

UNEC ANNUAL REPORT

2025

**Nurturing Innovation, Driving
Sustainability, and Shaping Global Leaders**



A Message from the Rector



It is with immense pride and profound gratitude that I present the Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC) Annual Report for 2025. This past year has been a testament to our unwavering commitment to academic excellence, innovation, and societal impact. As we celebrated our 95th anniversary, UNEC continued to build on its rich legacy, expanding its global footprint and fostering an

environment where future leaders are not just educated but empowered to make a meaningful difference in the world.

In 2025, UNEC has made significant strides across all key areas. Our financial stewardship has been robust, allowing for substantial investments in sustainability, student well-being, and research initiatives. We have strengthened our international collaborations, attracting diverse talent and offering our students unparalleled opportunities. Our academic programs have continued to evolve, integrating cutting-edge research and practical applications to ensure our graduates are well-equipped for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

This report highlights our collective achievements, from groundbreaking research to impactful community engagement, and showcases the dedication of our faculty, staff, and students. As we look ahead, UNEC remains committed to its mission of being a leading institution for economic education and research, driving sustainable development, and nurturing a generation of globally conscious and skilled professionals.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to the UNEC vision.

**Sincerely,
Professor Adalat Muradov
Rector**

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1. Executive Summary

The year 2025 marked a significant milestone for UNEC, celebrating 95 years of academic leadership and innovation. This report details a year of remarkable progress across all facets of the institution. Financially, UNEC managed a budget of 83,249,000 AZN, with a substantial 23% allocated towards sustainability and well-being initiatives, underscoring our commitment to a holistic and responsible educational environment.

Academically, the **2nd International Conference of Researchers in Economics and Social Sciences (ICRESS-2025)** on the topic “**Sustainable Development and Innovation Economy**” and the VII International Scientific Conference for Researchers in the Field of Economics and Management (ISCEMR-2025) was a resounding success, attracting leading scholars and fostering critical discourse. The UNEC Design School achieved international acclaim at a prestigious global event, with its collection captivating an international audience and demonstrating the vibrant cultural synthesis of Azerbaijan and China.

Our commitment to student success was evident in the comprehensive scholarship programs, including tuition fee waivers, merit-based awards, financial aid, and post-graduation grants for entrepreneurial ventures. These initiatives ensure that talent is nurtured and empowered regardless of financial background.

Internationally, UNEC continued to strengthen its global network, facilitating diverse collaborations and exchange programs. Our alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) remained a cornerstone of our strategic planning, with numerous projects and policies directly contributing to a more sustainable and equitable future.

In essence, 2025 was a year where UNEC not only celebrated its past but firmly positioned itself as a forward-thinking institution dedicated to academic excellence, global engagement, and sustainable development.

2. Strategic Overview & Vision 2030

UNEC's strategic vision for 2030 is anchored in becoming a leading international university renowned for its innovative economic education, impactful research, and commitment to sustainable development. This vision guides our annual objectives and long-term planning, ensuring that every initiative contributes to our overarching goals.

Core Pillars of Vision 2030:

- **Global Recognition:** To be recognized as a top-tier institution for economics and management education globally, attracting diverse talent and fostering international collaboration.
- **Research & Innovation Hub:** To be a hub for cutting-edge research in economics, management, and related fields, contributing to national and international policy-making and industrial innovation.
- **Sustainable Development Champion:** To integrate the principles of sustainable development across all academic programs, operational practices, and community engagement initiatives, actively contributing to the UN SDGs.
- **Student-Centric Excellence:** To provide an empowering and supportive learning environment that equips students with critical thinking skills, entrepreneurial spirit, and ethical leadership qualities.
- **Digital Transformation:** To leverage advanced digital technologies in teaching, learning, research, and administrative processes to enhance efficiency, accessibility, and pedagogical innovation.

Strategic Priorities for 2025, aligned with Vision 2030:

- **Enhancing Research Output:** Increase the number of publications in peer-reviewed international journals and secure more research grants.
- **Expanding International Partnerships:** Forge new academic and research collaborations with leading universities worldwide.
- **Curriculum Modernization:** Continuously update course content to reflect global economic trends, technological advancements, and sustainability challenges.
- **Strengthening Entrepreneurial Ecosystem:** Provide enhanced support, mentorship, and funding opportunities for student startups.
- **Promoting Inclusivity and Well-being:** Implement programs and policies that ensure a diverse, equitable, and supportive environment for all members of the UNEC community.

3. Key Performance Highlights (2025)

This section provides a concise overview of UNEC's key performance indicators for 2025, reflecting progress across academic excellence, research, internationalization, and sustainability.

Key Performance Highlights (KPI Dashboard 2025)

Indicator	Value
Total Budget	83,249,000 AZN
Sustainability Investment	23%
QS Ranking	801–850
THE Ranking	801–1000
Scopus Growth	378x
WoS diversity	159x
H-index (Scopus)	49
International Collaboration	67%
Countries Collaborated	139+

The following key performance indicators provide a concise overview of UNEC's institutional performance in 2025. These metrics reflect the university's progress in academic excellence, research impact, internationalization, and sustainability.

4. Academic Excellence & Innovation

2025 was a year of significant academic achievements, marked by outstanding faculty contributions, impactful research, and the continuous evolution of our program offerings.

Faculty Achievements

UNEC faculty members continue to be at the forefront of their respective fields, demonstrating excellence in teaching, research, and professional engagement. Several faculty members received national and international awards for their contributions to economics and management.

Research & Publications

Research output at UNEC saw a notable increase in 2025, with faculty and students contributing to a diverse range of scholarly works. Our research focuses on areas critical to national development and global challenges, including sustainable economics, digital economy, public policy, and entrepreneurial studies.

Key Research Highlights:

- On December 4–5, 2025, the **2nd International Conference of Researchers in Economics and Social Sciences (ICRESS-2025)** on the topic “**Sustainable Development and Innovation Economy**” was held at the Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC).
- **The VII International Scientific Conference for Researchers in the Field of Economics and Management (ISCEMR-2025)**, dedicated to UNEC's 95th anniversary, was a major success. It brought together over 300 researchers from 50 countries, presenting papers on topics ranging from green

finance to AI in business. The conference proceedings have been published and are available online.

- Numerous research projects received internal and external funding, focusing on the economic impact of climate change, digitalization of SMEs, and gender equality in the workforce.
- The UNEC Research Journal saw a 20% increase in submissions and a 15% increase in citations compared to the previous year.

Program Development

UNEC continuously reviews and updates its academic programs to ensure they remain relevant, innovative, and aligned with industry demands and global best practices.

- **Curriculum Integration:** Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been further integrated into core curricula across all faculties, ensuring that students develop a comprehensive understanding of global challenges and solutions.
- **Digital Learning Enhancement:** Investments were made in advanced e-learning platforms and resources, enhancing the flexibility and quality of blended learning programs.

5. Internationalization & Global Engagement

Internationalization remains a cornerstone of UNEC's strategy, fostering a global perspective in our students and faculty, and extending our influence worldwide.

International Partnerships

In 2025, UNEC significantly expanded its global academic network by signing new Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with universities across Europe, Asia, and other regions. These partnerships facilitate student and faculty exchanges, joint research initiatives, and the development of collaborative academic programs.

UNEC established new partnerships with the following institutions:

UNEC signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with the following institutions:

- Lanzhou University of Finance and Economics (China)
- Sejong University (South Korea)
- De Montfort University (United Kingdom)
- RWTH Aachen University (Germany)
- Constructor University (Germany)
- Óbuda University (Hungary)
- D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics (Bulgaria)
- UCSI University (Malaysia)
- Asia Pacific University of Technology & Innovation (APU) (Malaysia)
- Sunway University (Malaysia)
- INTI International University (Malaysia)
- Tunku Abdul Rahman University (Malaysia)
- Nilai University (Malaysia)
- Turkmen State Institute of Economics and Management (Turkmenistan)
- Turkmen State Finance Institute (Turkmenistan)
- Pamukkale University (Türkiye)
- Kırşehir Ahi Evran University (Türkiye)
- Balıkesir University (Türkiye)
- Osh State University (Kyrgyzstan)
- Kyrgyz National University (KNU) (Kyrgyzstan)
- Kunayev University (Kazakhstan)
- Turan University (Kazakhstan)
- Tashkent International University (Uzbekistan)
- National University of Uzbekistan named after Mirzo Ulugbek (Uzbekistan)
- Banking and Finance Academy of Uzbekistan (Uzbekistan)
- Tashkent International University of Financial Management and

Technologies (Uzbekistan)

- Samarkand Institute of Economics and Service (Uzbekistan)
- Tashkent University of Textile and Light Industry (Uzbekistan)
- STARS International University (Uzbekistan)
- American University of Technology (Uzbekistan)
- University of Baghdad (Iraq)

In addition, new academic initiatives were launched, including the establishment of a Bachelor's dual diploma program with Lincoln University, as well as ongoing preparations for dual degree programs with the University of Glasgow and Corvinus University.

As a result of UNEC's expanding internationalization strategy, the number of international students reached 819 in 2025, reflecting the university's growing global attractiveness.

Existing Collaborations on Dual-Degree and Joint-Degree programs

- UNEC continues to maintain and strengthen its long-standing partnerships with leading international institutions. In particular, ongoing collaborations with the University of Montpellier, Ege University, Tashkent State University of Economics, Mykolas Romeris University, ICD International Business School, Moscow University for the Humanities, University of Western Macedonia (joint-degree) remained active and productive, contributing to academic exchange, joint research, and institutional development.

UNEC Design School's Global Achievement in Hong Kong Stage (SDG 17)

A significant highlight of 2025 was the extraordinary success of the UNEC Design School on the international stage.

- **International Design Competition:** At a prestigious international event organized by *Hong Kong Polytechnic University-PolyU*, featuring hundreds of applications from around the world, only 30 country teams passed the rigorous selection process to reach the final and present their collections. The collection prepared and presented by UNEC Design School teachers Lala Qafarova and Gunay Karimova garnered significant international attention with its aesthetic presentation, high professionalism, and original design solutions.
- **Cultural Synthesis:** The event showcased Azerbaijani culture through traditional national costume elements and modern design samples reflecting an Azerbaijani-Chinese cultural synthesis. Both models were met with great interest by international experts and spectators for their high technical execution, artistic value, and creative approach.
- **Collaborative Effort:** This successful project was implemented within the framework of the UNEC International Cooperation Department, Strategic Development Department, and UNEC Design School, demonstrating the power of inter-departmental collaboration.





6. Infrastructure & The Green Transformation: “Ganjlik” Campus Reborn (SDG 11&13)

A defining milestone of 2025 was the complete transformation of the **UNEC Ganjlik Campus**. Moving beyond simple renovation, the university undertook a strategic "demolish and rebuild" project to align our physical infrastructure with our 2030 sustainability goals.

The "Green Campus" Initiative

The new Ganjlik Campus serves as a living laboratory for innovation and environmental stewardship. The project was executed under the "**Smart & Green University**" framework, ensuring that every square meter contributes to our carbon reduction targets and the **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

- **Net-Zero Architecture:** The campus features energy-efficient glass facades and automated climate control systems that reduce energy consumption by **40%** compared to traditional buildings.
- **Renewable Energy Integration:** Solar panels installed on the rooftop provide a significant portion of the campus's electricity, powering high-tech labs and common areas.

- **Zero-Waste Policy:** The campus is equipped with an advanced waste management system and greywater recycling for its extensive green zones.
- **Innovative Learning Spaces:** Traditional classrooms have been replaced with "Collaborative Hubs" featuring integrated AI-driven educational tools and flexible furniture to foster peer-to-peer learning.

The Ganjlik Campus is no longer just a place of study; it is a manifestation of our commitment to the planet. By rebuilding from the ground up, we have created a space where innovation and sustainability are literally built into the walls.

The Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC) has undertaken a comprehensive transformation of its campuses in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), demonstrating a strong institutional commitment to environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and sustainable innovation.

In addressing **SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation**, UNEC has implemented advanced water management systems, including the use of treated and recycled water for non-potable purposes. The installation of sensor-based water taps has further enhanced efficiency by minimizing unnecessary water consumption, ensuring responsible usage across campus. These initiatives collectively contribute to the conservation of vital water resources.

A key pillar of UNEC's sustainability strategy is its transition toward clean and renewable energy, directly contributing to **SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy**. The installation of solar panels across campus facilities has significantly reduced dependence on non-renewable energy sources while lowering greenhouse gas emissions. These systems not only generate sustainable electricity but also serve as educational tools, raising awareness among students and staff about renewable energy technologies.

UNEC's sustainability efforts also align with **SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure**, as the adoption of modern technologies—such as smart water systems and renewable energy solutions—demonstrates a commitment to innovative infrastructure development.

In line with **SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities**, the university has prioritized pedestrian safety and mobility. The redesign of campus infrastructure now emphasizes secure, accessible, and pedestrian-friendly pathways, reducing reliance on motorized transport and promoting a healthier, more sustainable campus environment.

UNEC has also made substantial progress toward **SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production** through its near-elimination of plastic waste. By introducing sustainable alternatives, promoting recycling practices, and fostering a culture of environmental consciousness, the university has significantly reduced single-use plastics within its premises. This shift not only minimizes environmental pollution but also encourages behavioral change among the academic community. Furthermore, these initiatives collectively support **SDG 13: Climate Action**, as UNEC actively works to reduce its carbon footprint through energy efficiency, waste reduction, and sustainable infrastructure. The integration of environmentally responsible practices into campus operations highlights the university's proactive role in combating climate change.

In conclusion, UNEC stands as a leading example of how higher education institutions can integrate the principles of the Sustainable Development Goals into their operational and strategic frameworks. Through investments in clean energy, water conservation, waste reduction, and sustainable mobility, the university not only enhances campus life but also contributes meaningfully to global sustainability objectives.

UNEC has implemented a comprehensive sustainability training framework that requires all administrative staff to complete a minimum of 15 hours of annual training. This initiative is designed to equip employees with a thorough understanding of key global sustainability challenges, including climate change, environmental protection, and resource efficiency, while strengthening their capacity to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

The environmental dimension of sustainability is delivered through a combination of structured training programs, international projects, and institutional initiatives to ensure broad engagement and practical knowledge development. Notably, UNEC coordinates the **REFRESH (Renewables Energy)** capacity-building project, which provides specialized training for faculty members on renewable energy and environmental sustainability topics.

Within this project UNEC successfully translated **Richard Dunlap**'s seminal textbook, *Sustainable Energy*, into the Azerbaijani language to enhance local accessibility to high-level environmental education. This initiative provides students and researchers with a rigorous academic framework for understanding renewable technologies within a regional context. By bridging this linguistic gap, we are actively supporting the development of a specialized workforce equipped to lead Azerbaijan's transition to a greener economy.

DIGISHIP – Digital Entrepreneurship Strategies for a Better Sustained Europe

The DIGISHIP (Digital Entrepreneurship Strategies for a Better Sustained Europe) Jean Monnet Module project aims to enhance the practical orientation of the Digital Entrepreneurship curriculum at the Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC) through the adoption of European Union best practices.

Within the framework of the project, two specialized courses have been developed:

- “EU Business Policies for Sustainable Entrepreneurship”
- “Digital Entrepreneurship and Innovation”

The overall objective of these courses is to provide students with a comprehensive

understanding of the European Union's strategies and policies related to digitalization and entrepreneurship. Additionally, the courses aim to strengthen students' ability to interpret the EU's future vision in areas such as enterprise development, strategic management, and finance.

To achieve these objectives, the curriculum is structured into two main modules, each with specific learning outcomes aligned with the broader goals of the project.

ENGAGE Project Participation

UNEC is also a partner in the project titled "*Enhancing Sustainable Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Higher Education of Azerbaijan*" (*ENGAGE*). The primary objective of this initiative is to foster an entrepreneurial mindset and strengthen the entrepreneurial environment within higher education institutions.

This is pursued through the integration of entrepreneurship into university governance, management practices, and academic curricula. Furthermore, the project supports the development of enabling environments, institutional cultures, and practical opportunities through Entrepreneurship and Innovation Centers. These efforts are designed to encourage and support entrepreneurial activities among both students and academic staff.

In addition, the *Sustainable Development and Green Economy Center named after Nizami Ganjavi* operates within UNEC and plays a central role in organizing sustainability-focused training, awareness programs, and research activities. Through these structured, recurring, and institution-wide initiatives, UNEC ensures that environmental sustainability training is systematically delivered, regularly updated, and aligned with international standards and best practices.

7. Financial Performance & Sustainability

In 2025, UNEC demonstrated that financial growth and ethical responsibility go hand-in-hand. Our fiscal strategy prioritized long-term impact over short-term gains.

2025 Budget Overview

The total budget for the fiscal year was **83,249,000 AZN**. This represents a steady increase in revenue generated through research grants, international tuition, and government funding.

Expenditure Category	Amount (AZN)	Percentage
Academic & Faculty Salaries	32,467,110	39%
Sustainability & Well-being	19,147,270	23%
Research & Innovation	12,487,350	15%
Infrastructure & Ganjlik Renovation	10,822,370	13%
Administrative & Operations	8,324,900	10%

Strategic Reinvestment in Sustainability

The **23% allocation (19.1M AZN)** toward sustainability and well-being is one of the highest among regional universities. This fund specifically supported:

- Green Campus Operations:** Maintaining the eco-friendly systems at Ganjlik and Zagatala campuses.
- Mental Health & Well-being:** Expanding the UNEC Psychological Counseling Center and student health services.
- SDG-Focused Research:** Funding for faculty projects specifically addressing climate action and poverty reduction.

GHG Emissions Management

Scope 1 Emissions

Scope 1 emissions at UNEC primarily originate from stationary and mobile combustion sources under direct operational control.

- **Stationary Combustion:**

Emissions from stationary combustion decreased from approximately 1,064,532 kg CO₂ in 2022 to 990,000 kg in 2024. In 2025, emissions are projected to decline further to approximately **904,852 kg CO₂**, representing a cumulative reduction of about 15% over four years. This reduction reflects improvements in energy efficiency, heating system optimization, and gradual adoption of cleaner technologies.

- **Mobile Combustion:**

Emissions from university-owned vehicles decreased from 277,200 kg CO₂ in 2022 to 260,000 kg in 2024. In 2025, emissions are expected to reach approximately **235,620 kg CO₂**, driven by sustainable mobility measures, fleet optimization, and reduced fuel consumption.

Scope 2 Emissions

Scope 2 emissions are associated with purchased electricity consumption.

- **Purchased Electricity:**

Electricity-related emissions declined from 926,753 kg CO₂ in 2022 to 860,000 kg in 2024. For 2025, emissions are projected to decrease further to approximately **787,740 kg CO₂**. This reduction is attributed to enhanced energy efficiency measures, widespread adoption of LED lighting, and initial integration of renewable energy solutions within campus operations.

Scope 3 Emissions

Scope 3 emissions represent indirect emissions across UNEC's broader value chain.

- **Purchased Goods and Services:**

Emissions decreased from 79,827 kg CO₂ in 2022 to 72,000 kg in 2024, with a projected reduction to **67,853 kg CO₂ in 2025**. This trend reflects the implementation of sustainable procurement policies and increased use of environmentally friendly materials.

- **Business Travel:**

Emissions from business travel, after peaking in 2023, declined to 385,000 kg CO₂ in 2024 and are expected to reach **331,500 kg CO₂ in 2025**. The reduction is primarily driven by the expansion of virtual meetings and stricter travel policies.

- **Employee Commuting:**

Commuting emissions are projected to decrease from 139,000 kg CO₂ in 2024 to approximately **117,810 kg CO₂ in 2025**, supported by initiatives such as carpooling programs, promotion of public transport, and flexible work arrangements.

- **Waste Management:**

Waste-related emissions declined from 60,984 kg CO₂ in 2022 to 58,000 kg in 2024, with a further reduction to **51,836 kg CO₂ projected for 2025**. This improvement reflects enhanced recycling systems, waste segregation, and reduced reliance on landfill disposal.

- **Zero Carbon Pilot Project**

In 2025, the Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC) launched a pilot "Zero Carbon" initiative at its main campus, marking a significant step

toward reducing its environmental footprint and promoting sustainable campus operations. As part of this initiative, UNEC introduced a policy restricting the entry of fossil fuel-powered vehicles into selected campus areas. Initially implemented across two university buildings, the project is planned to be gradually expanded to all UNEC campuses. The initiative aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, encourage the use of sustainable mobility solutions, and improve overall environmental quality on campus. In this context, the university promotes alternative transportation options such as bicycles, electric scooters, and electric vehicles. Beyond its environmental impact, the “Zero Carbon” initiative also plays an important role in raising ecological awareness among students, faculty, and staff. By fostering responsible behavior and sustainable practices, it contributes to the development of a more environmentally conscious academic community. This initiative is aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly **SDG 13: Climate Action**, and reflects UNEC’s broader commitment to sustainability. Overall, the “Zero Carbon” initiative builds upon UNEC’s “Green Campus” strategy and reinforces its position as a leading institution in advancing environmental sustainability within the higher education sector.



8. Empowering the Future: Scholarships & Entrepreneurship

UNEC believes that financial barriers should never hinder intellectual potential. In 2025, we revamped our financial support ecosystem to cover the entire student lifecycle—from entry to alumni status.

Comprehensive Scholarship Ecosystem

Our scholarship programs are designed to reward merit and support those in need:

- **Tuition Fee Waivers:** Full or partial waivers for top-scoring students in the State Entrance Exams.
- **UNEC Success Scholarship:** A monthly stipend for students maintaining a GPA above **95/100**.
- **Financial Aid & Social Support:** Targeted grants for students from vulnerable socio-economic backgrounds.
- **Student Financial Support and Access to Education**

In addition to its internal scholarship mechanisms, UNEC supports students' access to education through national financial aid instruments, including the **Student Loan Fund of the Republic of Azerbaijan (TTKF)**.

UNEC holds the leading position among higher education institutions in Azerbaijan in terms of the number of student loan agreements concluded, reflecting the high level of student participation in this financial support mechanism.

Through this system, UNEC students benefit from both standard and social student loan schemes, which are designed to improve access to higher education, particularly for students from socially vulnerable backgrounds.

This support framework contributes to ensuring equal educational opportunities, reducing financial barriers, and strengthening inclusive participation in higher education.

Post-Graduation: The "Alumni Launchpad"

UNEC's commitment doesn't end at graduation. In 2025, we launched the **Alumni Business Grant (ABG)**.

- **Seed Funding:** Graduating students with viable business plans can apply for grants up to **3,000 AZN** to launch their startups.
- **Incubation:** Winners receive 6 months of free office space at the new Ganjlik Innovation Hub and mentorship from industry leaders.

To further illustrate UNEC’s alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals, the following matrix presents key focus areas, institutional actions, and measurable outcomes.

SDG Mapping Matrix (UNEC, 2025)

UN SDG	Institutional Focus Area	Key UNEC Actions	Measurable Indicators
SDG 4	Quality Education	Curriculum modernization, SDG integration	ICRESS-2025, ISCEMR-2025, new master programs
SDG 6	Clean Water & Sanitation	Sustainable campus infrastructure	Water efficiency measures
SDG 8	Decent Work & Economic Growth	Entrepreneurship programs, alumni grants	Alumni Business Grant (up to 3,000 AZN per student)
SDG 9	Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure	Research & innovation, digital transformation	Increase in research output
SDG 10	Reduced Inequalities	Scholarships and financial aid programs	Tuition waivers, social support
SDG 11	Sustainable Cities & Communities	Green campus development	Ganjlik “Smart & Green” Campus
SDG 12	Responsible Consumption	Waste reduction policies	Zero-waste initiatives
SDG 11&13	Climate Action	Emission reduction strategies	Scope 1, 2, 3 reductions
SDG 16	Strong Institutions	Governance and transparency	Institutional reforms
SDG 17	Partnerships	International collaborations	32+ countries, global MoUs

The SDG Mapping Matrix demonstrates that UNEC's activities in 2025 were not limited to isolated initiatives, but were strategically aligned with broader institutional priorities and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. This alignment reflects UNEC's commitment to integrating sustainability into education, research, campus operations, and international cooperation.

9. Global Rankings & QS Performance

In 2025, the Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC) further strengthened its position in international rankings, particularly within the QS (Quacquarelli Symonds) framework, reflecting its growing global reputation, academic quality, and commitment to sustainability.

According to the **QS World University Rankings**, UNEC is placed within the **801–850 band globally**, while achieving a notable position of **12th in Western Asia**, demonstrating its increasing regional competitiveness.

Within the **QS World University Rankings: Europe**, UNEC holds the **271st position**, ranking **1st in Azerbaijan** and securing the **top regional position**, highlighting its leadership in the national higher education landscape.

In the **QS Global MBA Rankings**, UNEC achieved a position within the **201–250 range globally**, with a **70th regional rank** and **1st place in the country**. Additionally, the university ranked **56th worldwide in the QS International Trade Ranking**, reflecting strong performance in business and management education.

Subject-specific rankings further emphasize UNEC's academic strengths:

- **Economics & Econometrics:** Ranked **201–250 globally**
- **Business & Management Studies:** Ranked **301–350 globally**
- **Social Sciences & Management:** Positioned at **365 globally**

A particularly significant achievement is UNEC's performance in the **QS Sustainability Rankings**, where the university is ranked **721st globally** and **1st in**

Azerbaijan. This result underscores UNEC’s strategic focus on environmental responsibility, sustainable campus development, and alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Overall, these rankings reflect UNEC’s continuous progress in academic excellence, internationalization, and sustainability, reinforcing its Vision 2030 objective of becoming a globally recognized institution.

UNEC Performance in QS Rankings (2025)

Ranking Category	Indicator	Result
QS World University Rankings	Global Rank	801–850
	Western Asia Rank	12
QS WUR Europe	Europe Rank	271
	Country Rank	1
	Regional Rank	1
QS Global MBA Rankings	Global Rank	201–250
	Regional Rank	70
	Country Rank	1
QS by Subject	International Trade Ranking	56
	Social Sciences & Management	365
	Economics & Econometrics	201–250
	Business & Management Studies	301–350
QS Sustainability Rankings	Global Rank	726
	Country Rank	1

Performance in THE (Times Higher Education) Rankings

In 2025, the Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC) also demonstrated strong performance in the **Times Higher Education (THE) Rankings**, further reinforcing its international academic standing and regional leadership.

According to the **THE World University Rankings 2026**, UNEC is positioned within the **801–1000 band globally**, while maintaining its status as the **1st ranked university in Azerbaijan**. In addition, the university holds the **1st position in the South Caucasus region**, highlighting its leading role in the regional higher education landscape. Among Turkic-speaking countries, UNEC is ranked **14th**,

reflecting its growing competitiveness within a broader geopolitical and academic space.

In the **THE Interdisciplinary Science Rankings**, UNEC achieved a global position within the **351-400 range**, while again securing the **1st place in Azerbaijan**. This achievement indicates the university's increasing focus on interdisciplinary research, integration of diverse scientific fields, and contribution to solving complex global challenges.

Overall, UNEC's performance in THE rankings reflects its continuous improvement in teaching quality, research output, international outlook, and industry engagement. These results align closely with the university's Vision 2030 goals and its ambition to strengthen its position among globally recognized higher education institutions.

UNEC Performance in THE Rankings (2025)

Ranking Category	Indicator	Result
THE World University Rankings	Global Rank	801–1000
	Country Rank	1
	South Caucasus Rank	1
THE Interdisciplinary Science Rankings	Rank among Turkic States	14
	Global Rank	351–400
	Country Rank	1

10. Research Performance and Scientific Impact

UNEC has demonstrated substantial growth in its research performance over the past decade, particularly in internationally recognized databases such as **Scopus** and **Web of Science (Clarivate Analytics)**. This progress reflects the university's strategic focus on increasing research output, enhancing citation impact, and strengthening international academic collaboration.

Scopus-Indexed Research Performance

UNEC's research output in the Scopus database has increased significantly over time:

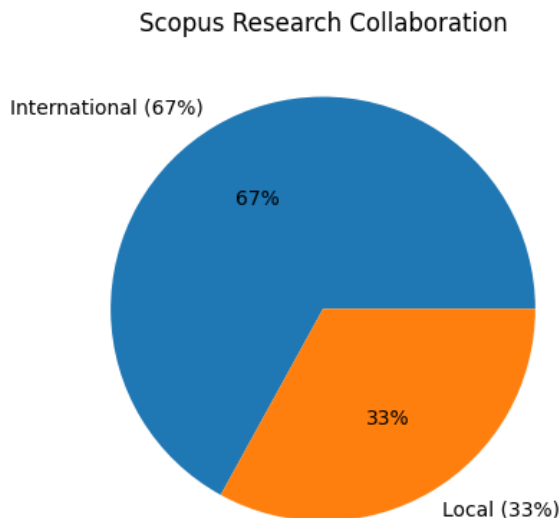
- **Publications** have increased by **378 times** between 2015 and 2025
- **Citations** have grown by **370 times** between 2014 and 2024
- **H-index** reached **49 in 2024**, representing a **25-fold increase** since 2014

These indicators highlight not only the growth in quantity but also the rising academic influence and visibility of UNEC's research.

International collaboration remains a key strength:

- **67% of Scopus-indexed publications** were co-authored with researchers from **139 different countries**, demonstrating strong global integration.

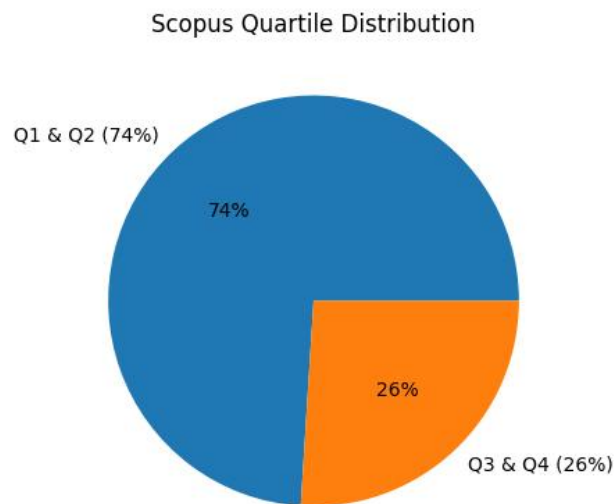
International Research Collaboration (Scopus)



In terms of research quality and journal impact:

- **74% of publications** are indexed in **Q1 and Q2 quartile journals**
- **26% of publications** fall within **Q3 and Q4 quartiles**

Distribution of Publications by Quartiles (Scopus)



This distribution indicates a strong orientation towards publishing in high-impact international journals.

10.1. Web of Science (Clarivate) Research Performance

UNEC has also achieved notable progress within the Web of Science database:

- **Publications** increased by **203 times** between 2014 and 2025
- **Citations** increased by **153 times** over the same period
- **H-index** reached **42 in 2024**, reflecting a **25-fold increase**

International collaboration remains equally strong:

- **67% of Web of Science publications** were co-authored with researchers from **149 countries**

International Research Collaboration (Web of Science)



10.2. Research Output by Scientific Fields and Citation Impact

In 2025, UNEC's research output covered a diverse range of scientific fields, reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of its academic activities.

In terms of publication distribution:

- 265 publications were related to Social Sciences
- 263 publications were in Environmental Sciences
- 218 publications were in Economics, Econometrics and Finance, as well as Engineering

Regarding citation impact by field:

- Environmental Sciences: 253 publications received 1,965 citations
- Energy Sciences: 192 publications received 1,364 citations
- Social Sciences: 265 publications received 1,240 citations














These figures indicate that UNEC's research is not only growing in volume but also achieving strong citation performance across multiple disciplines.





According to data from the SciVal database, UNEC demonstrates strong performance in citation metrics. In particular, the average number of citations per

publication (excluding self-citations) reached 10.2 for the period 2021-2025, representing the highest result among universities in Azerbaijan.

Furthermore, based on the Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI) indicator (excluding self-citations), UNEC ranked 1st in Azerbaijan, with values of 2.02 for the period 2020-2024 and 2.05 for 2021-2025. These results confirm that UNEC's research output performs significantly above the global average in terms of citation impact.

Distribution of Articles Across SDGs

Sustainable Development Goals	2024	2025	Total
 No Poverty	28	33	113
 Zero Hunger	19	34	87
 Good Health and Well-being	20	40	97
 Quality Education	22	40	97
 Gender Equality	8	13	36
 Clean Water and Sanitation	14	34	59
 Affordable and Clean Energy	207	303	677
 Decent Work and Economic Growth	280	355	940
 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	132	199	468
 Reduced Inequalities	53	84	229
 Sustainable Cities and Communities	48	53	143
 Responsible Consumption and Production	88	155	335
 Climate Action	185	274	590

 Life Below Water	7	16	38
 Life on Land	22	37	73
 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	28	38	102
 Partnerships for the Goals	216	359	804

UNEC Research Foundation

The UNEC Research Foundation is a research and expert center operating under the Azerbaijan State Economic University (UNEC), established on June 30, 2017. The Foundation focuses on conducting research in areas of critical importance to modern society and serves as one of the leading think tanks in Azerbaijan.

The Foundation's core activities include organizing and implementing both theoretical and applied research, conducting expert evaluations, providing consulting services, and carrying out forecasting and foresight studies. It also actively organizes thematic events that contribute to knowledge exchange and professional development.

In addition, the UNEC Research Foundation plays a significant role in fostering collaboration among public institutions, private sector entities, non-governmental organizations, and educational institutions. Its strong capacity in coordinating expert work and managing research processes enables the efficient delivery of high-quality results within relatively short timeframes.

Furthermore, the Foundation actively supports UNEC researchers by facilitating research initiatives, providing institutional backing, and promoting academic and professional development.

11. Governance and Institutional Management

UNEC's governance structure is based on the principles of transparency, accountability, and strategic leadership. The university is led by the Rector, who provides overall direction and ensures the implementation of institutional priorities in line with national education policies and global academic standards.

The Rector is supported by a team of Vice-Rectors responsible for key functional areas, including academic affairs, research and innovation, international relations, and administrative operations. This structure enables effective coordination across all university units and supports the achievement of UNEC's strategic objectives.

Decision-making processes at UNEC are guided by institutional regulations and supported by specialized committees and structural units. These processes ensure that academic, financial, and operational decisions are aligned with the university's long-term development strategy.

In addition, UNEC applies continuous quality assurance mechanisms to monitor and improve the effectiveness of its academic programs and administrative processes. Internal evaluation systems, performance monitoring, and feedback mechanisms play a crucial role in maintaining high standards of education and institutional performance.

12. Key Challenges and Risks

Despite its significant achievements in 2025, UNEC operates in a dynamic and increasingly competitive global higher education environment, which presents a number of strategic challenges.

One of the primary challenges is the growing competition in international university rankings. Maintaining and improving positions in global rankings such as QS and THE requires continuous enhancement of research output, teaching quality, and international visibility.

Another key challenge relates to the expansion of research funding. While research

activity has increased substantially, ensuring sustainable and diversified funding sources, particularly from international and industry partners, remains a priority.

In the area of sustainability, although UNEC has made considerable progress, the development of comprehensive data collection, monitoring, and reporting systems remains an important task. Strengthening institution-wide integration of sustainability practices will be essential for long-term impact.

Addressing these challenges effectively will be critical for achieving UNEC's Vision 2030 goals and strengthening its position as a competitive and internationally recognized university.

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13. Looking Ahead: Goals for 2026

In transition into the next academic year, UNEC is poised to:

- **AI Integration and Digitalization of Scientific Activities**

UNEC has initiated and continues to advance a strategic project in collaboration with leading international AI companies focused on the implementation of artificial intelligence in education and research. This initiative aims to enhance teaching methodologies, improve research efficiency, and introduce innovative, data-driven solutions into the academic environment. As part of this effort, UNEC also plans to establish a dedicated AI laboratory to support applied research, experimentation, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

In parallel, UNEC has implemented the AVESIS system in cooperation with leading technology partners to foster the digitalization of scientific and research activities. The system supports the management, monitoring, and evaluation of academic outputs, thereby increasing transparency, efficiency, and institutional research capacity.

Further development and expansion of these initiatives are planned for 2026, with a focus on strengthening UNEC's position as a technologically advanced and research-oriented university.

- **Artificial Intelligence Institute**

UNEC has established an Artificial Intelligence Institute, which is scheduled to become fully operational in 2026. The Institute is expected to play a pivotal role in advancing research and innovation in the field of artificial intelligence.

Its primary objective is to foster high-quality, interdisciplinary research by bringing together academic staff, researchers, and industry partners. The Institute will support the development of cutting-edge AI solutions, promote collaboration with international institutions, and contribute to the integration of AI technologies into education and scientific activities at UNEC.

Through these efforts, the Institute will strengthen UNEC's research capacity and position the university as a key contributor to the development of AI-driven innovation in the region.

- **Launching 2 double degree programs with Sejong University**, strengthening UNEC's international academic portfolio.
- **Introducing a differentiated remuneration system** for administrative staff, linked to performance indicators.
- **Implementing a performance-based ranking system** for administrative employees, to enhance efficiency, accountability, and institutional effectiveness.
- **Expanding the Green Campus model** across all regional branches, reinforcing UNEC's sustainability agenda
- **Increasing the Alumni Business Grant (ABG) fund by 15%**, to further support student entrepreneurship and startup development
- In alignment with UNEC's digital transformation strategy, the university's virtual system, EDUMAN, is planned to be upgraded to EDUMAN 2.0. This upgraded platform will implement a fully automated Learning Management System (LMS) based on adaptive digital education principles, enhancing both teaching and learning efficiency.

Furthermore, EDUMAN 2.0 will be integrated with governmental services, enabling streamlined data exchange and improved administrative coordination. In parallel, the MyCabinet application will be launched to simplify application procedures and facilitate reporting processes for authorized users.

The system will also introduce a single authentication mechanism, reducing time consumption and improving user convenience. Overall, these developments aim to fully digitalize the educational process at UNEC, ensuring a more efficient, accessible, and modern academic environment.