

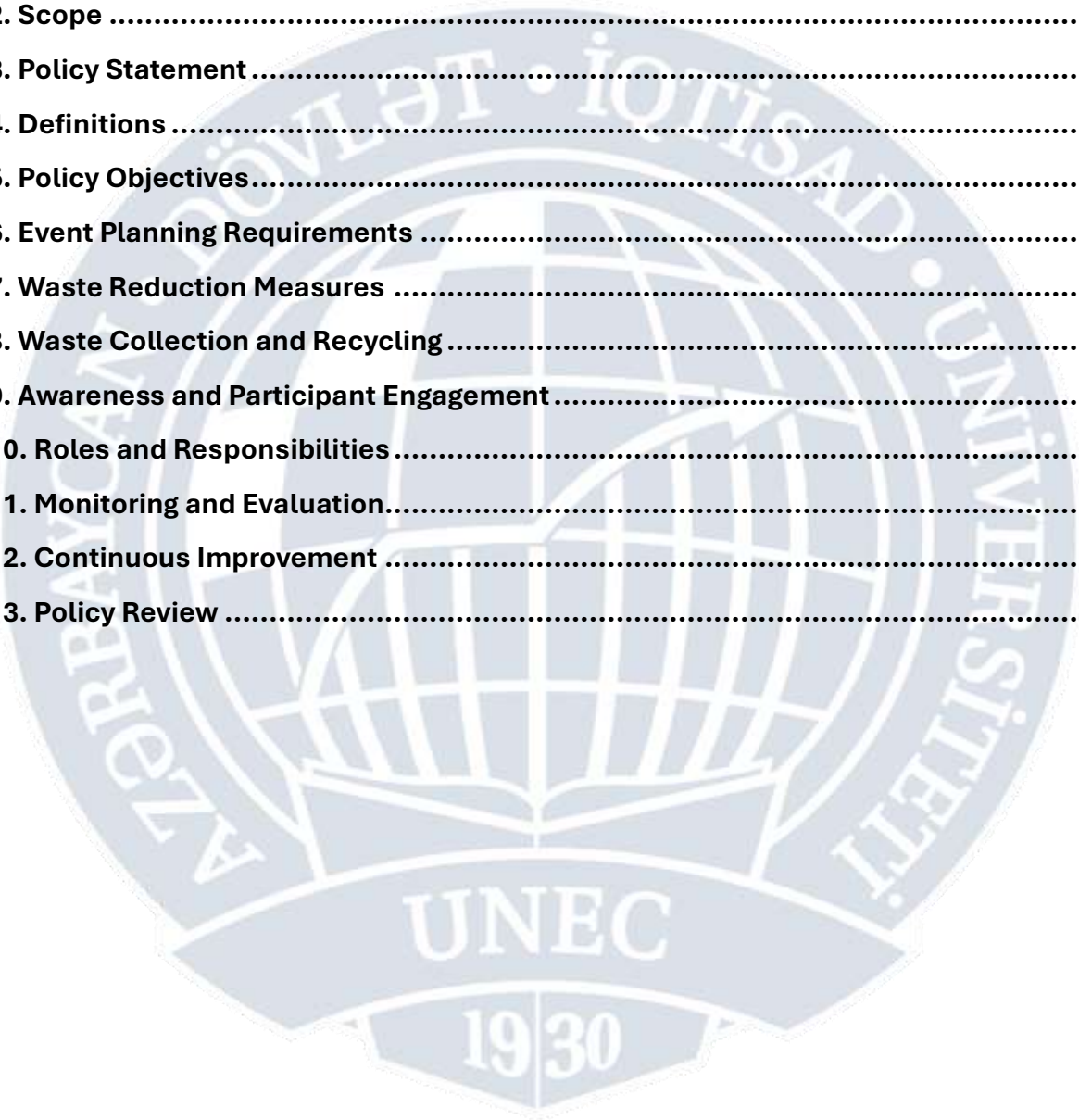
AZERBAIJAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS (UNEC)

ZERO-WASTE EVENT POLICY

ZERO-WASTE EVENT POLICY

Table of Contents

1. Purpose	3
2. Scope	3
3. Policy Statement	4
4. Definitions	4
5. Policy Objectives.....	4
6. Event Planning Requirements	5
7. Waste Reduction Measures	6
8. Waste Collection and Recycling.....	7
9. Awareness and Participant Engagement.....	7
10. Roles and Responsibilities	8
11. Monitoring and Evaluation.....	8
12. Continuous Improvement	9
13. Policy Review	9



1. Purpose

Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC) is committed to promoting sustainable campus operations and minimizing the environmental impacts associated with university activities. Events organized by higher education institutions can generate significant amounts of waste through the consumption of disposable materials, food packaging, promotional products, and printed documents. Therefore, UNEC aims to integrate zero-waste principles into the planning, implementation, and evaluation of all university events.

The purpose of this Policy is to establish guidelines and responsibilities for organizing events that minimize waste generation, maximize resource efficiency, encourage reuse and recycling, and support UNEC's sustainability objectives. Through the implementation of this Policy, the University seeks to reduce its environmental footprint, promote sustainable behavior, and contribute to a circular economy approach.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all university-organized and university-sponsored events, including but not limited to:

- Conferences and symposiums;
- Workshops and seminars;
- Academic meetings;
- Training programs;
- Graduation ceremonies;
- Student activities and festivals;
- Exhibitions and fairs;
- Community engagement events;
- Official receptions and institutional gatherings.

The Policy applies to all academic units, administrative departments, student organizations, event organizers, contractors, suppliers, and participants involved in university events.

3. Policy Statement

UNEC is committed to organizing events in a manner that prevents waste generation whenever possible and ensures that unavoidable waste is reused, recycled, composted, or otherwise diverted from landfill disposal.

All event organizers shall incorporate sustainability considerations into event planning and decision-making processes. Preference shall be given to reusable, recyclable, and environmentally friendly materials and practices.

The University shall encourage event participants to actively support waste reduction efforts and adopt sustainable consumption behaviors during university events.

4. Definitions

4.1. Zero-Waste Event

A zero-waste event is an event designed and managed to minimize waste generation and maximize the recovery, reuse, recycling, or composting of materials so that little or no waste is sent to landfill.

4.2. Waste Diversion

Waste diversion refers to the process of redirecting waste materials away from landfill disposal through reuse, recycling, composting, donation, or other recovery methods.

4.3. Sustainable Event Materials

Materials that are reusable, recyclable, compostable, biodegradable, or produced with reduced environmental impact.

5. Policy Objectives

UNEC aims to:

- Minimize waste generated during university events;
- Reduce the use of disposable and single-use products;
- Promote reuse and recycling practices;
- Encourage sustainable procurement and resource efficiency;
- Increase environmental awareness among participants;

- Support institutional sustainability goals and environmental commitments;
- Enhance the University's performance in sustainability assessments and rankings.

6. Event Planning Requirements

6.1. Sustainable Event Planning

Event organizers shall integrate waste prevention and resource efficiency measures into the planning process from the earliest stages of event preparation.

Sustainability considerations should be included in:

- Venue selection;
- Catering arrangements;
- Procurement decisions;
- Communication methods;
- Participant engagement activities;
- Waste management planning.

6.2. Digital Communication

To reduce paper consumption, organizers shall prioritize digital communication methods whenever possible.

Examples include:

- Electronic invitations;
- Digital registration systems;
- QR-code-based information materials;
- Electronic agendas and programs;
- Digital certificates and participation records.

Printed materials should be limited to situations where they are necessary for operational purposes.

6.3. Sustainable Procurement

Event-related purchases shall prioritize products that are:

- Reusable;
- Recyclable;
- Compostable;
- Locally sourced where feasible;
- Produced with minimal packaging.

Organizers should avoid purchasing unnecessary materials that are likely to become waste after the event.

7. Waste Reduction Measures

7.1. Elimination of Single-Use Items

Event organizers shall seek to eliminate or significantly reduce the use of:

- Single-use plastic bottles;
- Disposable cups;
- Plastic cutlery;
- Plastic straws;
- Disposable plates;
- Non-recyclable promotional materials.

7.2. Reusable Alternatives

Where feasible, reusable alternatives shall be used, including:

- Reusable tableware;
- Refillable water dispensers;
- Reusable banners and signage;
- Reusable decorations and event materials.

7.3. Sustainable Catering

Catering providers shall be encouraged to:

- Minimize food waste;

- Use reusable serving equipment;
- Reduce unnecessary packaging;
- Offer environmentally friendly food service materials.

Surplus food, where appropriate and safe, should be donated or redistributed whenever feasible.

8. Waste Collection and Recycling

Appropriate waste collection infrastructure shall be provided at event venues.

Where possible, clearly labeled collection points shall be established for:

- Recyclable materials;
- Paper and cardboard;
- Plastic and metal containers;
- Organic waste;
- General waste.

Event participants shall be encouraged to separate waste correctly and support recycling efforts.

9. Awareness and Participant Engagement

UNEC shall encourage event participants to actively contribute to waste reduction initiatives.

Awareness measures may include:

- Sustainability messages in event communications;
- Signage promoting responsible waste disposal;
- Information regarding recycling procedures;
- Volunteer engagement programs;
- Sustainability-themed educational activities.

10. Roles and Responsibilities

10.1. Strategic Development and Sustainability Units

- Promote implementation of this Policy;
- Provide guidance on sustainable event practices;
- Monitor sustainability performance indicators;
- Support institutional sustainability reporting.

10.2. Event Organizers

- Integrate zero-waste principles into event planning;
- Ensure compliance with this Policy;
- Coordinate waste reduction measures;
- Engage suppliers and participants in sustainability efforts.

10.3. Suppliers and Service Providers

- Support sustainable event objectives;
- Reduce packaging waste;
- Provide environmentally preferable products and services;
- Comply with applicable sustainability requirements.

10.4. Participants

Participants are encouraged to:

- Use reusable items where possible;
- Follow waste segregation guidelines;
- Support recycling initiatives;
- Act responsibly in relation to resource consumption.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

UNEC shall periodically assess the effectiveness of this Policy through:

- Evaluation of waste generation during events;

- Assessment of recycling and diversion rates;
- Feedback from event organizers and participants;
- Identification of improvement opportunities;
- Review of sustainability performance indicators.

Lessons learned from events shall be used to continuously improve future practices.

12. Continuous Improvement

UNEC is committed to continuously enhancing the sustainability of its events. Emerging best practices, technological innovations, stakeholder feedback, and institutional sustainability goals shall be considered when updating event management procedures.

13. Policy Review

This Policy shall be reviewed at least once every three years or whenever significant changes occur in sustainability objectives, operational requirements, or regulatory frameworks.

