisciplinary Approach – Energy Transition under the Threat of Climate Crisis," a course designed to cultivate holistic understanding and action on the global shift toward renewable energy. Drawing together students from engineering, economics, environmental science, and policy, the course encourages critical reflection on the technological, economic, and social dimensions of energy transition. Students engage in interactive workshops and collaborative projects that simulate real-world energy scenarios—analyzing renewable integration, policy design, and the social justice implications of the transition. Student teams develop applied solution proposals, from renewable energy deployment models and energy-efficiency strategies to frameworks that support clean energy adoption both on campus and in surrounding communities. Complementary faculty-led projects under Dr. Hamza Makhamreh, faculty at

Electrical and Electronics Engineering at ÖzÜ, deepen the technical dimension through research on lithium-ion battery health modeling, LLC converters using GaN devices, and single-stage PFC circuit design. These integrated experiences nurture systems thinking, innovation, and practical engineering skills—preparing students to actively shape the clean-energy transformation.

ISO 50001 Energy Management System Standard

Özyeğin University integrates the ISO 50001 Energy Management System Standard with the ISO 14001 Environmental Management System Standard, systematically addressing energy management to achieve more efficient, sustainable, and effective energy use.

ISO 50001 is an international standard aimed at systematically addressing energy management. Developed by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), this standard assists businesses in managing energy more efficiently, sustainably, and effectively. ISO 50001 supports organizations in achieving the following goals: Energy efficiency, Savings, Environmental sustainability, and Cost control.

In line with its environmentally conscious approach within the scope of ISO 14001 Environmental and ISO 50001 Energy Management Systems, Özyeğin University has issued its Corporate Carbon Footprint Report, which was prepared in accordance with the ISO 14064 Standard, to analyze its institutional carbon footprint and support environmental sustainability. These reports can be accessible via Özyeğin University web site.

As Özyeğin University, we have taken a significant step towards our net zero emissions goal by offsetting the carbon emissions generated throughout 2024 through Carbon Offset Projects.

Additionally, we hold an IREC Certificate (International Renewable Energy Certificate) for our 2923 MWh electricity consumption in 2024. This certificate documents that 100% of our Scope 2 electricity consumption from the grid was sourced from renewable energy. By officially certifying that all electricity used throughout 2024 was supplied from renewable sources, our university has taken a significant step toward reducing its carbon footprint.

Campus as a Living Laboratory

Özyeğin University's campus serves as a living laboratory where clean energy technologies and energy management strategies are implemented and tested in real-world conditions. The university has invested in comprehensive building energy management systems that continuously monitor energy consumption patterns, indoor environmental conditions, and equipment performance across campus facilities. This data infrastructure enables both operational optimization—automatically adjusting heating, cooling, and lighting based on occupancy and weather conditions—and research activities where students and faculty analyze energy data to identify efficiency opportunities.

The campus includes installations of renewable energy technologies including solar photovoltaic panels that generate clean electricity, solar thermal collectors that provide hot water, and ground-source heat pump systems that efficiently provide heating and cooling by utilizing stable underground temperatures. These installations serve dual purposes: reducing the university's carbon footprint and energy costs while providing educational resources where students can observe and analyze the performance of clean energy technologies. Researchers use campus buildings as test sites for piloting emerging technologies including advanced lighting controls, occupancy-based HVAC optimization, and thermal energy storage systems. The university has also implemented LED lighting retrofits across campus, significantly reducing electricity consumption while improving lighting quality, alongside building envelope improvements including enhanced insulation and high-performance windows.



Academic–Industry Collaboration and Policy Engagement

Özyeğin University advances Türkiye’s clean energy transition by fostering collaboration between academia, industry, and policymakers through its Center for Energy, Environment and Economy (EÇEM). Established in 2009, EÇEM serves as a multidisciplinary research and engagement hub that integrates engineering, architecture, and economics to address challenges related to energy efficiency, climate change, and sustainable development. The center focuses on technology transfer, energy-efficient buildings, and human–building interaction, translating academic research into practical solutions for society and industry.

Through EÇEM, the university coordinates major national initiatives and platforms for dialogue. The TÜSİAD–EÇEM Workshop Series, conducted under Türkiye’s Industrial Energy Efficiency Vision Project, enables direct knowledge exchange between researchers and industry leaders. The 2024 workshop convened representatives from twelve major companies to discuss process optimization, waste heat recovery, and renewable integration. The Chapter Zero Türkiye–TÜSİAD–EÇEM Climate Action Event, held in December 2024, brought together corporate executives to address climate

governance, carbon pricing, and regulatory developments, highlighting how energy efficiency can drive innovation and competitiveness. The university further contributes to national energy policy discussions through EÇEM experts’ participation in the Energy Week organized by the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, where academic research informs evidence-based policymaking.

Academic Leadership

In 2024, Asst. Prof. Göktürk Poyrazoğlu, Head of the Grid Operations and Planning Laboratory, strengthened Özyeğin University’s leadership in clean energy through research and national engagement. He contributed to high-level discussions on renewable integration and infrastructure security at the Turkish Atlantic Security Conference, and his paper on the Spatio-Temporal Impact of EV Charging Load on Locational Marginal Prices received the Best Paper Award at the 9th International Youth Conference on Energy (IYCE’24).

Energy Positive Homes

The Center for Energy, Environment and Economy (EÇEM) serves as a project partner in LEGOFIT, an international initiative coordinated by Demir Enerji and composed of 19 partners from 10 countries. The project focuses on developing adaptable technological solutions and early design strategies for the construction and renovation of Energy Positive Homes (EPH). Through an innovative platform based on Building Information Modelling (BIM), LEGOFIT integrates active and passive energy systems with smart management technologies to optimize building performance and minimize environmental impact throughout the life cycle. The project's integrated approach will be demonstrated across multiple pilot sites representing diverse climatic, cultural, and construction contexts.

Sustainable Logistics Systems

The Online Robust Green Vehicle Routing Project, led by Dr. Mesut Sayın, addresses systemic vulnerabilities in logistics operations exposed by global disruptions. The project develops an online and

resilient routing framework that dynamically manages uncertainties in demand, travel time, and cost. By combining blockchain technology with sustainable routing algorithms, it aims to enhance operational efficiency, reduce environmental impact, and build more adaptive and future-ready logistics systems.

8

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.



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Resilient infrastructure and innovation drive sustainable growth worldwide. Özyeğin University fosters entrepreneurship through its incubators and accelerators, supports start-ups with research-backed solutions, and collaborates with industry partners to build innovative, sustainable technologies.

103

Scholarly Publications
(2020-2024)

1.19

Citation Impact
(FWCI)

44

Funded
Projects

16

Student-Led
Activities



Technology-Focused Student Clubs

Among over 30 student clubs at Özyeğin University, four are specifically focused on technology, engineering, and digital innovation, providing students with hands-on experience and knowledge in cutting-edge technological fields.

The Artificial Intelligence Club brings students together with technology to encourage adoption of innovative solutions. It offers training sessions, projects, and collaboration opportunities to enhance members' knowledge and skills in artificial intelligence, integrating ethical values with advanced technology to help students develop future-oriented solutions while considering ethical responsibilities.

The OzU Blockchain Club focuses on disseminating information about blockchain technology and its applications such as cryptocurrencies, NFT, and Metaverse. It provides members interested in pursuing careers in this field with an environment for professional development, exploring and sharing the features of this emerging technology beyond traditional methods.

OzU IEEE, as a chapter of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), one of the world's leading engineering societies, organizes seminars, training sessions, and field trips for students. It

aims to make university life more enriching and help students shape their future career roadmaps in engineering.

The OzU Maker Club represents the maker movement, a technology-based DIY (Do It Yourself) culture. It aims to foster a maker spirit in the university ecosystem and prepare individuals who produce rather than consume. The club offers training on 3D modeling, coding, 3D printing, and design, and organizes seminars, competitions, and workshops on emerging technologies to introduce and integrate students into the maker culture.



ÖzÜ-X: Interdisciplinary Innovation Hub

Located on Özyeğin University's Çekmeköy campus, ÖzÜ-X is a transformative space designed to foster innovation, collaboration, and interdisciplinary research. As the university's flagship structure, ÖzÜ-X embodies the spirit of exploration, pushing boundaries, and redefining traditional academic and business practices. This facility serves as a meeting point for students, academics, and industry professionals, where interdisciplinary research and innovation converge.

ÖzÜ-X is a dynamic ecosystem that promotes interdisciplinary collaboration. Its flexible and social design focuses on human interaction and balances open and closed laboratories to adapt to project needs. It hosts interdisciplinary units such as the Entrepreneurship Center (Fit Startup Factory and OpenFAB Istanbul) and the Technology Transfer Office (TTO), as well as industry leaders like the GE Türkiye Innovation Center and ÖzÜ Bex, which supports SMEs in their digital transformation journey with EU funding. The makerspace, a central hub connecting laboratories, supports processes from prototyping to production, enabling the realization of innovative ideas.

ÖzÜ-X has made significant contributions to the university and the broader innovation ecosystem. Fit Startup Factory has received over

4,000 applications since 2011, supporting 250 entrepreneurs and leading to the establishment of 61 businesses. OpenFAB Istanbul has organized 86 workshops since 2016, reaching 2,113 participants. The Technology Transfer Office has been ranked among Türkiye's top 10 universities by TÜBİTAK and secured 350 million TL in funding over 10 years through collaborations with the public and private sectors.



Advancing Sustainable Infrastructure Through Energy Research

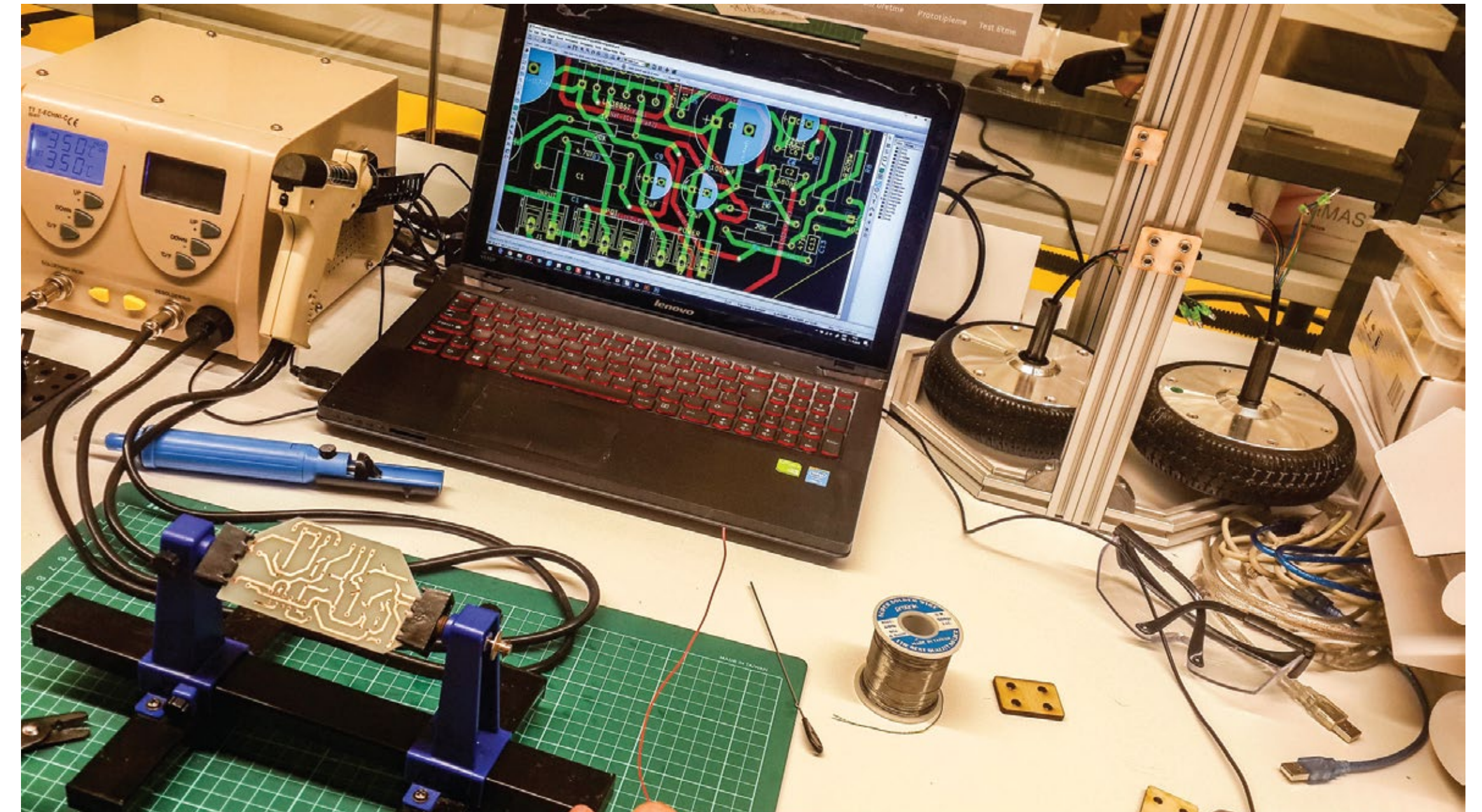
The Center for Energy, Environment and Economy (EÇEM) at Özyeğin University plays a central role in advancing sustainable infrastructure, energy efficiency, and innovation through interdisciplinary research and global collaboration. Under the leadership of Prof. Dr. M. Pinar Mengüç, the Center acts as a hub that connects academia, industry, and policy to develop solutions for sustainable industrial development and low-carbon transformation. In 2024, EÇEM expanded its international engagement through high-profile collaborations and events. Prof. Mengüç represented the Center at the Economist's Sustainability Week in London, sharing insights on renewable integration, circular economy practices, and carbon reduction. He also joined the University of Indonesia GreenMetric National Workshop, where Özyeğin University ranked among Türkiye's top institutions in Energy & Climate Change and Education & Research. EÇEM hosted the Climate Crisis and Sustainable Climate Transformation Conference and co-organized the "Green and Blue Transformation in Vehicle Technologies" workshop with METU-TEKPOL, highlighting the Center's leadership in fostering interdisciplinary dialogue and user-centered innovation for sustainable mobility.

The Center's research translates directly into practical applications for sustainable infrastructure. At the 10th Euro-American Congress on Construction Pathology (Rehabend 2024), EÇEM researchers presented energy efficiency renovation strategies for historic buildings in Istanbul, integrating heritage conservation with modern sustainability principles. EÇEM also contributes to the Horizon Europe LEGOFIT Project, a €20.7 million initiative involving 19 partners from 10 countries to design energy-positive buildings. Its pilot at Özyeğin University's Çekmeköy Campus integrates smart energy management technologies such as thermostatic and occupancy sensors, window monitors, and cloud-based boiler control systems.

OzU MakerLab - OpenFab

OzU MakerLab OpenFab reached 1,355 people through 104 different training sessions (workshops and courses) in 2024. While the majority of the training took place at OpenFab, some sessions were conducted internationally at different venues (Lisbon BioLab - Portugal, Vulca Seminar - Zam Germany). Participants who benefited from the training include OzU students, academics, researchers, administrative staff, external stakeholders from industry, high school students, and culinary arts center students (Le Cordon Bleu).

The training is not limited to engineering students but is designed for groups from all disciplines and fields, with participants ranging from gastronomy to interior architecture, business administration, industrial design, and hotel management students. Examples of training include the MAKEngineer Certificate Program, Creative Coding and Drawing Robot Workshop, Upcycling Workshop, 3D Printer Cookie Cutter Workshop, and Introduction to Vacuum Forming Workshop. All training, workshops, and interactive events primarily emphasize innovation and practical application.





University-Industry Partnership Projects

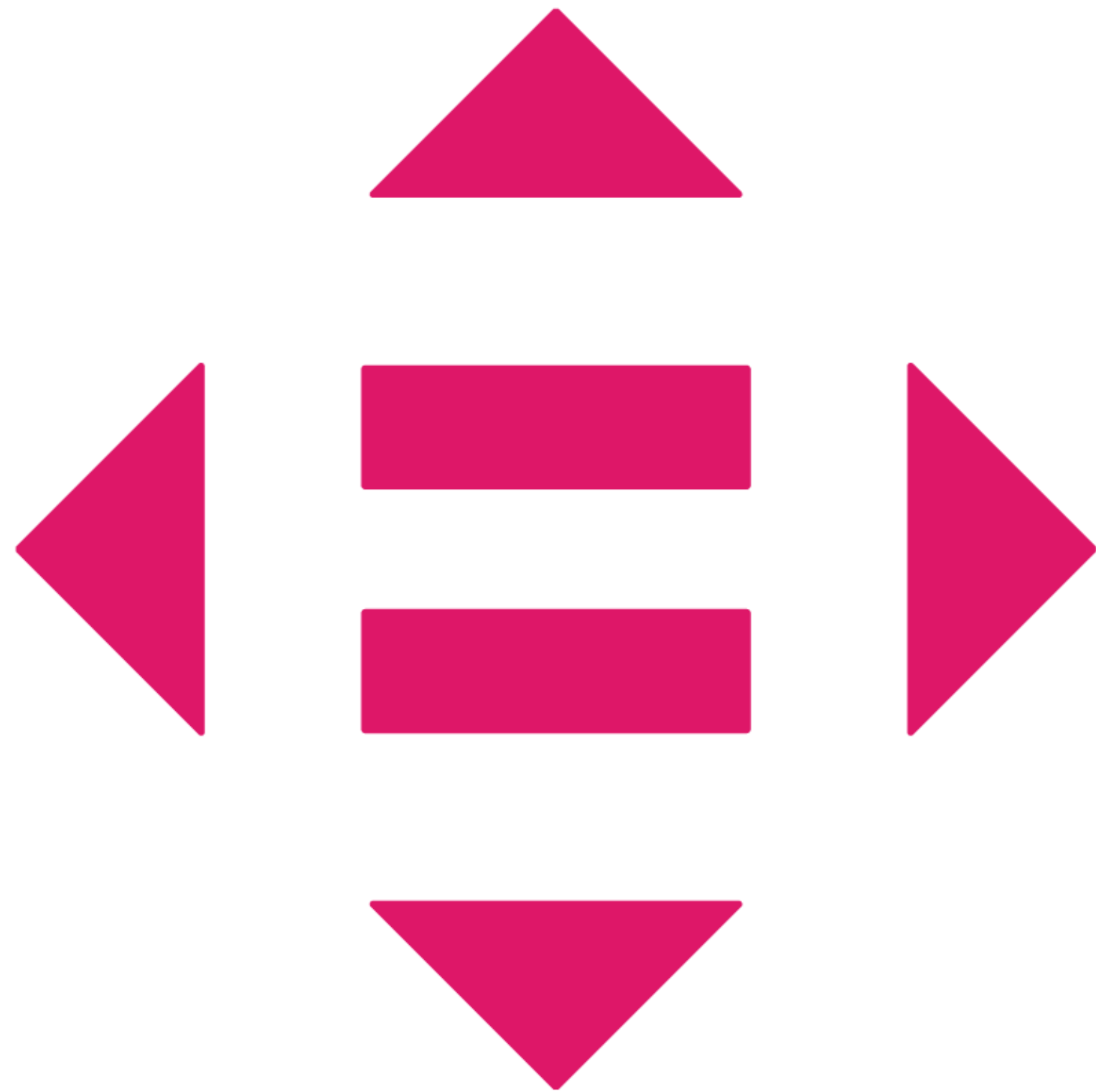
Over the past year, Industry Collaborations has successfully completed 29 university-industry collaboration consulting projects, alongside 7 successful national and international industry-partnered grant projects. Projects such as "Development of Solution Method for Scheduling Refrigerator R&D Test Rooms" by Dr. Ali Ekici, "AI-Based Plastic Injection Quality Control System" by Dr. Erinç Albey, "Building Height Detection from Satellite Images" by Dr. Hasan Fehmi Ateş, and "Manufacturing Innovation Digital Advancement Services Hub" by Dr. Erinç Albey demonstrate the university's commitment to addressing real-world industrial challenges through innovative research and development.

By bridging the gap between academia and industry, these initiatives create practical solutions that directly impact manufacturing efficiency, quality assurance, and technological advancement. Özyeğin University's multidisciplinary approach combines expertise in artificial intelligence, operations research, and computer vision to deliver tangible value to industry partners, strengthening Türkiye's innovation ecosystem while ensuring research remains relevant and impactful in today's rapidly evolving technological landscape.

National Recognition for Innovation Excellence

Özyeğin University has demonstrated its significant contribution to industry, innovation, and infrastructure development by securing 6th place nationally in TÜBİTAK's (Turkish Scientific and Technological Research Council) Entrepreneurial and Innovative University Index 2024. This achievement positions Özyeğin University among the top three foundation universities in Türkiye and maintains its distinction as the youngest foundation university in the top ten rankings. Published annually by TÜBİTAK since 2012, the index evaluates universities' entrepreneurship and innovation performance across four main categories comprising 23 indicators: Scientific and Technological Research Competence, Intellectual Property Pool, Collaboration and Interaction, and Economic and Social Contribution. Özyeğin University's strong performance across all these dimensions reflects its holistic approach to innovation that extends beyond academic research to encompass technology transfer, industry partnerships, intellectual property generation, and tangible contributions to economic and social development.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



Resilient infrastructure and innovation drive sustainable growth worldwide. Özyeğin University fosters entrepreneurship through its incubators and accelerators, supports start-ups with research-backed solutions, and collaborates with industry partners to build innovative, sustainable technologies.

42

Scholarly Publications
(2020-2024)

1.24

Citation Impact
(FWCI)

3

Funded
Projects

54

Student-Led
Activities

Responsible Citizenship Course: Building Capacity for Inclusive Solutions

Starting in the 2025–26 academic year, Özyeğin University will introduce TRL202/204 Responsible Citizenship, an interdisciplinary course designed to help students identify and address inequalities through rights-based and inclusive approaches. The course promotes social awareness and sustainable problem-solving by encouraging students to design impact-oriented projects that target disadvantaged groups and marginalized communities.

Working in multidisciplinary teams, students conduct social analyses and develop feasible, inclusive solutions aligned with diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) principles. The course emphasizes practical engagement and collaboration with local stakeholders, strengthening students' capacity for social impact assessment and community-based action. By equipping future professionals with the skills to design equitable, sustainability-focused interventions, the Responsible Citizenship course contributes directly to reducing inequalities.

KEÇİ: Empowering Rural Children Through Education

KEÇİ (Goat in English) is a student-led social initiative founded by

Özyeğin University students committed to advancing equal opportunities in education and ensuring access to quality learning experiences for all children. The initiative specifically targets students in rural and underserved areas, delivering interdisciplinary workshops and educational kits focused on design, sustainability, and technology. Through these hands-on learning opportunities, KEÇİ opens new educational pathways for children who might otherwise lack access to innovative, project-based learning experiences that develop critical skills for the 21st century.

Guided by the motto "We have the stubbornness of a goat," KEÇİ's mission extends beyond providing equal educational opportunities to encompass broader goals of fostering social solidarity and building a sustainable future. The initiative operates as a growing community that brings together participants, supporters, and stakeholders who share a commitment to educational equity, pursuing three interconnected strategic goals: creating meaningful educational outcomes for children, engaging and empowering stakeholders (including student volunteers, educators, and partner organizations), and building partnerships for social impact and sustainability. In 2024, KEÇİ received the SIA (Social Innovation Academy) Jury Special Award along with grant support, validating its model of student-driven social innovation and providing crucial resources to scale its operations and deepen its impact.

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 an outstanding higher education opportunity 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 transformative experience delivers the expected 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.



Nişantepe Study Program: Community-Engaged Learning

In the 2024–25 academic year, Özyeğin University launched the Nişantepe Study Program (NEP) to promote equal opportunities in education for students of the neighboring Nişantepe Middle School, a disadvantaged area adjacent to the campus. Within the compulsory university course Responsible Citizenship and Impact, ÖzÜ undergraduates worked weekly with nearly 150 middle-school students in eleven collaborative projects ranging from children's rights to AI-assisted storytelling.

The initiative significantly improved school attendance (+15%), academic outcomes (for the first time in years, 3 of 14 students passed the LGS national exam), and reduced disciplinary cases. Daily meals were provided to address nutrition gaps, and the program fostered strong university–community partnerships involving local authorities and school staff. NEP exemplifies a local model of community-engaged learning, enhancing both youth empowerment and civic awareness among university students.



Cultural Stress and Well-being in Immigrant Children

The project "Examining the Relationships Between Cultural Risks and Protective Factors and the Psychological Well-being of Immigrant Children," led by Asiye Kumru, examines the relationship between cultural stress (discrimination and ethnic identity) and psychological health outcomes (loneliness and depression) among immigrant children aged 12-14. Guided by cultural stress theory, strengths perspective, and eco-developmental frameworks, the study investigates the mediating roles of protective individual factors (emotion regulation, empathy, prosocial behavior) and relational factors (family respect, teacher-child relationship quality, peer connections).

Data was collected via surveys and face-to-face assessments from 222 immigrant children (111 girls, 111 boys), their parents, and teachers in California. Participant recruitment was facilitated through the Orange County Education Advancement Network (OCEAN) at the University of California, Irvine, with Prof. Dr. Gustavo Carlo and doctoral student Raymond Dionicio Villareal providing bilingual support for the pilot study with Latino immigrant families.

Understanding the Global South Through Turkish Foreign Policy

The project "Making the Global South: Dynamics of Southernness in Turkish Foreign Policy," led by Prof. Dr. Evren Balta (Comparative Politics & International Politics Department), asks a fundamental question: Is there really a "Global South," and if so, what does it mean? The research studies Türkiye's foreign policy because Türkiye occupies a unique position—it's connected to the West through NATO and EU candidacy, but it's also building relationships with countries like Russia and BRICS members.

By examining how Türkiye navigates between these different worlds, the study explores what the Global South actually represents: countries seeking independence from Western influence, looking for alternative partnerships, and building their own international networks. Türkiye serves as a case study to understand whether the Global South is a real geopolitical concept or a conceptual framework for understanding contemporary international relations and power dynamics.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Urbanization presents global opportunities and risks. Özyeğin University supports sustainable urban futures through architectural and engineering research, collaborations with municipalities, and campus-based projects that model inclusive, safe, and resilient urban design.



76

Scholarly Publications
(2020-2024)

1.09

Citation Impact
(FWCI)

6

Funded
Projects

16

Student-Led
Activities



Future Step: Participatory Campus Design

Future Step is an interactive sustainability and design project that encourages participants to reimagine their environment and envision a more liveable future. Using a large-scale map of Özyeğin University's campus, participants place magnetic markers representing various urban functions—such as green spaces, transportation routes, or social areas—to express their preferences for the spaces they want to inhabit. These spatial choices are digitally recorded and shared, creating a collective vision of the campus's potential future.

The physical installation is complemented by pathways made from recycled bottle caps collected across the university, symbolically guiding participants toward the campus stream while messages along the way prompt reflection on environmental responsibility and long-term thinking. Through this creative blend of participatory design, recycling, and sustainability awareness, Future Step links the past and the future, transforming everyday materials and spaces into a shared exploration of change.

Architecture Design Studio: Integrating Natural Systems

In the 201.B Architecture Design Studio course, students developed urban design proposals that integrate natural life into everyday campus activities, focusing on the footprint of the campus stream. Through field trips and the design process, students discovered how overlooked spaces could be made visible, awareness about natural life could be raised, and campus landscaping could be improved with more effective design for its inhabitants.

Students particularly worked on strengthening connections between dormitories and academic buildings, drawing inspiration from references provided by the stream. After stages of examination and research, they developed various designs tailored to user profiles, problem definitions, and specific needs to realize their intended designs in their chosen areas.



Sustainable Campus Development

Özyeğin University has embedded sustainable building standards and environmentally-sound operational practices in its campus development. Three of its Çekmeköy Campus buildings (AB1, AB2, and SC) have received LEED Gold certification, demonstrating performance in green design, energy and water efficiency, indoor environmental quality, and sustainable materials usage. The ScOLa (AB3) building, constructed under the EU-funded NEED4B project, consumes only about 20% of the energy used by a typical academic building in Türkiye.

Operational practices include a formal Environmental, Energy, and Water Efficiency Policy, which mandates systematic monitoring, analysis, and continuous improvement of resource consumption across all campus facilities. Energy efficiency is further promoted via campus-wide measures including use of energy efficient equipment and lighting (LED fixtures), passive design principles, building automation, and investments in renewable energy sources. Water-sensitive standards are also part of operations: new and refurbished buildings follow design standards that minimize water usage, support water reuse (gray water, rainwater harvesting), and apply drought-tolerant landscaping in outdoor spaces





ÖzU - Istanbul Municipality Collaboration on Smart Cities

Istanbul Municipality Collaboration on Smart Cities

Özyeğin University's participation in the Yeşil Şehir Eylem Planı (Green City Action Plan Workshop) represents a significant milestone in the university's commitment to sustainability. The initiative involved collaborative efforts with various stakeholders, including local government, businesses, and civil society, to develop a comprehensive plan aimed at making cities more environmentally friendly and sustainable.

The signing of a protocol with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) signifies a strategic partnership to implement the plan's objectives. This collaboration with EBRD provides financial and technical support for green initiatives, ultimately leading to improved urban sustainability, cleaner environments, and enhanced quality of life for the communities involved, showcasing Özyeğin University's dedication to addressing pressing environmental issues and fostering sustainable urban development.





Cultural Tourism and Rural Community Resilience

The research conducted by Assoc. Prof. Ebru Ergöz Karahan, aculty of Architecture at ÖzÜ, and colleagues, presented in "Cultural Tourism and Rural Community Resilience: A Framework and Its Application" (Göçer, Boyacıoğlu, Ergöz Karahan, and Shrestha, 2024), explores strategies to bolster resilience in rural communities through cultural tourism. This study emphasizes inclusivity and socio-cultural resilience, economic and environmental adaptability, and the conservation of heritage and biodiversity.

In the rural area examined (Behramkale), establishing new settlements allows locals to maintain cultural roots and adapt to tourism-driven economic shifts. The area's resilience strategies involve new infrastructure to balance tourism demand with heritage preservation, helping the community manage tourism's economic and environmental stresses while promoting both sustainability and cultural continuity. The rural model offers valuable insights for cities seeking to balance development with heritage and environmental conservation.

Predicting Post-Earthquake Road Closures

The project on the Prediction of Road Closure Probability and Recovery Process Analysis in Earthquakes, led by Bekir Oğuz Bartın, aims to develop advanced predictive models for determining

post-earthquake road closures and estimating recovery timelines. This research addresses a critical gap in disaster preparedness by examining the impact of building collapses on roadway accessibility and transportation network functionality.

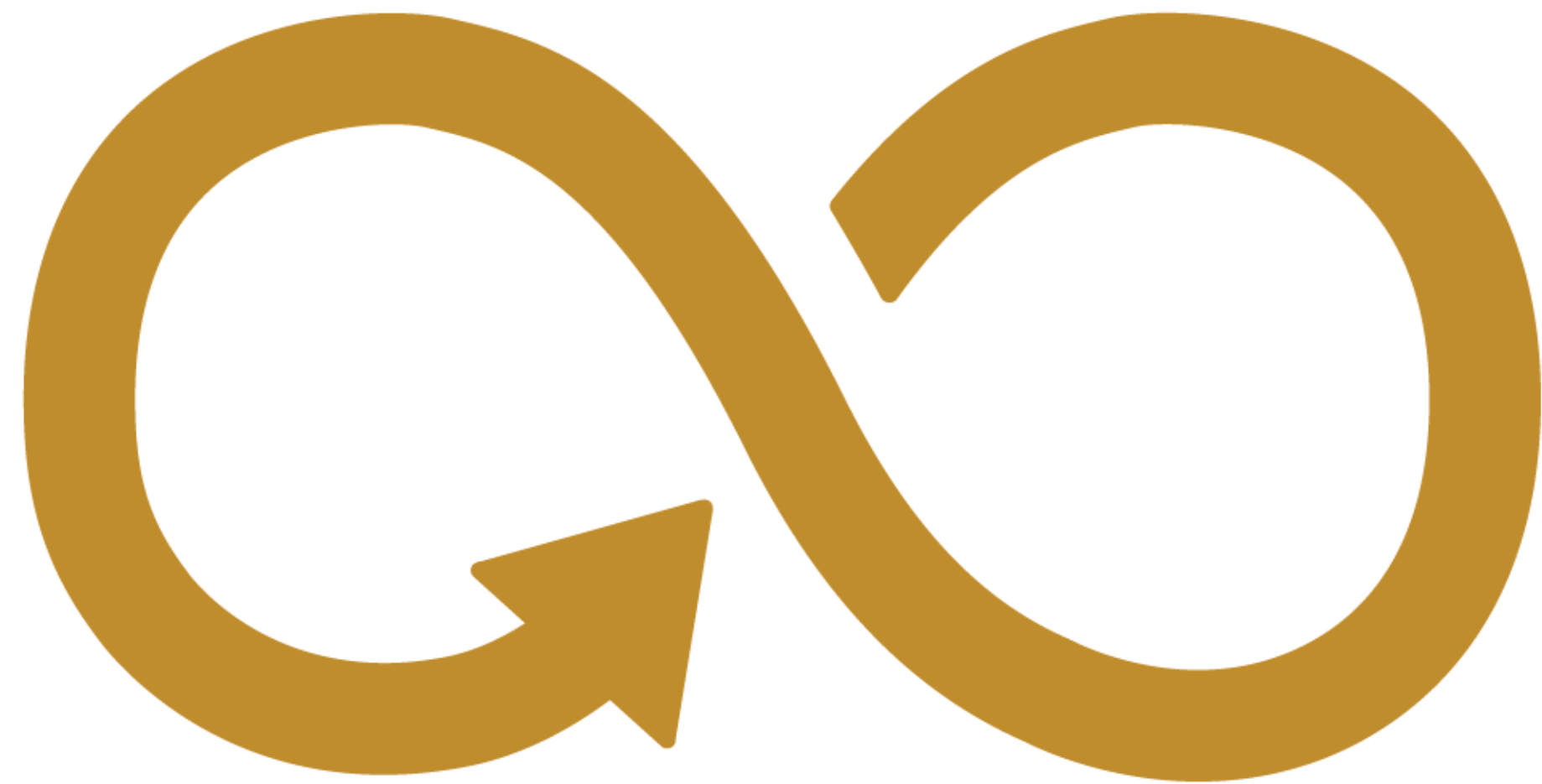
The research team focuses on quantifying the cascading effects of building failures on transportation infrastructure. Building collapses during seismic events not only constitute structural failures but also significantly compromise critical transportation corridors, thereby impeding emergency response operations and prolonging recovery periods. Through predictive modelling of such closures, emergency management agencies can formulate more effective response protocols and establish evidence-based priorities for long-term infrastructure enhancement.

Knowledge Production in Refugee Studies

Maissam Nimer from the Social Science Faculty at ÖzÜ explored the case of the migration studies industry in Türkiye through an examination of knowledge production on refugee labour. Focusing on research about Syrian refugees' labour and employment in Türkiye between 2012 and 2018, the research highlighted the ways in which refugee labour is articulated and studied to provide ground for a wider critique of migration-related knowledge production.

This study aimed to reflexively question academic outputs by exploring the conceptual frames used broadly in research on refugee labour and developing an overview of the literature on Türkiye with a focus on this topic. The research serves as an example to argue that knowledge produced in a Southern context is mainly incorporated as case studies despite attempts to advance theoretical discussions, highlighting a North-South hierarchization of knowledge and its implications for understanding urban migration dynamics.

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



Global production and consumption patterns remain unsustainable. Özyeğin University promotes responsible consumption through green campus operations, awareness programs on waste reduction, and research on circular economy models that inform business and policy.

33

Scholarly Publications
(2020-2024)

0.75

Citation Impact
(FWCI)

4

Funded
Projects

20

Student-Led
Activities

"We're Disposing of What We Consume!" Campus-Wide Recycling Initiative

Organized each semester as part of Özyeğin University's Zero Waste Management System under the ISO 14001 Environmental Management framework, the recurring "We're Disposing of What We Consume!" event raises campus-wide awareness on recycling and environmental responsibility. Held in honor of Global Recycling Day on March 18, the event engages students in both learning and action, emphasizing empathy, collaboration, and shared responsibility for a clean campus environment.

The program begins with a seminar on waste management and recycling practices at ÖzÜ, followed by a hands-on activity where students join cleaning staff and volunteers from the HSE Community and Conscious ÖzÜ to collect and sort waste across campus. Having reached around 600 participants to date, the event not only strengthens environmental awareness but also fosters appreciation for cleaning operations. In recognition of its impact, Özyeğin University received the 2024 Türkiye Scale (Private Sector) Award at Akdeniz University's 27th Environmental Service Awards for this initiative.



Waste Management and Resource Efficiency

Özyeğin University integrates circular economy principles into all campus operations through a comprehensive Waste Management Plan based on the 3R approach—Reduce, Reuse, Recycle—and supported by its integrated management systems. As the first university in Türkiye to receive the Zero Waste Certificate from the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change in 2020, and again following inspection this year, the university continues to strengthen its commitment to resource efficiency and waste minimization.

Plastic and paper cups have been eliminated from kitchens, and dual waste bins for recycling and general waste have replaced single bins across classrooms, offices, and outdoor areas. On-site segregation and recycling are practiced throughout the Çekmeköy campus and dormitories, while electronic waste is minimized through a six-year laptop replacement cycle in which components are reused when possible. Measurable targets set in the university's Strategic Plan guide efforts to reduce per-capita waste generation and increase recycling rates.

These initiatives are supported by integrated management systems including ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001, ISO 50001, and ISO 46001. Awareness activities and trainings ensure that students, faculty, and staff are active participants in sustainable waste practices, creating a culture of efficiency and responsibility across the university's daily operations..

Collaborative Initiatives on Food Waste and Sustainability

On November 20, 2024, Özyeğin University participated in "The Taste of Food Waste is Gone" panel organized by Şile Municipality. During the event, important information was shared about food waste and environmental sustainability. The opening speech was delivered by Mr. Özgür Kabadayı, Mayor of Şile, who emphasized the importance of social responsibility in reducing the environmental impact of food waste and developing sustainable solutions.

Paper Waste Donation to TEMA Foundation

Within the scope of information security, paper waste is collected and taken for destruction, and the proceeds are donated to the TEMA Foundation on behalf of Özyeğin University. In 2024, a letter of appreciation was received from the TEMA Foundation in recognition of the donation made by the university. The donations are utilized by the TEMA Foundation for purposes such as combating erosion, afforestation, and protecting natural resources.



Lost Waters of Istanbul: Urban Heritage and Natural Resources

Dr. Kaan Özgün, faculty of Architecture at ÖZÜ, and his graduate student Beliz Bayraktar's research examines Istanbul, historically known as a water city, which has long relied on aquifers and conveyance structures. Today, urbanization and excessive groundwater use threaten these systems, leaving only 174 of 321 creeks. The study explores how natural elements like creeks and springs influenced Istanbul's urban heritage, including bostans (gardens) and hagiassmas (sacred springs).

Using GIS, researchers compared historical and modern land use through maps like the 1845 Mühendishane-i Berri Hümayun map and the "Carte de Constantinople." Focusing on the historical peninsula, they analyzed its past and present features, revealing significant insights for sustainable land use, tourism development, and heritage policies that balance conservation with responsible resource management.

Sustainable Rural Heritage Management

The study "Sustainable Cultural Heritage Management: A Model Proposal for the Rural Settlements in Türkiye" led by Dr. Didem Boyacıoğlu, aims to develop a rural cultural heritage management model through on-site observation, analysis, and stakeholder

interviews in German rural settlements, and to discuss its adaptability to Turkish rural areas. The research builds upon ongoing work on Şile villages in Istanbul and is prompted by similarities between Şile and German villages.

By evaluating the effectiveness of German cultural heritage management plans, the study seeks to create an adaptable model for Turkish rural settlements, with potential application in Şile villages as a future case study. The research employs mixed methods, combining conceptual and methodological approaches with quantitative and qualitative techniques to define a rural-specific management model that promotes sustainable use of cultural resources and heritage sites.

Innovative Concrete Technologies and Sustainable Building Materials

Two ÖZÜ laboratories managed by Assoc. Prof. Zeynep Başaran Bundur, Chair of Civil Engineering, bring together faculty, interns, students, and technical staff from various disciplines to advance sustainable construction materials. The Advanced Construction Technology Laboratory conducts cutting-edge research on building materials, focusing on sustainable concrete technologies, 3D-printing, bio-based systems, and digital design tools while welcoming global and local researchers and companies.

The Advanced Concrete Technologies laboratory develops conceptual methodologies, theoretical knowledge, and experimental validation for innovative and sustainable building materials through holistic approaches. The Construction Materials laboratory tests various building materials, primarily concrete, with facilities to investigate both mechanical and chemical structures of cement-based materials. These laboratories contribute to responsible production by developing materials that reduce environmental impact while maintaining structural performance and durability.

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The Advanced Concrete Technologies laboratory develops conceptual methodologies, theoretical knowledge, and experimental validation for innovative and sustainable building materials through holistic approaches. The Construction Materials laboratory tests various building materials, primarily concrete, with facilities to investigate both mechanical and chemical structures of cement-based materials. These laboratories contribute to responsible production by developing materials that reduce environmental impact while maintaining structural performance and durability.

13 CLIMATE ACTION

Climate change is the defining challenge of our time. ÖzÜ is committed to reducing its carbon footprint through sustainable operations, embedding climate action into education, and advancing research that addresses climate adaptation and mitigation at local and national levels.



32

Scholarly Publications
(2020-2024)

1.31

Citation Impact
(FWCI)

24

Funded
Projects

6

Student-Led
Activities



Student Representation at COP28

Emre Yiğit Ay, a second-year Law student and President of the Social Awareness Club at Özyeğin University, represented Türkiye and the university at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, held from November 30 to December 9, 2023. Selected as one of only five national Climate Ambassadors under the joint initiative of the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization, and Climate Change and UNICEF, Ay stood out among nearly 150 university representatives from across the country.

On the opening day, he presented the climate agenda of Turkish youth, voicing their priorities and perspectives before global leaders, and later joined official negotiation sessions as part of the Turkish delegation. His participation provided valuable firsthand exposure to international climate diplomacy, reinforcing Özyeğin University's commitment to youth engagement, climate advocacy, and global sustainability governance.





Net Zero Campus Initiative

Özyeğin University is committed to achieving a net-zero campus through systematic carbon management and climate-responsible operations. Since 2018, the university has calculated and publicly shared its carbon and water footprints, integrating the results into its Environmental Policy and strategic sustainability plan. Regular assessments of environmental risks and resource efficiency ensure that climate-related impacts are continuously monitored and addressed.

Operationally, the university offsets its emissions through mechanisms such as International Renewable Energy Certificates (I-REC) and verified carbon projects while also implementing direct reduction measures, including the Campus Holiday initiative and event-based carbon offsetting. Sustainable infrastructure practices—such as drought-tolerant landscaping, rainwater harvesting, greywater reuse, and advanced energy and water metering—further enhance efficiency and climate resilience. These actions are reinforced by awareness programs across campus, supported by digital campaigns and the efforts of the university's Climate Ambassador. Integrated management systems, including ISO 14001, ISO 50001, and ISO 46001, provide the foundation for continuous improvement toward a low-carbon, climate-resilient campus.

Student Clubs' Collaborative Climate Seminar Series

The Climate Crisis and Sustainable Climate Transformation Conference and the Climate Crisis, Climate Transformation, and Sustainability Seminar held at Özyeğin University on May 7-8, 2024, involved collaborative efforts from Sustainability Platform, Faculty of Law, Law Club, the Diplomacy Club, and the ÖzÜ Debate Club. These events featured discussions on environmental challenges, climate policy, and sustainable solutions, strengthening climate governance and encouraging students to engage in policy discussions.

This interdisciplinary approach encouraged students to advocate for sustainable practices across society and fostered learning about climate issues, empowering students with knowledge and skills to address climate transformation and resilience challenges.



Nature-Based Solutions for Urban Climate Resilience

Dr. Beyza Şat, Faculty of Architecture at ÖzÜ, and her graduate student Emine Şen conducted a systematic literature review on the implementation of bioswales as nature-based solutions to address the growing challenges posed by climate change in urban areas. Their research focuses on ecosystem preservation and urban climate resilience. The study analyzed bioswale design and performance based on factors such as materials, orientation, and location within urban landscapes, aiming to establish a framework that enhances ecosystem services, manages stormwater effectively, and improves quality of life for city residents while supporting biodiversity and ecosystem health.

Climate-Resilient School Buildings

Dr. Touraj Ashrafian conducted research on incorporating future weather predictions into building assessments to enhance resilience, energy efficiency, and occupant comfort in response to climate change. His study explored the interplay between climate change and building performance, focusing on energy usage and cost implications in school buildings across different climate zones. Utilizing a comprehensive simulation-based approach, Dr. Ashrafian implemented and validated future weather data in a Turkish school

building, integrating envelope improvements and photovoltaic applications. This research provides critical insights for designing climate-resilient educational infrastructure that can maintain functionality and comfort under changing climate conditions.

Residential Building Climate Adaptation

Dr. Touraj Ashrafian and his graduate student Gökçe Tomrukçü from the Faculty of Architecture and Design investigated the potential impact of climate change on residential buildings and explored strategies for improving existing structures to support long-term climate adaptation. Using climate data scenarios developed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), various building envelope and HVAC system scenarios were created and compared. The study highlighted the need for strategies to increase the climate resilience of single-family homes, which constitute a substantial portion of Türkiye's building stock, identifying practical adaptation measures to mitigate climate change impacts while supporting energy efficiency and emissions reduction goals.



Project PHOENIX: Human Mobility and Climate-Induced Social Change

Dr. Susan Rottman from the Faculty of Social Sciences serves as the principal investigator for Project PHOENIX (Human Mobility, Global Challenges and Resilience in an Age of Social Stress), supported by the Belmont Forum. This interdisciplinary research initiative examines global changes including environmental and climate changes, demographic shifts, and socio-cultural transformations. The project conducts human-centric case studies examining food security and cultural survival, providing new perspectives on how climate-induced (im)mobilities are shaped by socio-cultural contexts and the psycho-social health of populations. Drawing on both natural and social sciences, Project PHOENIX addresses the often-overlooked human dimensions of climate change, examining how climate impacts intersect with social systems, mental health, and human mobility patterns—critical considerations for developing comprehensive and equitable climate action strategies.

phoenix
human mobility - global challenges - resilience

İklim hareketliliği, sosyal dönüm noktaları ve toplumun dayanıklılığına odaklanan bir araştırma projesi.
A research project focused on climate mobility, social tipping points and community resilience.

ÖzÜ-X
24.05.2024
14.30 - 18.00

PHOENIX, Belmont Forumu, "Turgunluk ve Gelişim Çağında" bir akademik kamu finansman kuruluşları tarafından finanse edilmektedir. Türkiye Bilimsel ve Teknolojik Araştırma Kurumu (TÜBİTAK), İsviçre Çevre, Tarım Bilimleri ve Mekansal Planlama Araştırma Kurumu (FOENAS), Amerika Kıtası Kalkınma ve Çevre Araştırmaları Enstitüsü (IAD), Avusturya Bilim Fonu (FWF), São Paulo Araştırma Vakfı (FAPESP) ve Ulusal Araştırma Vakfı (NRF).

PHOENIX is funded by the Belmont Forum, "Mobility & Migration CRA Call" by the following public funding organizations: The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK), Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences, and Spatial Planning (FORMAS), Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAG), The Austrian Science Fund (FWF), São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP), and National Research Foundation (NRF).

Phoenix image is an AI-generated drawing by OpenAI 2024

ÖZÜĞÜN-ÜNİVERSİTESİ
15.YIL

SP
SAĞLIK VE PLANLAMA

TÜBİTAK

BELMONT FORUM

15 LIFE ON LAND



Biodiversity loss and land degradation are urgent global issues. Özyeğin University engages in ecological restoration projects, supports research on sustainable land management, and raises awareness through student-led initiatives and collaborations with environmental organizations.

4

Scholarly Publications
(2020-2024)

1.93

Citation Impact
(FWCI)

1

Funded
Projects

10

Student-Led
Activities

Communication Design Projects Focusing on Biodiversity

In the 2023-24 academic year, students in the Communication and Design Department produced creative works centered on water ecosystems and biodiversity. In the COD 301 Design Studio course "Making Films Following the Water," students produced films under the theme 'Istanbul and Water,' starting from the campus stream. The subjects explored ranged from fountains to aqueducts, from public baths to droughts, creating works in various genres such as documentary, animation, and performance.

In the COD 302 Design Studio course "Art Following the Flow," students utilized the power of art and design to convey messages about the importance of freshwater resources. Following the route of the campus stream, students listened to the unheard voice of the stream, explored the natural landscape, and developed creative communication solutions and design projects. Conducting a collective work process under the name 'Codlective,' 12 students each produced projects in Özyeğin University laboratories. These creative works were placed at designated points along the stream route and shared with the public during the 'Greenhack' event on June 5th, World Environment Day.



Peace and Sustainability Grove

Since 2014, Özyeğin University has established a tradition of tree planting on its campus aimed at fostering a sustainable environment. These annual tree-planting events, organized by the HSE Committee and Student Dean Office and held at the start of each academic year, have gradually formed a "Peace and Sustainability Grove" on the university grounds, which has developed its own natural habitat over time. This green space, enriched by hundreds of trees, offers students, academic staff, and administrative employees the opportunity to engage with nature and enhance their environmental awareness. Özyeğin University's commitment to environmental protection is explicitly outlined in its Human Resources Policy. As one of the world's top 100 greenest universities and the top-ranked foundation university in Türkiye in the GreenMetric rankings for four consecutive years (2019-2024), Özyeğin University prioritizes the preservation of biodiversity on its campus. Over the past decade, more than 18,000 trees have been planted to enhance biodiversity, with a focus on selecting plants suited to the local climate. These plants are maintained with dedicated care, including regular pruning and an efficient irrigation system (drip and sprinkler), ensuring their longevity and the protection of campus green spaces.

ÖzÜ Bostan: Campus Garden for Sustainable Agriculture

The ÖzÜ Bostan (Özyeğin University Garden) project creates a campus-based organic vegetable garden that promotes sustainable land use, biodiversity, and ecosystem health while providing employees and the campus community with access to fresh, locally grown food. By maintaining an organic garden on campus, the university protects and restores a portion of its terrestrial ecosystem, providing habitat for pollinators and beneficial insects essential for biodiversity.

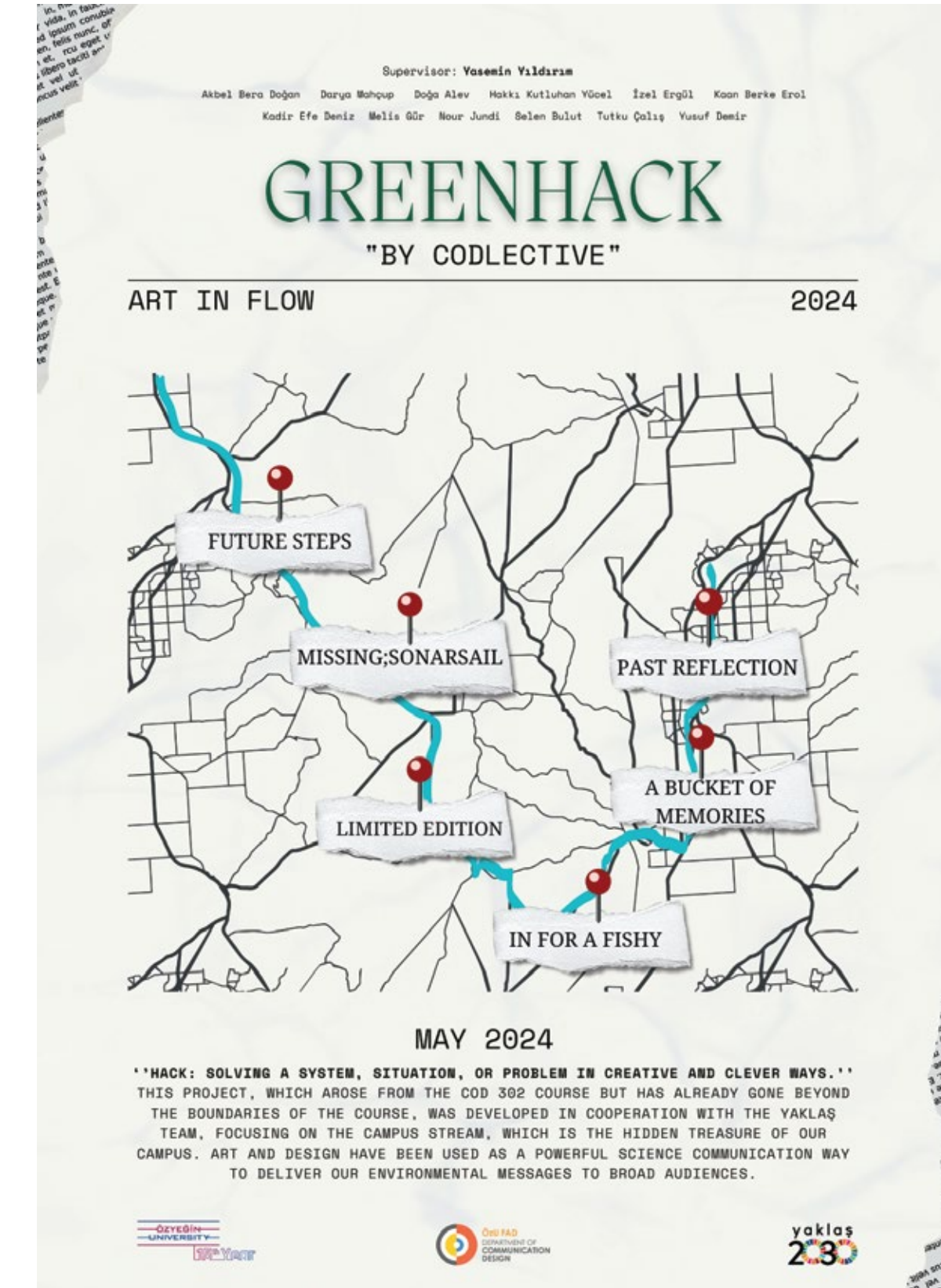
The garden employs sustainable agricultural techniques including crop rotation, composting, and natural pest management, avoiding synthetic pesticides and fertilizers that can degrade soil health and harm local ecosystems. This hands-on demonstration of ecological agriculture principles helps raise awareness among students, faculty, and staff about the critical connections between healthy soils, biodiversity, and sustainable food systems. The project also promotes employee health and well-being by providing access to nutritious, chemical-free produce while creating green spaces that enhance campus environmental quality and contribute to urban ecosystem services.

Yaklaş 2030 Program: Greenhack Event

The Yaklaş 2030 Program brings the effects of dense urbanization on the ecosystem to the forefront of discussion through the dry stream on campus. Student projects in the fields of communication, design, and art that draw attention to the stream on campus were presented to the public at the "Greenhack" launch organized as part of the World Environment Day activities.

The Yaklaş 2030 Program, which has been running since 2018 under the Sustainability Platform at ÖzÜ, focuses on research and learning by approaching global issues from the perspective of science and art. Aiming to develop students' critical perspective, sensitivity, and responsibility towards global issues, the program's focus this year was on the dry stream on campus. With projects produced in different departments, courses, and workshops, the program takes a transdisciplinary approach to the current situation, future, and rewilding possibilities of freshwater resources.

These creative works were placed at designated points along the stream route. The exhibition "On the Edge of a Stream" (Bir Derenin Kenarında) based on the students' projects, opened at the Pavilion Building on 22nd March on Water Day and remained open until October 2024.





Preserving Türkiye's Agricultural Heritage Systems

The "Capacity Building on Agricultural Heritage Systems" project, led by Assoc. Prof. Faik Gür, Faculty of Social Sciences, and conducted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of the Republic of Türkiye, with Özyeğin University serving as the service provider, aims to register the villages of Büyüksöğle, Küçüksöğle, and Geçmen in Antalya's Elmalı district as Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS).

GIAHS focuses on preserving traditional agricultural knowledge, practices, landscapes, and cultural values developed over thousands of years of human history, while ensuring their dynamic continuation and transmission to future generations. As Türkiye's first GIAHS application, this significant project has completed an application file for submission to the FAO GIAHS Secretariat, prepared two thematic reports, and organized a training program for ministry officials, contributing to the preservation of biodiversity and sustainable land management practices in rural communities.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



Peace and justice are essential for sustainable societies. Özyeğin University contributes by integrating human rights, ethics, and good governance into its curricula, conducting research on democratic participation and law, and fostering dialogue through civic engagement programs.

21

Scholarly Publications
(2020-2024)

0.86

Citation Impact
(FWCI)

2

Funded
Projects

26

Student-Led
Activities

Responsible Citizenship Course: Rights-Based Governance

Starting in the 2025–26 academic year, Özyeğin University will introduce TRL202/204 Responsible Citizenship, an interdisciplinary course designed to strengthen students' understanding of democratic participation, active citizenship, and rights-based governance. The course examines citizenship from legal, political, social, and psychological perspectives, helping students analyze societal challenges and design ethical, inclusive solutions that promote justice and accountability.

Working in multidisciplinary teams, students develop projects that apply human rights principles and participatory governance methods to real-world issues. The curriculum emphasizes transparency, ethical use of technology, and collaboration with local stakeholders, encouraging students to engage actively with communities and institutions. Through rights-based project design, fieldwork, and reflective practice, the course cultivates the values of civic responsibility and ethical leadership, preparing graduates to contribute to more just, peaceful, and accountable societies.

Inter-Disciplinary Child Rights Laboratory Mock Trial

The Inter-Disciplinary Child Rights Laboratory (ICRLAB) at Özyeğin University unites faculty and students from law, psychology, sociology, and social work to address child rights issues through multidisciplinary research and experiential learning. The laboratory equips students with the skills to approach complex child protection challenges using rights-based, evidence-driven methods.

On April 19, ICRLAB organized a mock trial titled "Under the Surface II: Marriage Consent Case," focusing on a family's petition to approve the marriage of a 16-year-old girl. Guided by faculty member Dr. Sevgi Usta, Faculty of Law, and research assistant Deniz Aslı Çoker, and Oben Südütemiz, students analyzed the case from legal, psychological, and sociological perspectives, producing expert reports on family dynamics, adolescent well-being, and social pressures. Journalism students from Istanbul University also joined, examining media representations of child marriage. The exercise engaged key international legal frameworks, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and CEDAW, while fostering practical understanding of justice and institutional responsibility in protecting children's rights.

Academic Freedom Policy

Özyeğin University became a signatory to the Magna Charta Universitatum on September 16, 2011, and declared its commitment to defend academic freedom and university autonomy. Since then, Özyeğin University has embraced academic freedom and affirmed its commitment to be a place of free and open inquiry. The university understands this freedom as a duty to search for truth, wherever it may be found. Such inquiry and the attendant open discussions, unrestricted exchanges of ideas, and examinations of widely divergent materials are all essential components of academic freedom. Academic freedom to pursue the truth must involve tolerance for students and faculty to make mistakes of inquiry. In embracing academic freedom, the university pledges to defend this quest for truth by its officers, faculty, staff, and students, creating an environment in which students and faculty may pursue truth aware that errors and mistakes are necessarily part of the process. The university also acknowledges the responsibilities that attend academic freedom, beginning with a commitment to honesty and integrity in dealing with officers of the institution, faculty, students, and the public. Özyeğin recognizes academic freedom in tenure and promotion decisions, research, scholarship, publication, teaching, for senior and junior faculty, and public statements as private citizens.



Connect Legal Lab:**Advancing Legal Frameworks for Digital Transformation**

The Connect Legal Lab, launched alongside the Department of IT Law, has been established as an effective research field in today's interconnected era. Recognized by technology leaders as essential, the lab addresses the need for fair and effective legal frameworks during rapid digital transformation, where everything from human cognition to vehicles is increasingly networked and digitized.

As an interdisciplinary research hub, Connect Legal Lab focuses on analyzing the legal implications of evolving technologies while fostering collaboration with various fields, including technology-focused disciplines and academia-industry participants. Research areas encompass interconnected and emerging technologies, such as next-generation wireless systems (5G and 6G), cybersecurity, data privacy, data protection, smart cities, brain-machine interfaces, and neuro-rights. Through this initiative, activities have been planned where students actively participate in research, events, projects, and hackathons. The lab also targets contributions toward enhancing undergraduate and graduate education on the legal impact of emerging technologies, serving as a forward-looking knowledge transfer center that pursues national and international research.

The founders of the Connect Legal Lab, Dr. Başak Ozan Özparlak and Dr. Müge Çetin from the Department of Information Technology Law, have recently joined the "Behavioral Next Generation in Wireless Networks for Cyber Security (BEiNG-WISE)" action conducted by the European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) organization. The project proposes a paradigm shift by integrating human behavioral factors with advanced technological characteristics to develop responsible-by-design cybersecurity solutions, bringing together cross-domain expertise from cybersecurity, wireless communications, data science, sociology, psychology, and law.

Countering Foreign Information Manipulation

The Detecting and Countering Information Suppression from a Transnational Perspective (DE-CONSPIRATOR) project coordinated by Dr. Akin Ünver, faculty of Social Sciences, is a groundbreaking research project launched in January 2024 to combat Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI), which involves the deliberate spread of false information by foreign actors to undermine democratic institutions. The project specifically examines sophisticated information manipulation tactics employed by Russia and China within the European Union and its partner countries, which use FIMI as a modern warfare tool to manipulate public discourse, promote their agendas, and create division and polarization in European societies. The project's launch is particularly timely as 2024 is a pivotal year for democracy, with nearly two billion people worldwide participating in elections. DE-CONSPIRATOR aims to counter these threats to liberal democracies that depend on the free and open flow of information.

DeeP-MaRS: An AI-assisted bioweapon detection platform

Dr. Burçin Ünlü from the Faculty of Engineering is participating from ÖzÜ in the DeeP-MaRS project consortium, an AI-powered biological weapon detection platform developed to counter bioterrorism threats. Bioterrorism involves deliberate release of harmful microorganisms such as viruses and bacteria into air or water, resulting in mass casualties, epidemics, and environmental damage. This project aims to develop a multi-sensor platform that combines magnetic levitation-Raman spectroscopy, photoacoustic spectroscopy, and artificial intelligence technologies. The platform's primary goal is to rapidly detect bacterial contamination in municipal water and air supplies, enabling early intervention to prevent the spread of diseases caused by biological attacks.

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

*Global challenges require collective solutions.
Özyeğin University strengthens this goal
through international collaborations, active
participation in global university networks,
partnerships with industry and civil society,
and research projects that connect local
actions to global outcomes.*



22 **91**
Funded Projects Student-Led Activities



ATTUNE: Activate The University for Climate Change

The project "Activate The University for Climate Change" (ATTUNE) has produced an innovative learning program that directly addresses climate change on the university campus and encourages students, academic staff, and administrative personnel to act together. The program is being simultaneously conducted at five different universities in Germany, Italy, Spain, Poland, and Türkiye as part of the Erasmus+ KA220-HED project.

The initiative collaborated with 10 different organizations including universities and NGOs to create five main online education modules on sustainability (water, energy, food consumption, waste, and transportation). Piloted in 5 different universities in 5 different countries, this model can now be implemented in any university. Over the past academic year, ATTUNE has achieved significant results: 5 universities across Europe leading change on their campuses against climate change, 50,000 visits to the website, active participation of 1,700 members from the university community, and 31 research-action teams working on specific topics on campus.



ÖzÜ Sustainability Platform

The Sustainability Platform is a multidisciplinary, multi-participant, comprehensive, and integrated model to present ÖzÜ's commitment to partnerships and sustainability. The office offers an integrated model to manage sustainability initiatives of ÖzÜ such as encouraging cross-disciplinary and cross-faculty research on sustainability, designing, delivering, and promoting extracurricular activities related to SDGs and maintaining a sustainable campus.

Institutional Partnerships and Collaborative Framework

Özyeğin University recognizes that the success of the SDGs agenda requires genuine collaboration among governments, the private sector, civil society, and universities. The university plays an important role in fostering cooperation and amplifying sustainable development work through innovation and leadership. The ÖzÜ Social Contribution Framework is a statement of the university's commitment to adopt a leadership role at a national and international level to shape a sustainable environment and society, contributing to the SDGs. Özyeğin University started a collaboration with the Turkish Industry and Business Association (TÜSİAD) in 2015 for institutional representation. Other partnerships of ÖzÜ in tackling the SDGs include institutions such as the International Sustainable Campus Network (ISCN), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United

Nations (FAO), WWF, Women in Renewable Energy, and Xi'an Jiaotong University, as well as government institutions and municipalities. In addition, Özyeğin University is a member of the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) initiative and the European University Association (EUA), both of which strengthen its global engagement and commitment to responsible education and sustainable development.

Memorandum of Understanding with Women in Renewable Energy (WiRE)

Özyeğin University has entered a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Women in Renewable Energy (WiRE) network. Signed by President Prof. Barış Tan, the MoU aims to identify areas of collaboration between the university and WiRE, facilitating cooperation and joint initiatives in areas of shared interest. The collaboration includes collaborative research, joint events, workshops, and other activities to be mutually agreed upon by both parties. Founded in 2013 in Toronto, Canada, WiRE has rapidly expanded to over 25 chapters worldwide. Its mission is to advance the role and recognition of women and other underrepresented groups in the renewable energy sector while promoting equal opportunities.

A roadmap proposal has been prepared to facilitate the design of short, medium, and long-term smart city strategies in selected cities. The pilot cities for the project include Istanbul, Izmir, Gaziantep, Konya, Bursa, Ankara, London, Paris, and Berlin. The project facilitated participation in virtual workshops on 'Data Management,' 'Access to Financing,' and 'Disaster/Risk Management.' A workshop on 'Collective and Integrated Data Management' was also held in Istanbul in cooperation with the Consulate General of Germany, where pilot cities discussed common challenges and proposed solutions.





2C1N: Sustainable Youth Reports Project

Mentored by ÖzÜ Sustainability Platform and conducted with the collaboration of Zorlu Holding and Simurg Association, the 2C1N Project aims to assist young people in making their voices heard about the SDGs. 2C1N is a project in which high school students analyze the 17 Sustainable Development Goals set for the year 2030, and the question of 'What will happen after 2030?' is discussed by high school students, and the answers are compiled into reports by university students.

The 2C1N project, which will take place over a period of 9 years starting in 2021, publishes Sustainable Youth Reports every August 12th, Youth Day. Its goal is to publish the Sustainable Youth Manifesto on August 12, 2030. As of 2023, pilot reports on the first 9 SDGs are completed.

ÖzÜ Social Impact Study

Özyeğin University believes that sustainable development can only be achieved through the active participation of all segments of society. Accordingly, the university prioritizes building bridges among the public sector, private enterprises, civil society, and academia to foster a culture of multi-stakeholder learning and collaboration. Guided by its institutional values, Özyeğin University

strives not only to generate knowledge but also to translate that knowledge into tangible social value through an integrated impact ecosystem.

The university is conducting a comprehensive internal impact study aimed at understanding, measuring, and managing its institutional impact. The study seeks to identify potential impact areas across academic units, student communities, and external partnerships, while assessing how current activities create value in terms of social benefit, inclusivity, and stakeholder engagement. The findings will serve as the foundation for a data-driven impact management model aligned with the university's sustainability vision, enabling the university to move from organically emerging impacts toward a more strategic, traceable, and measurable impact framework.

Türkiye & Europe: Smart and Green Cities Alliances

TÜSİAD, in partnership with TÜRKONFED, Institut du Bosphore, Berlin Bosphorus Initiative, Özyeğin University (ÖzÜ), and ÖzÜ-TÜSİAD Sustainable Development Forum, has initiated a project called 'Türkiye and Europe: Integrated Services - Tools - Technology Roadmap Project for Smart Cities.' This project aims to strengthen coordination among municipalities, providing a platform for experience and knowledge sharing.

Diversified Research Funding Framework

Özyeğin University has established robust partnerships with national industry organizations and secured funding from both national and international funding institutions. Primary funding sources include the European Union, TUBITAK (The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye), Ministry Funds, Foundation Funds, Consulate Funds, and Development Agencies. In terms of total funding volume distribution, TUBITAK represents the largest share at 34.13%, followed by university-industry collaboration at 24.42%, the EU at 23.8%, other international institutions at 8.4%, and development agencies at 5.6%.

Industry partnerships span a diverse range of sectors, reflecting the breadth and depth of collaborative research capabilities. These stakeholder groups include home appliances (Vestel, Arçelik), defense industry (Roketsan, Tusaş Motor Sanayi), technology and telecommunications (Nokia, Huawei), food and beverage, financial services and insurance (Anadolu Hayat Emeklilik, Kredi Kayıt Bürosu), furniture and textile, aviation and tourism (Pegasus, Swisshotel), construction and materials, and NGOs (TÜSİAD). These multisectoral partnerships enable the university to address real-world challenges through innovative research while contributing significantly to Türkiye's economic and technological advancement.



—ÖZYEĞİN—
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2025